

Saga-Book of the Viking Club.

VOL. II. PART III.

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“ The Book of the Settlement of Iceland. Translated from the original Icelandic of Ari the Learned ” By Rev. T. Ellwood.

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“ The Cult of Othin. An Essay on the Ancient Religion of the North.” By H. M. Chadwick.

MESSRS. JOHNSON AND GREIG, Lerwick (the Publishers).

“ Shetland Folklore.” By John Spence, F.E.I.S.

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“ Lakeland Words. A Collection of Dialect Words and Phrases as used in Cumberland and Westmoreland, with illustrative sentences in the North Westmoreland Dialect.” By B. Kirkby.

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“ Stories from the Northern Sagas.” Edited by E. E. Speight and A. F. Major.

THE MINISTRY OF PUBLIC EDUCATION, Christiania.

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PUBLICATIONS BY MEMBERS.

AMONG publications by members in the two years under review are :—

“ Upper Wharfedale, its History, Antiquities, and Scenery, from Otley to Langstrothdale.” By H. Speight. (London : Elliot Stock.)

“ Gisli Súrsson : A Drama. Ballads and Poems of the Old Norse Days, and some Translations.” By Beatrice Helen Barmby. (Westminster : Archibald Constable and Co., Ltd.)

Also in the *Scottish Review* for April, 1900, “ Wayland the Smith,” by Karl Blind ; also an article with a similar title in the *Deutsche Revue* for September, 1900 ; also in *Gentleman's Magazine* for April, 1901, “ Sir Francis Barry's New Excavations of Brochs ” in Scotland. In the *Reliquary*, “ King Alfred,” by the Rev. C. W. Whistler, M.R.C.S., L.S.A.

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

SEVENTH SESSION, 1899.

AL-THING, JANUARY 20TH, 1899.

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

The Rev. R. M. Heanley, M.A., read a paper on "The Vikings, and Traces of their Folklore in the Lincolnshire Marshes," which, with the discussion, will be reproduced in a future issue.

AL-THING, FEBRUARY 10TH, 1899.

Dr. KARL BLIND (Jarl) in the Chair.

Pastor A. V. Storm, Göfgir-man, Danish Chaplain in London, read a paper on "Early History and Monuments of Jutland and Sleswick," which is reproduced in the present issue.

In the discussion which followed, Mr. J. S. Thornton, a visitor, said that he had been much interested in the paper, especially in the account of the Jelling Stone, as he had himself travelled in Jutland, where he met and made friends with a Danish pastor, who he found was curate at Jelling. Twelve months later, being again in Denmark, he visited Jelling, and called at the pastorate. The pastor made him very welcome, and showed him the stone, the church, and other features of the place. Especially interesting was a chambered barrow to which he took him [that of King Gorm and Queen Thyra], as the chamber was made of oaken boards. Unhappily, he

heard later that the chamber had fallen in soon after his visit.¹

Mr. G. M. Atkinson asked whether the stones described by Pastor Storm were given in Professor Stephens' great work,² and observed that the Runic stone in the Guildhall Museum, and the two fine ones at Oxford, if properly deciphered, and the age and circumstances fixed, might bear an equal contribution to those cited by Pastor Storm to historical events in England.

Dr. Jón Stefánsson, in moving a vote of thanks to the lecturer, pointed out that all these monuments were found in South Jutland or Sleswick, and none south of what was formerly the Danish border. This seemed to point to that being an old racial boundary-line. It was very satisfactory to find that the stones corroborated the Sagas, as pointed out by Pastor Storm. It showed the truth that so often underlies tradition, and that the Sagas were based on historic facts, and that forgotten truths often lived on in them.

Mr. A. F. Major expressed his appreciation of the paper, and endorsed the remarks of the last speaker. He himself was convinced that the Sagas and traditions of the Scandinavian North were far closer to fact than was popularly supposed. Ancient monuments which helped to prove this were of inestimable value. The pity was that so few in this country knew of or cared to study them.

The President (Karl Blind) observed that Orkney men and Shetlanders, Englishmen in general, Danes, Icelanders, Norwegians, Swedes, and Germans, all met in common brotherhood in the Club. The treatment of political questions which might give rise to controversies was mutually excluded by the rules of the Society. Referring to the earliest known inhabitants of Jutland, the speaker showed from ancient chronicles that Saxons, Angles, and Jutes, were described, of old, as three tribes

¹ An illustration of this interesting chamber appears in Bache's "*Nordens Historie*," p. 295.—ED.

² Some only of the stones are given in Stephens' work.—ED.

from Germany. Richard Green, in his "History of the English People," says :—" To the north of the English, in their Sleswick home, lay another kindred tribe, the Jutes, whose name is still preserved in their district of Jutland. Engle, Saxon, and Jute, all belonged to the same Low German branch of the Teutonic family, drawn together by the same ties of a common blood, common speech, and common social institutions." In the *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Dr. Hyde Clarke had fully made out this point. The original population of Jutland belonged to the Suevian branch of the Teutonic stock. When it had swarmed forth by land and sea, it was gradually replaced by Slavs from the East and by Scandinavians from the North. In this way Jutland became a Dane-land in the present sense. The lecturer (Pastor Storm) having been under the impression that there were no inscribed Runic stones in this country, Karl Blind mentioned that there are thirteen in the Isle of Man and one in Shetland. The custom of drinking blood-brotherhood having been referred to in the lecture, the President avowed that in his University days he had himself indulged in that barbaric custom, which was an old Scandinavian, Skythian, and Teutonic one, and that the friends with whom he had drank blood-brotherhood remained true friends to him down to their death. He thought the time might come when all Germanic nations would have to withstand a Slav onset, and that then such brotherhood might bind them all together.

Pastor A. V. Storm, in responding, expressed his gratitude to the meeting for the reception given to his paper. He wished very much that models and copies of monuments such as he had described could be easily obtained.

AL-THING, MARCH 13TH, 1899.

Dr. KARL BLIND (Jarl) in the Chair.

A paper by Dr. W. Dreyer on "Some Features of the Advance of the Study of Danish Archæology in the last

Decades," translated by Miss E. Warburg, was read by Miss Warburg, and will be reproduced in a future issue.

AL-THING, MARCH 24TH, 1899.

The Rev. A. SANDISON (Jarla-man) in the Chair.

Mr. F. T. Norris read a paper on "The Vikings in the Thames Valley," which is held over for future issue.

GREAT AL-THING, APRIL 21ST, 1899.

Dr. KARL BLIND (Jarl) in the Chair.

The Great Al-thing was held at the King's Weigh House, on Friday, April 21st, 1899, at 8 p.m. The Law-Thing Saga, or Annual Report of the Council, and the Statement of Accounts and Balance Sheet for the year 1898, were laid before the meeting and unanimously adopted, and Umboths-Vikings, or Officers of the Club, for the ensuing year were elected.

A paper by Professor Sophus Bugge, Viking-Jarl, on "The Wayland Lay," translated by Miss E. Warburg, was then read by Miss Warburg, and is reproduced in another place.

In the discussion which followed, Mr. Alfred Nutt said that listening to Professor Bugge's very complicated, ingenious, and acute paper excited a feeling that one could not see the forest for the trees. The theory was that Vølundr's tale did not in reality belong to the Scandinavian North, but was an importation from England, no doubt in its ultimate origin concocted by Englishmen from classical fable. The latter point, however, was not before us. As usual with Prof. Sophus Bugge, we find a curious instance of circular reasoning. The date of the legend in its present shape is assumed to be the ninth century, and because at that date there are certain historical personages who are assumed to be the originals

of the characters in it, the date is held to be proven. This is so much part of Prof. Sophus Bugge's method, that he himself was always suspicious of it. There is no doubt that this story was widely known in England, though the explanations given of the carvings on the Frankish casket were quite new to him. But he still failed to see any reason why the story should not be Teutonic, and known to the North Germans who inhabited Scandinavia. Professor Bugge always regarded what we actually have as all that ever existed, and made no allowance for what must have perished in the lapse of time. He also seemed to regard all variants of a story as so many versions of one definite tale, instead of as separate handlings of traditional matter. He was interested in the identification of Kiar with Ciarbhal, but he doubted whether this could be Ciarbhal of Ossory, as the latter was well known to the Norsemen; but there were three earlier kings named Ciarbhal in the sixth century, one of whom might perhaps be the original of the Kiar of the story. He thought that there had been much give and take between Celtic and Scandinavian legend, but was of opinion that swan-maidens occurred first in the Celtic tales. With regard to the date of "Haustlong," which he had hitherto considered a fixed date, he would like to know whether Prof. Sophus Bugge had any ground for throwing it forward except a desire to make it fit in with his theories.

Mr. G. M. Atkinson said that the paper presented an interesting mixture of myth and reality, bringing together actual Irish kings and mythical swan-maidens. The swan-maiden story was extremely common in legends of various countries. He hoped the ornamentation of the bone casket would be fully reproduced if the paper was published.¹

Mr. C. A. Seyler echoed the hope that the paper would be printed, as it was impossible to properly criticise it

¹ The casket is reproduced on p. 280.—ED.

from one reading. It displayed remarkable ingenuity, especially in the explanation of the designs on the Franks casket and the details as to Egil. But why was it always deemed necessary to assume that one nation had borrowed from another? Why was it impossible that each should have drawn on a common stock? He would like to know what connection there was between the legend and that of Wudga, who was called the son of Wayland, and was mixed up with the stories of Theodoric and Ermanric.

Colonel Bertie Hobart asked for further information as to the place-names, Wayland's Smithy and Wayland's Stock. He did not follow the topographical point as to whether Wayland came from England to Norway or *vice versa*.

Dr. Karl Blind expressed the thanks of the company to the author of the paper, as well as to the lady, Miss Elsie Warburg, who had translated it so ably and read it so charmingly. Prof. Sophus Bugge, he said, was a very learned man, to whom we must listen with respect, but he must protest against his always trying to prove the Scandinavian mythology to be a mixture of classical myths and Christian lore. Dr. Bugge makes Wayland a Finn or a Lapp, and one of the swan-maidens an Irish girl—a theory which he was compelled to combat, though he had nothing to say against the Finns as a race, whom we must especially sympathise with as victims of the peace-loving Czar; nor against Irish girls, or any Keltic race. Professor Bugge glided over the passage in the Edda which makes Wayland come from the Rhine. The names of the brothers in the “Völundarkhviða,” a fragmentary poem interlarded with prose by the scribe who wrote it down, are not Finnish, but Germanic. Jakob Grimm asked whether the name Finn in the poem is not the same name that we find in genealogies of the Germanic and Anglo-Saxon kingly races. This name, he (Karl Blind) would add, is found as a family name in Germany, Norway, and Ireland, introduced into the latter country by the Fionna,

or Fenians, who were fair-haired, blue-eyed conquerors from the Scandinavian North. One might have expected that Prof. Bugge, who shows his full reading by numerous quotations, would have mentioned and dealt with Grimm's noteworthy hint; but he does not. The author of the *Völundr* poem is certainly not answerable for the prose note prefixed to it. In his own view, the "*Völundr Saga*" has twice travelled to the North from Germany. In the "*Wilkina Saga*," which contains a version of it, the author distinctly refers to German songs, and to the communications of men from Soest, Bremen, and Münster. There are other Eddic poems which deal with Germany, and in which Sigurd appears dwelling on the Rhine, and the whole Sigurd, or Siegfried, story is located on that river. Professor Bugge thinks Egil gave his name to Aylesbury, but he is wrong in saying that there was only one hero of the name. The Egil or Eigel name occurs in the German *Wieland* tale. Germany also can show a great many place-names connected with Wayland. No doubt the story has contact with the classic tales of Hephaistos, Erichthonios, and Daidalos; but, as we have it, it is a Teutonic tale brought to the North from Germany, whether it came by way of the Anglo-Saxons or not. "Southern," in the Eddas, always means German, and the Swan-maidens and Valkyries of the tale are southern demi-goddesses (*dísir sudhrænar*). So the Battle Virgins are called in the "*Lay of Helgi the Hunding-Killer*." No doubt we should have had stronger evidence of this if the Germans had not unluckily lost their old heroic ballads through monkish fanaticism. The Mirk-wood of the legend is the equivalent of the Schwarzwald, or Black Forest. The oldest German testimony to the existence of a Wayland tale in German is in a Latin poem, which may be assigned to about the year 930, where, as in *Beowulf*, certain armour is said to be Wayland's work. Geoffrey of Monmouth mentions cups which Wayland, working in gold and jewellery, made in the Siegen country, and Simrock identifies this with

Siegen on the Lower Rhine, a mining district. The Rhine is beyond doubt a gold-bearing river, and was still more so in early years. The statement of Geoffrey of Monmouth has also not been alluded to in the paper read before the Club. In conclusion, he was bound to say that he thought Professor Bugge's attack on the origin of the noble Scandinavian mythology had failed.

The proceedings terminated with a vote of thanks to Dr. Karl Blind on his vacating the office of Jarl, and to Mr. E. M. Warburg on his resigning the office of Skatt-master.

AL-THING, NOVEMBER 17TH, 1899.

The Rev. A. SANDISON (Jarla-man) in the Chair.

Mr. Eiríkr Magnússon, the Jarl, gave his inaugural address on "J. L. Runeberg, the Finnish Poet, with special reference to his work 'King Fjalar,'" which will be reproduced on a future occasion.

AL-THING, DECEMBER 15TH, 1899.

MR. EIRÍKR MAGNÚSSON (Jarl) in the Chair.

Mr. A. R. Goddard read a paper on "An Old Viking Game."

In the discussion which followed, Mr. E. Magnússon thanked the lecturer in the name of the Society for his paper, and said that he thought great credit was due to Mr. Goddard for having recognised from one glance in the speaker's house at the picture of the fragment of a board found in the Gokstad ship what game it had been used for. He himself did not know if the game was known in Norway, but it was very common in Iceland, where it is called "Mylla." The Icelandic name is no doubt a corruption from an original "Milla," and there may be a connection between this and the name "Merelles," which also has had its corruption into

“ Morris.” The game is nowhere mentioned in the Sagas, at any rate so as to be recognisable. The game described as played by Knut, called “ Shák-tafl,” was no doubt chess, the word *shák* being probably derived from “ shah,” the Persian name for chess. Other games mentioned are the game played by the gods in the days of their innocence, but no hint is given as to what this was ; also a game called “ Hnefa-tafl,” in which the object was to surround and checkmate one of the pieces. There was also a game called “ Hala-tafl,” and he thought some light was thrown on the nature of this by Mr. Goddard’s discovery. There was one story in the Sagas that told how two men were playing this game, and an old woman, incensed with one of them, seized one of the pieces on the board and struck him in the face with it, forcing his eye out of the socket. No doubt in this case the pieces had a pin to stick into a hole in the board when the game was played at sea.

Mr. A. F. Major asked whether the game was purely Scandinavian in its origin.

Mr. G. Maynard, Curator of the Museum at Saffron Walden, said that he had seen the game played by Welsh shepherds, who called it “ Caer Troja.” With the figures cut in the turf for playing, the game might be compared to the so-called mazes in the grass found in various parts of the country. There were some in south-west Northamptonshire, which were said to be of Scandinavian origin.

Mr. W. F. Kirby quoted a game mentioned in a Danish ballad, which might be similar. Dr. Prior, the translator, however, thought it was a kind of backgammon.

EIGHTH SESSION, 1900.

AL-THING, JANUARY 26TH, 1900.

The Rev. A. SANDISON (Jarla-man) in the Chair.

A paper by the Rev. A. McDonald, District Secretary for the Hebrides (Long Island), entitled "The Norsemen in Uist Folklore," was read by the Hon. Secretary. The paper, with the discussion, in which Messrs. Major and Kirby took part, will be reproduced in a future issue.

AL-THING, FEBRUARY 23RD, 1900.

The Rev. A. SANDISON (Jarla-man) in the Chair.

Mr. Albany F. Major, Viking-Skald and Hon. Secretary, read a paper on "Sea-Trading in Saga-Time," which will be reproduced on a future occasion.

AL-THING, MARCH 23RD, 1900.

Mr. EIRÍKR MAGNÚSSON (Jarl) in the Chair.

Miss A. Goodrich-Freer, Vice-President, read a paper on "The Vikings in Yorkshire." The paper, with the discussion thereon, in which Colonel Bertie Hobart, and Messrs. Norris, Atkinson, Major, and Magnússon, took part, will be produced in a future issue.

GREAT AL-THING, APRIL 27TH, 1900.

Mr. EIRÍKR MAGNÚSSON (Jarl) in the Chair.

The Great Al-thing was held at the King's Weigh House on Friday, April 27th, 1900, at 8 p.m.

The adoption of the Law-Thing Saga, or Annual Report of the Council, including the Treasurer's Account and the Balance Sheet for the year 1899, was moved by the Rev.

W. C. Green and seconded by Mr. A. W. Johnston, and was carried unanimously, and the election of Umbothsvikings, or Officers of the Club, for the ensuing year then took place.

The Rev. W. C. Green, District Secretary for East Anglia, then read papers on "Hallgrim Pjetursson and his Hymns" and on "A Passage in 'Sonatorrek,'" the latter of which is reproduced on another page.

In the discussion which followed, Mr. Eiríkr Magnússon expressed his great appreciation of the papers that had been read. He thought the subject-matter of the paper on Hallgrim would be new to most. Mr. Green had shown a very just appreciation of the personality of the man, and of his individuality as a poet, and had not shrunk from indicating the shadows that darken the picture. Hallgrim was undoubtedly the greatest Icelandic hymn-writer. The early Icelandic poetry was epic in its character, and therefore the earliest Christian poems were Drapas of the lives of the Saints and the Virgin Mary. No fewer than sixty Drapas of the latter had come down to us. In Roman Catholic times the Church aimed rather at giving amusement to the eye and ear than to stirring the emotions of the heart. Consequently there was no place in it for such contemplation as Hallgrim's. But when by translation Iceland became possessed of Holy Scripture in the vernacular, the opening up of the fountain of Oriental imagery and of the poetry of the Psalms created a new generation of poets, the singers of Reform, whose works were a treasure down to the present day, but the prince among whom was the peerless leper of Saurby. Hallgrim's hymns were a pleasant memory of his childhood, for during Lent the great hour of the day for Icelandic children was the hour when all the household gathered together at the evening devotions for the singing of Hallgrim's Passion hymns. The line of Icelandic hymn-writers did not die out with Hallgrim, but none were his equals in simplicity and the power of introducing the homely things of everyday life in the state-

liness of finished art. With regard to the passage in "Sonatorrek," the speaker had already heard Mr. Green bring forward his views on the subject, and was still of the opinion that he was on the right track, and that the passage might be translated, "My son has gone to meet with his kin in the home of the beeskip." Corruption of the text was hardly likely, because both alliteration and metre were perfect in this passage. Though this is the only place in Icelandic literature where the word *býskip* is found, it is to be noted that it is used by a most observant man, who had spent many years in England. Egil no doubt knew and possibly spoke Anglo-Saxon, an accomplishment of no very great difficulty, seeing that the two tongues were so closely allied. We know that he served in the English army in the North of England, where the beeskep is used. The speaker considered "the city of the beeskep" a perfect expression for the vaulted home of the swarming dead. He thought it was possibly a Christian reminiscence, as it is hardly a heathen form of speech. He considered Mr. Green's view of the passage very likely to be right, although this cannot be absolutely proven. In conclusion, he might say that Mr. Green's translations from Hallgrim were models of closeness to the original, and he also thought Mr. Green's version of "Egil's Saga" the best translation of all that had appeared in English.

Mr. A. F. Major expressed his gratitude to the lecturer for introducing to the Club the poetry of Hallgrim, and thought all would agree that Mr. Green's renderings were good English verse, and far above the level of many, if not most, English hymns. He was very glad that the lecturer had drawn from Mr. Magnússon such a charming picture of the hour of hymn-singing in the winter nights in Iceland. With regard to the passage from "Sonatorrek," his only doubt was whether Egil, composing in Iceland for the benefit of Icelanders, would use an image that would represent nothing to them unless they had been abroad.

The Rev. W. C. Green briefly thanked the Society for

their reception of his papers, and said he thought so many Icelanders had been to other countries, and honey was so universally an article of commerce in the North in days when sugar was unknown, that there would be few who were not familiar, at least by hearsay, with the mode of its production and with the dwellers in the beeskep.

AL-THING, NOVEMBER 2ND, 1900.

The Rev. A. SANDISON (Jarla-man) in the Chair.

Mr. Eiríkr Magnússon, Jarl, gave the inaugural address of the Session 1900-1901, on "The Conversion of Iceland to Christianity, A.D. 1000," which is reproduced on another page.

In the discussion which followed, Mr. G. M. Atkinson asked if the relics of early Celtic Christianity found in Iceland, as mentioned by the lecturer, had been preserved. Was the Celtic influence to be traced in Scandinavian art derived in any way from this source; such, for instance, as he had observed in the museum at Copenhagen on a remarkable carved doorway from Valthiofstad Church, Iceland, where Celtic ornamentation appeared with dragons, rings, etc.

Mr. A. F. Major said he thought all present thought that there was no scope for any discussion, because Mr. Magnússon had exhausted the subject in his paper. He should, however, like to thank him for his pregnant suggestion that among the settlers in Iceland the worship of the Æsir was yielding to the worship of the *land-vættir*, or spirits of the land. This had been a new light to the speaker, and he thought it accounted for much that seemed strange in the accounts in the Sagas of the religion of Iceland in heathen times. He hoped the lecturer would pursue this point on some future occasion.

The Rev. A. Sandison said that the silence, only broken by applause, with which the paper had been received, was, if not golden, at least eloquent. Anything he himself had

thought, or intended to say, on the subject, had had to be reconsidered, and the whole thing had been represented in a new light. He should like to know whether human sacrifices actually took place. He was much struck by the suggestion as to the *landvættir*. The early Icelandic converts must certainly be put down as very militant Christians. He understood that, apart from the very earliest Christian Celts in Iceland, there was a large Celtic element among the later settlers, which would account for the Celtic influence on the art of the country.

Mr. Eiríkr Magnússon said that the human sacrifices referred to were resorted to by the heathen as a counsel of despair, but were not carried out. It was a doubtful point when the Celts first came to Iceland. The question he raised as to the *landvættir* had never been brought under discussion before, but it was a very fruitful subject to pursue, as materials for it were to be found up and down the whole of Icelandic literature.

AL-THING, DECEMBER 14TH, 1900.

Colonel BERTIE HOBART (Law-right-man) in the Chair.

Mr. W. G. Collingwood, District Secretary for the Hougoun (Furness) and Westmoreland, read a paper on "King Eric of York," which is reproduced on another page.

A brief discussion followed, in which Mr. E. M. Warburg, Pastor A. V. Storm, Messrs. A. F. Major, G. M. Atkinson, W. F. Kirby, Colonel Hobart, and the lecturer, took part.

REPORTS OF HERATH-UMBOTHS-MEN.(DISTRICT SECRETARIES.)

THE District Secretary for Cumberland and Westmorland (Mr. W. G. Collingwood) writes:—

GREAT CLIFTON CROSS-SHAFT.

A SCULPTURED stone of the Viking Age, about the tenth and eleventh centuries, has been brought to light during a recent restoration of the church at Great Clifton, near Workington, Cumberland. It is in a neighbourhood where many such stones have been found, but few so interesting. All along the west coast of Cumberland there are relics of pre-Norman art, in the form of memorial crosses and coped tombs; and these can be broadly divided into two classes—Anglian or native Cumbrian derived from Anglian models, and Scandinavian, that is to say, sculptures having the art ideas of the Norse and Danish invaders, when, after Christianisation in Ireland, they introduced a new style, quite distinct from that native to the north of England, though partly derived from it, and in some cases influencing it. This shaft is of the distinctly Scandinavian type, with Irish influence visible, and must have been the grave-cross of some Viking settler or his descendant.

It was found in the Norman foundations of the church, and the fine preservation of one side is owing to its burial for the last 600 years. Part of it was encrusted with the ancient hard mortar used by the church-builders, but this was cleared away with dilute hydrochloric acid by Mr. W. L. Fletcher and Mr. Lidbetter of Workington—a process which, as the stone was sandstone, has done no damage to the detail, and is much better than any attempt to chip the mortar off. Mr. Fletcher then photographed

the stone for the present writer ; copies of the photographs



CROSS-SHAFT, GREAT CLIFTON CHURCH.

57 × 14 × 6 inches. White and red sandstone.

(Photo by W. L. Fletcher.)

of one side and one edge are submitted herewith. The

other side is partly defaced, and shows only some rather late and irregular interlacing, partly zoomorphic, and the other edge is almost entirely gone.

The stone measures 57 by 14 by 6 inches, and is the whole lower part of the shaft of a cross which, when complete with its wheel-head, would have been about 75 inches in height. It is remarkable, perhaps unique, from the fact that the stone was so chosen that it showed red on one side and white on the other, being cut across the junction of two beds differing in colour. The long, narrow triangle of darker tone in the photograph, at the lower corner of the side, is a bit of the red which apparently intruded into the white face. But the intention is evident, and bears witness to the love for colour which often comes out in the Sagas.

The subject is the favourite one of the conflict of the "Seed of the Woman" with the "Old Serpent." In the upper part, two little naked figures ride upon the necks of two great dragons—a motive which is also seen in the so-called "Saint's Tomb" at Gosforth, one of the Scandinavian hog-backs connected with the famous Edda cross. Over the head of the lower of these two figures is a human head ending in a plaited serpent, a form which recalls the early mediæval symbol for the serpent of Eden. The idea suggested is that of the temptations of human life struggled with and overcome. Under these is a great wolf-headed serpent, recalling the Edda myth of the Fenris wolf; and below it is a figure, robed in long drapery, with a glory round his head, interwoven with serpents and grappling with them. This, though grotesque in drawing, like all the figures on Irish crosses (and unlike the fine types on the early Anglian monuments), seems to be meant for Christ descending into hell: a subject not unusual in memorials of the dead, and obviously meant to express the Christian hope of redemption and life beyond the grave.

As a piece of sculpture, it is picturesquely designed and clean-cut in low relief, more nearly like the fine work

of the Gosforth school than most of the Cumberland examples, which are often extremely rude.

GLASSONBY SHAFT.

A very rude specimen of the same style and period has been known for some time, and figured in "Early Sculptured Crosses of the Diocese of Carlisle," as it appeared while built into the wall of Mr. Rowley's house at Glassonby in East Cumberland. Last summer Mr. Rowley very kindly had it taken out of the wall, and it is now in Tullie House Museum, Carlisle. It proved to be a broken fragment of a cross-shaft, split longitudinally, and on the sides were an interlaced dragon and a rude human figure. The key-pattern on the edge connects it with examples from old Viking neighbourhoods on the Dee, and more remotely with Ireland, for at Clonmacnois there is a tenth century slab with a similar pattern. It may be remarked that the name Glassonby, spelt in the twelfth century Glassanebi, must mean the *bær* of Glasan, an Irish name (seen in MacGlashan), which like Gilemichel, Duvan, and other Irish names, may have been imported into Cumbria by Vikings, just as the Irish names Njáll, Kjartan, Kormákr, etc., were imported into Iceland.

THE WITHERSLACK SWORD.

At a visit to Witherslack by the local Antiquarian Society in last September, the Rev. F. R. C. Hutton exhibited an iron sword which had been found in a bed of sandy gravel at the foot of Whitbarrow Scar, eight feet below the surface. There is no ornament; the pommel and decorated part of the hilt are gone, though the guard remains; and the point has been broken off, leaving the sword now only two feet in length. It is of the type well known as Anglo-Saxon or Viking, and resembles the sword from Ormside churchyard, and that from the Hesket tumulus now in Tullie House, the two latter probably Danish.

As indicating local interest in subjects promoted by the Viking Club, it may be noted that in December the Rev. Canon Thornley, of Kirkoswald, lectured on “Kormák’s Saga” to large audiences in Barrow-in-Furness and Workington.

From Séra Thórhallur Bjarnarson, the present writer has received the third volume of the pocket edition of “Fornsöguthættir” (Isafoldarprentsmiðja, Reykjavík, 1900, 1½ kr. = 1s. 8½d.), containing readable extracts from Hardar Saga, Egla, Helga en fagra, Björn Hitdælakappi, Viga-Styrr, etc., much to be commended to any who would read a little Icelandic.

The District Secretary for Vinland (Miss C. Horsford, *Farla-Kona*) writes :—

RESEARCH IN VINLAND.

THIS year is the millennial anniversary of the discovery of America by Leif Erikson, and it ought to be a year for unusual interest to be taken in that event.

Last spring the prizes were awarded for the best essays on Norse discoveries in America, which were offered by the National Geographic Society. About half-a-dozen papers were sent in. None of these were very good. The first prize was given to an essay which was almost a plagiarism from Dr. B. F. De Costa’s “Pre-Columbian Discovery of America”; but it was so carelessly copied that several absurd blunders appeared. Dr. De Costa’s book was for many years the best American work on the subject, and well deserving of a prize, but unfortunately the judges did not recognise the authorship. It would seem, therefore, that this country is not at present able to produce either competent writers or judges for such a competition.

Dr. De Costa is an elderly gentleman who has recently become a Roman Catholic, after having been for many

years the Rector of the Church of St. John the Evangelist in New York City. He now travels a great deal about the country, lecturing to Roman Catholic societies about the Norse discovery of America ; speaking chiefly about Leif having been a missionary, and about the Vatican records of the establishment of the Church in this country in pre-Columbian times. I saw him not long ago in New York, but he had nothing new to tell me.

Bishop Howley of Newfoundland is now interested in other researches.

About two years ago, Mrs. Hammer, the widow of a Danish-Norwegian Consul in Boston, gave, in memory of her husband, a large sum of money to Harvard College, the income of which was to be spent in promoting the study of Scandinavian literature. A concert representing the history of Scandinavian music was given soon after, and a library of ancient and modern Scandinavian literature is being collected.

Dr. W. H. Schofield, who has the care of this fund, and is the instructor of Old Norse history and literature at Harvard, has studied one year in Copenhagen and one in Christiania. He recently translated into English and published the great work of our honoured Viking-Jarl, Professor Sophus Bugge. He has the gift of inspiring great enthusiasm in his pupils, and there is reason to hope for great and increasing interest in the ancient history and literature of the North in Vinland.

The District Secretary for East Anglia (Rev. W. C. Green) writes :—

EAST ANGLIA.

EAST ANGLIA has not, so far as I know, any Scandinavian novelties to record since two years ago. In the last *Saga-Book* I spoke of some local words of Scandinavian origin or kin. No doubt there are plenty more, but they are mostly common to several counties. Such are the *wiches*,

havens, nesses. In regard to the last named, on some parts of our Eastern Coast the *ness*, such as Thorpe-ness, Orford-ness, does not appear now much of a projection. But possibly the sea has encroached, and flattened or snubbed some noses. We have a peculiar form of *ness* in our Walton-on-the-Naze. In its other name, Walton-le-Soken, one might suppose is present *søkant*, Danish for “sea-shore”; but Soken is from Anglo-Saxon *soc*, *socn*, a court, or a court’s jurisdiction. The French *le* is due to the judicial privileges having been accorded in Norman-French times. Cf. the ward of Portsoken, London, and other instances where it is applied without reference to the sea. Is the river Stour to be traced to *stor*, “great”? It seems likely; and then also we shall refer to this origin other Stours, and *stur* in several words. The occurrence of *Sturium amnem* in the pseudo “Itinerary of Richard of Cirencester” may be dismissed from consideration. I have wondered whence Ant, a Norfolk river, got its name. The insect does not seem to the purpose. Can it be from the Icelandic *önd*, “duck,” Danish, *and*? The new settlers under Skallagrim in Iceland (of whom we read in the “Landnámabók” and in “Egil’s Saga”) called an inlet “Duck-kyle” (*anda-kil*).

Your Somersetshire correspondent, in 1899, gave a surviving form of the cow-riddle propounded by Odin when he played the Sphinx. I have heard from a native Suffolk kinsman another form of this, as follows—

Four upstanders,
Four downhangers,
Two hookies,
Two crookies,
A wiggle-waggle,
And a swish-about.

More symmetrical this is in its pairs than the Somerset form.

I met with the following in my parish, of which I seek an explanation, Norse or otherwise. An old woman was saying how the young people who left their village for

soldiering, or what not, often came back useless for farm labour—"They don't know a bee from a bull's foot, as the saying is." Query: a bee, the insect? or B, the letter? I suppose in the Scotch proverb, when anyone has "a bee in his bonnet," it is the buzzing insect that is supposed to confuse the thoughts in his head. Proverbs are, as we know, commonly alliterative, as in "not knowing chalk from cheese," and the like. All our country riddles, as I pointed out in a previous paper, are of the descriptive kind; seldom, if ever, are they questions.

The District Secretaries for Orphir, Orkney (Mr. R. Flett and Mr. A. W. Johnston), write:—

THE ROUND CHURCH AND JARL'S BU AT ORPHIR,
ORKNEY.

EXCAVATIONS were made last autumn at the Round Church at Orphir and at the adjoining site of the Jarl's *Bu* or Palace. The work was carried out by Mr. Alfred W. Johnston of London, architect to the Kirk Session, and Law-man of the Viking Club, and with the consent of Mr. W. L. Hutchison, laird of the *Bu*, and Mr. S. Bews, the tenant. All that now remains of the Round Church is the half-round apse or chancel, and a small portion of the contiguous walls of the round nave. At a depth of three feet, the old floor, steps, and base of the stone altar were uncovered. Two interments had been made under the altar and floor. These had evidently taken place after the disuse of the church, as part of the remains of the first interment were in the lower strata of debris, while the bed of the grave was only twelve inches below the old floor bed, necessitating the removal of the central portion of the altar and steps, which had not been replaced. A carved bone handle of a Norwegian comb was found at the floor level. About two feet down below the present ground level there was a rough floor of broken roof-slates,

overlaid with refuse of lime. In the Session Records during the eighteenth century it is stated that the Round House was used as a store for lime for repairing the parish church. Photographs of the church and excavations have been taken by Miss Tulloch of the Palace Street Photographic Co., Kirkwall. The site of the Jarl's *Bu* lies immediately to the north of the church, as described in the "Orkneyinga Saga." Mr. Johnston pointed out, some time ago, to the Rev. Mr. Caskey, Incumbent of the parish, the exact spot where the Jarl's *Bu* would have stood in accordance with the description in the Saga. At that time there were no indications whatever of any ruins.

In 1899 Mr. Caskey informed Mr. Johnston that Mr. Flett of Mussaquooy, the gravedigger, had come across the foundations of a wall in digging two graves at the north-west corner of the graveyard, the wall lying from east to west. As this would correspond with the south wall of the Jarl's *Bu* as described in the Saga, Mr. Johnston obtained the co-operation of Mr. Robert Flett of Bellevue, the Honorary District Secretary of the Viking Club, who made two further excavations to the eastward in line with the supposed wall, with the result that he struck the wall again. A careful survey of the site, and measurements of the church, were at the same time made by Mr. C. S. S. Johnston, architect, of Edinburgh. During last autumn Mr. A. Johnston and Mr. Flett continued a series of excavations eastward, and traced the wall to its eastern extremity, opposite the Round Church. The Saga states that a noble church stood opposite the south wall of the Jarl's *Bu*, near the eastern gable. As considerable confusion has arisen regarding the "present church," mentioned in various contemporary accounts of the Round Church, it will be as well to explain that the present parish church was built in 1829, immediately to the west of the Round Church, and its eastern end stands on the site of the western half of the round nave. The previous parish church was built in 1707, and stood immediately to the south of the present church, and therefore clear of the

Round Church. The Jarl's *Bu* and Round Church are situated at the head of the Hope or Hap of the *Bu*, in the township or *tun* of Orphir, from which the parish takes its name.

Some recent writers have placed the site of the Jarl's Palace in the township of Swanbister, which adjoins the township of Orphir. But the mound at Swanbister, which is described in the Ordnance map as the "site of the Earl's Palace," is the ruins of a broch or round tower. Moreover, the Jarl's *Bu* at Orphir mentioned in the Saga remains to this day. The present *Bu* at Orphir is described in the rent-roll of A.D. 1500 as boardlands (*i.e.*, Earl's guests' quarters) of the old earldom, paying no skatt. Dr. Joseph Anderson surmises that the Round Church was built by Jarl Hakon in the twelfth century, after his return from Jerusalem and Rome, whence he had gone on a pilgrimage in expiation of the murder of his cousin Magnus, Jarl and Saint. He brought back relics with him, and probably placed them in this church, which is built in imitation of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem.

Two notable events are recorded at much length in the "*Orkneyinga Saga*" as having taken place at the Jarl's *Bu* at Orphir. The one, under date 1126, recounts the accidental slaying of Earl Harold by means of a poisoned shirt meant for his brother Paul; and the other, under date 1136, details the differences which arose at Earl Paul's Yule-feast between Sweyn Asleif's son and Sweyn Breastrope, ending in the death of the latter and another man.

The District Secretary for the Wirral, Cheshire (Mr. A. C. Nicholson) writes as follows :—

THE WIRRAL.

MR. COLLINGWOOD, in vol. ii., part ii., Jan., 1899, has dealt with most of the immediately interesting features of

this district. *En passant* I may correct "Permian" (p. 141, 8 lines from bottom of page) to "Triassic." I have done little besides trying to interest every and sundry in the history of the country. I hope later to send you some notes of interest. Last year I was precluded from spending any time over these as I had hoped.

THINGWALL.

There is, as is well known, a Thingwall in the Hundred of West Derby, just over the Mersey. Some doubt has been expressed to me whether this is not a *modern* Thingwall, and not original; this is a question to enquire into. Near the Wirral Thingwall is Cross Hill, near which there is a stone set on a foundation of granite boulders, 3-ft. 9-in. in height. On Cross Hill itself there used to be a stone, now said to be buried. This raises the question whether *the* Thing was actually held where now the mill and hamlet stand; is it not far more likely to have been held at Cross Hill? There are curious markings to be seen on the fields, but these latter having been ploughed for years, surface inspection gives one very little information to determine their actual nature; what is required is resort to spade investigations.

CAR (p. 149 *op cit.*)

We have the Carrs in West Kirkby parish, also Newton Car, and the Car houses.

SANDBANKS AND SEA CHANNELS.

It is probable that these are remains of Norse names. I heard of one the other day—"Marker-ey," the highest point on a certain sandbank, not far from Hilbre; but one must not expect to find them on the Ordnance map, nor on the Navy charts.

The District Secretary for the Hebrides (Rev. Alexander McDonald) writes :—

THE HEBRIDES.

I HAVE nothing to report as to any discoveries made in the Hebrides during the last year. There was a paper in the current number of the *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness* giving etymologies of place-names in the island of Eigg, and the Norse names in that island were considered in detail. Last year an excellent work on the Charms, Hymns, and Incantations of the Gael (collected principally in the Hebrides), was published by Mr. Alexander Carmichael, who has been collecting folklore for over 40 years. There is less in this work to show the Norse influence on the prayers and literature of the Hebridians than might have been expected. There is, however, a hymn to St. Magnus, of which I enclose Mr. Carmichael's translation.

"HYMN TO ST. MAGNUS.

"O Magnus of my love,
Thou it is who would'st us guide,
Thou fragrant body of grace,
Remember us.

Remember us, thou saint of power,
Who didst encompass and protect the people;
Succour thou us in our distress,
Nor forsake us.

Lift our flocks to the hills,
Quell the wolf and the fox,
Ward from us spectre, giant, fury,
And oppression.

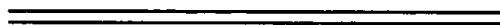
Surround cows and herds,
Surround sheep and lambs,
Keep from them the water-vole
And the field-vole.

Sprinkle dew from the sky upon kine,
Give growth to grass and corn, and sap to plants,
Water-cress, deer's-grass, 'ceis' burdock,
And daisy.

O Magnus of fame,
On the barque of the heroes,
On the crest of the waves,
On the sea, on the land,
Aid and preserve us."

(This hymn was taken down from George Gunn, who was evicted from Kildonnan, Sutherland. Mr. Carmichael says that he is, or was, peasant proprietor in St. Ola, Orkney.)

[The "Legenda et Sequentia Sancti Magni" contain nothing specially remindful of this hymn; but it would be interesting to know whether the poem on St. Magnus in 52 stanzas, preserved in the Arna Magnean Library at Copenhagen, has any parallel. It is reminiscent both of Christian and pre-Christian ideas.—ED.]



THE NORSE LAY OF WAYLAND
(“ VØLUNDARKVIÐA ”),
AND ITS RELATION TO ENGLISH TRADITION.

BY PROFESSOR SOPHUS BUGGE.

IN the second half of the thirteenth century, an Icelandic copied from a then old collection of parchments, the oldest poems he knew (the names of the authors of which are not given) about the gods and heroes of the heathen North. In this vellum, now known as the Elder Edda, we find, as the first of the poems about the heroes of our prehistoric times, the Song of the Smith Vølund. This wonderful hero was known to the Anglo-Saxons by the name of Weland; the Germans called him Wieland (Weland, Velent), and the French, Galans. I will not investigate here the origin of the legend or myth concerning him; I will merely say that, in my opinion, in this legend, mythical tales which were common among Germanic peoples from the earliest ages, tales about supernatural beings clever at working in smithies and about women who flew in swans' attire, are blended with Latin myths dealing especially with Vulcan, Dædalus, and Theseus (who in the “ Mythograph. Vatican.,” ii., 127, is confused with Dædalus). These stories were, even in the early Middle Ages, and most likely also later, carried to the Germanic peoples, and were by them transformed and fused with their own stories. Neither will I here attempt to show the origin of the name of this hero,¹

¹ I write *Weland* without attempting to decide the quantity of the vowel in the first syllable. This name cannot be explained by the old Norse

which up till now has not been traced clearly ; but in the following treatise I shall try to show *where*, and *at what time*, the poem on Vølund, found in the Elder Edda, was written, as well as on what model it was based.

I.

The “ Vølundarkviða ” is introduced by a piece of prose which explains to us the persons who appear in the poem. Two short pieces of prose are also found in the body of the poem, which itself is written in the oldest Northern metre, consisting of alliterative pairs of lines. The contents of this poem, in which we find the freshness, but also the coldness, of the nature of the far North, are briefly this :—Three maidens come flying from the South, and stop to rest at the brink of a lake.¹ There they are found by three brothers, who, according to the prose prologue, are the sons of the King of the Finns. Ølrún becomes the bride of Egil, Slagfinn takes Hlathgunn to wife, and Vølund her sister Hervør. For eight years the maidens live together with the brothers, but in the ninth year they fly away, clad in swans’ feathers. Egil and

word *vél*—skill, craft, cunning—for this form *vél* is not found in Anglo-Saxon. The old Norse *vél* (fem.) is the same word as Anglo-Saxon *wīl* (neut.)—wile, trick. The smith, in old Norse, is called *Vølundr*. The vowel in the first syllable is here short ; *cf.*, for example, the poem “ Lilja,” 92, The French *Walander, Galans*, shows that, as early as the tenth century, the name was pronounced with the *ø* or *a* of the first syllable short.

An old Norse form *Vølundr*, with a long *ø*, has, in my opinion, never existed. Such a form is in direct opposition to Norse phonetic laws of the year 900 or thereabouts, as at that time it would have become *ølundr*. Neither can it be proved, by reference to the metre, that the first syllable is long in the Norse name. The lines *háls Vølundar, kván Vølundar*, are built up as are, for example, *lítt megandi, margs vitandi*. The line *fyr Vølund* is built up as the lines *ok ùnandi* (“ Sig.,” xvi. 5), *und vegundum* (“ Guðr.” ii., 4-8). I quote the Edda from my edition, Christiania, 1867.

¹ *á sævarströnd*. This expression by itself can denote both the “ seashore ” and the “ brink of a lake.” The author of the prose prologue has given it the latter meaning, and gives the name of the lake as Wolf-lake (Úlfsjár). In the poem of “ Friedrich von Schwaben,” the three maidens bathe in a spring.

Slagfinn set out to look for their wives, but Vølund remains at home in Wolf-dale. He expects his bride to return, and fashions costly rings for her. It comes to the ears of King Níthuth that Vølund is alone with his treasures; with his men he goes to Wolf-dale, binds Vølund while he is asleep, steals his treasures, and takes him away captive. After this, Níthuth wore a wonderful sword that Vølund had made for himself, and gave his daughter Bøthvild a costly ring which Vølund had made for his love. The wicked wife of Níthuth sees that Vølund is meditating revenge, and, taking her advice, Níthuth hamstring Vølund, and he is put to work at his forge on a small island, where none but the King can come to him. Here Vølund still plots revenge, and successfully. He murders the two young sons of the King, who go to see him all unbeknown to their father. He makes drinking vessels for Níthuth of their skulls, and ornaments of their eyes and teeth for the Queen and Bøthvild. He shames the King's daughter, who comes to him without her father's knowledge, and finally he flies away, after having revealed all to Níthuth. The poem does not tell us how he gets the means to fly.

The language of the poem, its poetical expression and relation to several poems written by Norwegians, show us clearly enough that, in the form in which we have it, it is written by a man whose mother tongue was Norwegian. But in order to decide in which Norwegian district the poet was born and grew up, I will first consider the statement in the prose prologue that Vølund and his two brothers were the sons of a King of the Finns. On this point tradition in other countries is silent. This is therefore, in all probability, a Northern addition, which occurs, not only in the prose prologue, as most of the German investigators seem to think, but also in the poem. In the first place, this must be concluded from the fact that one brother is called Slagfinn (Slagfiðr), not only in the prologue, but in the poem. This name does not occur, as do the names Vølund and Egil, in the legend anywhere but

in the North, and we may therefore conclude that it was the invention of a Northern poet. It is true that German and Dutch scientists (Kögel, Jiriczek, Sijmons) have maintained that the name *Slagfiðr* is a German, and not a Northern name, and they have explained it as coming from the old High German, *slagifeðhera* (Schwungfeder). Even were this the correct explanation, it was not therefore necessary for the name to be German, as *slagfjeder* is also a Northern word. But I conclude that this explanation is false, for these reasons:—

(1.) *Slagfiðr* is not represented in the “*Vølundarkviða*” as winged or experienced in the art of flying; had he been able to fly he would naturally, when pursuing his bride, have made use of the art; instead of which he set out on his *ski* (*skreið*).

(2.) No other Germanic tale knows anything about a brother of *Vølund* being able to fly.

(3.) Not even *Vølund* (Weland, Wieland) is represented in the “*Vølundarkviða*,” or in any other Germanic tale, as being from birth or by nature winged or able to fly. It is only modern learning which, wrongly and unsupported by any ancient proofs, has credited him with these attributes.

Slagfiðr is in reality a regular nominative, of which the accusative form is *Slagfinn*. That the Icelanders in the Middle Ages understood this is proved by the fact that the name, in the *Arnarnagnæan* MS., is written *Slagfinnr*.

This name, therefore, which the poem has given to one of *Vølund*'s brothers, states that he was a *Finn*. As the verb *slá* (to strike) can be used especially in the sense of “to strike with a hammer,” “to forge,” the name *Slagfiðr* denotes “The forging Finn.” This fits in well with the saying in an old French poem that *Galand*'s (*i.e.*, *Vølund*'s) two brothers were also mighty smiths. It also fits in well with *Vølund*'s speech in the “*Vølundarkviða*,” in which he says that all the three brothers, when they lived together, had costly things of gold. In Norwegian Sagas

the Finns are mentioned often as being clever weapon-forgers.

The fact that the poet observes of each of Vølund's brothers that he *skreið* (*i.e.*, ran on *ski*) also supports the idea that he considered them to be the sons of a chief of the Finns. For this was considered a characteristic of the Finns (or Lapps), who therefore, in very ancient times, were called *Skriðfinnar*.

Our poet has made Vølund's beloved embrace his *white* neck; but he may very well have imagined Vølund (though a son of the King of the Finns) white and fair. It is not necessary for Vølund to be of pure Finnish blood. The author of the poem was, therefore, a man who knew the Finns (*i.e.*, Lapps), at least by hearsay, and knew them as runners on *skis* and forgers of weapons, and also as hunters, for Vølund and his brothers are represented as mighty hunters. Even this tends to prove that the author of the poem was a Norwegian, born and brought up in the north of Norway; but it does not quite preclude other possibilities, as, for example, that he may have been an Iclander. I shall therefore produce other arguments to locate the home of the author with greater certainty.

There were several reasons why the Norwegian who composed the Lay of Vølund and his brothers should have laid the scene in the land of the Finns. In the first place, Vølund is called, in the Norse poem, "King of the Elves." In my opinion, this title has been accorded him outside the North—in England.¹ It assumes the original Germanic idea of forging elves, but it has most likely some foundation in the saying that Vulcan is Lord of the Cyclops; Norwegians mixed up their ideas on elves practised in the art of forging, with their ideas on Finns; "finn" is, like "elf" (*álfr*), the name of a dwarf. It was, therefore, natural that a Norwegian poet should make Vølund, Elf King, King also of the Finns. It must be

¹ Cf., on *aluisc smið* . . . þe wes ihaten wygar, who is said to have made Arthur's cuirass ("Layamon's Brut," Madden's edition, ii, 463).

noticed especially that in the tradition, Egil, Vølund's brother, was known as a marvellous archer and a mighty hunter. This, together with other things, may have given rise to the fact that the Norwegian poet made Vølund and his brothers come in contact with the Finns, who made their living out of hunting wild animals on *skis* with bow and arrow. The mythical personages, Ull and Skathi, are also ski-runners, hunters, and archers, and Skathi is located in the most northern district of Norway, Hálogaland. Side by side with what I have pointed out, may be mentioned that, even in an Old English poem, Weland is made to suffer in a "wintry cold" place. But I wish especially to draw attention to the following:—The South German poem, "Friedrich von Schwaben," of the fourteenth century, tells us that this hero, under the name of Wieland, sees three doves come flying to a well, where they intend to bathe. When they touch the ground, they are transformed into maidens. They jump into the water, leaving their clothes on the bank. Wieland steals these, and thus wins one of the maidens, Angelburg. This shows that the legend of Vølund, or Wieland, as it was known outside the North, also has made maidens in birds' feathers (either of doves or swans) come flying; they leave their feather-coats by a well, or at the brink of a lake, where Vølund (Wieland) also finds the one feather-coat.

The Norwegian lay begins by saying that through Mirkwood (the dark wood) three maids from the South came flying, and they rested on the brink of a lake. One of them had the wings of a swan. And in the prose we are told that the maidens had laid their feather coats beside them. Here I find a sufficient reason for the laying by the Norwegian of the scene of his tale in the land of the Finns. The poet did so because he knew the singing swan spent its summer in the interior of the countries of the Finns or Lapps, where it built its gigantic nest on the brink of the lonely lakes. In my opinion, the poet, in all probability, knew this himself,

for he was evidently so impressed thereby that he decided to lay the scene of his poem by one of these lakes. I think the poet lived in Hálogaland, Norway's most northern district. He wandered by the shores of the lonely inland lakes, where the swans abode through the short summer, and where the Finns ran on *ski* when the snow lay on the ground. The vivid and fresh descriptions of scenery in the poem all support this theory. The lake, on whose shores the swans sit to rest, lies in Wolf-dale, and is called in the prose prologue *Ulf sjór* (Wolf-lake). The brothers leave their home on *ski* when the swans have flown away. Vølund, who stays at home, is occupied with forging, and lives by the chase. He comes home with a brown she-bear which he has shot, roasts the flesh by the fire, skins the animal, and lays himself down to sleep on its hide. This tallies exceedingly well with the life in those Northern parts, where the Finns lived by the chase (as is told in the "Historia Norvegiæ," found in Scotland), and where there were innumerable wild animals, especially bears and wolves. The Icelandic scientist, Björn Olsen, who defends the opinion that the Edda lays are written by Icelanders, quotes various Icelandic poems to prove that forest bears were known to the inhabitants of that country, though not found in their forests, that they knew they were hunted, and had a heavy hide which was good to sit on, and that their flesh was good to eat.¹ But I consider it impermissible thus to pick a poetical picture to pieces. It must be viewed in its entirety, as the poet has presented it to us. And this picture an Icelanders who had not lived in Hálogaland could not have created. It has taken its shape in the mind of the man who himself lived in Finnmarken's forests, by the still lakes of the land of the Finns.

When Vølund wants to roast the bear flesh, he lights a fire—

¹ In the treatise "Hvar eru Eddukvæðin til orðin?" in *Timarit*, 15th year (1894), p. 53.

*áur brann hrísi
 øll þar fura.*¹

(Soon a whole fir tree blazed,
 Kindled by the fagots of birch.)

So he puts a whole fir tree on the fire when he roasts a whole bear. He lights the fire with fagots, presumably of the birch; the forests in the interior of Finnmarken still consist of birch and fir. Thus I consider I have proved that the Norwegian Lay of Vølund was composed by a Norwegian, who dwelt in Hálogaland, and who had intercourse with Finns in the interior.

II.

I will now investigate the source whence the poet obtained the legend. Vølund is not a man evolved by the fancy of a Norwegian poet, for the stories of this person Vølund, Weland, Wieland, or Galans, were, as I said before, spread over the various countries of the North, over Germany (especially the north-west), England, and France. It has been universally acknowledged, and rightly so, that the tales, as related by the various peoples, tally to such a degree as to make it impossible for them to have been preserved independently of one another from a time so obscure and far off that it cannot be traced. On the contrary, we must presume that the legend of this wonderful smith has been transmitted, most likely in poetry, from one people to another. It is universally acknowledged that the “Vølundarkviða” was composed about the year 900. This conclusion has been arrived at on account of the poetical peculiarities of the lay, as well as those of the language. And I have shown above that

¹ The MS. has, *allþvr fura*. Finnur Jónsson has altered this to *allþurro furr*. This is, in my opinion, incorrect, for we are then forced to consider the following lines—

*viðr enn vindþurri
 fyr Vølund*—

as not genuine, in spite of the fact that they seem genuine enough. Besides, *fura* is, from its meaning, just the word we should expect in this place.

the poem was composed by a Norwegian from Hálogaland. To find from which foreign race the Lay of Vølund, as known to the poet, was brought to the Norwegians, we must seek to ascertain with which of the races possessing at that time a knowledge of the legend of the wonderful smith the Norwegians (especially those of the northern part of Norway) had intercourse, and with whom they had previously been in contact; we must also strive to ascertain from whom they received their moral and intellectual impulses. Evidence which may be obtained from England regarding this legend has therefore the highest importance for our purpose.

In the Exeter Book, which was probably written early in the eleventh century, is found a short Anglo-Saxon poem, a lyrical epic, which has been called "Déor's Lament," or "The Singer's Solace." This is divided into stanzas, and has a refrain. This poem, evidently much older than the Exeter Book, mentions that Weland lived in solitary exile, bore hardships and sorrows, was confined in a pit teeming with serpents during the depth of the winter. To these woes were added those resulting from Niðhad hamstringing him.¹ Beadohild sorrowed less over the death of her brothers than over her own

¹ *Weland him be wurman wræces cunnade.* *Be wurman* must mean "with the worms." Weland was therefore cast by Niðhād into a snake-pit, as several mythical heroes were cast according to Norse Sagas. According to the MS. we should read—

*Siððan hine Niðhād on
nêde legde
swoncre seonobende
on sýllan mon.*

Swoncre seonobende must mean, "with an elastic band which was bound round his sinews," or, "with an elastic band made of sinews." But on account of the expression

*sum on fêðe lēf
seonobennum séoc,*

in the poem "Wyrde," and on account of "Vølundarkviða," I prefer to read *swongre seonobenne* (the last word according to Grein), *i.e.*, by cutting his sinews, which hampered his walk. The name *Niðhād* I will, in what ensues, write *Niðhad*.

shame. In the Anglo-Saxon poem of "Waldere," Widia, the son of Weland, is called Niðhades mæg (*i.e.*, daughter's son). In the epic of "Beowulf," Beowulf's coat of mail is mentioned as being Weland's work.

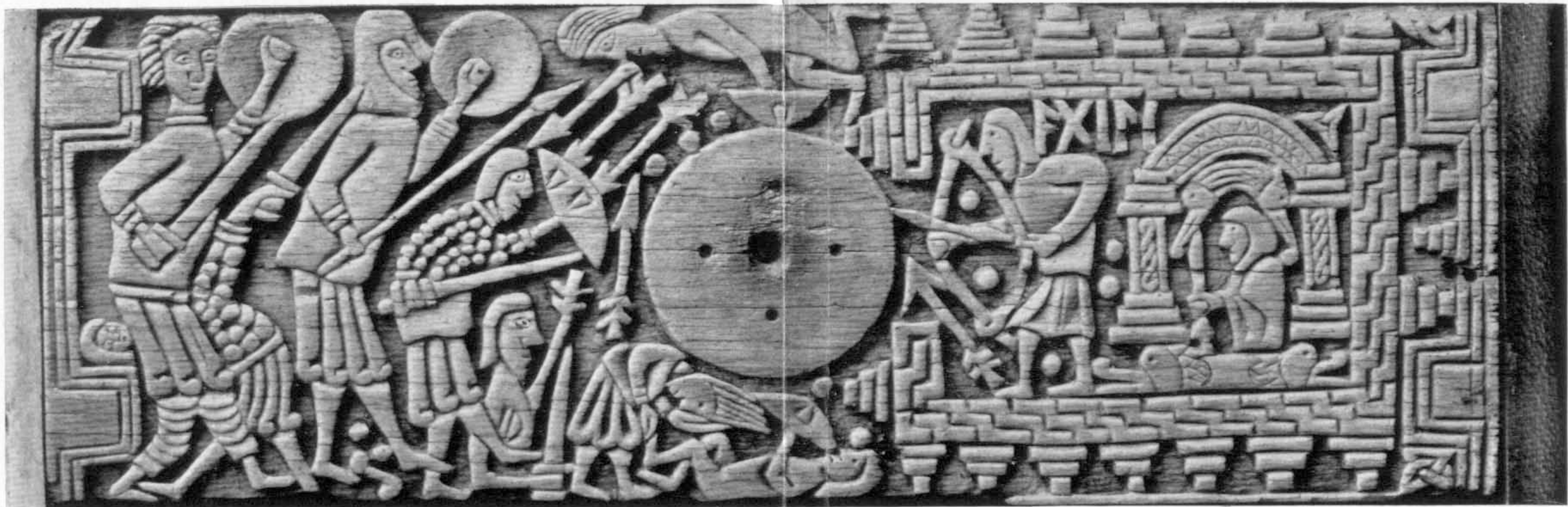
King Alfred translates Fabricius by Weland, and calls him "wise," and "a goldsmith, a man who in the olden days was most celebrated." Till very recent times a tale was told in Berkshire of an invisible smith called Wayland, who had his abode in an old stone monument, known as his smithy, and this place is mentioned in an old charter, dated 955, as *Welandes Smiððe*. Even in a charter dated as far back as 903, a place in what is now Buckinghamshire is called *Welandes Stocc*.¹ We notice that chap. lxi. of "Thithrik's Saga" mentions that Velent fells a tree and hollows out the trunk into a boat. He gets into this boat (which is called a *stokkr*), and takes with him his tools, food, and drink. In it he drifts out to sea, and arrives at the land of King Nidung.² I here pass over several evidences found in later writings of the widespreadness of the legend of Weland in England.

We have an important contribution to the knowledge of how early and how widely the Lay of Weland was known to the English in some carvings on a box made of whalebone, now in the British Museum, and known as "The Franks Casket."³ It was bought in France, and

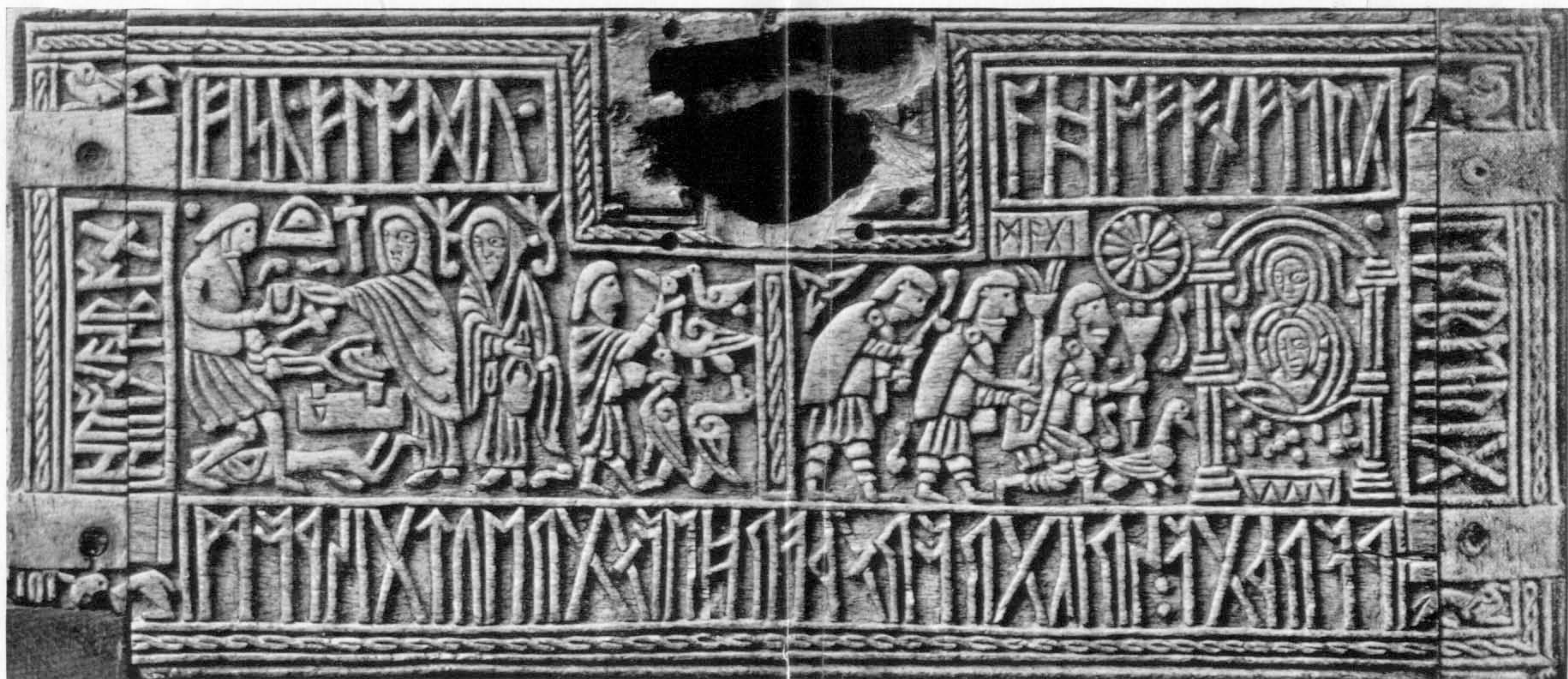
¹ Bintz, in Sievers' "Beitr.," xx., p. 189.

² It is not my opinion that a tale which agreed in all its details with that of "Thithrik's Saga" was known in England in the year 900. In the name *Welandes Stocc*, *stocc*, like the Old Norse *stokkr*, might also denote that staff on which the anvil rests.

³ Reproduced in Stephens's "Runic Monuments," vol. i., pp. 474, 475. [Also in "English Miscellany," where Prof. A. S. Napier subjects it to a learned and exhaustive examination, but principally with the object of explaining the Runic inscriptions engraved on it. The casket itself is one of the most remarkable finds of recent years. It is a rectangular box, 9 in. long, 5 in. high, and 7½ in. wide. It is covered in high relief on sides and lid with pictorial representations from the Wayland Lay, the legend of Romulus and Remus, and the visit of the Magi. Borders of Anglo-Saxon runes enframe each picture, except that on the lid, but it is not known what was on the part now gone. The carvings, which are about ⅛-in. deep,



PORTION OF LID OF THE FRANKS CASKET: FULL SIZE.



was formerly in Clermont Ferrand in Auvergne. It has on it carved representations and inscriptions, some in Runic, some in Latin characters, and the Runic inscriptions are (with the exception of one short Latin word) in the English language. Several of the linguistic peculiarities in these inscriptions cannot be of later date than the eighth century, and even the beginning of that century. On one side of the casket, the front, is seen a smith, seated, and forging at an anvil. There are two hammers in front of him, to emphasise more clearly the fact that he is a smith. This is Weland, as I first proved in Stephens's "*Runic Monuments*" (Preface, p. 69 fol.). The sitting posture of the smith tallies well with the tale of the hamstringing of Weland. In his left hand is a pair of tongs, by which he holds a human head over the anvil. This is the head of one of King Niðhad's sons, out of which Weland is making a drinking-vessel. At the feet of the smith is a headless corpse, that of one of the King's sons. Before the smith stand two women, Niðhad's daughter and her serving-maid. With his right hand the smith is giving something (probably a piece of jewellery) to the one nearest to him. The other woman is carrying

are vigorously drawn, and almost as sharp for the most part as when first wrought. The date of the casket, as Prof. Bugge states, is about the beginning of the eighth century, judging from the language, which is in the Northumbrian folk-speech of that time. The pictorial representations afford excellent details of the contemporary dress, weapons, and house-building. It is supposed that the casket was at one time mounted with plates of silver, which are now lost. It was purchased by Mr. A. W. Franks, of a Parisian curiosity dealer, in 1857, and had been the property of a private individual at Clermont Ferrand in France, where it had served the purpose of a work-basket. How it came into France is mere matter for conjecture. Probably it formed a portion of the plunder captured by Vikings in Northumbria, and was by them conveyed thence to Normandy. When Mr. Franks purchased the box, it had been broken into pieces, and the parts obtained by him were the four sides and the bottom. Subsequently a part of the lid was found in the Barcello Museum at Florence, which had recently received it by legacy. The rest of the lid, it is supposed, may have been metal adornments, but its character is unknown. The casket, with casts representing the recovered parts, is now on show in the British Museum.—ED.]

a sort of bag, and this is, presumably, a sign that she is a serving-maid, who in the Old Norse language is called *eskimær*, i.e., she who carries a casket, into which her mistress puts her most valuable possessions. A plant is depicted on each side of the serving-maid's head. Perhaps this has reference to chap. lxxiv. of "Thithrik's Saga," which says that the ring of the King's daughter broke as she was walking with her maid in the garden (*í grasgarði*). It must be noticed that the representation on the casket tallies with "Thithrik's Saga," but not with the "Völundarkviða." There is no serving-maid in this. In the Saga, the King's daughter comes first alone to Velent, and afterwards they both come. In what follows I will speak about other representations on the casket which have some relation to the Lay of Weland.

In the *Journal of the British Archæological Association* (vol. xli., pp. 138-9), the Rev. G. F. Browne describes a sculptured cross-shaft in the parish church at Leeds, Yorks, as having a panel containing the pincers, hammer, bellows, and anvil of a smith. The same panel contains an obliterated figure, probably intended for a human being. Attached by bands to the sides of the figure are two wings, while above what should be the head is the figure of a woman in a long dress, who is being held by the back hair and the tail of her dress by the human figure. Mr. Browne supposed this to represent Weland (Völund) carrying off a swan-maiden. But this interpretation seems very doubtful, though it appears not improbable that it is Weland who is here represented; the fact that the attributes of a smith and a pair of wings appear in the same carving speak for it. Maybe the woman is Beadohild, whom Weland intends to shame. As he is depicted below her, his smithy may be underground. The wings are presumably those which Weland has made for himself and with which he is going to fly away.

We have thus proved that the legend of Weland was widely and generally known in England before the poem "Völundarkviða" was written by a Norwegian from

Hálogaland, while we have no such ancient proofs that the legend was generally known at such an early period in Germany, or any other country. But even if the legend were known so early in North Germany, there is every reason to suppose that, judging by the usual direction of the flow of culture in the ninth century, this Lay of Vølund, which a Norwegian poet from Hálogaland treated in his poem “Vølundarkviða,” came to the Norwegians from England, and not by way of Denmark from North Germany.¹ In the ninth century, when a race of Slavs dwelt on the Baltic and in the eastern part of Holstein, and when the Saxons were on a lower level than the English, both morally and socially, only a very feeble stream of culture from North Germany reached the west and north of Norway. And, on the other hand, with the ninth century began a new epoch in Norway's relations with the British Isles. From the north many Viking ships and peaceable merchant vessels set out for the west. Certainly the expeditions of the Norwegians went more to Scotland and Ireland, and those of the Danes to England. But the Norwegians also had frequent and lively intercourse, both friendly and hostile, with the English. As early as 787 Norwegian Viking ships came to England; the Scandinavians also came into contact with Englishmen in Scotland and Ireland, which is seen by the fact that the legends and language of old Irish tales are influenced by Scandinavian and English. English life and culture largely affected the Norwegians, not only directly but also through the medium of the Danes, especially those with whom the Norsemen were brought into contact in the British Isles. In the tenth century, according to the Saga, Harald Haarfagre sent his son Haakon to the English King to be brought up, and Harald's elder son, Eirik (who was once King of Norway),

¹ The oldest testimony from Germany is the expression *Vuelandia fabrica*, of Walthari's mailcoat in Eckehard's “Waltharius,” from about the year 930. But this does not prove any knowledge of the Saga of Weland in its entirety.

afterwards became King in York. From this it is clear that even in the ninth century there must have been intercourse between Norway and England; a supposition supported by many facts as, for example:—Thorolf, the son of Kveldulf, according to the Saga of Egil, sends a merchant vessel to England from Hálogaland (this seems to have taken place in 874). And we have historical proofs of the statement that Ôhthere or Ottar of Hálogaland entered the service of King Alfred, presumably in the early part of the reign of Harald Haarfagre. In my opinion the probability of the Lay of Vølund, as treated by a Norwegian from Hálogaland in the “Vølundarkviða,” having come to the Norwegians from England, a probability supported by general reasons, becomes a certainty when the poem is examined more closely.

III.

I will here investigate several details, which show that the author of “Vølundarkviða” obtained the legend from an English source.

(1) The King, who imprisons the smith, is called in the “Vølundarkviða,” *Níðuðr*, gen. *Níðaðar*; in England, *Niðhad*; but in the “Thithrik’s Saga,” in the German tale, he is called *Niðungr*, and in the “Anhang des Heldenbuchs,” *Hertwich* or *Hertnît*. I acknowledge that this argument is not decisive, as the King might have been known in Germany, at an earlier period, by a name more like *Níðuðr*. (2) The King’s daughter is called in the “Vølundarkviða,” *Bøðvildr*; in England, *Beadohild*; but in “Thithrik’s Saga” she is called *Heren*. This may be a Germanic form of *Arienne* or *Arianne*, as *Ariadne* is called in Latin MSS. of Servius from the early Middle Ages.¹ (3) The English poem, “Déor’s Lament,” uses of Weland this expression—

¹ Cf. for the sound change, the old High German *helfantbein* from Latin *elephantem*; and Dutch *keper* from Latin *caprea*; Anglo-Saxon *glædene* from Latin *gladiolus*. The *H* in *Heren* may be added by the influence of Germanic names in *Here-*.

*hine Niðhad on
nêde legde.*

(Niðhad placed bonds upon him.)

In the “Völundarkviða,” 11, those bonds which are laid on Völund to bind him are called *nauðir*,¹ which is the same word as the Anglo-Saxon *nêde*; and in “Völundarkviða,” 12, Völund asks, “Who are you who (*á logðu*) placed bonds on me?” The verb here used, *á logðu*, is the same as *on legde*, which is used in the Anglo-Saxon poem. (4) With reference to the pregnancy of the King’s daughter, the adjective used in Norwegian (*barni aukin*, stanza 36) is the same as the Anglo-Saxon (*héo éacen wæs*). (5) There is also a similarity, which can hardly be accidental, between *æva skyldi* (it should never have been so), in Bothvild’s answer to her father in the last stanza of “Völundarkviða,” and the words used of Beadohild, with which the part concerning Weland concludes in the English poem—

æfre ne meahte ðrîste geðencan hû ymb ðæt sceolde.

(She never dared think boldly of what would happen—i.e.,
with regard to her pregnancy.)

It is worth noticing that in the same stanza of the “Völundarkviða” occurs—

ek vætr hánun vinna máttak

(I had no strength to resist him),

i.e., *máttak*, denied, the same verb as *ne meahte*, used in the English poem in the same place. Niedner, who has pointed out the last three similarities, remarks with reason² that the Norwegian poem hardly presupposes the existence of the short lyrical Anglo-Saxon effusion. As we know now, from sources other than this short lyrical

¹ *nauðir* is not used elsewhere in Old Norse with this meaning, except in “Sigrðr,” i., where Sigrðrífa’s bewitched sleep is called *fölvar nauðir*.

² “Zeitschr. f. deutsch. Alt.,” xxxiii., p. 36 fol. I had, independently, noticed these similarities, with the exception of No. 5.

epic, that the legend of Weland was known in its entirety in England, the only probable explanation of the similarities we have mentioned is this—that both the “*Vølundarkviða*” and the short Anglo-Saxon lyric, “*Déor’s Lament*,” have been modelled on a longer Anglo-Saxon epic concerning Weland. The carvings on the whalebone casket also point to such an Anglo-Saxon poem.

Many investigators, especially those of German nationality, have come to the conclusion that that common source from which the “*Vølundarkviða*,” and the Anglo-Saxon poem, “*Déor’s Lament*,” were taken, was a Low German poem; but this is to make a *détour* for which there is no reason. Several reasons, given as conclusive, for the “*Vølundarkviða*” having its origin in one or even in two German sources have been proved false. The name *Slagfiðr*, which I discussed above, gives no such proof. It is said that the swan-maidens flew through *Myrkvið*. This word has been explained by German investigators to mean *Saltus Hercynius*, and their opinion is that the name has been preserved from a Saxon poem. But *myrkvið* only denotes “the dark forest,” and several places in Norway have borne the name *Myrkviðr*.¹ Similarly, no valid proofs that the Anglo-Saxon poem, “*Déor’s Lament*,” had a Low German origin, have been produced. The name of the King’s daughter, *Beadohild*, is, of course, no proof of this, as in German originals she is never called by any name which could correspond to this, but in “*Thithrik’s Saga*,” *Heren*. The King’s name, *Níðhád*, is a genuine Anglo-Saxon name, the second part of which is also found in the masculine names, *Wulfhad*² and *Wighaad*. Why cannot the Low German name, *Níðung*, of the King, in “*Thithrik’s Saga*,” be a German corruption of the Anglo-Saxon name, *Níðhád*? Several names and expressions in “*Vølundarkviða*,” due to the influence of Anglo-Saxon poetry, also prove that the

¹ In Fritzner’s “*Dictionary of the Old Norse Language*.” 2nd edition.

² Cf. Searle, “*Onomasticon*.”

Norwegian author of the poem knew and imitated an English poem on Weland.

In stanzas 4-8 of the "Völundarkviða" it is said of Völund—

Kom þar af veiði veðreygr¹ skyti.

(From the chase came the weather-eyed marksman.)

We do not find this epithet applied to a marksman in Norwegian, but we still say in English, "to have a weather-eye," "to keep one's weather-eye open." But when we compare with the Norwegian lines, lines in the Anglo-Saxon poems such as, *Þonne hie of wáðum wêrige cwómon* ("Gûðlâc," 183) (as they came weary from their wanderings), and *wêrige æfter wæðe* ("Andreas," 593) (weary after the wandering), we see that the Norwegian poet has had an English poem as model, and that he, where the Anglo-Saxon poem had *wêrig* (weary), has in his poem used *veðreygr* (weather-eyed), which had quite a different meaning, but was akin to the Anglo-Saxon word in sound.² We see at the same time that the English which the Norwegian used as his model can hardly have been written in the Northumbrian dialect, for *wêrig* was in Northumbrian *wærig*. Stanza 5 says of Völund forging—

hann sló gull rautt við gim fástan.³

(He forged the red gold towards the sparkling jewel).

¹ The MS. has, in the first place, *vegreygr*.

² In Old Norse the same name is pronounced either *þjóðrikr* or *þjórikr*.

³ The MS. has *gim fástan*. If *fástan* is here the superlative of *fár*, and denotes "the most radiant," it was, in all probability, pronounced as a tri-syllabic word as *faastan*. We might, however, consider *fastan* elliptic accusative, which must be translated adverbially as "incessantly." Many have understood *við gim* to mean "by the fire," from the neut. word *gim*, "fire." But this word is never found in the Old Norse prose literature, nor in the oldest, more popular poems, whose metre is more free, but only in the artificial Icelandic poems later than about the year 1000. The origin of the word remains unexplained. I suppose that *gim* (neut.), "fire," has arisen from the fact that in "Völundarkviða," 5, *gim* has wrongly been explained to mean "fire."

i.e., he set the jewel in gold.¹ This *gim*, acc. of *gimr* (jewel), from which *gimsteinn* is formed, is a borrowed word, from the Anglo-Saxon *gimm*, which, again, presumably through the Irish *gemm*, comes from the Latin *gemma*. In stanzas 6, 13, and 30, *Níthuth* is called *Niara dróttinn*. Hitherto no explanation of this expression has been found. To explain it I must touch briefly on the origin of the legend, without here giving a real proof of my conception of it. *Vølund*, or *Velent*, the marvellous workman, is, as a punishment, kept by force on an island by a fierce King, to whom he came from a foreign land, and whose anger had been aroused. *Dædalus*, the marvellous workman, is kept by force by King Minos on the Island of Crete, to which he had come from a foreign land. In the oldest Greek writings Minos is mentioned as a just King, but the Alexandrians call him fierce and unjust. Servius calls him *crudelis*, and speaks of *Minois sævitia*. The fact that, in this, the Germanic legend tallies, not with the oldest Greek, but with the later Græco-Roman tale, is, in my opinion, one proof among many that the connection is not founded on original relationship, but on later transmission. In "Thithrik's Saga," *Velent*, like *Dædalus*, comes flying over the sea to the strange King, who receives him as a friend and whose service he enters. We may compare the story in "Thithrik's Saga," that *Velent* fells a tree, hollows out the trunk, and sails in it away over the seas, with the Greek tale that *Dædalus* was the first to invent axe, saw, and sailing-ships.

One remarkable likeness between the *Vølund* legend and the *Dædalus* myth is the following:—Both make for themselves wings to get away from the King who keeps them back, and both fly away on those wings they have made for themselves. In the face of this similarity it is arbitrary to refer *Vølund*'s flying powers—quite contrary to the statement of the legend—to his supposed quality as a spirit of the air. This would make the cutting of his

¹Cf. "Hygin. Poet. Astr.," ii., 5.—*Corona. Hæc existimatur ariadnes fuisse . . . Dicitur etiam a Vulcano facta ex auro et Indicis gemmis.*

sinews meaningless. The King's name (Norse, *Níðuðr*; Anglo-Saxon, *Niðhad*; Old German, *Nidung*) denotes that he was malicious, just as Minos, in the later story, was described as fierce.

The prototype of Níthuth being Minos may possibly explain to us that he was called *Niara dróttinn*. Servius on Virgil's "Æneid," vi., 566, has—*Rhadamanthus Minos Æacus filii Jovis et Europæ fuerunt; qui postea facti sunt apud inferos judices*. This note has gone over to the "Mythograph. Vatican.," ii., 76, where we have, *qui facti sunt apud inferiores judices*. I have proved before that both Servius's "Mythological Notes" and the "Mythographs of the Vatican" were in the early Middle Ages known in Britain, and that some features in Northern myths have their origin in them.

A literal Anglo-Saxon translation of *inferiores* is *neoðran* or *neoðeran*. The Old Norse *Njárar*, from *Njaðrar* (cf., *hvárir* from *hvaðrir*), answers in sound to the Anglo-Saxon *neoðran*. When the Norse poet calls Níthuth *Niara dróttinn*, he has, according to this explanation, taken this from an Anglo-Saxon poem which called *Niðhad* the King of *Neoðran*. But the Anglo-Saxon poem could not have preserved any traces of the fact that the Latin expression (of which the Anglo-Saxon was a translation) denoted the awful King as a king who afterwards became a judge in Hades.¹ Stanza 10 calls Volund *álfa ljóði*, and in stanzas 13 and 32 *vísi álfa; ljóði* must therefore denote "lord," "prince." The word occurs nowhere else in the Norse language; it is taken from the Anglo-Saxon *léod* (prince). The alteration in the form from the Anglo-Saxon word is caused by the necessity which the Norwegian felt for distinguishing the word from *ljóðr* (people), and marking it as a derivation of this.

¹ I have also considered the possibility of the correct expression in "Vølundarkviða" being *Njörva dróttinn*, and of *Njörvar* being a poetic description of the people who bind, lame, and imprison Vølund. Cf. Anglo-Saxon *nearu*, angustus, angustiae, and Old Norse *Njörvasund*—really, "The Narrow Sound."

When Völund wakes after having been bound, he asks (in stanza 12), "Who are the men who placed bonds on me?"

*Hverir ro jöfrar
þeir er á lögðu
besti "byr" síma
ok mik bundu?*

Here there is no sense in the text of the manuscript. It should in all probability be—

*þeir er á lögðu
besti ýr síma (bonds of bast).*

The form *besti* for *bast* (Dat., *basti*) is not found elsewhere in Norse. I opine that this form is taken direct from the Anglo-Saxon Dat. form, *bæste*, in an English poem on Weland. In the same way the expression, *á stræti*, in "Hamðismal," xii., has, according to Zimmer, been taken from the Anglo-Saxon, *on stræte*, where *stræte* is the Dat. of the feminine *stræt*.¹

In stanza 17 the wicked Queen advises the hamstringing of Völund—

*sníðið ér hann
sina magni.*

The second of these lines seems, in its Norse form, metrically irregular, as in Norse the first syllable of *sina* is short, but the Anglo-Saxon form, *seonwa*, suits the metre; and therefore here also the Norwegian poem seems to have had an English model.

In stanza 18, l. 7-8, Völund says of the sword which he made for himself, but which Níthuth stole from him—

*sá er mér "frā" mækir
æ fjarri borinn.*

¹ Finnur Jónsson reads in "Völundarkviða," *bestesíma*, but this does not explain *byr* in the MS. We find in several places in "Völundarkviða" traces of later work, which consists of inserting in the first of the two alliterated lines, two alliterations instead of one, which has injured the meaning. Thus in 2, 3: *fógr mæf fira*, instead of *fógr mæf Íra*; 9, 3: *hár* (for *ár*) *brann hrísi*; 34, 7: *ok undir fen fjøturs* (for *sjøtuls*).

All editors¹ have understood *frā* to be *frann*, i.e., *fránn* (burnished). But in the last stanza of "Völuspá" this word is written *fraN*. But in "Brot of Sigurðarkviðu," xii., 1, we find *frā*=*fram*; in the prose which precedes "Grîp.," *frā vís*. And therefore in the "Völundarkviða," stanza 18, we should read—

Sá er mér "fram" mækir æ fjarri borinn;

fram is here most likely preserved from the English model, with the meaning of *frá*, in spite of the fact that *fram* used as *frá* does not occur in Old Icelandic.² The accentuated and alliterated *fram* here governs the preceding *mér* (cf. Anglo-Saxon, *he hine feor forwæc mancynne fram*, "Beowulf," cx., where *feor* is used in connection with *fram*). The two words, *feor*, *fram*, are used in Anglo-Saxon in conjunction, where the accentuated *fram* can bear the alliteration. As the sword is characterised by Völund in the preceding lines, the designation here of that same sword only as *sá mækir* (that sword) is stronger than a new addition, *sá fránn mækir*.³

The word *kista* (coffin), which is used in stanzas 21 and 22, and also elsewhere in Norwegian, is a foreign word, coming from the Latin *cista*, though it is not necessary that this should have come to Norwegian through the medium of English (Anglo-Saxon, *ciest*). Stanza 24 tells us that Völund has murdered Níthuth's young sons—

*und "fen fiøturs" .
fætr um lagði.*

The expression is repeated in stanza 34, when Völund

¹ Even the editors of the "Phototypic and Diplomatic Reproduction of the MS." ; cf. p. 47.

² But, on the other hand, in Swedish (see Kock, "Arkiv.," vi., 31-34, and Noreen, "Altschwedische Grammatik," p. 189, § 248, 3, Note 2.

³ As *fram* in general was not used in Norse as in "Völundarkviða," 18, and as *fránn* (burnished) was a suitable epithet to a sword, the words *sá er mér fram mækir*, "Völundarkviða," may perhaps have occasioned the expression *þann inn frána mæki* in "Fáfn." i.

relates what he has done. No satisfactory solution of the expression has yet been given. Völund's hamstrings were cut, but he was not bound in the smithy, therefore "acle-chains" cannot here be the meaning of *fjöturr*.

On the English casket we see a headless corpse at Weland's feet. I think the original expression is—

*und fen sjötuls
fætr um lagði.*

He laid the feet of Níthuth's sons deep down in the mud, at the place where he sat: *sjötuls*, Gen. of Anglo-Saxon *setl*, *seotl*, *setol* (seat). As the word was not used in Norse in this sense, *sjötuls* (either by verbal or written transmission of the word) was changed to *fjöturs*. The word *jarknasteina*, Acc. pl. (25, 35), a sort of shining stone, which also occurs in "Guðr." i., 18, and iii., 9, is borrowed from the Anglo-Saxon *eorcnanstân* or *earcnanstân* ("Crist." 1196).

In stanza 28 Völund says—

*Nu hefi ek hefnt
harma mínna
allra nema einna
"ívið giarira."*

The last word in the manuscript may also be *giarira*, altered to *gianra* or *giarnra*, with *rn* interlaced. This word contains, as its first syllable, *ívið* (malice), which is not found elsewhere in Norse, and is borrowed from the Anglo-Saxon *inwid* (*inwit*). Here the writer seems to mean *íviðgjarnra* (cf. Old Saxon, *inwiddies gern*). F. Jónsson remarks with reason that *íviðgjarnra* is not an epithet which harmonises with *harma*. He inserts, therefore, *íviðgjørnum*, but Sijmons prefers *íviðgjarnri*. One of these expressions is probably the original. But it seems to me to be possible that *íviðgjarnra* may be a faulty transmission to Norse of the Anglo-Saxon poem's *inwid-gyrna*, from *gyrn* (sorrow); cf. Anglo-Saxon, *inwitsorh*. The transmission may have been caused by *gyrn* not being found in Norse, and by Anglo-Saxon *gyrne*=

georne, *gyrnes*=*geornes*, and other similar dialectic forms.

In stanza 29 it is said of Völund that directly after he had completed his revenge he flew away laughing. The stanza begins thus:—*Vel ek, kvað Völundr*. *Vel* is not found in Norse used in this way. Here *Vel* is the same as the Anglo-Saxon joyful exclamation *wel*, as in *wel lâ!* (Lat., *euge*), and in *wel him ðæs geweorces*. This exclamation suits *hlæjandi*, which follows, very well.

The King, when Völund has confessed all to him, says, in stanza 37, “You could have said nothing which could have caused me greater sorrow, or for which I would *níta* you worse, Völund.”

né ek þik vilji, Völundr!
verr um “níta.”

Here *níta* has no sense. I suppose that an English poem on Weland had *nêtan* or *genêtan*, *i.e.*, oppress, downtread, torment, and that the Norwegian poet has preserved this as *neita*. But as the Norwegian word *neita* (to deny) has the by-form *níta*, *neita* was here changed afterwards to *níta*.¹

In the above I think I have proved that the “Völundarkviða” is a transplanting of an English poem on Weland,² and that this transplanting was effected by a Norwegian from Hálogaland, who, just as did Ôhthere, who was in the service of King Alfred, spent some time in England.

IV.

In order that we may more clearly decide the time in and the circumstances under which the “Völundarkviða”

¹ This *neita* (as I have supposed it found in “Völundarkviða”) differs from the Old Norse *hneita*, “Fms.,” iv., 58:—*kallaði Óláfr sverðit hneiti; því at honum þótti þat hneita þinnur sverð fyrir hvassleika sakir*, which Fritzner translates, “to hurt, to put aside.” Moreover, in a modern Norwegian dialect, *neita*, “to hurt, offend” (Aasen); especially “irritate by sharp reproaches; to sting, to prick” (Ross).

² Long ago, N. F. S. Grundtvig, in “Nordens Mythologi eller Sindbilled Sprog” (“The Mythology or Parables of the North”), 1832, p. 176, said, “Evidently the Lay of Völund . . . is translated from the Anglo-Saxon.”

was composed, I will enquire into the race of the "swan-maidens." The Norwegian poet describes them as coming from a foreign land. The first stanza of the poem tells us that the maidens came flying from the South, and that the *Southern* maidens sat down to rest at the brink of a lake. Here follows a stanza which throws light on their race. Hlathgunn and Hervør were daughters of Hløðvér, Ólrún was Kiar's daughter.¹ In old Icelandic writings the Frank name Hlodoweo (Chlodewich or Ludwig) is given with this name Hløðvér. From this Müllenhoff² has supposed that these two swan-maidens were daughters of a Frank King. The third swan-maiden, Egil's wife, is said to be Kiar's *dóttir* ("Völundarkviða," 15; in the prose prologue, *Kiar's dóttir af Vallandi*). This mythical King is also named in "Atlakviða," where Gunnar says that he owns helm and shield from Kiar's hall (*ór høll Kiars*). In a verse in the "Hervarar Saga"³ he is said to have been of yore ruler over the Valir.

Ár kváðu ráða . . . Vølum Kiar.

Who is Kiarr? As he is said in olden times to have ruled over the Valir, and as Cásere (*i.e.*, Cæsar, the Roman Emperor) is said, in the Anglo-Saxon poem of "Widsið,"⁴

¹ I insert after stanza 1, stanza 15, and read as one stanza:—

(2a) *Hlaðguðr ok Hervør
borin var Hløðvé,
[en] kunn Ólrún
var Kiars dóttir,
Ein nam þeira
Egil at verja
fögr mæð "fira"
faðmi ljósum.*

Sijmons inserts stanza 15 between stanzas 2 and 3.

² "Zeitschr. f. deutsch. Alt.," xxiii., 167 fol.

³ Bugge's edition, pp. 265, 346.

⁴ "Widsið," ed. Grein, v., 76 ff.:—

*mid Cásere
se þe winburga geweald áhte
wiolena and wilna and Wala rices.*

to have ruled over the kingdom of the Wealas, some scholars¹ consider that Kiarr is the same name as Cæsar. But at such an early date the people of the North must have got the name Cæsar either from the Kaisar of the Goths or from the Cæsere of the Anglo-Saxons, and I am unable to explain how either of these forms could have got to the Norse Kiarr²; I therefore turn to another supposition.

Müllenhoff compared the name *Kiarr* with the Irish masculine names, Cearmad, Ciarmac, Cearbhall, Ciaran, Ciarvaidhe, etc., and has come to the conclusion that Kiarr was a Breton King, or what he found less likely, a King in the British Isles.³ But Müllenhoff was unable to prove how a Breton King could bear a name only to be found in Ireland. Besides, he is at fault when he thinks that the Irish name Ciaran has the same root as Cerball. I think that Müllenhoff was, however, partly on the right track here, though he was not himself able to reach the goal.

The King, who in the poem has become Kiarr of Valland, must have been a real historical person, of whom the Norwegians had often heard. He is mentioned together with Hløðvér, who, as I mentioned before, is a Frank ruler, Ludwig. And in the "Hervarar Saga," Kiarr is called King of the Valir immediately before Alfrekr, or, according to other transcriptions, Alrekr enn frækni, King of the English. In him Müllenhoff³ has already recognised Alfred the Great.⁴ The fact of Kiarr being men-

¹ Holtzmann, "Altdeutsche Grammm.," i., 99, and Heinzel, "Über die Hervararsaga," p. 506 (=92). I had myself, quite independently, reached the same result.

² The relation between the Old Norse forms, *ísarn*, *iarn*, and *járn*, can give no assistance to an explanation.

³ "Zeitschr. f. deutsch. Alt.," xxiii., 168.

⁴ In "Flateyjarbók," i., 25 (= "Fornald. s." ii., 2), we find *Alrekr hinn frækni* a son of *Eirekr hinn málspaki*, and father of *Vikarr*. By the influence of the name of this Northern Saga-King, the English name *Ælfred* was changed to *Alfrekr* or *Alrekr*. In a similar way "Saxo Grammaticus" has confused the names *Gautrekr* and *Goðrøðr* when he writes, "Gotricus qui et Godefridus est appellatus" (p. 435).

tioned together with Ludwig of the Franks and Alfred the Great of England shows us who Kiarr most probably was.

In the "Landnámabók"¹ are named, among the Kings in foreign lands at the time Iceland was becoming inhabited, the Emperor Hløðver Hløðversson, *i.e.*, Ludwig II., who died 875 (876?); and then Elfráðr enn ríki in England (871-901) and Kjarvalr in Ireland. This last-named is Cerball (a name which was later written Cearbhall), King of Ossory, in Southern Ireland. In 847 he began the strife against the Scandinavians in Dublin, and killed many of them. After the Norwegian Ólaf Hvíte became King in Dublin (in 853), Cerball united himself to the Danes and won with them a great battle against the Norwegians in Tipperary. In 858 and 859 he fought together with Ivar, Ólaf Hvíte's brother. About 860 he fought against the Normans, led by Rodolf or Rolf, King of Waterford; and in the following years he fought first with, and then against the Normans. Cerball died in 887 or 888.² Icelandic sources, probably less authentic, make Kjarvalr King in Dublin, and relate that several of his daughters married Norwegians.

The fact that Kiarr of Valland is in one verse mentioned together with Álfrekr (*i.e.*, Alfred) of England, and in another with the Frank Hløðvér (*i.e.*, Ludwig, probably Ludwig II.), leads us to believe that Cerball (Cearbhall), whose daughters married Norwegians, is the historic model for the Kiarr of Valland of the Norwegian poem, the Kiarr whose daughter married Egil, Vølund's brother. In my opinion, a Norwegian poet has altered the Irish name Cearbhall to *Kiarr Valr*, or Kiarr of Valland (acc., *Kiar Val*³; Kiarr has two syllables). The name Cearbhall

¹ "Ísl. s." i., 25.

² For information concerning him, *cf.* especially Steenstrup, "Normannerne," vol. ii., and Todd, "Cogadh Gaedhel re Gallaibh."

³ We may compare this mistake with another: that Pontius in Pontius Pilate was, in the Middle Ages, understood to be derived from Pontus, and was therefore translated by Anglo-Saxon, *se Pontisca*, and Old Norse, *enn Pondverski*.

is quite distinct from the root *cíar*, *i.e.*, dark, from which comes *Cíarān*, and from *Ciar*, the ancestor of *Ciarraighe* (Kerry), in Ulster. But a Norwegian about the year 900 might very easily confuse these two roots, just as the learned Müllenhoff has confused them in the nineteenth century. In the language of the Icelandic Sagas, *Valland* denotes North France. Properly, the name *Valir* should denote the Bretons. The English used the name *Wéalas* of the inhabitants of Wales, and *Cornwéalas* of those of Cornwall. And Anglo-Saxon *wealh* denotes generally a slave, just as *vala mengi* (in “Sig.,” 66) denotes slaves. There are traces that the Norwegians at the beginning of the time in which they became acquainted with the people of the West, used the word *Valir* for all Celtic people, and in a less restricted sense than was the practice later; it was also used for the Irish. *Valþjófr*, *i.e.*, slave from *Valland*, is the name of a son of the Icelandic settler *Ørlyg*, who was brought up in the Hebrides; *Valþjófr*, a grandson of *Helgi Magri* from Ireland. *Vali* (or *Váli*) the Strong is the name of a Norwegian who was first the man of King *Harald Haarfagre*, and who afterwards took up his abode on the Hebrides. In any case a Norwegian who had no intimate knowledge of the Celts might easily transform *Cearbhall* to *Kiarr Valr* (acc., *Kiar Val*), and my opinion seems to gain strength from the fact that in the second stanza of “*Vølundarkviða*” it is said of *Kiar’s* daughter—

Ein nam þeira
Egil at verja
føgr mæṛ “fira”
faðmi ljósum.

Finnur Jónsson explains this:—“*mæṛ fira* : eine Umschreibung der Frau=die Tochter der Menschen” (a re-writing of the word “woman”=the daughter of man). But this gives us an artificial and hardly distinctive expression, scarce befitting this poem, the method of expression of which is otherwise so direct and natural. I therefore opine that the original expression is *føgr mæṛ*

Íra,¹ i.e., the fair maid of Irish race; cf. *þursa meyyjar* ("Völuspá," 8); *dís Skjöldunga* ("Helga kv. Hundingsbana," ii., 51).

When the swan-maiden, in spite of the fact that her father is Kiarr of Valland, is called an Irish maiden, my opinion that Kiarr of Valland is modelled on the historic Kjarval or Cearbhall of Ireland is substantiated. In the poem he is made the father of one of the swan-maidens; the poem is therefore not older than the ninth century. But a King who died in 887 or 888 could hardly have been so used by a poet before the year 900 or thereabouts. This can be said with so much more certainty because that poet who changed Cearbhall into Kiarr Valr could not have known him intimately. We have, therefore, here, in my opinion, the important fact that the date of the "Völundarkviða" cannot be much earlier than about 900. Neither does the date of the poem seem to be much later.² I dare not deny the possibility of the Norsemen having known the name Vølund before the "Völundarkviða" was conceived, but we have no proof of this.

The author of the poem must have become acquainted with the name Kiarr, or rather Kiarr Valr, either in England or elsewhere in the West. Here he also learnt the name of Hlōðvér, King of the Franks, or perhaps even on a voyage to France. In this connection we can lay stress on a few unessential similarities in expression between the poem "Völundarkviða" and an Irish poem. In stanza 40 Níthuth asks his daughter, "Is it true, Bøthvild, what they have told me?" (*Er þat satt, Bøðvildr, er sөгðu mér?*) And she answers (stanza 41), "True it is, Níthuth, what they have told you."

*Satt er þat, Níðaðr!
er sagði þér.*

¹ For the metre cf. *dýrt lín spunnu*, stanza 1, l. 8, and Sievers in Paul-Braune, "Beitr.," x., 523.

² Here I agree with F. Jónsson, "Den Oldnorske og Oldisl. Litteraturs Historie," i., 212.

In a verse inserted in the Irish tale about the battle of Ross-na-Ríg, Conchobar asks, "Is it true what the men say?" (*In fír an atfiadat na fír?*) and Iriel finishes the verse, which gives the answer with, "It is true what they say" (*Is e a fír a n-arfiadat*¹). Níthuth says to his wicked wife, who counselled him to harshness towards Volund, and who thereby occasioned the death of his sons (stanza 31)—

"Joyless I watch, little I sleep after the death of my sons;
Cold is it in my head, cold to me are your counsels."

In the Irish tale of Ronan, who killed his own son, which is first found in the "Leinster Book" of the twelfth century, Ronan, by reason of the backbitings of his wife, lets himself be persuaded to have his own son, her stepson, and the foster-brother of his son killed. He sits by his son's corpse and wails out verses to her, among which we find—

"Cold is the wind by the warrior's house; dear were the warriors 'twixt me and the wind . . . Sleep, Echaid's daughter. There is no rest for me, e'en if you do not sleep, for I see my son in his garments soaked with blood."²

I dare not insist that these likenesses must necessitate historical connection. But we cannot but acknowledge, in contemplating the second comparison, that the spirit of the Norwegian and the Irish poem are closely connected.

In stanza 39, Níthuth's best slave is called Þakkráðr. This name, which is not Northern, the poet may have learnt in England³ or North France, as it was common in Normandy in the form of Thankred.⁴ When Volund is waking in his bonds, Níthuth asks, "Where did you, Volund, King of the Elfs, obtain our treasures which we

¹ Hogan's edition, p. 38.

² *Revue Celtique*, xiii., 388.

³ See Thancred in Searle, "Onomast. Anglos."; Hruschka, "Zur Ags. Namenforschung," ii., p. 245.

⁴ Cf. Joret, "Patois Normand," pp. 21, 65, 93.

found in Wolf-dale?" Völund answers, "This gold¹ was not on the road of Grani; I thought our land was far from the rocks of the Rhine." Here it seems that Níthuth's home was laid near the Rhine. This does not tally with the prose prologue which says that Níthuth was King of Sweden. It likewise does not tally with the Norwegian poem's location of Völund's home in Finnmarken, for Níthuth and his men cannot ride from the Rhine to Finnmarken in a couple of nights. Neither could the report that Völund is alone then have come so quickly from Finnmarken to Níthuth. Therefore Níthuth's location in the Rhine lands seems to be older than the introduction of the poem into Norway. Therefore the tale of the gold that the Wælsing gained on the Rhine was known in England as early as the ninth century. But why did the Anglo-Saxon poem, as I suppose it has, place Niðhad's home in the Rhine provinces? I find the solution in the fact that he, as I have supposed in the above, was made King of the Neoðran. This was a translation of *inferiores*, "the inhabitants of Hades." But, later, this was supposed by the English to mean, "the lands on the Lower Rhine." The legend of Sigfrid or Sigurd was, in my opinion, located on the Lower Rhine as early as the ninth century. In the "Niebelungenlied," the name of Siegfried's and Siegmund's kingdom on the Rhine is Niderlant.²

None of the heroic poems preserved in the Edda seem to be older than the "Völundarkviða"; in fact, hardly so old. This lay owes no influence to any still preserved in the Norwegian tongue. There is freshness and originality in its poetic diction. The artificial transcriptions, *kenn-ingar*, are here entirely wanting. The usual poetic expressions for "King" (*buðlungr*, *skjöldungr*, etc.), which previously had an intrinsically different, a more special meaning, and are found, among others, in the "Helge

¹ *gull var þat* (in MS., *þar*) *eigi*.

² Cf. Sijmons, "Heldensage," in Paul's "Grundriss," ii., (a) p. 33, (b) p. 65.

Lays," are also wanting. The metre in the "Völundarkviða" shows, by its greater freedom, that it is more original than that in most of the other poems of the Edda. It is, on the other hand, to be noticed that several of the poems of the Edda show much similarity with the "Völundarkviða" in poetic style and in single expressions of epic forms. This proves either that these poems were influenced by the "Völundarkviða," or that they originated in the same poetic school. A Norwegio-Icelandic myth of the gods, the myth of Odin and the holy drink of poetry, seems to have been influenced by the Saga of Volund. But I will not here investigate all these questions concerning the influence of the poem of Völund on other Norwegio-Icelandic poems.

V.

It is pretty certain that the Norwegians received from the English, about the year 900, not only those points of the legend which are treated in the "Völundarkviða," but at the same time other points, not necessarily in verse form. I here mean especially the story of Völund's brother Egil. "Thithrik's Saga," whose information concerning Velent is based chiefly on Low German tales, tells us in detail of Egil, in connection with Velent, and of his prowess in archery. When we read (p. 91), "People call him Olrvnar Egil," this is not taken from that version of the tale of Velent which the author of the Saga obtained from North Germany, but from an older Norwegian tradition, for here only do we find Ølrún mentioned.

In "Völundarkviða" we read that, when the three brothers lived together in Wolf-dale, they hunted, and it is proved by a poetic name for arrows¹ which occurs in a stanza composed in the year 976 by Eyvind Finnsson Skaldaspillir, that Egil was renowned in Hálogaland at that time as a marvellous archer. Then the Icelandic poet, Hallfreth, talks of Egil the Archer, in a verse which

¹ *hlauþsildr Egils gaupna*, in "Haralds Saga gráfelds," at the end.

seems to have been composed about the year 987.¹ The tale concerning him was rife in Iceland² for many years in the Middle Ages; maybe also in Norway, which we may perhaps conclude from the expression quoted in "Thithrik's Saga." We must suppose that this tale also (of Egil the Archer) was brought to Norway from England, because the tale of Weland's brother, the marvellous archer, and the hunter Ægili, was (as can be proved, and which I shall here proceed to do) known in England at a time when the "Völundarkviða" was not thought of.

Many English names of places begin with *Ægles*,³ among them *Æglesburg* (Aylesbury), not far from *Welandes stocc*. On the afore-mentioned Franks casket of whale-bone, the date of whose Anglo-Saxon Runic inscriptions is the eighth century, there is represented, as a part of the same carving, and to the right of the two women, who represent Beadohild and her maid coming to Weland, a man, with his back turned to the women. In his hands he holds by the neck two out of four birds, probably geese, which are to be seen before him. This carving is explained by the story of "Thithrik's Saga," that Velent's brother Egil catches birds of various kinds to provide wings for Velent. Here also the carving on the casket has a point not found in the "Völundarkviða." Jiriczek ("Deutsche Heldensage," i., 19 ff), and with him Sijmons, on the other hand, explain the carving which shows us the person holding the birds to mean that King Niðhad's young sons, when chasing birds, come to Weland's house. In my opinion, this explanation is wrong. Nowhere does the epic tale mention, as an important point in the story, that the King's sons caught birds, or held them in their hands. The Saga says only that they came with their bows to Velent to get him to make arms for them, and

¹ Snorra Edda, edition A.M., i., 422.

² In a verse in "Ragnars Saga Loðbrókar," in "Fornald. s.," i., 279, the arrow is called *Egils alnar leygr*.

³ See Kemble, "The Saxons in England," i., 422; Binz in Sievers' "Beitr.," xx., 190.

afterwards that, as they did not return, the King thought they had gone to the forest to chase birds and animals, or to the shore to fish. The fact that the person represented has his back turned to the women, also argues against his being one of the King's sons. It is true that Sijmons thinks that this means that the King's sons, as is said in "Thithrik's Saga," walked backwards when they went to Velent the second time. But this is impossible, for at the time they walked backwards, early in the day, before the sun had risen, and came to Velent to get him to make arrows for them, they had none, and could therefore not possibly have had the time or the means to shoot birds. And besides, those two birds represented on the casket, which he is not holding in his hand, remain, in this case, unexplained. And, on the other hand, the fact that, according to "Thithrik's Saga," Egil catches birds, whose feathers he brings to Velent, is an important point in the story, and it is therefore quite admissible to consider it represented on the casket by that person who holds two birds in his hand. Finally, I will bring up the following in refutation of Jiriczek. If the person with the birds on the casket is explained to be Weland's brother, the representation of the chronological sequence of events in the story is correct; farthest to the left is the corpse of one of the King's sons, to the right of this stand the two women, and farthest to the right is the fowler. By this it is indicated, and correctly, that the murder took place first; then Weland meets the King's daughter and her serving-maid; and, finally, his brother obtains for him wings for flight. If Jiriczek's explanation were right, the artist would unhappily have separated the dead son from the living by the two women.¹

I think I have proved in the above that the English tale of the eighth century, from which we first became acquainted with the legend of Weland and his brother

¹ The reason of the fowler being smaller than the figures on the left, is simply that there was not enough room for him on the casket, and this can give no support to Jiriczek's explanation.

Ægili, is unanimous with "Thithrik's Saga" in saying that Weland, while with Niðhad, made wings for himself of feathers brought him by his brother Ægili. On another side of the same casket, *i.e.*, on the lid, we see represented a man drawing his bow to shoot an arrow from it. Over him is written in Runics, "Ægili." Now both the North German and the Norwegian legend knew Egill, Velent's (Völund's) brother, as an archer and a hunter. I have especially laid stress in the above on the fact that the carving on the front of the English casket shows that the English tale of that time knew Weland's brother as a fowler. No other old English or Germanic hero of the name of Ægili (Egill) is known. It is therefore certain that Ægili the Archer on the casket is Weland's brother.¹

We cannot reconcile the story in which Ægili is represented on the casket with those points in the legend which we obtained elsewhere. We see several warriors step forth from left to right towards the archer. Farthest to the left a man armed with sword and shield marches on. Behind him is a man clad in a cuirass, sword in hand, bending his head and his body from the waist upwards, probably because he is wounded. To the right we see a man, armed with spear, shield and helm, stepping towards Ægili; to his right is another cuirassed warrior, holding his sword in his right hand, and in his left a shield, with which he covers himself. The shield is struck by two arrows, which must have come from Ægili's bow, as no one else in the carving has one. A third arrow is in flight towards the warrior's head. On his right is a man armed with a sword. He has sunk down, having been struck in the breast by an arrow.

I will pass over, for the present, three persons in the centre of the carving.

Ægili the Archer stands before a house. Behind him, inside the door, we see the upper half of some person, probably a woman. She also is looking at the attackers,

¹ This is denied by Jiriczek and Sijmons, without sufficient reason, and without their being able to give any other explanation.

and holds in her hand an upright staff, or something of that sort (it can hardly be an arrow). The explanation of this scene seems to be that Ægili is defending himself, his house and his wife against an advancing attack. It is pretty certain that we know of no other such story from any other country telling of Weland's (Vølund's, Velent's) brother Ægili (Egil), but I think I shall be able by comparison with another tale to make it probable that the solution just given of the carving on the casket is the right one.

In "Thithrik's Saga," chap. lxxv., this story is told of Egil, Velent's brother: that in the presence of the King he shoots an apple from his little son's head. In an English ballad we are told the same story of the apple about an English archer, William of Cloudesley. This ballad is printed in "Bishop Percy's Folio MS.," vol. iii., p. 76 ff., and by Child, "The English and Scottish Popular Ballads," v., No. 116. The last scholar who has examined the story contained in this ballad is Klockhoff (in "Arkiv f. Nord. Filol.," xii., pp. 191-9). This same ballad tells us the following: William of Cloudesley, an outlaw, was married, and his wife Alice lived in Carlisle. Once he visited her there, but an old woman whom, out of charity, he had taken to live in his house, told of his coming to the Justice of the County. Accordingly, the house was surrounded on all sides. William seizes his bow, and his wife a battle-axe. He first of all defends himself by shooting arrows—

"Cloudesle bent a wel good bowe
That was of trusty tre,
He smot the justice on the brest,
That hys arrowe brest in thre."

The house is set fire to, and William exhausts his arrows—

"William shott soe wonderous well
Till hes arrowes were all agoe."

He thereupon, when his wife and children are safe, dashes out of the house, only to be overpowered.

I have mentioned above that the tale of an archer shooting an apple from his son's head has been told both of Velent's brother, Egil, and of William of Cloudesley. We have especially noticed above that the archer represented on the casket is Weland's brother. In my opinion, therefore, the tale represented on the casket shows that another tale (besides the one of him shooting an apple from his son's head) was told of Ægili; a tale which was afterwards also told of William of Cloudesley. I explain the carving on the casket, therefore, as follows:—The warriors of a hostile King (probably Niðhad) advance, armed, on the house where Weland's brother, Ægili, lives with his wife. It is the intention of the attacking party to take Ægili prisoner. But when he sees the enemies advance he places himself with drawn bow to defend himself. Behind him, in the house, sits his faithful wife. We see how he, like William of Cloudesley in the ballad, wounds one of his enemies in the breast with an arrow. This same carving has three other figures which I have hitherto not discussed.

At the top, and in the very middle, seemingly suspended in mid-air, we see a naked man in a horizontal position; his face is downwards, and he has a shield before him. This can be no other than the flying Weland, as Hofmann correctly surmised. As the flying Weland is represented in front of Ægili, who stands with drawn bow, the artist must have known this point in the story, told in "Thithrik's Saga," that Egil (Ægili) was ordered to shoot at Velent (Weland) as he was flying. But the relation of this to the story of Ægili has been rather unhappily represented, because the artist, in order to get in as many as possible of the events of the story, has, on the front of the casket, shown on the same level events which did not occur simultaneously.

In the middle, furthest down on the lid, just under the man hovering in the air, we see a naked man on his back, with his shield before him. I can give no certain explanation of this man. But he, like the one in the air, is

naked, and, as taken all in all, he is represented answering in every particular to the first man, except that he is on his back on the ground, we cannot deny that the artist possibly has here intended to represent what is told in "Thithrik's Saga," that Egil fell to the ground when he attempted to fly.

Finally, to the left of the recumbent figure, we see a clothed but unarmed person, his head bent forward. His one hand is held to his forehead. Presumably only on account of lack of room, he is placed quite close on the recumbent figure, so that the top of his hair is under this one's shield, and his one hand touches the foot, and the hand he holds to his forehead is close to one knee of the recumbent figure. This bending man has two peculiarities which demand our attention. The artist has treated his hair quite differently to that on any other figure on any side of the casket—for it is standing on end. And suspended in the air over the head of this person is an arrow, which, strangely enough, has its head turned upwards. Each of these peculiarities must have a special reason. Just by the arrow's point are represented three small round articles; we see two of the same over the man who is on his back, and five of them round Ægili. The art which has been at work here is so naive and helpless, that we can easily find various meanings in the carvings; I shall therefore assert nothing positively as to what the artist intended, and what I say must be considered only as a supposition. I think that the bent figure is Ægili's son, from whose head he had to shoot the apple, as he did according to "Thithrik's Saga," and as William of Cloudesley did according to the ballad. By the upward-turned arrow, the artist naively, and not very happily, tried to show that the arrow did not touch him, and in that case the round things by the arrow point are apples. The artist has amused himself by drawing many of these as ornamentation. The hair standing on end, towards which he is reaching with his hand, presumably denotes the fright which seizes the youth after the shot has

successfully removed the apple; he touches his head to assure himself of the fact that the apple has really gone. I will lay stress on yet another detail in the carving. In front of Ægili is an arrow which he cannot yet have used; this turns our thoughts to that point told us in the Icelandic MS. (A.B.) of "Thithrik's Saga," that Egil, when he has to shoot the apple from his son's head, places another arrow beside him. (The Norwegian vellum, however, tells us that he had two arrows, besides the one he used to shoot the apple from his son's head.)

The explanations which have been given of the carving on the English casket are not all certain, but I consider the following to be so. The English artist who executed these carvings, not later than the eighth century, knew those points which were also in "Thithrik's Saga," *i.e.*, that Ægili brought his brother Weland those feathers of which he made wings, and that Ægili was ordered by King Niðhad to shoot at the flying Weland. The artist knew also other tales of Ægili's prowess as an archer, especially that he, like William of Cloudesley, defended himself with arrows against advancing foes, who attacked him in that house where his wife was. According to this, the tale in "Thithrik's Saga" of Egil's prowess as an archer cannot, as Klockhoff thinks, have been borrowed from the Norwegian tale of Heming. As we know that, as early as the tenth century, Egil was known in Norway as an archer and ski-runner, the Saga of Heming must, contrariwise, have been borrowed from the tale of Egil, which was brought to Norway from England.

In the Middle Ages a tale was told in France of a marvellous forger of arms, *Galand* (*Galans*), who was said to have made several famous swords.¹ This name of the smith was brought to the French by the Normans. This is proved by the vowel *a* in the first syllable, and especially, as Jiriczek remarked with reason, by the fact that the

¹ As found in Depping and Michel, "Vêland le forgeron"; "Altdeutsche Blätter," i., 34-47; W. Grimm, "Heldensage," Nos. 28, 29, 30; Jiriczek, "Deutsche Heldensage," i., 23.

oldest French chronicle, dating from the first half of the eleventh century, and telling of fights against the Normans in the second half of the tenth, has the name *Walander* with the Norwegian nominative ending. In a French tale Galans is mentioned as one of the three brothers who were all marvellous smiths. But the name of the one brother, *Ainsiax*, seems to have come to the French from the Germans. This circumstance, that the name *Walander* came from the Normans to the French, makes it probable that the tale of Vølund, or Walander, was widespread in England, not only among the Norsemen, but also among the Danes; *Walander* is rather Danish than Norwegian.

VI.

In the prose prologue to the “Vølundarkviða,” Níthuth is said to be King of Sweden (Svíþjóð). This I consider a later idea, to be ascribed to the Norwegians of Hálogaland. This makes it necessary for Vølund’s home to be supposed to be in Finnmarken. Níthuth could not in reality, as in the poem, have come to this place from the Rhine lands in a few nights. The Norwegian, therefore, found it necessary to place Níthuth’s home nearer to Finnmarken. In the ninth century Finnmarken was bounded by the countries of Ångermanland and Jämtland, the former of which was, at that time, reckoned to *Helsingjaland*.¹ Up to the heights there came, from the West, Norwegians, and from the East, *Kylfingar* (i.e., Swedes, according to Gustav Storm), who held markets with the Finns, and demanded tribute from them. Then there were often fights between the Norwegians, to whom the Finns were subservient, and the “Kylfingar,” for these two nations accused each other of unlawfully taking tribute from Finnmarken. It became strife to the death, with no quarter. The later, peculiarly Norwegian form of the

¹ See “Egil’s Saga,” chap. xiv., and G. Storm, in “Akademiske Afhandlinger til S. Bugge,” p. 73 ff.

legend of Vølund, makes Níthuth, King of Sweden, attack, take prisoner and maim Vølund, son of the King of the Finns, in Wolf-dale, in the wilds of Finnmarken, and makes him accuse Vølund of having stolen treasures, which belonged in reality to Níthuth. This reflects, therefore, in accordance with what I said before, historic events in Finnmarken about the year 900.

The old Norse poem, "Haustlǫng," assumes a knowledge of the poem of Vølund. This poem, "Haustlǫng," is generally allocated to the year 900 or thereabouts, but is, in my opinion, not older than the second half of the tenth century. The fact that the giant Thjazi is, in this poem, called "*Níðuðr*¹ of the Stone," proves that a knowledge of the tale of Vølund is assumed. As the country of the giants is called, in a closely related poem, "Cold Sweden," *Svíþjóð kólga*,² we might from the expression, "*Níðuðr* of the Stone," for a giant, be led to suppose that the author of "Haustlǫng" also knew Níthuth as King of Sweden. But this conclusion is less certain.

From Norway the tale of Vølund has passed to Sweden, and has become naturalised there, which was made easier because Níthuth, in the Norwegian tale, even before this passed to Sweden, was said to be King of Sweden. In Richard Dybeck's "Runa" (New Series, folio, 1870, i., p. 39) the following is stated:—"In the parish of Misterhult, in the East of Småland, by the lake of Götmar, is a forest-clad mountain range called Fjälla and Gullstrecket. In the lake of Götmar is an island called Gullholmen, which, according to a remark on a map of the beginning of the eighteenth century, was previously called Bågön (Baugöen, *i.e.*, the island of rings). Another small island in the lake is called Silfverholmen. Close to this place, in the same parish, a valley stretches to the lakes of Göten and Rammen, and there lies the village of Ulfvedal, which has given to a part of

¹ *grjótníðaðar* (gen.) Snorra Edda., ed. A.M., i., 312.

² Ibid i., 298, in "Thórsdrápa."

the parish the name of Ulfvedalsgränd. . . . By the lake of Göttern is the farm Vällehorfva, close to which a small stream runs down into the lake. The bridge over this is called on a map Verlebro. It is said that in olden days there lived by the lake a famous smith, by name Silvernagel, who, whenever he wished, went into the mountains and fetched gold, which he found there in long bars. This he wrought, and yet he himself did not become rich." In this tale we have, as I agree with Dybeck and Svend Grundtvig ("Danmarks Gamle Folkeviser," iv., 592) in thinking, a probable scene of the story of Volund. But I do not think that the collector of the "Sæmundar Edda" knew these Smaalandish tales, and therefore made Níthuth King of Sweden. I think, on the contrary, that the Norwegian legend, which gives the name of the place as Ulvdale, and makes Níthuth King of Sweden, passed to Sweden. It has been allocated to East Smaaland because the name Ulvedal was found there, and there it was fused with an originally North German form of the legend which called the smith Veland or Verland.¹

The fusion of a more specially Scandinavian form of the legend, most closely related to the English, and of the one imported from North Germany, can also, quite apart from "Thithrik's Saga," be traced in Denmark. In the Danish ballad of "Kong Diderik og hans Kjæmper" ("King Diderik and his Champions") (Danmarks Gamle Folkeviser," ed. by Svend Grundtvig, vii., B. 15), Vidrik says—

" *Verland* is my Father's name,
A clever² smith was he;
Bodil was my Mother's name,
A beautiful King's daughter."

¹ The names of places, Vällehorfva and Verlebro have, of course, their origin in the name of the brook, and not in the name of the smith. But popular superstition seems to have connected these names with Veland and Verland. The name Gullholmen has not necessarily its origin in the legend, but may have been connected with it at a later date. Dybeck's explanation of the name Bågön is hardly correct.

² I correct *køn* (clever) for the word *skøn* in the MS.

The name of the smith's mother, *Bodil*, bears no likeness to any name that we know Weland's mother to have had in Germany. The vowel *o* in the first syllable clearly proves that it did not come from Germany. *Bodil* is evidently a corruption of the Norwegian name of Vølund's mother, *Bøðvildr*, taken from the English name, *Beadohild*. But we are not able to prove more concisely how the name *Bøðvildr* has come to the Danish ballad as *Bodil*.¹

¹ I have proved elsewhere that the ballad, "Ridderen i Fugleham" (The Knight in Birds' Feathers), which has been sung in Denmark ("Danmarks Gamle Folkeviser," No. 68), in Sweden ("Arwidsson," No. 112), and in the Faroe Isles, has been influenced by the tale of Vølund. See Sophus Bugge and Moltke Moe, "Torsvisen," p. 108.

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KING EIRÍK OF YORK.

By W. G. COLLINGWOOD.

THE object of this paper is to show that the “Heimskringla” and the English chroniclers have the same story about the death of Eirík, last king of York, and therefore mean the same person ; also to collect material towards a fuller account of his reign.

I. ICELANDIC STORIES OF EIRÍK BLÓDÖX IN ENGLAND.

“Egil’s Saga,” written 1160-1200, at or near Egil’s home at Borg, has much to say about Eirík Blóðöx, son of Harald Hárfagr. Of his rule in England it tells us (c. 59, Rvk. ed. 1893 ; chap. lxii. of the Rev. W. C. Green’s translation) that he was driven from Norway by his brother, Hákon the Good, and then went to Orkney, Scotland, and finally England, where he was met by King Æthelstan, who did not fight him, but gave him the government of Northumberland, to defend it against the Scots and Irish. Later on (c. 67) the Saga says he was killed in the west during one of his raids (*i vestrvíking*), about the time when Eadmund became king of England.

Snorri Sturluson, who lived for a while at Borg, where he must have known all the legends of Egil, wrote about 1200-1241. He had no occasion to mention Egil in the “Heimskringla,” but tells us more about Eirík (“Hákonar Saga Góða,” c. 3-4), namely, that Æthelstan gave him the kingdom because of old friendship with his father, and on the understanding that he should become Christian and protect the land from Danes and other Vikings.

Egla says, "Scots and Irish," for the Vikings came from Dublin and Galloway. Eirík, he says, used to make summer raids out of Northumbria into Scotland, the Hebrides, Ireland, and Wales. When Æthelstan died, a report came that Eadmund disliked the Northmen, and meant to turn him out. So he retired from York and buccaneered in the west with Arnkel and Erlend. He ravaged the South Isles, Ireland, and Wales, and then "sailed south under England"—"eptir þat sigldi hann sudr undir England." He went far inland—"hann gekk lángr á land upp"—plundering and chasing the people before him. There was a king named Olaf, appointed by Eadmund to guard the country, and he got together a large host, and went to meet Eirík. In the great battle that followed, many English were slain, but where one fell there came three into his place down from the land—"af landi ofan." Towards evening the Northmen were overcome and slaughtered, and at nightfall Eirík fell, and with him five kings, namely, Guthorm and his two sons Ivar and Hárek (Henry), with Sigurd and Rögnvald (Regnald), also the two Orkney earls, Arnkel and Erlend. Gunnhild and her children were with Eirík's ships at a port in "Northumberland" (anywhere in the north of what we now call England), and they sailed to Orkney with the few who had escaped.

Here, as elsewhere, Snorri is wrong on many points of chronology, topography, and English politics. For example, from Wales Eirík could not go south and find any part of England under a King Olaf, who can only be Olaf Cuaran, king of Northumbria under Eadmund and Eadred. It is evidently he who is meant, if not by Snorri, by the story which Snorri is quoting, and colouring up to the taste of his audience. Again, "down from the land" is a stock phrase, implying that the Vikings were raiding from their ships only a little way in shore; but Snorri has it that Eirík went a long way inland. These errors, natural in a writer 250 years after the event, trying to make history interesting, or writing with much pic-

turesque feeling, do not invalidate the information he supplies, especially when he is corroborated, as we shall see this account is.

In the “*Drápa*,” said to have been made by Gunnhild’s order after the death of Eirík, the five kings are also mentioned. “*Orkneyinga Saga*,” written before 1225, records the coming of Eirík to Orkney, and the death of Arnkel and Erlend in battle as his followers (c. 1 and 4). The *Saga of Olaf Tryggvason* repeats “*Heimskringla*” in part, and the Norwegian monk Theodoric (“*De Regibus Norwegiæ*”) also says of Eirík, “*Ad Angliam navigavit et a rege honorifice susceptus ibidem diem obiit.*”

II. THE DANISH PRINCE HRING.

Lappenberg, in “*England under the Anglo-Saxons*” (vol. ii., p. 125, note : Thorpe’s translation, 1845), quotes Adam of Bremen’s statement, that Harald Blátönn, King of Denmark (about. 940-985), sent his son Hring to England, “*who, an [or the] island having been conquered by the Northumbrians, at length was betrayed and killed.*” That is the sense of the words with the punctuation given by Lappenberg, who continues : “*The English historians must have overlooked these passages, when they unanimously make this Eric, the son already mentioned of Harald Hárfagr, king of Norway. The Icelandic fragment (‘Fornm. Sögur,’ bd. xi., p. 418) cited by Turner in favour of his view, is, as it acknowledges, an excerpt from Adam of Bremen.*”

The passages referred to are :—

“*Anglia, ut supra diximus (i., 41, ‘Gudredus Nordimbriam expugnavit’) et in gestis Anglorum scribitur, post mortem Gudredi a filiis ejus Analaph, Sigtrih et Reginold per annos fere centum permansit in ditione Danorum. Tunc vero Haroldus Hring filium cum exercitu misit in Angliam. Qui subacta insula tandem proditus et occisus est a Nordumbris*” (Adami, “*Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiæ Pontificum*,” ed. Pertz, 1846, lib. ii., cap. 22). This quotation, kindly supplied by Dr. Jón Stefánsson,

differs somewhat from Lappenberg's. Dr. J. Stefánsson remarks that in the context Adam makes "Hartildus" rule Denmark and Norway after Hákon Jarl's death, which discounts his testimony on Northern antiquities.

"Fornmannasögur," xi., p. 418 (communicated by the same) says: "Hér [*i.e.*, in Adam] segir ok sva, at Haraldr konungr sendi son sinn til Englands, þann er Hringr hét, með her, því at Danir höfðu haft þar jafnan vald of 100 vetra, síðan er Guðröðr vann eyrna ok er Hringr hafði unnit eyrna var hann svikinn ok drapinn af Nordimbrum."

"Flateyjarbók," written between 1387 and 1394, quotes, "or Kristnisögu meistara Adams," almost exactly the same words.

Canon Raine ("York," *Historic Towns Series*, p. 39) follows Lappenberg in making Eirík to be son of Harald, King of Denmark. Hodgson Hinde ("Introduction to the Pipe-rolls of Cumberland," etc., 1847, p. xiv.) merely says, "Eyric, of Danish extraction, was its last king."

On the other hand, Skene, who gave much weight to the Sagas, and Haliday, who compiled with diligence, though his posthumous work was not thoroughly revised by its editor, accept the story of "Eric Bloodaxe." Haliday ("Scandinavian Kingdom of Dublin," p. 69, note) hints that this Hryng was the Viking earl Hring from Wales, who is said in Egla to have fallen in the battle of Vinheiði, which, in spite of the difficulties, we can hardly doubt to be a romantic travesty of Brunanburh. Symeon of Durham says, under 937, "Æthelstanus rex apud Wendune pugnavit"; and ("Hist. Eccles. Dunelm.," ii., 18), "Weondune, quod alio nomine Ætbrunnanwerc vel Brunnanbyrig appellatur"; showing that Brunanburh was Wen-dun, if not Wen-heath; and there is nothing in English or Irish annals to suggest a great battle like that described in Egla at the date there given, *i.e.*, about 926, except that Sigtrygg died, and his sons Ragnvald, Guthferth, and Olaf (not Olaf the Red), left for Dublin, and Constantine, Owain, Ealdred, and the rest, came to Dacor to submit to Æthelstan, without mention of

fighting. Eglá is a romance in which real incidents are treated as a child treats engravings in making a scrap-book, arranging and colouring them fancifully: but the incidents may be none the less true.

Now in the “Annals of Clonmacnois” it is said that at Brunanburh fell “the king of Dannach’s [Denmark’s] own son.” Haliday misreads this, and tries to identify a previous name, Imar, with Hring, and this with both Earl Hring of Eglá and the Hiring of Adam. It is not worth while trying either to prove or disprove the suggestion. Hiring must have been very young, and Earl Hring, says Eglá, was “not young.” But the mention by so independent an authority as an Irish annalist of the fall of the king of Denmark’s son, shows that Adam was perhaps right in sending Hiring to England; though the inference that this Hiring became king of Northumbria is far from proved.

The idea may have sprung from the romance of Sigurd Hring, who was fabled to have conquered Northumbria two centuries earlier; and his legend may have been attached to a young adventurer who never did more than seize a small island off the coast. Others of similar name were “Eohric, king of Barbarians,” who “went to Orcus” says Ethelwerd in grim joke (902)—poor Yorick!—and the “Annals of Clonmacnois” mention Arick mac Brith (Eric, son of Barith or Bardi) as killed at Brunanburh. Haliday, by what seems an error, says that “Eric, son of Harald Greyfell,” was in Northumbria and Ireland in 947; meaning that Eric’s grandfather, Eric, son of Harald Hárfagr. But none of these can replace Eirík Blóðöx as king of York; and since Adam of Bremen says he founds his account on English annals, we must turn to them, and see which claim they support.

III. THE STORY OF THE TIMES IN ENGLISH CHRONICLES.

The “Anglo-Saxon Chronicle” is the best, though its annals were kept in monasteries of the South, and as long

as the North was alien ground, Northern affairs were less noticed. Florence of Worcester, who died 1118, edited the old chronicle a hundred and fifty years after the death of Eirík. Henry of Huntingdon and William of Malmesbury wrote about 1135, and Roger of Wendover, who died 1237, collected additions from various sources. Beside these South countrymen are the Northern writers, Symeon of Durham, born about a century after the death of Eirík, and doubtless in possession of local traditions; the author of "Libellus," written about 1125, who may possibly be Symeon himself; and Roger of Hoveden in Yorkshire, who tried to improve on Symeon and the old chronicle at the end of the twelfth century.

None of them mention Eirík during the lifetime of Æthelstan, who died Oct. 27th, 940, three years after Brunanburh. It seems as though that great victory had scared away the Vikings for the time, though Malmesbury says that Aldulph, apparently an Angle of Bernicia, tried to dispute Northumbria with Æthelstan. But when Eadmund came to the throne at the age of 18, the people of the North thought it a chance for recovering independence. After the turn of the year, Olaf Guthferthson came back from Ireland, and they made him their king. He was killed fighting the Scots after a year's reign, and Olaf Cuaran succeeded him. Eadmund drove him out of York, and also ravaged Cumbria, after which he seems to have held the North until his death on May 26th, 946. His brother Eadred, who succeeded, at first received the submission of the Northumbrians and Scots; but then the period of confusion begins. The "Anglo-Saxon Chronicle" says:—

947: Archbishop Wulstan of York and the Northumbrian *Witan* swore to Eadred at Taddenes-scylf, but soon belied their oath.

948: Because they had taken "Yric" to be their king, Eadred ravaged Northumbria, burned Ripon Minster, and marched away. But his rearguard was slaughtered at Chesterford by the men of York, and he returned to crush

them. Then they forsook “Hyryc,” and made compensation to Eadred.

949 : Anlaf Cwiran (Olaf Cuaran) came to Northumberland.

952 : Eadred imprisoned Archbishop Wulstan, and massacred the people of Thetford. The Northumbrians expelled Anlaf (Cuaran), and received (restored) “King Yric Haroldson.”

954 : The Northumbrians expelled “Yric.” Eadred got the kingdom, and died 955.

On this Lappenberg remarks : “The dates are lamentably confused ; the reception of Eric being recorded under the latter (952), and his expulsion under the former !” (948)—a curious error on his own part, but one that seems to have been shared by most of the early writers ; for they try to simplify the story by giving Eirík only one tenure, instead of the two which the “Anglo-Saxon Chronicle” distinctly allots to him. The table opposite shows how they shifted the dates in a vain attempt to improve history. Henry of Huntingdon is omitted, because his chronology can be gathered only from the length he assigns to reigns.

Symeon of Durham (ed. Hodgson Hinde ; Surtees Society, 1868) says :—

948 : Eadred overran Northumbria, and the people swore fidelity to him, but then made a certain Dane, Eiric, their king—“quendam Danum, Eiricum, præfaciunt regem.”

950 : Eadred ravaged Northumbria ; his rearguard was attacked ; he returned to crush them ; they expelled their king and gave compensation to Eadred.

952 : “Defecerunt hic reges Northanhymbrorum et deinceps ipsa provincia administrata est per comites.”

954 : Earl Osulf appointed to the earldom of Northumbria.

In the “*Historiæ Continuatio*” it is said : “*Ultimus regum provinciæ illius fuit Eiricus*”—the last king of that province was Eiric, whom the Northumbrians, violating

A.D.	HOVEDEN, about 1180.	SYMEON, about 1100.	ANGLO-SAXON CHRONICLE.	FLORENCE, about 1100.	WENDOVER, about 1200.
946	Eadmund succeeded by Eadred		Eadmund succeeded by Eadred	Eadmund succeeded by Eadred	Eadmund succeeded by Eadred
947	Taddenscliff oath EIRIC elected		Taddenscliff oath (YRIC elected)		EILRIC elected
948	Ripon & Chesterford EIRIC expelled	Eadmund died [Eadred Northumbria swore to EIRIC elected	Ripon & Chesterford HYRYC expelled		Ripon & Chesterford EILRIC expelled
949		Eadred's invasion, rearguard slaughtered	Olaf Cuaran came to Northumberland	Taddenscliffe oath IRC elected	
950				Ripon & Casterford IRC expelled	EILRIC killed by Macon at Steinmor
951					Wulstan imprisoned
952	Wulstan imprisoned	Last king (EIRIC) expelled	Wulstan imprisoned Olaf expelled YRIC restored	Wulstan imprisoned	
953	Wulstan released	Osulf, Earl of all Northumbria			Wulstan released
954			YRIC expelled Wulstan released	Wulstan released	
955	Eadred died	Eadred died	Eadred died	Edred died	Eadred died

the oath they had sworn to Eadred, made king over them. For that reason the king was offended, and ordered the whole province to be devastated. Then the Northumbrians—"illico Northymbrenses, expulso rege suo atque occiso a Maccus filio Anlafi"—when their king had been expelled, and killed by Maccus, son of Olaf, appeased Eadred, and the province was given to Earl Osulf.

"Libellus" says: "When Eadred came to the throne, the Northumbrians, contrary to the oath they had sworn, recalled Onlaf to the kingdom from which Eadmund had driven him. Then Eadred ravaged Northumbria, and expelled Onlaf. But when Eadred retired, the Northumbrians gathered themselves together and cut off his rearguard, and made Eric king—"quendam Ericum filium Haroldi sibi regem constituerunt." Then Eadred returned, ready to exterminate them all—"unde illi perterriti Ericum, quem sibi præfecerant expellentes"—they appeased Eadred, and from that time there were no more kings in Northumbria.

The "Chronicle of Melrose" also says that Ericus, son of Harold, was the last king.

Roger of Hoveden tells his variant of the usual story, but he adds, without dates, that "the last king of Northumbria was Eiric, whom the Northumbrians expelled. They also slew Amancus son of Anlaf, and with oaths and gifts appeased Eadred, who made Earl Osulf governor of the province."

Florence of Worcester tells how they elected in 949, "quendum Danica stirpe progenitum Ircum nomine," and mentions Eadred's ravaging next year, as the "Chronicle" does.

William of Malmesbury says that Eadred after his accession in 946 nearly exterminated the Northumbrians and the Scots, because they broke their oath to him, and made Iricius their king.

Henry of Huntingdon sees that Olaf Cuaran must come in; he makes him reign first for four years; then, "with their usual fickleness," the Northumbrians expelled him,

and elected Eric, son of Harold, who after a reign of three years was turned out, and Eadred invited "of the people's free will," in the eighth year of his reign over England.

Roger of Wendover makes "Eilric's" tenure like the first in the "Anglo-Saxon Chronicle," and kills him off early, but adds interesting facts:—

950: King Eilric, by the treachery of Earl Osulf, was slain by Prince Maco—"a Macone consule"—together with his son Henry and brother Regnald, in a lonely place named Steinmor; after which King Eadred reigned over Northumbria.

It was remarked by Sharon Turner, and admitted as probable by Lappenberg, that these two companions of Eirík's, Henry and Regnald, were the Hárek and Rögnvald, named by Snorri. But the coincidence between the two accounts goes a little farther, and the inference to be drawn from it is conclusive against Lappenberg's view. The "lonely place" was, of course, not known to Snorri, but he says it was "far up the country," and Steinmor can hardly be any other place than Stainmoor, the well-known pass on the old main Roman road, by which anyone approaching Yorkshire from the west would travel. Eirík must have been coming from the shore of the Irish Sea, to attack the country under King Olaf (Cuaran), which was Yorkshire; and this is the road he would take, and the place where he would be met and resisted. His opponents would be Oswulf of Bamborough and any remains of Olaf Cuaran's party, united for the occasion with the people of the neighbourhood, the Cumbrian Welsh, to make a great opposing force, which alone could crush his large body of Vikings. Snorri has it that Olaf was the chief opponent; Wendover says that Oswulf managed matters, but that Eirík was actually slain by Prince Macon. Symeon knows the story better, though he says less; he tells us that *Maccus, the son of Olaf*, killed Eirík, and Hoveden that Amancus, the son of Olaf, was afterwards killed by the Northumbrians, thus getting rid

of both Viking dynasties, Olaf having gone to Ireland. Wendover is wrong about the relationship of Hárek and Rögnvald to Eirík, mistaking perhaps Rögnvald for that brother whom Eirík had already killed, and misreading "Guthorm and his sons, Ivar and Hárek," or the corresponding passage in the authority he had before him. That authority could not be Snorri, who was writing in Iceland at the time when Wendover was writing in England; but they both copy from some earlier account; and Symeon seems to have known the story too, by his casual mention of the slaying of Eirík by Maccus. That is to say, the tradition of the fall of Eirík Blóðöx at the battle of Stainmoor can be traced back to a little over a century after the event; and it becomes evident that the English chroniclers in naming Eirík are certainly referring to Eirík Blóðöx, and not to the Danish Hiring.

IV. SIDELIGHTS FROM LEGENDS. (I) *Egil*.

These English accounts, while they support the Icelandic traditions as to the person in question, differ as to the time and circumstances. The "*Heimskringla*" says that Æthelstan invited Eirík, and that Eadmund drove him away. Snorri, or his authority, seems to base this idea upon an inference: that as Eirík left Norway 937—so the "*Islenzkar Annálar*" say (see Vigfússon's "*Sturlunga Saga*," vol. ii.)—he must soon after have arrived in England; and that as Æthelstan was known to favour the Northmen, talking their language and giving his sister Eadgith in marriage to Sigtrygg, he would be likely to invite Eirík.

But Snorri seems to forget that by his own story Æthelstan was the friend of his foster-son, Hákon, who had driven Eirík away, and would be therefore the last man in whom Eirík would confide. Similarly he tells us that Eadmund hated Northmen, but that he appointed Olaf Cuaran his vicegerent. The fact is, that Snorri knew very little about English history 250 years before his time,

and soon gets out of his depth; but when he is merely setting down the stories he had heard, is not unworthy of consideration.

So about "Egil's Saga." The dates are hopeless, as Valdimar Asmundarson, the Reykjavík editor, confesses, while contending for the historical value of the incidents in the story against the school of critics who reject them on account of evident blunders and insertions of folklore. For example: Egla says that in the same summer Hákon went to Norway (933: "Islenzkar Annálar"), and Egil to Iceland; and after telling of this return of Egil's, it continues, "Þat var þá um haustit," etc. (chap. lviii., Rvk. ed.)—"It chanced in the autumn . . . that Skallagrím died." Then it says, "Enn þann vetr annan er hann bjó at Borg eftir andlát Skallagríms" (chap. lix.)—"During the second winter after Skallagrím's death, Egil became melancholy, and when the summer came" he went to England, and met Eirík in York; that is, according to the usual chronology, in 935, when Eirík was not in York, even if we accept the idea that he came straight there on leaving Norway. The truth is, that the words "It chanced in the autumn" begin a new episode, and the context is merely the work of the compiler. We need not refuse to believe the story because the compiler blundered in his framework of chronology in either case. Eirík may have been ten years in Orkney and Scotland, reaching York only after Æthelstan and Eadmund were dead, as the English chroniclers give us to understand; and Egil may have gone there at a much later date than the Saga time-table makes out. The "Anglo-Saxon Chronicle" aims at giving dates, and little else; the Sagas give incidents, and little else. We find in the case of the battle of Stainmoor that there is a real correspondence between English and Icelandic accounts, and unless we have good reasons to the contrary we need not hastily reject anecdotes which may well have been preserved for a couple of centuries at the home and in the family of a famous man like Egil Skallagrímsson.

(2) *St. Cathroë.*

The Latin "Life of St. Cathroë," an Irish work of the eleventh century (printed in "Chronicles of the Picts and Scots," ed. Skene, p. 116), describes the saint's visit to Dovenaldus, commonly called Dummail or Dunmail, who "conduxit (Cathroën) usque Loidam civitatem (Leeds) quæ est confinium Normannorum atque Cumbriorum, ibique excipitur a quodam viro nobili Gunderico, a quo perducitur ad regem Erichium in Euroacum urbem (York) qui scilicet rex habebat conjugem ipsius divini Cathroë propinquam." Eirík's wife, it says, was a relation of Cathroë, elsewhere said to be an Irishman of royal birth, son of Faitheach and Bantias his wife. This is hardly possible, for Gunnhild was Norse, and Eirík's only wife. But both the Olafs had Irish wives. Possibly the biographer wrote *Erichium* for *Olavum*, but that could only be because Eirík's fame, a century later, was the greater. The visit of Cathroë is stated to have taken place during Eadmund's reign, which adds to the argument that the king he saw was Olaf.

But much later Eirík was well remembered. In the time of Edward I., when the English Government was approaching the Pope on the subject of the Scottish claims, and trying to prove that English kings and their lieutenants in the North had always received the homage of the Scots, it was Eirík they mentioned in this connection. "Item: Edredo Rege Anglie Scoti sine bello se subdiderunt; et eidem Regi Edredo, tanquam domino, fidelitatem debitam juraverunt; quodam Yricio Rege super ipsos Scotos statuto" ("Chron. Picts and Scots," p. 224). We do not gather from the "Annals" that Eadred regarded Eirík as other than an enemy; but finding him there, he may have treated him as representing Northumbria, until it was desirable to remove him. At any rate, the official historians of a later date chose to think so.

(3) Stainmoor and the Reycross.

The "Annals of Ulster," under A.D. DCCCCLI., which corresponds with 952 or later, have the entry: "Cath for firu Albain 7 Bretain 7 Saxanu ria Gallaib"—a battle against the men of Alban and Britain and Saxony by the Galls; *i.e.*, an attack by Vikings on a combined army of Anglo-Saxons and Cumbri and Scots. The "Ulster Annals" mention English battles only when they were very important, and if this means Eirík's last fight at Stainmoor, it was one of the decisive battles of English history, for it ended the kingdom of Northumbria, and made England one realm.

We have seen how the accounts of this battle point to a last effort on Eirík's part to regain York, by landing on the west coast, at Ravenglass or Ellenborough, and going up the Roman road past Appleby, ravaging Cumberland and Westmorland, until Earl Oswulf gathered his own men, together with the aggrieved Cumbrians and the rival followers of Olaf Cuaran, who was closely connected with the Scots, and may have had Scottish forces at his command; how they trapped Eirík on Stainmoor, and left only a few to flee back to the ships and Gunnhild. It was evidently a great battle; and it is curious that there was not only a local tradition of a great battle at Stainmoor, as stated by the late Canon Simpson at a meeting on the spot in 1880, but also, as the Rev. Thomas Lees pointed out, a mediæval romance about the battle of Stainmoor. It is in "Horn Childe and Maiden Rimnild" (Ritson's "Metrical Romances"), a fourteenth century poem, which tells how three kings from Ireland, Ferwele, Winwald and Malkan, ravaged Westmorland and advanced against Yorkshire. Hatheolf, the Angle prince of North Yorkshire, met them at Stainmoor, where a great battle took place, in which Ferwele and Winwald perished with 60,000 men. Hatheolf slew 5,000 with his own hand, but was beaten down by the Irish with stones, and stabbed by Malkan, who escaped with thirteen men, only

to fall eventually by the hand of Horn, the son of Hatheolf.

This is a variant of "King Horn," both founded on traditions of the Viking Age, like "Havelock" and "Beorn Buzecarl" and "King William" and others. They are the English analogues of the thirteenth and fourteenth century Sagas in Iceland, giving with much fantastic matter the reminiscences still current of a great romantic period. In this the names are altered, and much of the story is upside down; but Hatheolf corresponds in some measure with Oswulf, whose near ancestor bore that name; Malkan may be for Maelchon, Macon, Maccus, Amancus, Magnus, Olaf's half-Gaelic son; Winwald, a fanciful word, perhaps meaning the Leader or Ruler of his Friends, "Vina-valdr," evidently the non-Celtic person in a Gallgael host, might stand for Eirík. But the circumstances of the battle are more similar to our accounts of the real fight, and may be—as much as many stories—"founded on fact."

The Reycross has always puzzled antiquaries, but as shown in "Early Sculptured Crosses of the Diocese of Carlisle" (by the late Rev. W. S. Calverley, F.S.A., ed. W. G. Collingwood, pp. 264-268), it is one of a series of grave-monuments of the tenth or eleventh centuries. Since it is not in a churchyard, it must commemorate the burial of some great person at Stainmoor. We cannot say that this was the only fight which was fought there in those times, but it was the most famous; and possibly, though there is no conclusive evidence, it may have been raised to the memory of one of the heroes who fell in the last battle of Eirík Blóðöx.

PAGES OF EARLY DANISH HISTORY,
FROM THE
RUNIC MONUMENTS OF SLESWICK AND JUTLAND.

BY THE REV. PASTOR A. V. STORM.

OUR forefathers were men of deeds rather than words, and wielded the sword with greater readiness than the pen. We have therefore few records of their deeds dating from their own days. Most of our knowledge of them is drawn from later sources, and in particular from Saxo's "Chronicle of Denmark" and the Sagas. A leading characteristic of the latter is, that they contain throughout few love songs and romances, but the songs of the sword are their constant theme. To the Northern mind, battle and fighting abroad were more glorious than a life of ease at home. But these hardy men have left behind them truthful records of some of their doughty deeds, carved on the lasting material of the stone of their land—short commemorations of friend or husband, or faithful wife or mother. For to these men the good opinion of succeeding generations was highly esteemed. No mean, self-seeking spirit theirs, but the burden of the runes is of fair or manful strivings, either by man or woman.

A special value therefore attaches to these old memorial stones, of which a number have come down to us. Many are lost, and we are the poorer for the loss. For not only do they gratify our love of fatherland and its welfare, but they also yield priceless historical data, enabling us to correct and supply deficiencies in the Sagas and other

historical records. In general, the Runic stones were reared by the raisers to those who had been their contemporaries. No legendary glosses, therefore, had as yet had time to cluster around and obscure or exaggerate their meaning. The deeds recorded by the runes are briefly and tersely put, for stone is an awkward material to work, and favoured the record rather of facts than of fiction.

For an insight into the rise and meanings of runes much is due to, among others, the Danish professor Wimmer. His treatise in the festal publication of the University of Copenhagen, on the occasion of the Golden Wedding of King Christian and Queen Louise in 1892, is here made use of, together with the noble work of the Anglo-Dane, Professor Stephens. The period treated of is that great Viking time when the men of the North first make their entry on the great stage of history. It is this heroic period of which little is known, but on which the research of the last century, happily for us, has cast such a flood of light, that the events of 1,000 years ago are often clearer to us than even to those who stood but a century or so away from them. Many of the figures which thus are made to pass anew before us will be dear to all who love to trace the footsteps of their forefathers, and we shall see men and women whom neither Anglo-Saxon nor Dane needs to be ashamed of, and with regard to them we may even repeat Tennyson's greeting to the beloved consort of the King when she first came to these shores—

“ We are each and all Dane in our welcome of thee, Alexandra,”

when we recall the fact that she who now sits on England's royal throne has descended in an unbroken line from that king and queen of Denmark whom we shall treat here—King Gorm and his queen Tyre, the latter of whom will be ever lovingly remembered by every Danish man and woman because of the name she received 1,000 years ago of “ Danmark's Bod ”—“ Denmark's

Salvation"—she having been instrumental, with her husband, in building the rampart called the "Dannevirke," near the old town of Sleswick, which guards the old-time Danish border against the South.

It is to that part of Denmark in the year 900 that we turn our attention. The first Runic stone to be considered is called the "Vedelspang Stone I." (Fig. 1). It was found in 1797 by a farmer of Vedelspang, a place situated one mile south of the town of Sleswick. It had originally been reared on a gravehaugh, as the inscription shows, but at some period it was removed to serve as a landmark near a ford over the shallow waters of the Sli, hard by Sleswick. Time and the weather have laid their rough hands on it. It was broken into two pieces, but the parts were found together. The stone is 7-ft. 6-in. long, and 2-ft. 4-in. broad at the middle, and the runes are on an average 8-in. high. There is another engraved mark on the stone, which it is thought may have been there before the runes were cut. It is a circle with a line through it, which Professor Stephens explains as meaning "eternity"; so in all probability the stone had already some religious significance before it was used as a memorial stone to King Sigtrygg. For that is what the stone was raised for, as the runes read—

Asfriþr : karþi : kumbl : þaun : aft : Siktriku : sun : sin : aui : Knubu.

(Asfrithr karved kumbl [gravestone] this after Siktriku son hers and Gnupa's.)

For a long while it was unknown who this Asfriðr was, for the name is an uncommon one, and as a rule most of the rune-stones are raised to men. It was therefore for a time the general view that for Asfrid should be read Osfred, which name, at the beginning of the ninth century, is frequently met with as a man's name. But Wimmer maintained that the character of the runes on the stone pointed to a period towards the middle of the tenth century, and not the ninth.

In 1887 another rune-stone (Fig. 2) was found in the

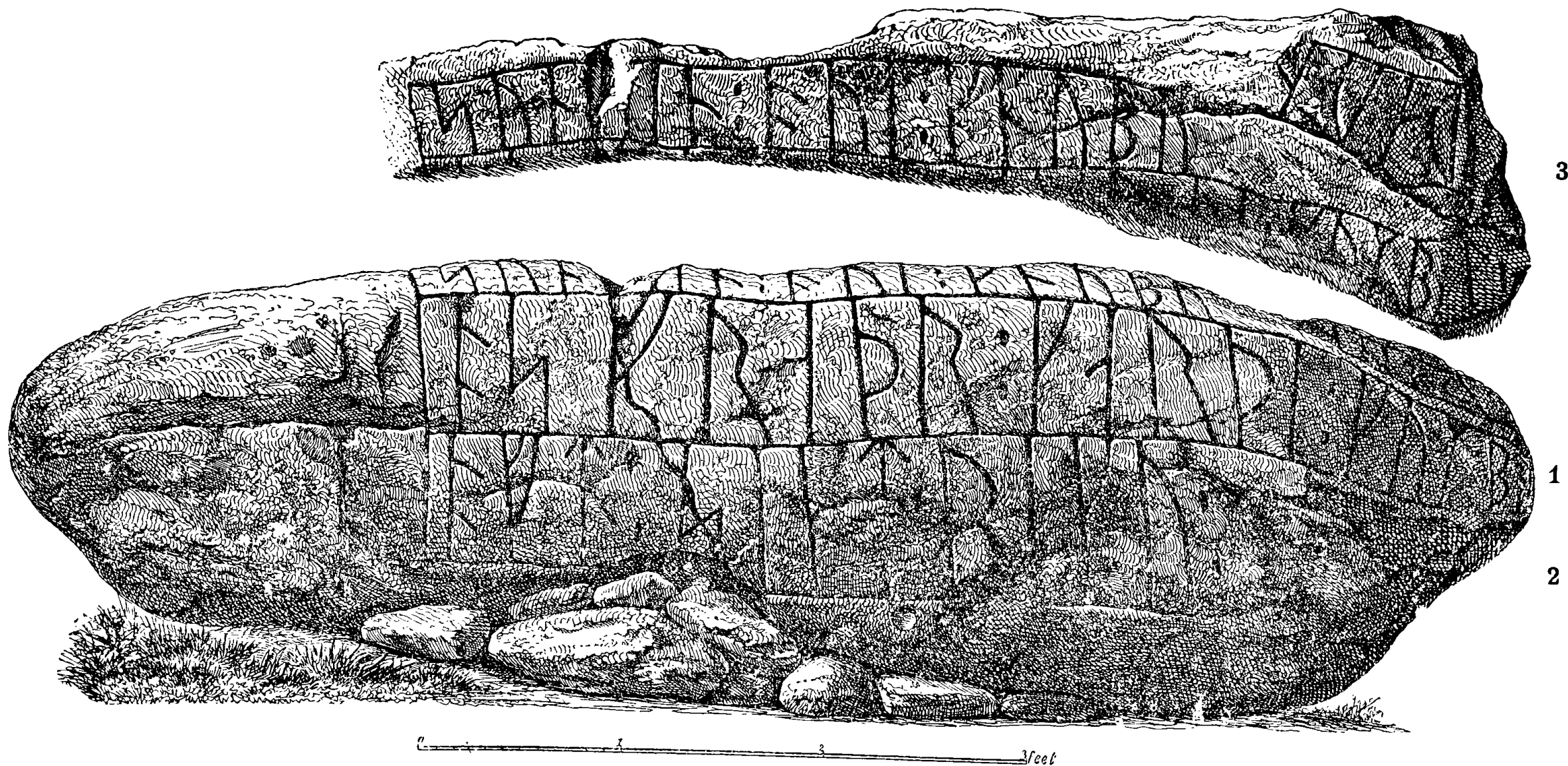


FIG. I.—FRONT AND TOP SIDE OF VEDELSPANG STONE I.
(Runes read from left to right in the rows as numbered.)
(Reproduced by permission of Dr. L. F. A. Wimmer.)

town of Sleswick itself, which explained the first. This new find is called the "Vedelspang Stone II.," and is kept in the Museum at Kiel, while the first is preserved at Louisenlund. The second stone is only 4-ft. high, and 1-ft. 4-in. broad, the runes being $\frac{3}{5}$ -in. long, and covering three sides of the stone :—

*Ui : Asfriþr : karþi : kubl : þausi : tutir : Upinkars : aft : Sitriuk :
kununt : sun : sin : auk : Knubu.*

(*Vé* [holy] Asfrithr carved kubl [gravestone] this daughter
Othinkar's after Sitriuk, king, son hers, and Gnupa's.)

It must strike the eye at once how like the two inscriptions are to each other. Yet here the form of the runes differs from that of the other stone. On the one stone (Fig. 1) they have a likeness to the Swedish form; on the other (Figs. 2 and 2a) they are purely Danish.

But who are the people whose names are thus recorded? Who is this Gnupa, who married Odinkar's daughter Asfrid? And who is their son, King Sigtrygg, over whom the devout mother raised this monument?

"Olav Tryggvasson's Saga" gives us the first key to open the secret. We read there :—

"King Gorm [of Denmark] marched with his army into that kingdom in Denmark which was then called Reiðgotaland, but now is called Jotland,¹ against a king who then ruled there. His name was Gnupa. They fought several fights together, but at the end Gorm overthrew that king, and took his whole kingdom . . . and Gorm was always victorious. . . . He slew all the kings towards the south as far as the Sli."²

Many learned men had ridiculed this old Saga on account of the reference to this "Gnupa," whom Gorm overthrew. It was affirmed that the Saga-writer was an ignorant man, and that there never lived a king of that name! But here are no fewer than two stones which plainly tell us not only that he existed, but also that he had a good wife and a royal son. Wimmer is convinced that the Saga speaks the truth, and that the statements of other docu-

¹ South Jutland is the oldest Danish name of Sleswick.

² The fjord near Sleswick.

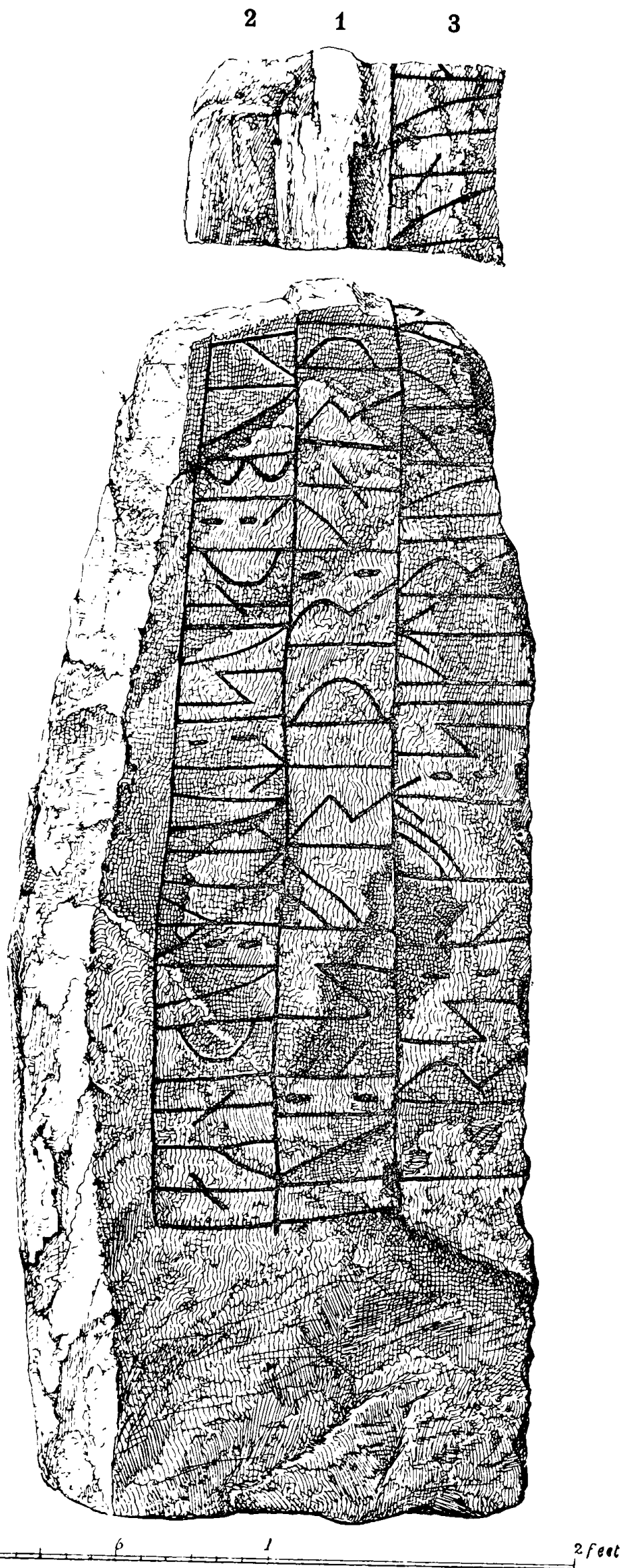


FIG. 2.—FRONT AND LEFT SIDE OF VEDELSPANG STONE II.
*(Runes read from bottom of first row upwards, down the second row, up the third,
 and down the fourth and up the fifth rows on the next plate.)*
 (Reproduced by permission of Dr. L. F. A. Wimmer.)

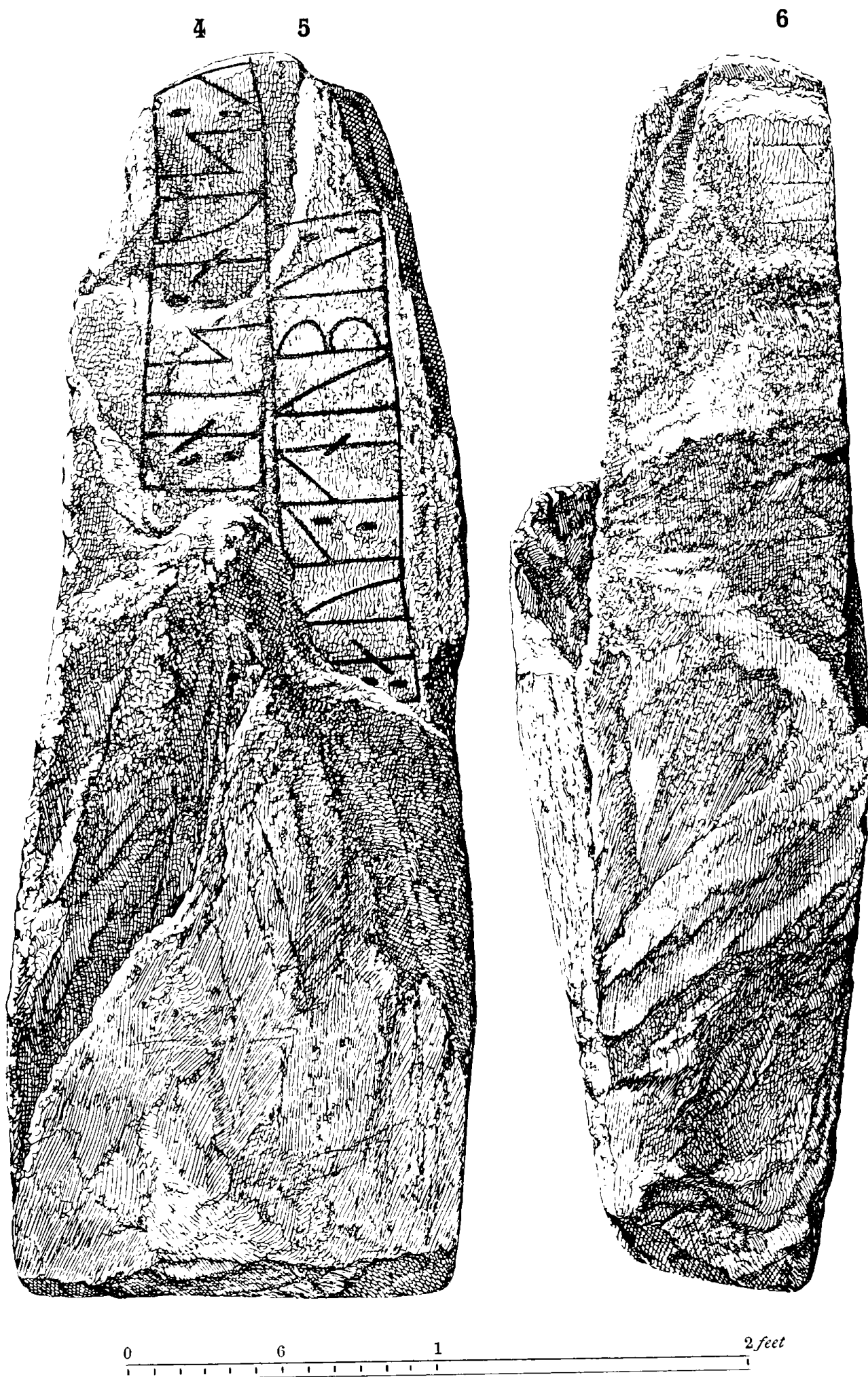


FIG. 2a.—BACK, AND REPRODUCTION OF LEFT SIDE WITH UNDECIPHERABLE
 RUNES, OF VEDELSPANG STONE II.
 (Reproduced by permission of Dr. L. F. A. Wimmer.)

ments must be made to conform to the record of the Saga.

The next witness is the Saxon monk Widukind, who wrote in the annals of his monastery of Corwey, under the year 934, that the Old Saxon king, Henry I.,

after having subdued all nations around him, attacked the Danes, who had harried the Frisians from the sea, and he subdued them, and made them pay taxes, and compelled their king, Chnuba, to be baptised.

That this Chnuba is the same person as the Gnupa of the rune-stones seems clear enough.

Yet another important source from which we may learn somewhat of our early unrecorded history is Adam, canon of Bremen, who wrote about 100 years later, and who got much information from Sven, king of Denmark. Adam says that Olaf of Sweden conquered a part of Denmark, and after his death "Chnob and Gurd, his sons," ruled. In another part of his writings he tells us that Olaf and his sons were followed by Sigerich.

These several records had been the subject of hot dispute until the period of the discovery of the last Runic stone, which brought order into the chaos, and set forth the truthfulness of the older historians, both in the Sagas and in the annals. We can now understand what actually took place. A fleet put to sea 1,000 years ago from the Swedish coast, with Olaf as leader. The Vikings kept this time within the Baltic, and steered towards the important town of Sleswick, which they took, and in which they established their strength. A son of Olaf, Gnupa, married Asfrid, the daughter of the mighty Danish Jarl, Odinkar. Their power so grew that it alarmed the Saxon king, Henry, who fitted out an expedition against them. Gnupa was defeated, and forced to become a Christian. Hereupon Gorm, king of Denmark, became anxious. He was unwilling to relinquish so fair a part of his kingdom as South Jutland to this Swedish conqueror, grown stronger perhaps by alliance with Henry. Gorm therefore gathered his Danish host, and overthrew and slew Gnupa, as the Saga records. The foreign in-

vader was thus checkmated, and the inviolability of Danish soil vindicated. But Gorm went further. To secure the frontier of Denmark from further assault, he determined to strengthen the old border defence works towards the South. The "Dannevirke," a new and stronger rampart, was raised just south of Sleswick, and it can still be seen. But to his good queen, Tyre, who perhaps was a Jarl's daughter from South Jutland, like Asfrid, tradition, for some reason, has given most of the honour. The rampart took three years to build, and when completed, the Danes, possibly because of the special help she had afforded to its completion, gave her

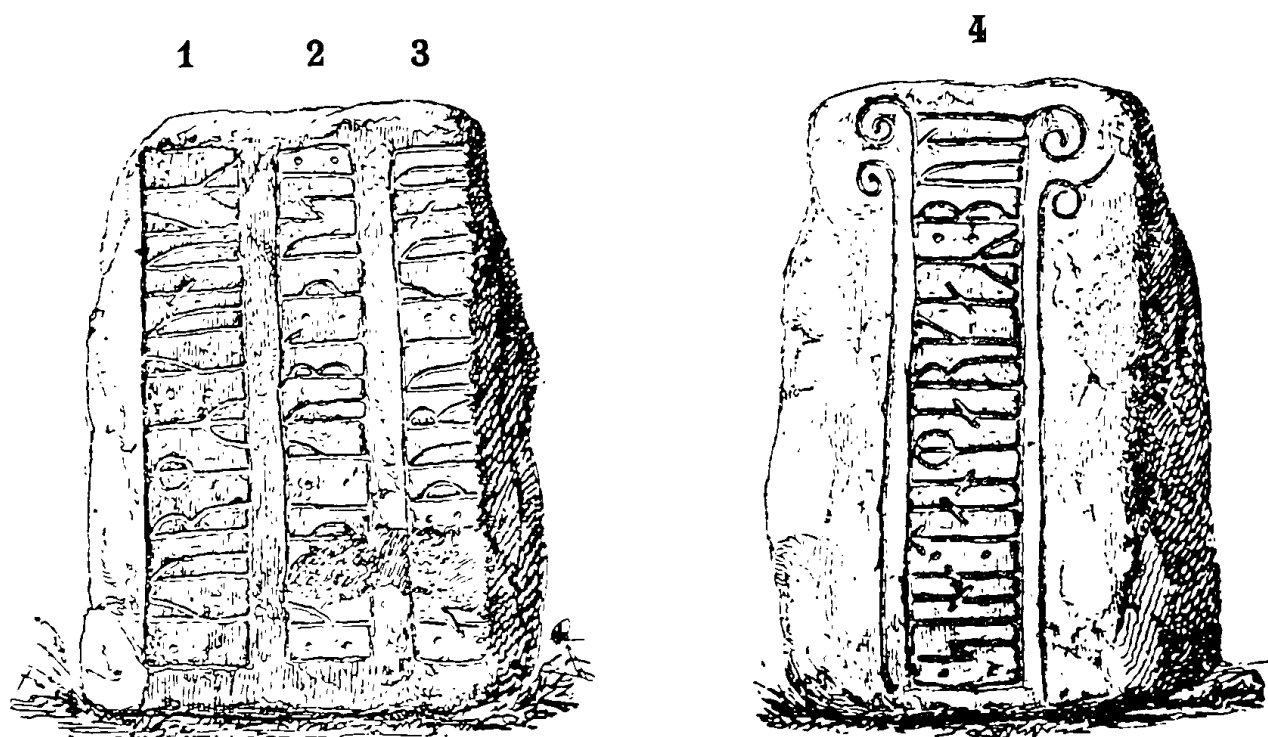


FIG. 3.—FORE AND HIND SIDES OF THE SMALL JELLING STONE.

(Runes read from the bottom upwards of the rows as numbered.)

the proudest title any Danish woman could bear—that of her country's saviour, "Danmark's Bod," and this is recorded in runes on the "small Jelling stone" (Fig. 3), set up by her husband at her death to the following effect—

*Gurmr : kunukr
k[ar]pi : kubl : þusi
[aft] : þurui : kunui
sini : Danmarkar : but.*

(Gorm king carved kubl [gravestone] this after Tyre queen his Denmark's Saviour.)

This stone is 9-ft. high.

But there is yet one other strong and unconquered woman in South Jutland left to notice. This is Asfrid, daughter of the mighty Jarl Odinkar, with whom she took shelter while the storm which carried away her husband Gnupa burst over her head. On his defeat by Gorm, and death, she first rallied his scattered forces. Then she raised a noble gravehaugh over the body of her husband, whereon she set up a rune-inscribed stone in his honour, consecrating it all in the name of the gods as "Gnupa's sacred gravehaugh." She thus defied both the Danish king and the new spiritual King whom Gnupa had been compelled to confess. Hence she is called "the devout"—this according to the old religion. But her intentions were not yet fulfilled—she bided her time and meant to take revenge. The death of Gorm, king of Denmark, furnished her with an opportunity. There was still left to her a son, Sigtrygg, and she gets her mighty house—Odinkar's—to acknowledge him as king, and steps were taken to establish his power. But the new king of Denmark, Harald Bluetooth, had also not forgotten what his father and mother and the whole nation had worked for in overthrowing the Christianised Gnupa and the Saxon intermeddler, and in rearing the "Dannevirke." King Harald found no difficulty in raising an army, and Sigtrygg, like his father, was killed in battle. Thus did Harald justify the praise accorded him on the "greater Jelling stone" (Figs. 4, 4*a* and 4*b*)—"He won himself all Denmark." All that is left to note is the high-spirited woman Asfrid, in her motherly grief. Just as she did to her husband, so she raised a monument over "her and Gnupa's son," Sigtrygg, whom Harald killed, and set it up alongside that of her husband's on "Gnupa's sacred hill," and these are the important Runic stones we have considered. We can feel for Asfrid, for the sufferings and disappointments of her life; while her devotion to her old faith and to her husband and son are praiseworthy.

We have in Tyre and Asfrid, both from South Jutland, two noble female presentments of the Viking time, but



FIG. 4.—FORESIDE OF GREATER JELLING STONE.

(Runes read from left to right, the bottom row being continued on Figs. 4a and 4b.)



FIG. 4a.—LEFT SIDE OF GREATER JELLING STONE.



FIG. 4b.—HINDSIDE OF GREATER JELLING STONE.

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of varying fortunes. Tyre is elevated to the royal throne of Denmark, accepts with her husband the new faith of the "White Christ," laboured with her husband for the consolidation of her country, furthering his efforts to build the great national defence work, the "Dannevirke," and finally, after a successful life, is laid to rest in queenly state at Jellinge, with a monument raised above her by her husband, King Gorm. Asfrid, as noble and strong as Tyre, married an invader, who brought the kingdom of Denmark into danger, refused the new faith, tried to make her son king, suffered repeated defeats, and finally could only raise her sorrowful memorials to her slain husband and her son, the latter of whom she still styled "king"; while, in the course of time, her own name and that of her husband are forgotten, and have passed out of popular remembrance for nearly 1,000 years, until in these latter days they are accidentally brought to light by the finding of these memorial stones she set up, which enable us to sympathetically recall her deeds and her personality.

For undoubtedly most important are these two Runic stones set up at Jelling in North Jutland. Jelling is now an ordinary village, but 1,000 years ago it was a notable royal city, being situated just half way betwixt Sleswick and Viborg, on the old ox road between those important towns. At Jelling are two mounds, still called after the names of Gorm and Tyre respectively, and between them the Runic stones were raised. Gorm and Tyre doubtless lie buried beneath these mounds, which are about 70 feet in height and 700 feet in circumference. The greater Runic stone (Figs. 4, 4*a*, and 4*b*) is about 8 feet high. On its back and side are two figures—Christ, with outstretched arms and the halo around His head, the mighty and merciful Lord, and beside Him the well-known Northern dragon, around whose whole body the serpent twines itself. On the foreside of the stone an inscription begins and is continued on the other two sides, which reads—

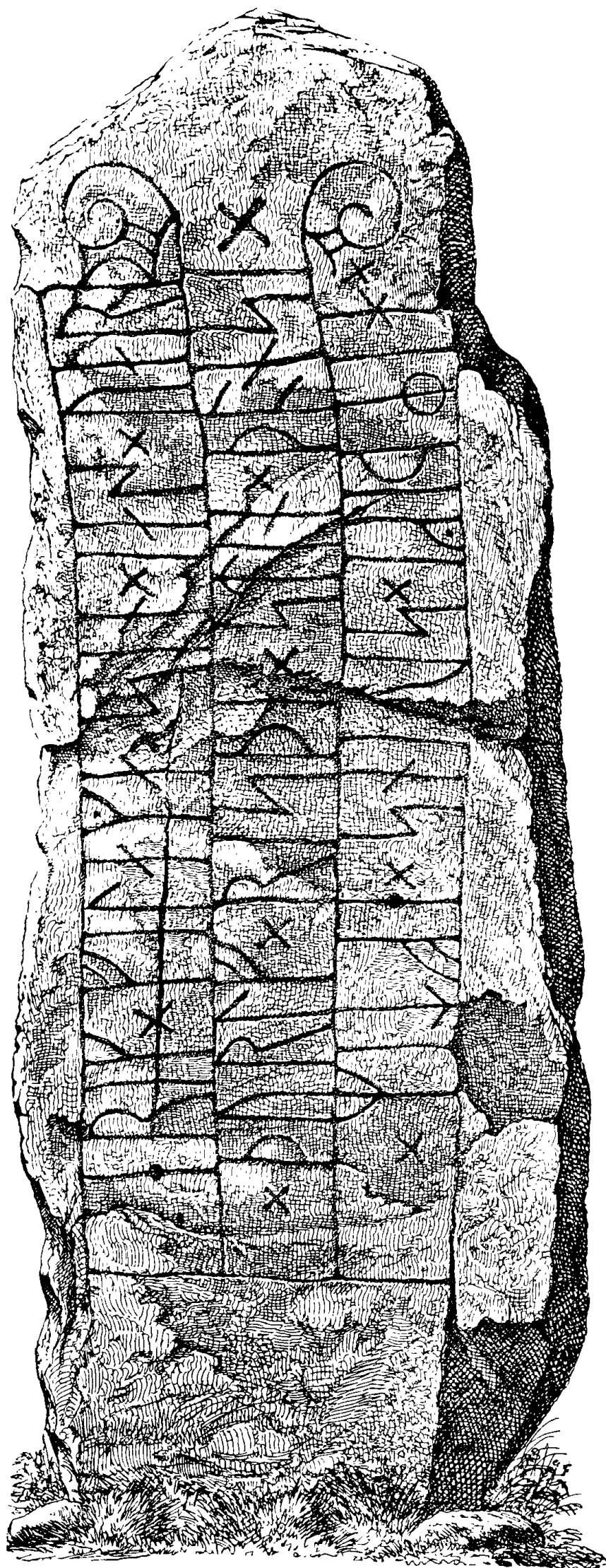
Haraldr : kunukr : baþ : kaurua
kubl : þausi : aft : Gurm : faþur : sin
auk : aft : Þeurui : muþur : sina : se
Haraldr : ias : sem : uan : Denmaurk
ala : auk : Nuruia : auk : Danmark : kristne.

(Harald, king, bade carve kubl [gravestone] this after Gorm, father his, and after Tyre, mother his, the same Harald who won himself all Denmark and Norway, and Christianised the Danes.)

On the lesser stone (Fig. 3), which now stands beside the greater, but formerly stood on the northern mound, are engraved, on its two sides, the memorable words to which I have already referred: "Gorm, king, made this gravestone after Tyre, his wife, Denmark's Saviour."

There is no doubt as to the meaning of these inscriptions, and as to their importance in the history of Denmark, but we have already glanced at that in connection with the two Vedelspang stones. We will therefore turn to the next two stones, which also bear upon the Danish connection with England at the end of the tenth century—the "Hedeby Stone" (Figs. 5 and 5*a*) and the "Dannevirke Stone" (Figs. 6 and 6*a*).

Hedeby is the old Danish name of Sleswick. We have already seen the important events that took place there 1,000 years ago, when Gorm and Harald overthrew the foreign invaders. And the events narrated on these two Runic stones also centre around Hedeby, or Sleswick. Nowadays Sleswick is a very quiet town, but 1,000 years ago it was a bustling shipping haven. The merchandise which came from Russia and the East passed by ships from Gotland to Sleswick, the long, narrow fjord of the Sli affording a safe anchorage for the boats. From Sleswick the merchandise was borne overland across South Jutland to Ribe, on the western coast, and thence shipped to England, Holland, and France. On the other hand, the rich products of Italy and France were by the same route carried down the Rhine to Holland, and thence over to England or to Scandinavia through Ribe and Sleswick. It was therefore a rich and important town.



0 1 feet

FIG. 5.—FORESIDE OF HEDEBY STONE.

(Runes read from bottom of first row upwards, down the second row, up the third, down the fourth, and up the fifth and sixth in the top portion of the next plate)

(Reproduced by permission of Dr. L. F. A. Wimmer.)



FIG. 5a.—HINDSIDE OF HEDEBY STONE.
(Reproduced by permission of Dr. L. F. A. Wimmer)

And it was thither that Ansgar, "the Apostle of the North," came in 826, and set up the Christian Church at Hedeby; so that Sleswick is the cradle, so to speak, of the Danish and Northern Church. These facts show the importance of the place, and explain how Swedish chiefs more than once cast longing eyes upon it.

Now these regions are occupied by Danes and Germans. But at that time the Germans had not reached the Baltic. All the shores were held by Slavs and Wends. Only on the western coast of Holstein was there a Saxon or Frisian people, and the Saxons had at that time been much reduced by Charlemagne. Little connection was there therefore between Denmark and her Southern neighbours. There was nothing to learn from the Wends, and little from the rough Saxon. Civilisation was indeed on a higher level in Scandinavia than there, for there was a lively intercourse among the Northern kingdoms themselves, and the superior mental and material civilisation existing in England, Ireland, France, and Holland was reflected back on to Scandinavia by means of the raiding Viking seafarers. Then as now the path of the sea was the highway of progress, and open to all who had the courage and enterprise to dare its perils. But between Denmark and Germany there were impassable marshes, thick forests, wild animals, and perhaps wilder men and robbers. Hence our forefathers preferred the sea, and, happily for us, brought back more than material wealth.

If we speak of foreign influence at this period—the tenth century—it is mostly English. Ansgar, it is true, came from the north of France, but he was sent from a Saxon monastery. His good influence, however, never sank very deep. But when it is remembered how far and wide were the Viking raids, it can be understood whence the strongest influences were derived. In Normandy, England, and Ireland was then a living Christianity. King Guthrum, with 30 men, received Christianity from the hands of King Alfred in Wessex, and Saxo calls King

Gorm “the English.” Our two last Runic stones bear this statement out to the full.

The older of the two was found in 1796, by the same man who discovered the “Vedelspang Stone I.” It is called the “Hedeby Stone” (Figs. 5 and 5*a*), and is also kept in the park of Louisenlund. Its inscription records—

*Þurlf : rispi : stin : þansi
himpigi : Suins : eftir
Erik : filaga : sin : ias : uarþ
taupr : þa : trekiar
satu : um : Haiþa : bu
ian : han : uas : sturi : matr : tregv
harþa : kuþr.*

(Thurlf, Suin's housethegn, raised this stone after Erik, his fellow, who died when war-men sat around Hetheby; but he was a steersman, a hero most gallant.)

It is 7-ft. high above ground and 2-ft. 6-in. broad and 1-ft. 10-in. thick, and the runes are about 7-in. high.

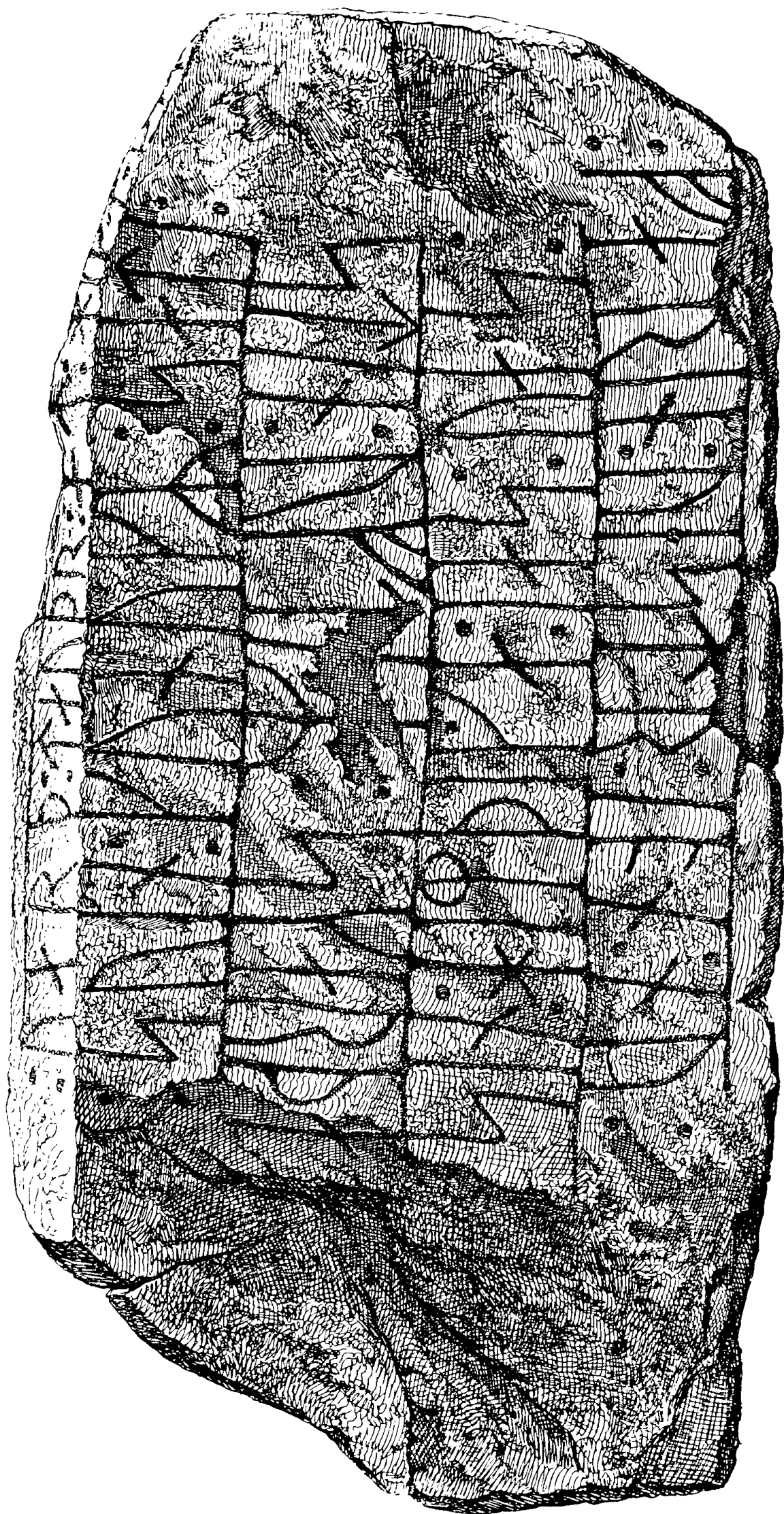
The second (Figs. 6 and 6*a*) was discovered in 1857 near old high road through Sleswick, hard by the “Dannevirke.” It was, happily, not removed, but the Danish authorities took care to place it on its original site, where it still stands. It is 6-ft. 2-in. high and 3-ft. broad and 1-ft. 4-in. thick, and the runes on the foreshore are 7 to 9-in. high, and on the side ranging down to 5½-in. It tells us that—

*Suin : kunukr : sati
stin : uftir : Skarþa
sin : himþiga : ias : uas
farin : uestv : ian : nu
uarþ : taupr : at : Hiþa : bu.*

(Suin, king, set stone after Skartha, his homethegn, who was faring westward, but now is dead at Hetheby.)

This monument is called the “Dannevirke Stone,” because it stands by that thousand-year-old rampart.

By the help of these stones we now take up the thread of history which we left when we showed how Harald killed “King” Sigtrygg. Harald died in 985, and his son Sven (Forkbeard) became king of Denmark. Under him the Danish Vikings grew strong in England. In 994



0 6 4 2 3 feet

FIG. 6.—FRONT OF DANNEVIRKE STONE.

(Runes read from bottom of first row upwards, down the second, up the third, down the fourth, and up the fifth on the left side. The fifth row is repeated in next plate.)

(Reproduced by permission of Dr. L. F. A. Wimmer.)

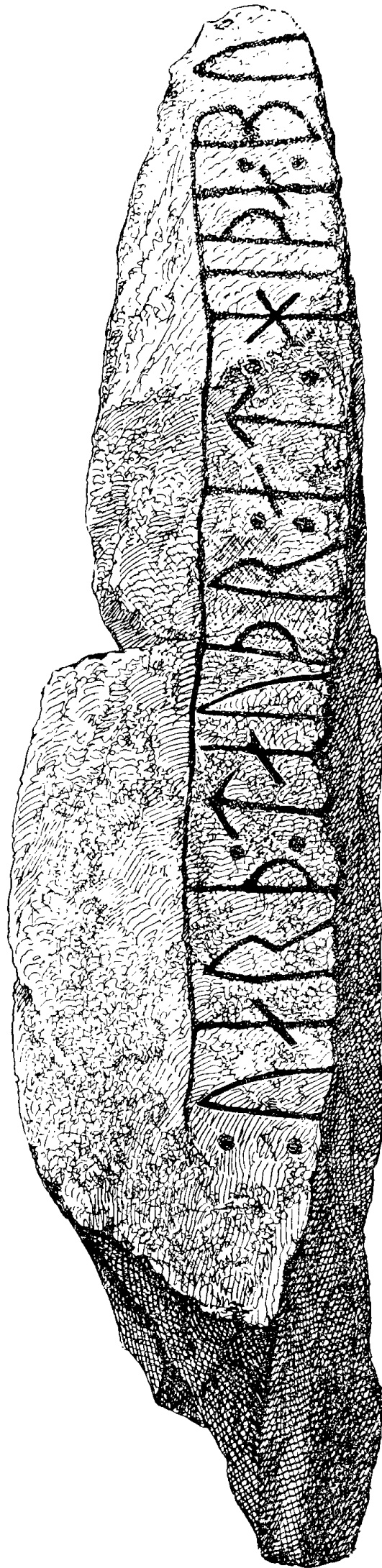


FIG. 6*a*.—LEFT SIDE OF DANNEVIRKE STONE.
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Sven attacked London, together with Olav Tryggvasson, king of Norway. Olav soon made his peace with King Ethelred, but Sven continued his raids. Now both the Runic stones mention a King Sven who must have fought a battle before Hedeby. How are these statements to be harmonised ?

We know from German annals that the Bishop of Sleswick had to leave that place about the year 1,000, as Vikings had harried it; and the Viking leader was no less a person than the king of Sweden, Erik the Victorious. This king followed the track of Olaf and Gnupa, and took Hedeby, or Sleswick. King Sven of Denmark was in England, full of many plans for the future; but as soon as he heard of the foreign invaders in his land he hurried home. Very likely he landed at Ribe, and in quick marches through South Jutland he reached Sleswick, where he had to lay siege to the town, which King Erik held and had fortified. Many men fell while "war-men sat around Hedeby," and one of them was named Erik, and another Skarde, the latter being of King Sven's body-guard. The upshot of the struggle was that the invader was overthrown and driven out, and Denmark again freed. After the battle, Erik's name is commemorated by his friend Thorlfr, and King Sven himself raises a stone in memory of his faithful man Skarde.

It is a delightful picture for a Dane to behold: King Sven leaving behind the wealthy land of England, where he might have set up a new kingdom, in order to return to his native land, which was dearer to him than the land in the West. It is likewise well worth noticing why the two fallen heroes are commemorated. Erik was a "steersman" and "a gallant hero," and Skarde had gone "westward" (to England, of course). Of the same type as these two who fell were the many who settled in England in the following and preceding years; worthy forbears of those who "rule the waves." They were steersmen and gallant heroes. Surely we all owe a debt of warm gratitude to the Runic stones for their few but true words.

THE CONVERSION OF ICELAND TO CHRISTIANITY, A.D. 1000.

BY EIRÍKR MAGNÚSSON, M.A.

IN the month of June this year (1900) the people of Iceland celebrated the anniversary of the conversion to Christianity of their heathen forefathers, 900 years ago. By that time, with the exception of the Scandinavian Peninsula, the whole Occident, from Novgorod to Ireland, from the Black Sea and the Mediterranean to the Baltic and the Skagerack, had been incorporated, more or less effectively, in the vast empire of the Conqueror of Golgotha. Wheresoever the Northern Viking came in contact with mankind south of his own native land, he found himself confronted by the Christian religion, allied to a stately, dignified, and solemn ceremonial; and wherever he met Christianity, there, too, a higher state of civilisation and culture presented to him a bewilderingly engaging face. By this time the ferocity that characterised the first Viking raids had greatly softened down. Christianity had now become the uncompromisingly aggressive, paganism the passively resistant, actor in the great contest for the spiritual destiny of mankind. This, in the nature of things, was bound to come to pass. Christianity, with a revealed ideal of salvation, of eternal hope, was destined to conquer the heart of man; paganism, with no such ideal to lead and to inspire it, was bound to fall back, and eventually to evacuate an untenable position.

Even the history of the conversion of Iceland, as we shall see, is, on a small scale, of course, an illustration in

point. Of that history I propose to give you an outline to-night, hoping that to some of the members, at least, of our Club the subject may have a certain interest; especially since, so far as I know, there exists no connected account of it in any English work.

It is a fact, though seldom, if ever, pointed out, that Christianity had an asylum in Iceland long before the first arrival of the Norsemen in the island, about A.D. 860. The father of Icelandic historiography, Ari the learned, in his "*Libellus Islandorum*," tells us that the new-comers found dwelling there Christians, whom they called "*Papar*"; who, because they would not abide here in fellowship with heathen men, thereupon went away, leaving behind them Irish books, bells, and crosiers, wherefrom it could be concluded that they were Irishmen.¹ To this the "*Landnámabók*" adds: "And in English books mention is made of journeys between the countries [Iceland and Great Britain] in those days."

We have an independent evidence of the accuracy of this statement of Ari's. An Irish monk named D cúil wrote, about 825, a book on geography, which he called "*De Mensura Orbis Terræ*." In this work he states that some 30 years before—that is to say, about 795—he had had a conversation with some clerics returning from an island in the extreme North, which he took to be the *ultima Thule* of the ancients. He gives a very clear statement of the information his clerical friends imparted to him; and their account not only fits no island on earth save Iceland, but, as far as it goes, it is the most correct description we have of that country from so early a period. The clerics had been in the island from February to August. "They told me," says Dicuil, "that at the summer solstice, and during the days immediately preceding and succeeding it, the sun, going down, vanished as if he went behind a little mound, in such a way that no darkness befell during this short hour,

¹ "*Islendingabók*," chap. i.

and any work might be done. If they had only ascended some high mountain on the island, the sun would probably never have vanished out of sight." This is unmistakably a description of Iceland.

The additional statement of the "Landnámabók," which doubtless owes its origin to Ari himself, that English books make mention of intercourse between Iceland and Britain in those ancient days, finds also its corroboration in a still existing English book of great antiquity.

Among the many works by the Venerable Bede that have come down to us, is a commentary, entitled, "In libros regum quæstionum triginta liber unus." One of the questions debated is the miracle recorded in 2 Kings xx. 9, 10. Jehovah promises King Hezekiah a further span of life, of 15 years' duration. Hezekiah wants a token showing that Jehovah is in earnest. The Prophet Isaiah, being the interpreter of Jehovah's purpose on the occasion, asks the king: "Shall the shadow [on the sundial] go forward ten steps, or go backwards ten steps?" Hezekiah answers: "It is a light thing for the shadow to decline ten steps; nay, but let the shadow return backwards ten steps." In discussing wherein lay the miracle that Hezekiah demanded, Bede takes the opportunity of bringing before his readers the following fact:—"For the people who dwell in the island of Thule which is beyond Britain, or in the outermost regions of the Scythians, observe that it happens for some days every summer that the sun, on setting, though to the rest of the 'orbis' he has his position beneath the earth, is nevertheless visible to themselves all the night through; and that it may be clearly seen how he goes slowly back from west to east, even as the stories of the ancients, as well as the people of our own time who come hither from those parts, set forth most abundantly."

Of islands beyond Britain (*ultra Britanniam*) there is not one to which this statement can apply, except Iceland. The distinction made between those dwelling in the island of Thule and those in the outermost regions of the

Scythians, makes it impossible that Bede thought of Thule as an outermost part of Scythia. So here we have a new evidence to the fact that Iceland was the dwelling-place of human beings who were in the habit of journeying over to Britain in Bede's lifetime, with true stories about the striking solstitial phenomena observed in that island at midsummer. But Bede died in 735. How long before that date he wrote this commentary, I am not in a position to say. His words give clearly to understand that to his readers he was not aware he was conveying any strange or striking novelty by saying, "*qui in insula Thyle . . . degunt.*" So the conclusion would seem warrantable that the facts he was referring to were generally known in Britain at the time he wrote them down. That takes us back to some time before Bede's death. And since the dwellers at that time in Iceland could have belonged to no other race or class of men than did the clerics from Iceland with whom Dicuil conversed 60 years after the death of Bede, or the men whom the Norwegians found in the island on their arrival some 45 years after Dicuil wrote his interesting account, I do not regard myself as liable to the charge of drawing on imagination in maintaining that Iceland had afforded Christianity a home from, say, A.D. 700, or for some 170 years at least before the Norse occupation of the country began.

Bede's extremely important statement that "*qui in ultimis Scytharum finibus degunt . . . illis de partibus adueniunt,*" *i.e.*, to Britain, with stories of the midnight sun, pointing to intercourse existing between Scandinavia and Britain anterior to the earliest recorded Viking raids to the west, I must pass by on this occasion as irrelevant to the subject I am dealing with.

It is clear, judging from the objects the Keltic Christians left behind them in Iceland, bells and crosiers, that they must have been living in monastically organised communities. But their occupation of the island seems to have been confined to its south-eastern parts. There, at the place which from the beginning of the colonisation

period has been called Kirkby, and where the "Land-námabók" says Papar were dwelling before that movement began, they seem to have left behind them a minster or church, for that fact would account most naturally for the name of the place. This humble homestead in the western bailiwick of Skaptafell (Vestr-Skaptafellssýsla) has one distinction to boast of: it is the oldest Christian home not only in Iceland, but also as compared with any in Scandinavia or Denmark. From, possibly, 700 A.D., it has never sheltered a heathen occupier. From 1186-1550 it was a convent of Benedictine nuns.

It was probably Ingolf, the first real settler in Iceland, who first frightened the inoffensive anchorites away. He landed just in the parts where they had their chief settlements, and on exploring the coast westward in quest of the pillars of his high-seat, must have seen the blue peat-smoke of their abodes rising against the background of lava and glacier, and made personal acquaintance with them, pleasant or otherwise; but whatever the cause, the flight of the recluses must have been precipitate, since they left behind some of the objects they must have set the greatest value on.

Among the early settlers of Iceland not a few were Christians. They all came from Sodor, *i.e.*, the Hebrides, and Ireland. The majority of them were of Norse descent, who, having been settled in the West for various lengths of time, had adopted the religion of the community among whom they dwelt. Others of the same stock were born Christians in the West, and in the veins of some of these settlers ran the noblest blood of the Norse race.

In this respect we must draw special attention to the descendants of the famous war-duke from Sogr in Norway, Ketil Flatnose, who left Norway early in the turbulent reign of Harald Fairhair, and with his children and other kinsfolk made Sodor his home, where he became a man of great might and influence. Ketil had five children, four of whom brought with them Christianity to Iceland. His son, Helgi Bjóla, went to Iceland early in the land-

settling period, and spent the first winter in the country with Ingolf, Iceland's first settler, at Reykjavík, and next spring received from him, on what terms we do not know, landed property about Keelness, some ten miles to the north of Reykjavík. A famous daughter of Ketil was Aud the Deepminded, queen of Olaf the White, king of Dublin. After her husband's death, about 870, Aud went with her son, Thorstein the Red, together with other relatives and a large retinue, to Scotland, where Thorstein carved out for himself an extended dominion. He was at last treacherously slain by the Scots, and his mother betook herself with her seven children first to Orkney, then to Faro, leaving behind in either place a married granddaughter, and at last to Iceland. There she appropriated to herself the wide countryside called Dales, at the head of Broadfirth in western Iceland. Another daughter of Ketil was Thorunn; she was married to Helgi the Lean, son of Eyvind Eastman, of Swedish descent. Helgi's mother was Princess Rafarta, the daughter of King Cearbhal of Ossory in Ireland. Helgi betook himself with his wife to Iceland, and appropriated to himself the whole district of Islefirth, hallowing for himself the possession of this wide tract by kindling beacon fires at every river mouth throughout it. He set up his family abode or manor house at Christness, and dwelt there till his death. A third daughter of Ketil Flatnose was Jorunn; she had a son called Ketil, his father's name is not on record. He went from Sodor to Iceland, and took up his abode at Kirkby, which I have already mentioned. "There," says the "*Landnámabók*," "the Papar had had a seat before, nor might Christians ever abide there." Ketil was evidently the immediate successor of the Papas to this property. The name of the place is a proof positive that he found the church of the anchorites still standing on his arrival; for local names frequently draw their origin from existing peculiarities or facts.

One more Christian relative of Flatnose was his nephew Orlyg the Old, son of his brother Hrapp. He had been

brought up by a Bishop Patrick in Sodor. On breaking the news to the Bishop that he wished to go to Iceland, the prelate provided him with timber to build a church, and an iron bell, a "plenary," and hallowed earth to put under each of the corner pillars. Orlyg sailed to Iceland accompanied by a number of Christian friends, and settled within the landtake of his cousin Helgi Bjola, and built a church at his homestead of Esjuberg.

A number of Christians of less account, some of them evidently Irish, are mentioned by name, especially in the district of Burgfirth, directly north of Reykjavík; but no doubt there were many of whom no record is left. Many settlers were married to Irish wives, and must have had a more or less clear idea as to what Christianity was like. Numerous Irish slaves as war-booty found their way to the country; they were all Christians, but in most cases not a refreshing illustration of that profession of faith.

Now we have before us the fact that already in the early period of the colonisation of Iceland all the descendants of Flatnose, so far as we know, had cleared out of Sodor and settled in each of the four quarters of the land: Helgi Bjola in the south, Aud the Deepminded in the west, Thorunn with her mighty husband Helgi in the north, and Ketil, Flatnose's grandson, in the east. There must have been some serious cause for the emigration of this one family *en bloc*, as it were, from Sodor. We are not left in doubt what that cause was. About 870, Harald Fairhair, worried by the Viking raids from the Western Isles upon his kingdom of Norway, led an expedition against these Viking lairs, and slew the Vikings right and left, and drove the rest away, and incorporated in the kingdom of Norway both Orkney, Sodor, and Man. The family of Flatnose shared the fate of the rest of the king's enemies, and therein lies doubtless the reason why it emigrated from comfort and affluence to an uncertain destiny in barren Iceland. The time of Harald's expedition makes it certain that the emigration of this nobility of Christians to Iceland must have taken place early

during the 60 years over which the colonisation period extends, from 870-930.

All the ancient records agree in the statement that the Christian settlers or their immediate descendants lapsed from Christianity into heathenism. No cause is assigned, but the impression is left that this happened because paganism was preferred. Nothing is left on record to show that there existed any state of religious hostility between pagan and Christian settlers. All the more strange therefore, at first sight, appears the general apostasy of the Christians. But when we look below the surface we shall find a natural explanation of the fact in the evolution of society in the island during the colonising process.

On arrival in Iceland, the head of each ship's company hallowed for him, according to recognised sacred rites, as much land, where land was unoccupied, as satisfied his ambition for landed lordship. Of the men who thus took possession of unoccupied land, but few were Christians, the overwhelming majority heathens. In most cases, the extent of the appropriated territory exceeded vastly the personal or immediate requirements of any one family. For obvious reasons it was a matter of paramount importance to the primary possessor to dispose, on advantageous terms, of as much of his landed property as he could not turn to profit by his own efforts. Whether spare land was disposed of in such a manner to a Christian by a heathen, or *vice versâ*, was a matter of indifference to the owner. If he sold the land, or if he let it out to tenants, the purchase money and the rents were equally serviceable, no matter whether the purse they came out of belonged to a Christian or a heathen. This mutuality of interest between men of different confessions of faith explains to a large extent, as I think, the peaceful relationship which obtained between Christians and heathens during the period of Iceland's colonisation. There were other causes tending to bring about the same result. Paganism in the North was not an aggressive, proselytising religion, as I have said before. A heathen might think about the gods

whatever he pleased, as long as he did not publicly blaspheme them. Ingolf, for instance, was a devout heathen, and a zealous sacrificer to the gods, while his foster-brother, Hjörleif, would never sacrifice. Sundry heathens of historical fame surnamed "The Godless" are on record. Numbers of instances might be adduced, showing how weak a hold the heathen belief had on the heart of men when the day of history broke over the North. Such instances, however, are chiefly confined to men who from youth upwards had spent a life in daring exploits over lands and oceans, and had come out of the ordeal victorious believers in their might and main. Perhaps the real explanation of the unbelief of such men is that they were far-travelled, had seen more of civilised life than the folk at home, and grasped the fact that Christianity was everywhere allied to a higher civilisation, yet that for the profession of the sword, the success of which depended on assiduous training, the one religion was as useful or useless as the other.

But as concerning Icelandic paganism specially, I cannot help thinking that it presents one phase peculiarly its own, and strikingly indicative of the softening of the national temper as compared with Norway. I refer to the intensely deep veneration the people bestowed on the *landvættir* (landwights), the guardian spirits of the land, to which no parallel is found in Norway. If I misread not the old records, the religious belief of the people, on coming to that strange land of ice and fire, shifted its basis so far that, beside the old gods, who received the formal national worship, the *landvættir* became the real objects of the deepest, most tender devotion. It is really touching to consider what an ideal of timid delicacy, tenderness, innocence, and purity, the devout heathen made of these hidden agencies in Nature's mysterious laboratory in the new land. No fetid smell must come near to them, no living thing must be destroyed, where fields or fells were hallowed for them, their precincts must not be looked at by a man with an unwashed face. When Christian mis-

sionaries pour their Holy Water over their stony abodes, they can only wail and bemoan their sad fate. To the believers in them they are faithful "unto death"; they multiply their flocks, turn out with them into the dangers of the sea, and follow them to the perilous contests at law in courts of Parliaments, general and local. They become revengeful only when they know for certain they are threatened with wholesale desertion. The best evidence of the national worship accorded to these beings is the preamble of the first code of law of the Commonwealth, framed by the first Speaker of Iceland, Ulfjot, 927-929. According to the "*Landnámabók*," this preamble provided that ships with figure-heads should not be taken into the ocean from abroad; but if they were, the figure-heads should be taken down before the ships came in sight of land, and on no account were men to sail to the land with gaping heads or yawning snouts, lest the land-vættir should take fright thereat.

We should have expected that the law began by a declaration that the new community would continue to worship the divinities of their forefathers, but in reality it declares that a new faith has arisen in the land, the faith in the landvættir. I do not think I am far wrong in surmising that the hard-hearted, stepmotherly nature of the country was the cause of this national resignation; for, after all, it is the resigned heart of man these beings reflect, and it is a religion of resignation we have here before us.

Now, to return again to our topic, the causes that brought about the general apostasy of the Christians, we have to consider what it meant for the head of a family or the captain of a ship to take with him to Iceland a shipload of immigrants. As the heathens were overwhelmingly the most numerous, we will take the example from their class.

On board ship the captain was the head of the crew, no matter what blood relationship there was between him and his shipmates. The crew was the tribe of which he

was the head. On landing he hallowed for himself what extent of land he deemed he wanted, and partitioned out of it to his men such holdings as they wanted on various terms of tenure. The first duty after landing was, as soon as circumstances allowed, to build a temple for the new community, the site of which was the manorial property of the chief. For this purpose he, no doubt by arrangement, levied a tax upon the community; not a temporary, but a permanent one. The temple, in the larger communities, was a spacious edifice, divided in two portions: an inner one, where there stood a stall after the fashion of an altar, whereon there lay a ring, weighing, in some cases at least, twenty ounces. On this ring all men must take their oaths, and it was the chief's duty to have it on his arm at all meetings of a public character. Round the stall were arranged the images of the gods, and under it was the consecrated earth from the old temple in Norway, which, if the chief happened to have been a temple priest there, he took with him to Iceland. On the stall stood a bowl, with a sprinkler in it. Into this bowl was let flow the blood of such beasts as were sacrificed to the gods at the appointed feasts, and with the sprinkler that blood was sprinkled about the temple and the congregation. The outer and larger portion of the temple was the festal hall, where the temple priest feasted the community at the three great yearly festivals. In this part were found the pillars of the priestly high-seat, and into them were driven the *reginnaglar*, or nails of the gods. And this place was a great sanctuary.

Now when a captain had erected such a temple in his lordship, he became the *goði* of his people in the full sense, and his *power* or *sway* over his people was called *goðorð*; the two terms convey about the same idea as *pontifex* and *pontificatus*. The *goði*, as such, was not a territorial magnate—he was only a lord of power. Therefore the *Grágás* (code of the Commonwealth) says that a *goðorð* cannot be taxed in tithe, “for it is not property, but power.” This is the reason why *goðorð* is a term synonymous with

mannaforræði, or rule over men. The power of the Pope of Rome is, to some extent, an apt illustration ; he sways over men, but rules over no territory. A *goði*'s might and influence depended entirely upon the number of men who yielded him allegiance. His liegemen, as a rule, were most numerous in his own immediate neighbourhood, but any man was free to become the liegeman of any *goði* he chose. The liegemen, in return for the protection afforded them by their *goði*, were bound to respond to his call whenever he wanted them, whether to swell his retinue at public assemblies, or to strengthen his force for military purposes, defensive or offensive.

Now when we consider that the heathen leaders of crews to Iceland took, after landing, the earliest opportunity they could to erect a temple and to set up as *goðar* (sovereign chiefs), we see at once what fate the Christian chiefs saw awaiting them. Unless they could provide temples to their heathen liegemen, who, of course, were in overwhelming majority as compared with the Christian retainers, the heathens would go in a body over to neighbouring heathen chiefs in quest of religious comfort at their temples, and the power of the Christian lords would diminish to such an extent as to count for nothing. What then was the Christian lord to do ? become from a high-born ruler of men a nobody among a swarm of heathens, and eventually a liegeman of some heathen chief who, out of compassion, should take him under his protection ; or, compete with his heathen fellows in the free market of liegemanhip, to save his family from social extinction ? About his choice there could be no hesitation in a tribal state of society. He must, in any case, preserve his prestige as a chief. But that he could do only by offering his liegemen of the heathen persuasion the same religious comfort under the heathen cult that any of the heathen chiefs could afford them. This meant that he must bind them to him by erecting a temple for them, and become their *goði* on the heathen system. These social exigencies must have been the main causes which

led to the general apostasy of the Christian colonists in Iceland, or, at least, of their immediate successors, although the old historians are silent on the point. To be or not to be—that was the question.

Excepting the Kirkby district in the east, the country was wholly heathen from about the beginning of the tenth century until towards the latter end of it, or more precisely speaking, until 981, when missionary enterprise from abroad heralded in the change which was consummated in the last year of it.

But in the course of these 80 years changes had taken place in the constitution of the country which were destined to have a peculiar effect on the course of the missionary progress.

About the year 965, Thord, surnamed the Yeller, a great-grandson of Aud the Deepminded, carried, at the Althing, a constitutional scheme, according to which the country was divided into four Quarters, which generally bore the names of the Southlanders', the Westfirthers', the Northlanders', and the Eastfirthers' Quarter, each of which was to have its superior court of appeal at the Althing. Each of these Quarters was divided into three so-called Things, or jurisdictions, except the Northlanders' Quarter, in which there were four Things. In each Thing, again, there should be three *goðorð*. Consequently the number of *goðar*, or chiefs, in the whole land was now fixed at 39. Into the hands of these chiefs fell the whole government of the country, to the exclusion of every other claimant. Practically speaking, this meant turning into a monopoly the free competition in liegemanhip which hitherto had obtained. When this change came in, *goðar* existing in excess of the number of 39 must be disfranchised; aspirants to the dignity outside the league of the 39 could look forward to no share in the government of the country, even if they succeeded in forming a community of adherents numerous enough to count for a *goðorð*. Men of ability and ambition finding themselves thus beset by disabilities constitutionally enforced, would

naturally chafe at such a state of things, and widespread discontent could not fail to follow. This constitutional experiment had been on its trial for only sixteen years when the first missionaries made their appearance. Among the malcontents they would be certain to find ready-made allies when the main body of the 39 made a dead set against the introduction into the country of the new faith.

The first attempt at converting the Icelanders to Christianity was made by a native of the country, named Thorvald, known in history as Thorvald the Far-travelled. He was the son of Kodran, a franklin who lived in the north country district called Waterdale, and was descended from a famous race of men who were known as the Skidungs, descendants of Skidi the Old, son of Bard in Al in Norway.

Thorvald, about whom we have a special Saga, began life as a disfavoured child of his father. But he had the good luck to be taken up by a kindly soothsayess of the neighbourhood, who gave him a loving fostering until he attained the age when, for a well-born Icелander in those days, it was the fashion to go abroad and approve one's self a doughty Viking, worthy of a place among a king's bodyguard. According to the Saga of him, he was a singularly noble type of a Viking. His biographer informs us that he was a peculiar favourite of King Sweyn, the father of Knut the Great, for he was a man of much counsel, well endowed with bodily strength and of a valiant heart, highly skilled in the craft of weapons and keen in battle; he was free and open-handed as to money, approved for faithfulness and trusty service, engaging of demeanour and well beloved among all the war-host, and not undeservedly so, for although yet a heathen, he acted with a generosity that surpassed other heathens: his share in the loot he would bestow upon the needy, or spend in ransoming prisoners of war, or succouring those afflicted by misery; if his loot happened to consist of captives of the stricken field, he would send them back to their parents or relatives, even as those whom he had

ransomed with money. As a reward for his dauntless valour in battle, his fellow-soldiers conferred on him the privilege to choose his own share of the war-booty before it came to general division, and his choice fell on the sons of mighty men, or on such other objects as were most missed by the losers, but least coveted by his comrades; and such captives and keepsakes he would send back to parents and owners respectively. After having spent some time in Viking raids, he came to Germany, and there made the acquaintance of a Bishop named Frederick, a man of singularly sweet disposition and inexhaustible Christian forbearance. By this Bishop Thorvald was baptised and converted to Christianity, which he embraced with such ardour that by incessant prayers he at last prevailed on the Bishop to undertake with him a journey to Iceland, in order to preach God's errand, and to convert his father, mother, and other relatives. They came to Iceland in the year 981, and remained in the country for five years. During this time they christened the family of Thorvald, whose brother, Orm, however, would have nothing to do with the new faith. They undertook missionary journeys, not only in the neighbourhood of Thorvald's immediate relatives, but also went north to Skagafjord, and even as far north as Eyjafjord. They also made their way westward as far as the Broadfirth Dales, the old landtake of Aud the Deepminded, where the *goði* at this time was Thorarinn, the son of Thord Yeller. In the beginning it seems that the mission was favoured with considerable success. Many were baptised, others received the *prima signatio*, the sign of the Cross, a preliminary ceremony to baptism, and Thorvald's father-in-law, Olaf of Hawkgill, even set up a place of Christian worship, which indicates that in his immediate neighbourhood there existed already a congregation numerous enough to support a parish church. But when the heathen priests, collecting their temple tax, came to learn that the Christian converts refused to pay it, they soon combined to make the life of the missionaries and their

converts one of trouble and even danger. And Thorvald, always stronger in the provocative argument of the sword than in the soothing persuasiveness of the Gospel, brought the situation to such a point of peril, that he and the gentle Bishop had promptly to leave the country. Of Thorvald it is said, with what truth we know not, that he founded a monastery out in Russia, at a place called Drafn, having been sent on a missionary errand to that country by the Emperor of Byzanz.

The next mission to Iceland took place in 996, under the ægis of Olaf Tryggvasson, King of Norway. The missionary this time was Stefnir Thorgilsson, a great-grandson of Helgi Bjola, who has been mentioned before. Converted to Christianity in Denmark, while on one of his Viking cruises abroad, he soon afterwards fell in with Olaf Tryggvasson, and became his man when Olaf seized upon the kingdom of Norway, 996. Stefnir, as a missionary, was an apt pupil of imperious Tryggvasson. When he came to Iceland, he went about with a company of nine sturdy men at arms, preaching the gospel ; but if he failed to persuade, he would wreck temples and burn idols when and where he got the chance. This kind of missionary proceeding necessarily led to the heathens banding together to resist with might and main this Christian marauder, who with difficulty got away from his incensed pursuers, and took shelter with his kinsmen within his great-grandfather's landtake of Keelness. As Stefnir came out to Iceland in the summer of 996, his missionary doings must belong to that summer and the following autumn. When the Althing assembled in the month of June next year, a bill was promptly passed making blasphemy against the gods and any injury done to idols a criminal offence, not against society in general, however, but, tribal fashion, against the family of the offender. Therefore it was made obligatory only on such members of the offender's family as were related to him in the third, fourth, and fifth degree to prosecute him at law for such a crime. Christianity now was termed *frænda skömm*, or family disgrace ; recep-

tion of it covered the confessor with infamy within his family. The penalty was outlawry, and forfeiture to the prosecutors of the convict's property.

In the light of the fact that in the tribal state of society existing in Iceland at this time the bond of blood-relationship was sacred and inviolable, not only in consequence of long traditional custom, but actually by law, as we know from the ancient chapter on *weregild* in "Grágás," called "Baugatal," this new enactment, carried through by the compact body of the privileged heathen *goðar*, spoke an unmistakable language as to how ruthlessly these men were in earnest, and must have sent terror and dismay into the heart of the people at large throughout the land. For us, strangers to such a state of society, it is almost impossible to conceive these feelings in all their intensity. It would almost seem as if the malicious aim of this law was socially to annihilate the family of any prominent man who by lending support to Christianity proved himself an enemy of the old *goðar*. Otherwise it is difficult to understand how the exposure of this new-made crime should be made a family concern and not a concern of society at large. In any case the law served as a direct incentive to men of unscrupulous avarice to conspire against wealthy relatives in order to possess themselves of their property. Such a purpose would be more surely effected by the very provision that the prosecution was made obligatory on the more distant relatives of the offender, who naturally would not realise the tenderness of the bond of blood-relationship as keenly as those of closer kindred. The first to be prosecuted under this law was the man who was the primary cause of it, Stefnir himself, the plaintiffs being the sons of Osvífr (the father of Gudrun, immortalised by William Morris), who were descended from Ketil Flatnose in the fifth degree, while Stefnir was the fourth in descent from him.

But the law was destined for a short sway. As matters turned out, it had a run of only three years, and during that time seems to have been put only twice in operation.

For now Olaf Tryggvasson began in full earnest to throw the enormous weight of his uncompromising influence into the scale. The same summer, 997, that Stefnir had to quit the country an outlawed criminal, King Olaf sent his own court chaplain, a German, named Thangbrand, to Iceland to convert the people. Thangbrand was a high type of Teutonic brusqueness, a pompous cleric, dauntless in argument, and fearless of clinching it with his sword if need be. Appointed priest by King Olaf to the first church he set up in Norway, in the island of Mostr, Thangbrand, by extravagant living, speedily ran through the endowment of the benefice; then promptly gathering men together, he made Viking raids upon heathen people, and by the plunder procured in that manner adjusted the wrong side of his balance-sheet.

Thangbrand landed in Swanfirth (Alptafjörður) in eastern Iceland, and took up his abode at the house of Hall o' Side, a scion of a royal race of ancestors, a man of much wisdom and equability of temper, generous-hearted, forbearing, yet firm in his dealings with men. Thangbrand converted Hall and all his household to Christianity in the course of the winter. Next summer he started on his first missionary journey, with Hall o' Side, as he went in the capacity of a *goði* to the Althing. In this journey Thangbrand baptised many men, and whole families in some cases. And as the majority of those who are mentioned as having been baptised resided some near to, others at no great distance from, the Christian community of Kirkby, their ready acceptance of baptism may possibly be accounted for as being due to the influence which that community had for a long time exercised upon the heathens in those isolated parts of the country. In this journey was baptised Nial, the hero of the story of Burnt Nial, who, as we learn from the Saga of him, had long been persuaded of the excellence of the Christian faith above the heathen.

No general movement hostile to Thangbrand was organised among the heathens. Individuals came for-

ward to try conclusions with him, but his sword prevailed ; in one duel he came off victorious although, instead of a shield, he bore only a rood-cross. Poets lampooned him, but his sword untaught them the provocative art for ever. In disputes on the relative merits of the two religions he proved superior to all comers. Asked if he knew that White-Christ had not the courage to fight a duel Thor had challenged him to, he answered, "I know that Thor was but mould and ashes when it pleased God he should live no longer."

When he came to the Althing, the Parliament of the people, he "pleaded dauntlessly God's errand," and many people out of the Southlanders' Quarter were christened. An attempt on the part of the relatives of one of his victims to wreak revenge on him was frustrated by Nial, backed by the men of the Eastfirthers' Quarter, that is to say, Hall o' Side and other chiefs of the eastern parts.

About Thangbrand's movements after the Althing of this year, 998, until the next year, 999, when he returned to Norway, some confusion prevails in the old records, but it is a confusion of no real importance, as it only affects the order in which his various trips through the land took place. Enough to say, that he travelled over the greater part of the island, and christened a great many people, among whom it may suffice here to mention Gizur the White, and his son-in-law Hjalti Skeggjason, both of whom take henceforth a most prominent part in bringing about the change which was to become an accomplished fact in the course of less than two years.

Thangbrand went back to Norway in the summer of 999. At the Althing that summer our Sagas mention that a great discussion took place at the diet on the new faith. But we have no details of the debates on the subject. That they must have been of an excited character may be inferred from the fact that both Thangbrand and Hjalti Skeggjason were outlawed, the former under the common law for manslaughter, the latter under the above-mentioned blasphemy law. Hjalti left the country, accom-

panied by Gizur the White, and both betook themselves to the court of King Olaf Tryggvasson, who accorded them a gracious welcome. But when about the same time Thangbrand appeared on the scene, and told the king that the Icelanders had received his missionary errand with hostility, and that they would never accept the Christian faith, the king lost his temper in so royal a fashion that he threatened to mishandle and to kill all the heathen Icelanders who then happened to be in Norway. But, fortunately, Gizur the White had a true story to tell of Thangbrand's success, and the courage to add that in Iceland, as in Norway, Thangbrand had behaved in too riotous a manner, taking the lives of sundry persons, and to abide by such a conduct on the part of a foreigner the Icelanders deemed a hard matter. On the other hand, knowing how the Christians joined hands with the discontented great families in Iceland, and how both made a common cause against the league of the privileged 39 *goðar*, he was able to assure the king that, by wisely conducting affairs, Christianity would prevail in the island. In this manner the king's rage was assuaged. Gizur and Hjalti bound themselves to do their best to bring the conversion of their people to a successful issue; while the king arbitrarily seized and retained as hostages the sons of four Icelandic chieftains who were among the mightiest lords in each Quarter of the island. All the Icelanders who at this time were at the mercy of the king were baptised.

Provided with seven priests, Gizur and Hjalti started from Norway early in the summer A.D. 1000. They did not reach the Westmen's Isles till the 19th of June, the day before the session of the Althing was to begin. They got themselves ferried, at their speediest, to the nearest shore, where, after some difficulty thrown in their way by the liegemen of the staunchest of the heathen chiefs, Runolf o' Dale, they got horses and rode at their speediest towards Thingvellir. On their way they gathered to them such following of Christians as they could pick up, and when they came to a place called Springdale (Laugadalr),

a short distance east of Thingvellir, Gizur prevailed on Hjalti to remain there, and not present himself, an outlaw, within the hallowed precincts of the Althing. Gizur proceeded with his following to a place on the lake of Thingvellir, called Vellankatla, or Boiling Cauldron, where he encamped, and sent messages to relatives and friends gathered at the Thing to come and join him. The messages were readily responded to, and now the Christians rode in a compact body to the Althing, the impetuous Hjalti Skeggjason having suddenly joined them at the last moment, and thus broken his parole to his father-in-law, and at the same time the law of the land, by entering, himself an outlaw, the precincts of a hallowed assembly.

When the Christian host made its appearance on the scene, the heathens ran together, all fully armed, and such was the excitement that for a while it looked as if a general battle could not be avoided. But it would seem that passion did not run so recklessly high on the part of the heathens as appearances seemed to warrant; for there were men of influence among them who endeavoured to prevent things coming to the issue of the sword, and their attitude seems to have brought about so much wavering that the day closed without the arbitrament of the sword having been resorted to. Thus matters stood on Saturday the 22nd of June, A.D. 1000. A peace-hallowed Thing was now converted into two hostile camps. What the next day would bring forth no one knew.

Early next morning, Sunday, the 23rd, the Christians assembled to a solemn service on the slope overlooking the meads of Thingvellir. When Mass had been sung, the whole congregation went in a procession to the Rock of Laws, led by Thormod and his six priests, all in sacerdotal robes, preceded by two large crosses, each of the priests swinging a censer.

Now Gizur and Hjalti stepped forward and declared their errand in language which created general admiration. King Olaf Tryggvasson's interest in the matter was insisted upon with great effect, and when the speakers had come

to the end of their harangue, so awe-inspiring had it been that none of their opponents had the boldness to argue against them.

But the effect on the assembly generally was disastrous, for Christians and heathens now took witnesses that they would live no longer under one common law. Henceforth, then, the nation was to be divided: the heathens abiding by their law, the Christians by such laws as they should think it fit to frame henceforth. This shows that the Christians were already confident that the heathen party was too weak to enforce their will by physical force (*i.e.*, force of arms). The attitude of the Christians was defiant and revolutionary, that of the heathens constitutionally passive.

At this juncture a traveller rushed excitedly into the assembly, saying that a volcanic eruption had taken place in the neighbourhood of the manor of Thorod, a heathen *goði*, in the landscape called Olfus, and the lava threatened to destroy his house. "No wonder," answered the heathens, "that the gods should be angry for such language as we have now been witnesses to." "But," promptly retorted Snorri *goði*, "what made the gods angry when the earth burnt whereon we stand now?" After this both parties went away from the Rock of Laws.

The Christians now organised themselves into a constitutional assembly of their own, appointing Hall o' Side their Speaker-at-Law, and requesting him to draw up a constitutional charter for the Christian community. But he backed out of the difficult task by, strange to say, arranging with the Speaker-at-Law of the heathens, Thorgeir, the chief of the men of Lightwater (Ljósavatn), in the North Country, to frame the Christian constitution for him, and this he undertook, for a moderate fee, according to some authorities.

This was a singularly cleverly conceived stratagem on the part of the acknowledged chief of the Christian party; for if the Speaker-at-Law of the heathens failed to satisfy his own side, a disastrous split in the heathen party was

certain to follow, giving the Christians all the greater chance of victory. If he failed to give satisfaction to the Christians, then matters stood where they were; the Christians, with the powerful support of the king of Norway, fully matched their opponents. If he should satisfy both parties, the volcano on which both now stood would become extinct without any explosion, and mutual peace and concord would settle upon a distracted land.

According to the “*Saga of Olaf Tryggvasson*,”¹ Hall o’ Side, Gizur and Hjalti stipulated with Thorgeir beforehand that whatever form he should choose to give to the law he had undertaken to frame, the following three paragraphs must be included in it :—

1. All folk in Iceland to be Christian; those not yet christened, to be baptised.
2. Temples and idols not to be recognised by law.
3. Sacrifices, if proved to have taken place, to be punishable by outlawry.

After this, Thorgeir went to his booth and lay down, and spread a fell over his head, holding converse with no one; and thus he lay till the same hour the next day, Monday, the memorable 24th of June, A.D. 1000.

In the meantime the heathens resorted to a device which clearly indicated how despairing a view they took of the situation. They convened and held a crowded meeting, at which it was resolved to make a vow to the gods to sacrifice two men out of every Quarter of the land, to the end that they should not allow Christianity to spread over the country. On learning this, Gizur and Hjalti called together a meeting of their Christian followers, and declared that they too wished to have a human sacrifice, no less in number of persons than their opponents; and Hjalti spoke thus :—

“The heathens sacrifice the worst men they can find, and thrust them over rocks or precipices, but our choice shall be according to virtue, and we shall call it the

¹ “*Fornms.*,” II., 236-7.

triumphal gift to our Lord Jesus Christ ; let our vow be to live better and pay more heed against sinning than before."

This apparently meant that the triumphal gift should consist of eight men who vowed to lead a life of exemplary Christian conduct ; monastic recluseness was scarcely contemplated, as no member of this triumphal gift is known to have taken any conventual vows. Gizur and Hjalti came forward at once for the Southlanders' Quarter, Hall o' Side and Thorarin of Crosswick for the Eastfirthers, Hlenni the Old and Thorvard the son of Spakböðvar for the Northlanders, but for the Westfirthers' Quarter only Guest Oddleifsson came forward at first ; however, after some hitch, Orm, the brother of Thorvald the Far-travelled, the missionary we have had to deal with before, stood forth, saying, "If my brother Thorvald was now in this land, a man would soon be forthcoming for this purpose ; but now I shall offer myself, if ye will accept me." They agreed, and forthwith he was baptised.

Having spent 24 hours in his booth in the manner already mentioned, Thorgeir rose up, and sent out word, calling all the people to the Rock of Law. The people having assembled, he stood forth among them in his place of authority, and spoke, saying : " Things will have come to a hopeless pass when the people of this land shall no longer have one common law to abide by " ; and he set it forth to the people in many ways, how that such a thing should not be allowed to take place, avowing that it would lead to a state of hostility from which people might be sure would rise internal fighting such as would bring about the ruin of the land. He related the story how certain kings in Norway and Denmark had been at wars and battles each with the other for a long time, until the people of each country settled peace between them in spite of their unwillingness ; a settlement which resulted, in a short time, in their sending each other precious gifts, and in that peace lasting as long as both kings lived. " Now it seems to me also a good counsel," said he, " that even we prevent having their will those who are most eager to go at each

other, and that we so equalise matters between them that to either side such concession be made as that we may all have one law and one faith in common. One thing is certain : if we tear up the law, we shall tear up the peace also.”

The speech had the effect that the whole assembly agreed to having one law in the land, and declared themselves ready to abide by Thorgeir’s framing of it.

The law, as formulated by Thorgeir, consisted of the following three paragraphs :—

1. All men in the land should be Christian ; those still unbaptised should be baptised.
2. As to the casting out of children, and eating of horse-flesh, the old law should remain unamended.
3. Those who preferred might sacrifice in secret, but if they were found out, the punishment should be outlawry.

By this compromise Christianity and paganism changed places ; henceforth the former was a recognised national, the latter a tolerated private form of worship.

Not a voice was raised against Thorgeir’s decision. All the people assembled received the *prima signatio* or *signaculum crucis*, a ceremony preliminary to full baptism ; many were baptised then and there ; but many excused themselves from going into cold water,¹ and so were baptised in a warm spring in the neighbouring Springdale. The whole assembly was baptised on the way home from this memorable Althing. In this way Christianity became the State religion in Iceland.

It seems incredible how the heathen chiefs, who only two days before would hear of nothing but wiping Christianity out in blood, should now, without a murmur, accept it. But when we look more closely into the matter we can discover various reasons whereby to account for the sudden change. When the Christians in a compact

¹ This statement must be taken *cum grano salis*, the cold water meant is that in the rifts or the river (Øxará) at Thingvellir, the coldest water I have ever bathed in.

body boldly galloped in on Saturday, the 22nd of June, the first effect upon the conservative heathen chiefs was a burning sense of indignation at seeing the defiant front of their hated and despised antagonists. But, as the records give to understand, there were among them men of cool heads and moderation, and to them it was due, that the matter in dispute was not at once put to the decision of the sword. To these men the position of the heathen chiefs must have presented itself as a peculiarly perilous one. Within the land the Christian party was already a very strong one, and was led by men of high character, ability, and determination. Abroad this party had now the formidable support of the everywhere-triumphant missionary potentate Olaf Tryggvasson, who held as hostages the sons of some of the greatest chiefs in Iceland, and was well known to the Icelanders by rumour as one who brooked no nonsense when dealing with refractory pagans. If he should receive bad news from Iceland of Gizur and Hjalti's mission, the heathen chiefs might with certainty count on news worse for themselves from Norway in return. (They did not know that the king had less than three months more to live.) It could not escape their mind that, behind his present interference in the internal affairs of their country, possibly far-reaching political schemes might be lurking—schemes aiming at their own independence and at the independence of their own land at the same time. Harald Fairhair's (Olaf Tryggvasson's great grandfather's) attempt to inveigle the country into subjection by means of Uni the Dane's diplomacy, was not yet forgotten.

In such circumstances it would naturally suggest itself to thoughtful men that one simple device would save the perilous situation: let all the privileged chiefs who were heathen still, accept Christianity. By doing so, all religious quarrel with Christians at home would be at an end; the king of Norway would be deprived of all pretext for further meddling in Iceland's internal affairs; and the political privileges which the constitution of 965 had conferred upon the 39 chiefs would remain uninterfered with, they

continuing in their old power Christian chiefs of Christian liegemen.

That considerations to this effect must have suggested themselves to Thorgeir while he lay under his fell reviewing in his mind the various phases of the situation, may be taken for granted ; that he should have found means to quietly communicate them beforehand to the heathen chiefs, and thus prepare them for what was coming, seems to have at least probability in its favour. And then the sudden and peaceful conversion to the new faith of the whole assembly at Thingvellir becomes perfectly natural.

Christianity won a swift and signal victory. Of course it was a victory in a worldly sense. The heart of the great mass of the people remained what it was before. But the field was now open to the sower. The reaping of the fruits of that sowing was reserved for the future.

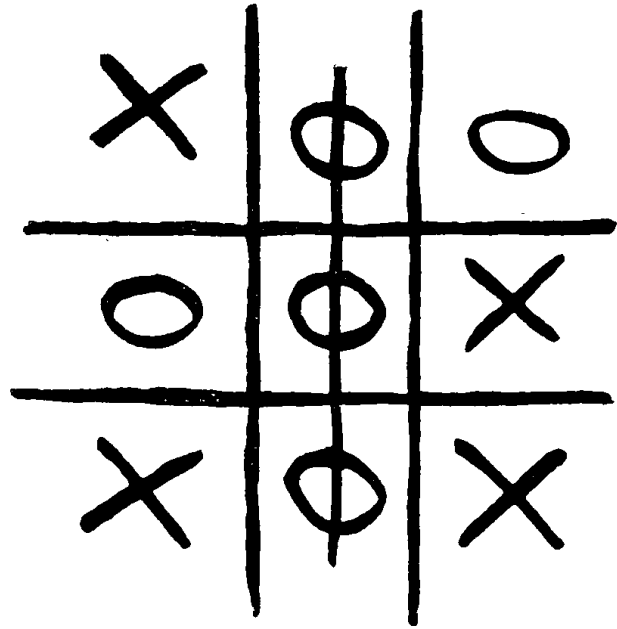


FIG. 1.—OUGHTS AND CROSSES.

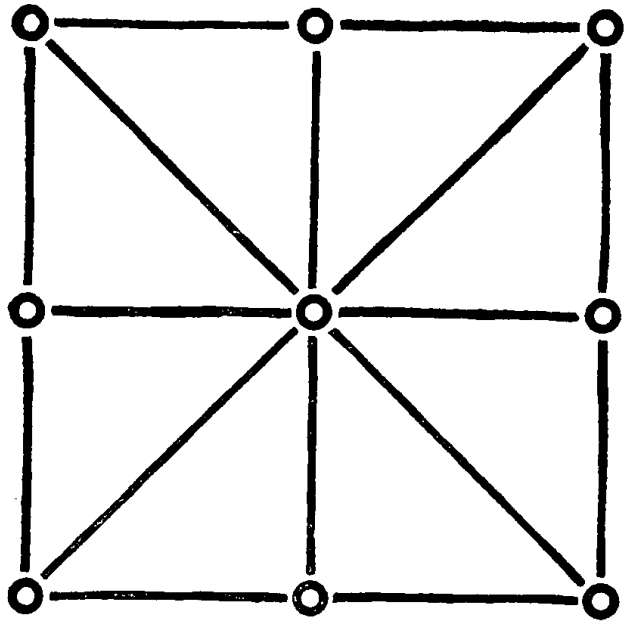


FIG. 2.—NINE-HOLES.

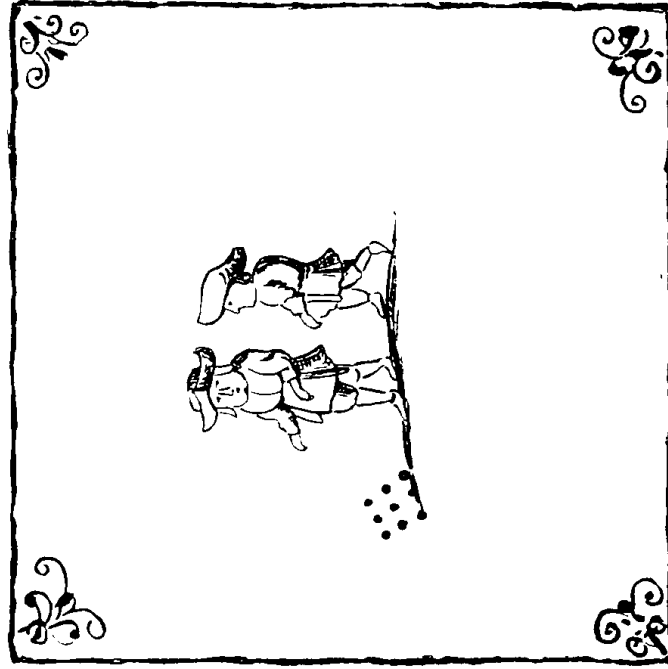


FIG. 3.—DUTCH TILE.

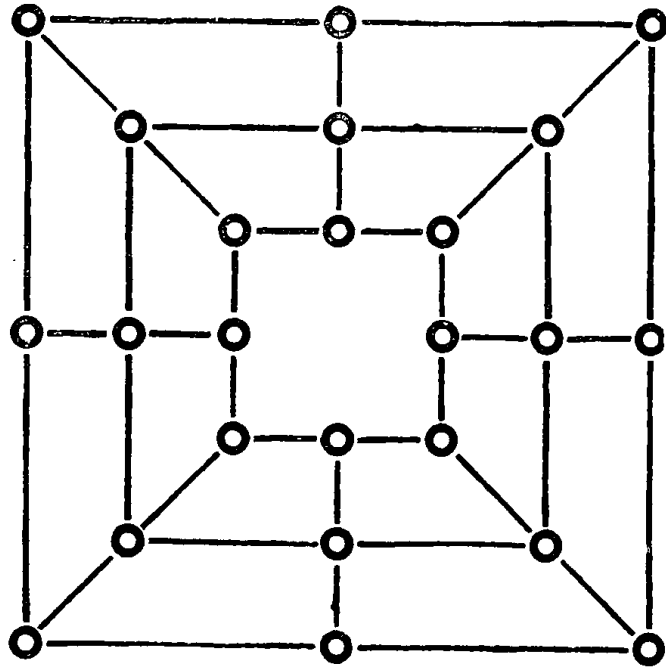


FIG. 4.—NINE MEN'S MORRIS.

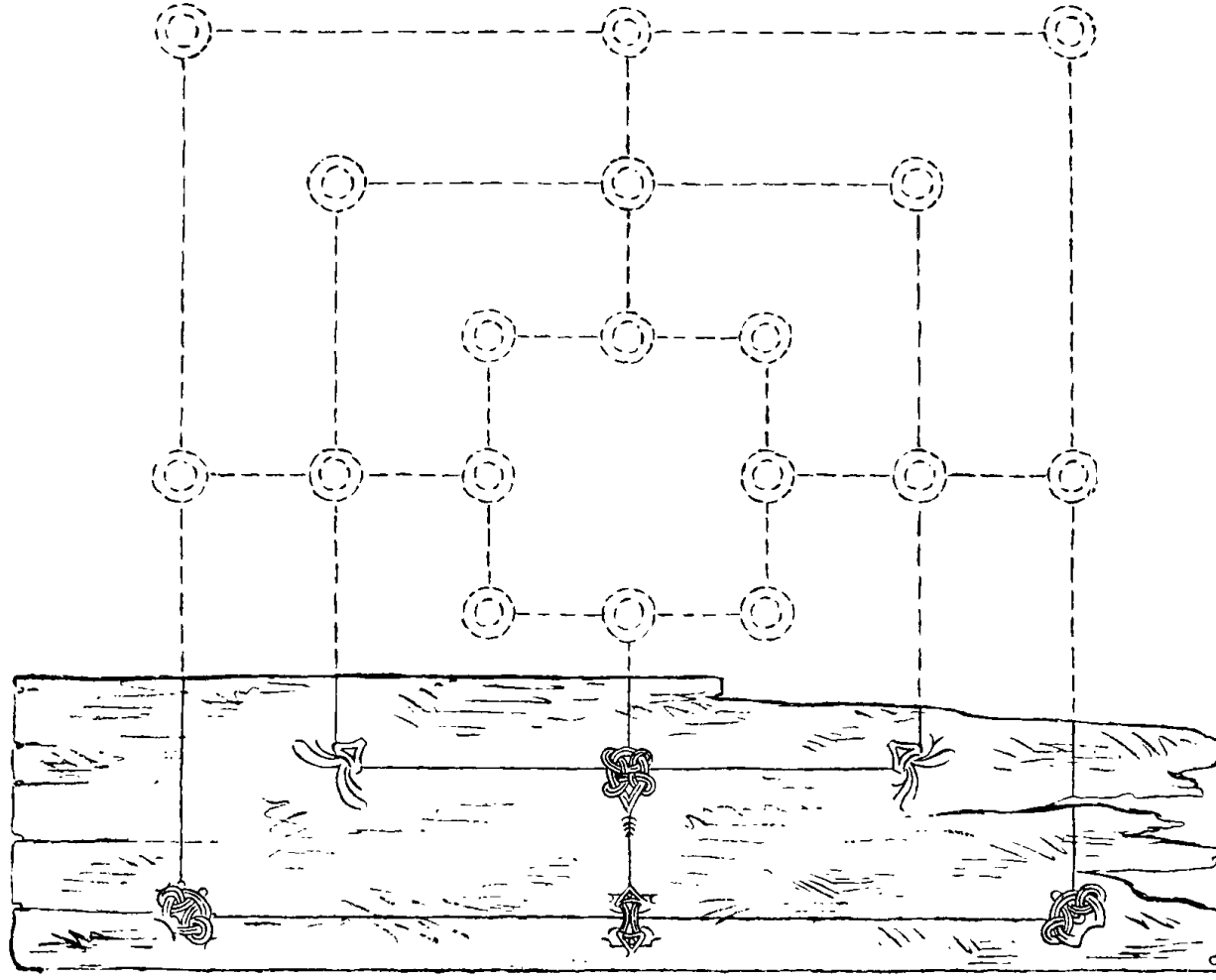


FIG. 5.—BOARD FROM VIKING SHIP.

NINE MEN'S MORRIS :

AN OLD VIKING GAME.

By A. R. GODDARD, B.A.

“The nine men's morris is fill'd up with mud ;
And the quaint mazes in the wanton green,
For lack of tread are undistinguishable.”

“Midsummer's Night's Dream,” Act II., Scene 2.

THE recurrence in widely-separated parts of the world of certain similar games and sports goes to furnish us with yet another proof that “all mankind, the world o'er, are brithers a' for a' that.” The early Oriental forms of chess and draughts and kindred table games, the singular animal sports of the native Indians of Guiana, the lines scratched on pavements at Rome and Athens, or on the stone benches of our mediæval monasteries, all tell us that “to play” is as widely human as “to err.”

It was the writer's good fortune to chance upon a pleasant little discovery about eighteen months ago, by which an interesting game, known to be mediæval and Shakspearean, was proved to be centuries older than was suspected, and found to have been a table game amongst our Viking forefathers. When these sturdy adventurers swept the seas with their long ships, braving the perils of the unkindly ocean, “that broad way of daring on which no footprints linger,” as it was called by an old Saxon writer, they carried with them, it is suggestive to know, their sports to beguile their leisure hours : wherein their descendants are like unto them, faring to all the ends of the earth, and revelling in their strenuous recreations, even under the hail of the enemy's bombs.

If the question were asked of most persons, even those of fairly wide reading, "What is 'Nine Men's Morris'?" the answer would probably be, "It is a game mentioned in Shakspeare, and said still to be occasionally played to-day by rustics in out-of-the-way places." This statement summarises such information as students of Shakspeare will usually find appended in footnotes to the passage at the head of this article, in which Titania is describing the effects of a flood in an English rural district. Hitherto, therefore, the game has been an obscure detail, all but lost in the mass of Shaksperiana, although of recent years attention has been called to it by interesting matter in *Notes and Queries* and in the *Archæological Journal*.

Nine Men's Morris belongs to the class of "three-in-a-line" games, which is larger than most people would imagine. The simplest example of the class is the "Oughts and Crosses" of the English schoolboy. Have we not all of us memories of odd moments whiled away, perhaps even during school hours, in waging this battle on our slates with our next neighbour? The illustration will sufficiently recall the game and the manner of playing it, by scoring an alternate cipher or cross, until the first uninterrupted three placed in line secures the victory.

Probably few lads who play at Oughts and Crosses are aware that English boys played practically the same game long before slates came into use in our schools, under the name of "Nine-holes." Drayton in his "Polyolbion" describes how

"The unhappy wags which let their cattle stray,
At Nine-holes on the heath while they together play."

And again in his "Muses"—

"Down go our hooks and scrips, and we to Nine-holes."

The object of this game appears to be the same as in the previous one—that is, to place three men in unbroken line, and to prevent the enemy from doing it. In an old Dutch tile in the writer's possession the holes are cut in

the ground, and the players are about to place their pieces. This would seem to show that the game was known and played in Holland two or three centuries ago.

The same game was played by the lads taught in our old monasteries, or perhaps by the monks themselves in their idle time, for in many of our Cathedral cloisters the lines or holes belonging to it are found scratched or cut in the stone seats. These occur in both the second (Fig. 2) and the third (Fig. 3) form at Westminster, Canterbury, Norwich, Gloucester, Salisbury, and elsewhere, and there is an interesting example cut on a stone in the old graveyard of Arbory, Isle of Man.

It is possible that invaders from Imperial Rome first taught the ancient British how to play this game, for Ovid evidently describes something very similar in his "Art of Love." He refers to it as a pleasant means whereby lads and lasses might make progress in one another's affections. Let us read a paraphrase of the passage, and relegate the text to the footnote. "A little board," he writes, "receives small pebbles, three to either side, and the way to win is to range them in unbroken line. Crack a thousand jokes! For a lass not to know how to play is a shame. In playing, love is ever forwarded."¹ There is also another reference to the same game in his "Tristia." It is evident, therefore, that this three-in-a-line game was a source of amusement to young folks in very early times. In the British Museum, in the Egyptian department, there may be seen a small red-brick tablet, with nine shallow hollows, in which stand pieces of red and black tile; this has all the appearance of a Nine-holes board. The game was also played in England for something more than mere love. Herrick, in his "Hesperides," makes this clear, when he refers to the gains made by a certain player—

¹ "Parva tabella capit ternos utrimque lapillos,
In qua vicisse est continuasse suos.
Mille facesse jocos; turpe est nescire puellam,
Ludere, ludendo sæpe paratur amor."

"Art of Love," III., 365.

Compare also "Tristia," II., 481.

“Raspe plays at Nine-holes, and 'tis known he gets
Many a tester by his game and bets.”

Such then was the simplest of the three-in-a-line games. One authority, Nares, in his “Glossary,” says that Nine Men’s Morris is only another name for Nine-holes, and gives the plan shown in Fig. 2 as an example he had seen cut on small boards. This is not quite correct, as may be seen by examining the board on which our game is usually played, which is also the form found in the fourteenth century, as Strutt tells us in his “Sports and Pastimes.” Dr. Hyde considers that the game was known to the Normans, although he gives no authority for the statement. In the light of later evidence it is likely enough, and we derive a second name for the game, “Merelles,” from a French source, from *muraille*, or the Latin *muralis*, because of the fragments of brick or tile sometimes used for the pieces. Merelles was also played as a table-game. An old edition of Petrarch’s works, dated 1520, gives a quaint woodcut of two monkeys playing it in this shape.

In this more developed form, each player has nine men, and plants or “pitches” them down alternately, as at Nine-holes, and with the same object, to get three in a row, and to hinder the opponent from doing the same. When a three is made, the player may take one of his enemy’s men off the board. When all the nine men on both sides are placed, they are then moved one place at a time, still with the aim to secure continuous threes, until by constant removals one player is left with only two, when the game is lost. It is a surprisingly good game, and much more skill is needed to play it well than one would think. The wrestles and deadlocks, the strategy in occupying useful stations to secure the threes, and the stiff fight between players at all equal before victory can be scored, must be experienced to be understood.

This is the game to which Shakspeare refers. It is little known in England, except amongst the rustics in country districts, who are of all people those who best conserve old customs and immemorial tradition. The

ease with which men and table can be extemporised has also something to do with it. The lines or stations of the board may be cut in the turf of the common, or scratched on the top of the corn-bin, or chalked on the pavement or floor ; whilst the men may be made of anything at hand—sticks and stone, beans and oats, or chalk and coal. Various contributors in *Notes and Queries* write of the game as being known and played in Yorkshire, Wiltshire, Dorset, Norfolk, and other counties. The name also varies according to local pronunciation. Thus in Dorset it is known as “Marnull” or “Marells” ; in Norfolk as “Nine Stone Morris” ; while in Wiltshire it has many forms, such as “The Merrills,” or “Madell,” or yet again, “Medal.” Thus, “Elevenpenny Madell” is played on the full board, as in Fig. 4 ; in “Ninepenny Madell” the diagonals are omitted ; “Sixpenny Madell” is played on three triangles, one within the other ; and “Threepenny Madell” requires only one square, and is, in fact, the Nine-holes form. The word “penny” refers, not to the coin, but to the pins or pieces.

John Clare, the peasant poet of Northamptonshire, in his “Rural Muses” (1835) speaks of the game as played on the leys, or on the grass at the end of ploughed fields, in a sonnet, “The Shepherd Boy” :—

“Pleased in his loneliness he often lies
 Telling glad stories to his dog, or e'en
 His very shadow, that the loss supplies
 Of living company Full oft he'd lean
 By pebbled brooks, and dream with happy eyes
 Upon the fairy pictures spread below ;
 Thinking the shadowed prospects real skies
 And happy heavens, where his kindred go.
 Oft we may track his haunts where he hath been
 To spend the leisure which his toils bestow,
 By nine-peg-morris nicked upon the green,
 Or flower-stuck gardens never meant to grow,
 Or figures cut on trees his skill to show
 Where he a prisoner from a shower hath been.”

The lines for this more advanced game also appear on the stone seats in cathedral cloisters. Mr. St. John Hope

and Mr. Micklethwaite, in the *Archæological Journal*, quote many examples, with woodcuts. Some have the diagonals, some are without. They are found at Norwich Cathedral and Castle, Gloucester, Canterbury, Winchester, Salisbury, and there is a fourteenth century example at Scarborough Castle.

A yet more interesting case comes from Athens, where Mr. Leveson Gower describes a similar board cut in the steps of the Acropolis, and elsewhere in that city. It is not suggested that these incised game-tables in Greece come down from old classic days. It is more likely that they were wrought by the same hands that cut the Runic scroll on the Lion of St. Mark's on the top of the column at Venice, when that animal stood on his original site in the Piræus. The inscription in the scroll has been said to point to the Varangian Guard, and they may have cut the familiar recreation too, to supply them with a favourite table-game.

However that may be, evidence is forthcoming from a most unexpected quarter to connect our old game with the Scandinavians, and to put the date of it four or five centuries further back than anything hitherto known. Many will remember the interest awakened by the discovery of the great Viking ship at Gokstad in 1880, of which a model was exhibited in the "Healtheries" Exhibition held at Earl's Court two or three years later. Within the ship was found a rich store of furniture and equipment to help us to fill in the romantic picture of the life of the old Norse sea-rangers. Professor Nicolaysen, of Christiania Museum, published a full account of the excavation, and a detailed record of all found therein, in a most valuable monograph, with exact and beautiful engravings of all the objects, drawn to scale.

Amongst these illustrations is one called a "Fragment of a Game-board," with incised lines and ornament on both faces of it. On one hand the game was evidently some form of draughts, with many more squares to the line than we have on our modern boards; on the other,

the lines and ornament were not recognised as belonging to any known game. The engraving of it was reproduced in Du Chaillu's "Viking Age," where it figures as "A Fragment of Wood from the Gokstad Ship." A finely-turned playing-piece of dark horn, in the shape of a helmet, was also found hard by the board, together with a candle-stand, the old rover's wooden bedstead, and a number of other personal items and fittings. When the lines and the tiny scrolls at intersecting points are examined, there can be no doubt as to the game that was played on the board. So much is given, that, with the fixed proportions of the squares which decide the playing-table, it is easy to restore the whole. The result may be seen in the illustration (Fig. 5). We have here the earliest trace yet known of our old game of Merelles, or Nine Men's Morris.

We have, therefore, one detail the more to enable us to realise the life of those great seafarers who found King Alfred so much to do in his time; the ninth century being the date assigned by Professor Nicolaysen, for reasons given, to this interesting ship and burial. Brave old adventurer! With hard fights before him in strange lands; with the storm-wind whistling through his spars and rigging; with chronic rheumatism racking his veteran joints—for the doctors report a bony enlargement of them from this cause—he was careful not to lose the chance of sport on his *taflbord*, and carried it with him on his sundry expeditions, even in that last great voyage of all, when he sailed forth into the Great Unknown. And there it lay interred under the clay of Gokstad, with the bones of its worn-out old master.

The Sagas tell us that the hot spirit of the players was shown in their games, no less than in their fighting. They, like certain descendants of theirs, did not take kindly to defeat. King Knut, at Roeskilde, in playing chess with one of his jarls, lost a knight, and wished to have it back; but his antagonist was bent on "playing the game," and rather than yield the point, he lost his

temper, upset the *taflhord*, and went off in a fume. On another occasion, Sam Magnusson wanted to withdraw a piece he had exposed, but Thorgils Bodvarsson, his opponent, objected. A friend looking on, who acted as referee, said it was surely better to concede than to quarrel; but Thorgils did not see it in that light. He knocked the game over, put the men in a bag, and smote Sam a blow on the ear that made the blood flow.

As we have seen, the Vikings bore their games with them in their ships. Thus they, no doubt, conveyed them into their new settlements beyond the seas. Was this the way the game came to be known in Greece? Did the Normans derive it from their forefathers of Scandinavia? Do our rustics unknowingly owe their simple sport to those hard years of raid and ravage, when the Norsemen rode through Saxon England with much the same celerity that their Dutch descendants are found displaying to-day in South Africa? There is one old possession of theirs to which they certainly bore it. When the modern board, as figured in Fig. 4, was shown to Mr. Eiríkr Magnússon, at Cambridge, he said, "Why, we have this game in Iceland, and we call it 'Mylla'; only in our boards we have not the diagonals at the corners." That is to say, in Iceland, they play the same game that the Vikings took with them to the island. Even in mediæval England we did so too, for several of the examples on the cathedral seats also lack the diagonals; and for the name "Mylla," or "The Mill," Brand mentions that in certain parts he found the game was known as "The Shepherd's Mill."

That fragment of board turning up in the ship at Gokstad justifies us in calling the Nine Men's Morris an old Viking game, and there it must be left. Whether they received it from some earlier civilisation, perhaps from the East, has yet to be ascertained.

In the modern story of the game, it should be mentioned that it was played with living figures at a Floral Fete held at Saffron Walden in connection with Lord

Winchelsea's "Order of Chivalry." It may safely be said that it can never have been played on so large a scale before, as the outer square was 45 feet each way, drawn in lime-white lines on the pleasant green turf of a garden. Nine boys in black, with red sashes and caps, were matched against nine girls in white, with sage-green sashes and bands round their straw hats, and the victory rested with the lady who marshalled the girls. The first four diagrams served as banners, and may be seen in the picture taken at the time, on June 24th, 1897, eighteen months before the further light was shed on the subject by the recognition of the game in the monograph on the Viking ship.



ON A PASSAGE OF "SONAR TOREK" IN THE "EGIL'S SAGA."

BY THE REV. W. C. GREEN.

READERS of "Egil's Saga" will remember the scene in chap. lxxi., where Egil, in deep grief for the death of his son Bodvar, after refusing to eat or speak for two days, is beguiled by his daughter Thorgerdr into taking food, enduring life, and composing a poem on his son's death. The result is "Sonar Torek," a very remarkable poem, indeed the most remarkable of Egil's poems, and different in much from most Icelandic verse in the Sagas. It has less of war, blows, and bloodshed; it is pathetic, a tone of melancholy runs through the whole. The old father can hardly sing, he says, for grief, is powerless to avenge such a death on the sea that has reft him of his son; he is reminded of his earlier losses of brother, father, mother; his kindred are now as a wasted forest, his friends fail him. Now his loved son is lost, his best and only hope. Odin, god of battles, faithful ere-while, is faithless now: he will worship him no more. The gift of poetry is his only solace; patiently he will wait and welcome death.

In the poem there are difficult and puzzling passages, some doubtless corrupt. Of one curious phrase I am now to put before you an explanation which occurred to me when translating the Saga: an explanation different from what I find in printed commentaries. In stanza 17 is this:—

*Byrr er býskip
i bæ kominn,
kvánar son
kynnis leita.*

My son is gone
To the home [dwelling,
buildings] of the beeship,
My wife's son
To seek his kin.

Bodvar is gathered to his fathers, is gone to the other world, to the dwelling of departed spirits, to Valhalla, or the like. So much is plainly meant. But what exactly is this word *býskip*? And why is the spirit-world *býskip*?—a word only found here, one may remark.

Vigfússon's Dictionary gives: "*Býskip*, the ship of the bees, *the air, sky* (dubious)." And some think that for the dubious word *býskip* there should be some *personal* name, of Odin probably, so that "to Odin's home" is meant. Those who acquiesce in the word *býskip* explain that "ship of bees" means "home of bees," that which contains the bees; hence, "the upper air, heaven, the region of the happy dead." But air and sky are the abode of so many other things, just as much as, indeed more so than, of bees. And then "ship" is an unusual term for "home or dwelling," and is a curious thing to compare heaven's vault to. Northmen were, it is true, great ship-farers, but yet they did not dwell much upon or make homes of their ships. However, far-fetched comparisons are found not unfrequently, one must own, in Icelandic poetry.

But it occurred to me that *býskip*, if granted to be the text, might be otherwise interpreted. "Skip" and "skep" are old *English* words still in use, with quite other meanings than "ship." "Skip" is a measure for corn or the like; "skep," a basket; especially is "skep" an ordinary old-fashioned straw *beehive*. In many provinces "skep," or "beeskep"—and, I believe, "beeskip"—would be at once understood for "beehive." Is it not possible that Egil's *býskip* may be simply "beeskep," "beehive"?

It appears from dictionaries that it is not so used now. There is *skeppa*, a measure=Dan. *skjeppe*, but no *skip*, except the nautical one. Yet the word *býskip* may surely have been intelligible to Icelanders in this sense; it may have been so used, I urge, by a poet. For the simple word *bý*, "bee," is, according to dictionaries, obsolete in Icelandic, having been supplanted by *bý-fluga*, "bee-fly." But certainly the poet Egil uses *bý* in stanza 15 of "Höfud-lausn," and he uses it metaphorically, as he uses *býskip* here metaphorically. The lines in "Hfdln." are—*Þöfurr sveigði ý, Flugu unda bý.* "The king bent his yew, Flew wound-bees"; *i.e.*, his arrows were as stinging bees. Or—

"King Eric bent his bow of yew,
Like stinging bees his arrows flew."

"Bee" might be quite intelligible to an Icelanders (as any name of a foreign creature might be in England), though he had no bees in Iceland. The word "bee" might be common enough, though imported; so might, as I think, "beeskep" or "beeskip" (it would not matter much to Icelanders whether they used *skep* or *skip*, the more familiar word to them; and very likely all the lot—*skep*, *skip*, *scoop*, *skiff*, *σκαφος*, and *ship*, belong to one stem). And certainly the Icelanders trafficked with England, and one especial article brought by them from England was honey, the produce of bees. Egil, our poet, had twice been in England for a considerable time. So that he may very well have taken the word *býskip* and used it for beehive, as his ships certainly did take honey from our bee-fostering isle.

But now, when Egil says that his son is gone "to the home (or dwelling) of the beehive," there still remains the question, Why does he call the realm of the departed the beehive? He may indeed, possibly, mean (as it has hitherto been explained by commentators) the airy home, the clear sky of the happier plains of heaven, which *largior æther lumine vestit purpureo* (Virgil); Virgil indeed speaks elsewhere of the bees delighting in a *ver sudum*.

But even so, the "*beeskip* = *bee*^{HIVE}" is surely a better figure for the vaulted dome of the sky than "a ship, a travelling vessel," of quite another shape.

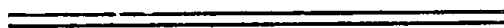
If, however, Egil in *býskip* thought of a "beehive," my idea is that he meant to suggest the *swarming number* of the ghosts or spirits tenanted that region or abode. For the multitude of these is a point dwelt on by several poets. Virgil, Dante, Milton, and newly-discovered Bacchylides, all lay stress on these; the ghosts are numerous as leaves in autumn, as migrating flocks of birds: nay, in one case, Milton says of the host of evil spirits in Satan's hall that they swarmed

"As bees in spring-time, when the sun with Taurus rides,
Pour forth their populous youth about the hive."

The dead are indeed sometimes termed the *plures*, the majority. And this explanation suits, I think, the tone of the whole poem. The old man mourns the loss of his kin, gone one after another: now Bodvar, his last hope, gone to join the rest.

"To the dwellings of the swarming beehive
Is my boy gone.
My goodwife's child,
Gone to reseek his kin."

So, in brief, I suggest that by *býskip* Egil means, not the place (air) where *our* earth-born *bees really are*, but the place where, *like bees*, swarm the happy dead.



VIKING NOTES.

THE Viking ship discovered in Tottenham marshes, to which mention was made in the last *Saga-Book*, has not proved, in the upshot, to justify its ascription. It will be remembered that the portion first uncovered was broken up and carried away by a mob. Two-thirds of the ship remained, however, in the ground, and by the kind courtesy of Mr. C. W. Sharrock, in charge of the works of the East London Waterworks Co., on whose ground the vessel was found, the Hon. Editor and a number of Vikings were invited to be present at the unearthing of this latter portion. When completely uncovered, it was found to be a vessel of about 50-ft. length, 9-ft. beam, clinker-built, and its timbers nailed together by strikingly similar nails and rivets to those found in King Gorm's tomb in Denmark and in the Gokstad ship. The sum of the investigations made was, however, unfavourable to its Viking ascription. In the first place, its bottom was moulded much flatter than were those of sea-going ships of the Viking period, which variation was evidently adopted to fit it for navigating shallow waters such as must have been those of the Lea when not artificially confined to a single channel. Further, no signs of rowlocks or oar-holes were to be found. And, finally, the inside $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. floor-boards were from 10 to 12 inches in breadth, and evidently saw-cut, whereas the planks of ships of the Viking period are much narrower, thicker, and apparently not saw-cut. Some crockery found with the vessel belonged to the sixteenth or seventeenth century. The sum of the evidence consequently pointed to a much later date than the Viking period, and the vessel was probably either a trading barge used formerly to supply the wants of the towns along the Lea and Thames, or else an eel-boat. Under these circumstances its interest to Vikings vanished, and the exhaustive illustrated article which it was intended to devote to it has not been written.

FROM a notice in the daily papers, it appears that what is termed a "Viking" ship was discovered at the latter end of last year (1900) near Lebe, in Pomerania. The vessel is stated to be 43-ft. in length, and was found embedded in swampy ground, the lower part, resting on sand, being well preserved, but the upper part considerably decayed. It has been deposited in the museum at Stettin. Another "ship of the Vikings" is reported to have been found at Satrupholz, near Kiel. She is stated to be about 13-ft. long and $1\frac{1}{2}$ -ft. broad, and to have been hollowed out of an oak trunk. The "Viking" origin in this case does not seem very obvious. A dug-out was also discovered at Tottenham marshes, near where the reputed Viking ship was unearthed. It is to be deposited in the British Museum. It is to be observed that the usual ascription of these dug-outs to the British period is not always warranted, for such vessels were made and used by the Anglo-Saxons so late, at least, as the ninth or tenth centuries, as is seen by the reference, in the "Thithrik Saga" version of the "Lay of Wayland," quoted by Prof. Bugge (p. 288), to Velent felling a tree, hollowing out its trunk into a boat, in order to sail away in it over

the sea. Only, one would opine, there was very little seaworthiness in so shallow a craft.

OUR energetic Herath-umbboths-man for Hougum and Westmorland, Mr. W. G. Collingwood, is engaged, in connection with the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archæological Society, in the preparation of a volume of "Pipe-Rolls," or Sheriffs' Annual Accounts, for the two shires named. These pipe-rolls afford invaluable evidence regarding pedigrees, place-names, and local circumstances in the Middle Ages, and it were much to be wished that similar work were undertaken for other parts of the United Kingdom. The volume is being produced by subscription.

READABLE articles by non-members are published from time to time, among which have come under my notice "Wool-spinning in Shetland," by S. B. Hollings, of Calverley, near Leeds, which appeared in the *Wynberg Times*, Cape Colony, and "Women of the Fair Isles," Orkney, published in No. 149 of *Chambers' Journal*. I should be indebted to Vikings throughout the Empire who would call my attention to the occurrence of any such publications. A Miss Muriel A. C. Press has also published a translation of the "Laxdæla Saga" (Dent & Co.).

THE long-delayed work of compiling the Index to the first volume of the *Saga-book* is now in a fair way to be finished, and Vikings will receive it before the end of the year.

DEATH-ROLL.

THE Club has to deplore the loss by death of the following members:—
The Chisholm, Jarla-man, a member since 1895; Alex. Sandison (of Lund), J.P., a member since 1892; and J. H. Rossal, M.A., a member since 1894.