

Orkney & Shetland Miscellany

VOL. I.



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VOL. I.

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KIRK OF THE NESS, CULLYAVOE, YELL, SHETLAND.

From the original water colour drawing by the late Sir Henry Dryden, Bt., 1832. In the possession of A. W. Johnston.

Orkney and Shetland Miscellany

OF

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(Founded in 1892, as the Orkney, Shetland and Northern Society.)

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The cover has been designed and drawn by Mr. A. W. Johnston. The upright borders are formed of interlaced letters—O for Orkney and S for Shetland; the lower border of the letters O and S interlaced; and the top border, interlaced monograms O, S, O, for Orkney and Shetland Old-lore. The shield has a Viking Ship for Orkney and Shetland, surmounted by the Earl's coronet used by Sir David Lindsay, Lord Lyon King of Arms, c. 1542, in depicting the coat of "the Erle of Orkney of auld."

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NOTES, QUERIES AND REPLIES.—The Editors will be glad to receive notes, queries and replies from any readers, whether subscribers or not.

VIKING CLUB'S SPECIAL OFFER TO OLD-LORE SUBSCRIBERS.—It has not been quite clear to some of the subscribers that the Old-lore Series is a special and extra publication of the Club offered for subscription to non-members. In consequence of this misunderstanding, they are now given the special privilege up till March 31st, 1907, of joining the Club for 10s., without entrance fee, for which they will receive the Saga-book or Proceedings of the Club issued in 1906 and 1907. A special application form is inserted in this number.

PLACE-NAMES OF ORKNEY.—A special Committee of the Viking Club, with Mr. J. W. Cursiter, F.S.A.Scot., as Chairman, is at present engaged in making a collection of the place-names in Orkney. Each parish will be taken by itself, and the names elucidated by Dr. Jakob Jakobsen, and issued from time to time in this series as a special work.

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QUERIES.

CANTEELIM.—This has been explained by a writer in the “Orcadian” as “a snatch of a song.” When a child, and that was not yesterday, I picked up the word from several very old people, and have since used it and heard it frequently used to convey a meaning of innuendo, or a casting up of the past sarcastically. Of course I am well aware that certain words are used in different islands with very different meanings. I would be glad if any one could give me the probable derivation of the word, with the meaning I have indicated.—A CRAB.

GENDER.—It may be said that as late as fifty years ago, few, if any, Orcadians in ordinary conversation used the neuter gender, everything being either masculine or feminine. The habit is fast dying out, but the other day a friend, in telling of his injured foot, said, “Boy, sheu’s stootley, sair,” and in referring to the weather remarked, “Boy, he’s coorse the day.” Can any of your readers inform me whether there was any fixed rule or theory by which the gender of an article was fixed by our forefathers?—A CRAB.

JOHNSTON.—Who was the father of James Johnston, of Outbrecks in Stenness, Orkney, who granted a bond for £50 Scots to A. Lyell, writer, Kirkwall, November 25th, 1686, payable January 10th, 1687. He died 1686-98, and was succeeded by his younger brother Richard Johnston, merchant, Stromness. The latter was married to Marjorie Cursiter, of Appietown, and died 1702-7. Their father is said to have come from Birsay. Outbrecks was sold by Richard’s grandson Joshua Johnston, N. P. Stromness. The old title deeds are not to be found.—A. W. Johnston.

KENNEDIES OF STROMA.—Can any one tell what became of Murdock Kennedy, of Stroma, after he lost his possessions there in 1721? Was he married? If so to whom, and when? Was Alexander Kennedy, of Widewall, South Ronaldshay, his younger brother or his nephew?—X.

MURRAY.—Sir John Mitchell, of Westshore, first baronet, married Margaret Murray, daughter of Francis Murray, said to have been Commissary of Shetland. Her niece, Christian Murray, daughter of Captain John Murray, married first, Andrew Gifford, of Ollaberry, and second, William Henderson, of Ollaberry. To what family did these ladies really belong? There are two traditions concerning them, one that they were related to the family of Pennyland in Caithness, the other that they were related to the family of Tullibardine. Any definite information on this matter will be welcome.—A. S. M.

ROBERTSON.—In 1711, July 17, James Robertson, *alias* Lenard, indweller in Rousay, third son of deceased George Robertson and Euphane Isbuster, sometime indwellers in Stenness, Orkney, disposed of his $1\frac{1}{3}$ farthing udal land in town of Cloustane in Stenness, to Nicol Robertson, in Orburgh in Clouston, Stenness. Who was Nicol's father?—A. W. JOHNSTON.

SCLATER.—Who were the parents of Gilbert Sclater, born in Orkney, 1690, and his sister, who married a man Buch (?) in Orkney? Their father or mother married again, and Gilbert and his sister were turned out to look after themselves. Gilbert, when a lad, went to England and married, and had three sons, Gilbert, John, and William. Gilbert II. married and had children—Gilbert, Elisabeth, Rachel, and Anne.—E. SCLATER.

TWO JACOBEOAN SONNETS WRITTEN IN ORKNEY.

THE Jacobean fame of Mr. William Fowler as a Scottish poet has been almost wholly eclipsed by that of his more renowned nephew, William Drummond, of Hawthornden; but at the Court of King James VI. his poesies and anagrams gave great delight. We know little of his life, save that he studied at St. Leonard's, St. Andrew's, in 1573-4, and apparently was Parson of Hawick. Later he became Secretary to the Queen Consort, Anne of Denmark, and as such in her suite accompanied the Queen into England, surviving, it seems, until 1614. For a Scot of his time he had travelled considerably; he had seen France, the Low Countries, Germany, Sweden, and Norway, and many parts of Italy; and he vaunted that he knew his own land also as far north as the distant Orkney Islands. In the verses written to Lady Arbella Steward [Arabella Stuart] "upon his passages down the Thames to London, January 8th, 1603," he boasts—

"I haue the Orcades seen, Dee, Done and Forth,
Tay, Tweid, Esk, Humber, Leei, and nowe faire Thames.'

His sojourn in Orkney would seem to have been of some duration, and it inspired at least two of his sonnets. One of these is pretty well known, and it is as follows:—

SONET IN ORKNAY.

Upon the utmost corners of the warld
And on the borders of this massiue round,
Quhaire fates and fortune hither hes me harld,
I doe deplore my greiffs upon this ground;
And seeing roring seis from rokis rebound
By ebbs and streames of contrair routing tydes,
And Phœbus Chariot in there waues ly dround,
Quha equallye now night and day devyds,

I cal to mynd the storms my thoughts abyds,
 Which ever wax and never dois decress,
 For nights of dole, days joys ay ever hyds,
 And in there vayle doith al my weill suppress:
 So this I see, quhaire euer I remove,
 I change bot Sees bot can not change my Love.

This poem is to be found, with other poems of William Fowler, among the Hawthornden MSS. [Vol. XI.] in the Library of the Society of Scottish Antiquaries, Edinburgh. It was first printed in 1857 by David Laing, in the *Archæologia Scotica*, Vol. IV., p. 231. This sonnet makes one wish to know more about the "Orcadian exile" of the writer, and I was glad, therefore, on looking over the same volume of his MSS., to find another of his sonnets, written when he was in Orkney, still extant. It was new to me, and, for all I know, may not have been printed before. It shows that, in spite of his "Penelope" at home, he found that his sojourn in the islands, under the wiles of an enchantress, was not without its diversions.

ORKNAY.

As charming Circe did Ulisses stey
 Within the bounds of the Aolian Yles,
 Transforming men, euen to there awen deray,¹
 And changing them in foules and beastes by wyles,
 So thow chaist love quha in my long exyles
 From my Penelope haithe me deteind,
 Conjuring wynds which ay my hope beguyles,
 Hes me with the but greif in greif reteind.
 And though this grace I have of yow obtieind
 As not to be in foule nor beaste transformed;
 Quhairthrough the less the lesser may be meind²
 Yet charming charmer thow hes me deformd,
 Quhile my weake witts now witles doe becum,
 And eyes but³ sight and tung baith tyed and dum.

¹ disorder. ² menyie, to hurt. ³ without.

A. FRANCIS STEUART.

THE ODAL FAMILIES OF ORKNEY.

SO far as I am aware, no serious effort has ever been made to trace the history of any of the native Orkney families unless, or until, they have undergone the process of Scottification—have purchased, that is to say, a Scotch coat of arms, married into Scotch families, and become feudatories of a thousand acres instead of Odal owners of a hundred. For several reasons such an effort is beset with unusual difficulties. The lack of surnames till near the end of the Norse regime deprives us of the most obvious kind of clue. The absence of title-deeds in connection with Odal properties robs us of another. The poverty and coming down in the world that attended the Norse families, consequent first upon the continual subdivision of estates, and then upon the oppression of the Stewart earls, killed the traditions of a race practical and essentially humorous: since the romantic past, so dear to the most tattered Celt, strikes an average Orcadian as both a useless and a slightly ridiculous appurtenance to a man working in his shirt-sleeves. And, finally, the general adoption of Scotch standards on the question of "Who's Who" has insensibly blinded local genealogists to the fact that there are other than Scotch pedigrees in the islands.

The result is that we are left with no family histories going further back than the sixteenth century, and the local annals of Orkney lack one of the most entertaining and illuminating characteristics of other county histories; to wit, the rich store of incidents, legends, and traditions, associated with particular names and places, that serve as footnotes to, and sidelights on, the record of public events; and that in a singular degree unite in kind of personal relation the people of the present with the people of the past.

Possibly the clouds have settled so thickly upon our domestic history that no amount of seeking will discover anything authentic in these matters before the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries. But now that this Old-lore Series has been started as a focus for all odds and ends of island information, the time has come for any who are interested to contribute to the attempt. In any event a considerable body of information can surely be got together subsequent to the impignoration, and a more personal sentiment be awakened by the records of by-gone events and half-forgotten worthies. The aim of this present paper is solely to seek for such information; partly by putting forward a few suppositions as cock-shies, to be pelted with hard facts by those more learned than the author, and partly by the simple process of asking questions.

Put as briefly as possible, I take it that the course of events ran somewhat thus. In the heroic Saga days there were many landowners, all nominally ranked alike as Bonder, and all jealously proud of that status and tenacious of its privileges, though accepting the leadership of certain families among them who are distinguished by the Saga writer as powerful or "nobly-born" (by which term he seems to imply a relationship, often very distant, to the Earls). Sigurd of Westness, the sons of Havard Gunni's son, Olaf Hrolfsson of Gairsay (father of the famous Svein), Thorkel Flettir, Jon Væng, and a number of others are enumerated as magnates of the twelfth century. But, singularly enough, the Norse race, which provided an aristocracy for every land in which it settled, declined to permit a hereditary patrician class to grow up within its own domains. The fundamental explanation lies in this: that while every Odaller was ready enough to become a nobleman himself, he altogether refused to be a vassal of his neighbour (a tendency that has not entirely disappeared in the twentieth century). Hence the share-and-share-alike Odal law of succession, with the result that to begin with "Everyone

was Somebody," and in the end "No one's Anybody." These chiefs of the Saga days doubtless held greater estates than their fellows; but with every generation they would grow smaller and ever smaller, a process of disintegration of the estates, and consequently a diminution of the wealth and importance of the families continuing for some centuries.

At this point, however, an inquiry is suggested. Was the land in actual fact as completely subdivided as it ought to have been in theory?

But with the influx of Scotch influences and settlers, even under Norwegian rule, a reverse process evidently begins. The Sinclairs, the Craigies, and the Irvings certainly managed to make themselves comfortable in Orkney before the year 1468: various members of the Sinclair family, in particular, acquiring considerable estates. Presumably all these lands were bought piecemeal from impecunious Odallers, and lay, like the old Bishopric estate, "sparsim" through the islands.

Here two questions arise. Is there any evidence to support or to controvert this supposition as to the scattered nature of these estates? And was there any relaxation of old Odal laws that permitted this process?

Furthermore, it is tolerably safe to assume that at this time some of the native families would naturally take advantage of altered conditions to increase their acreage likewise; and would begin to follow the feudal fashions set by the Scotch gentry in the Earl's or Bishop's train. Though, on the other hand, these early Scotch proprietors became *ipse facto* Odallers, and, as in the case of "Johne of Cragy and the laif of the uthale men," are found identified with that class.

Another question:—Were arms, either of Scotch or Norse source, borne by any of the Odal families before the impignoration?

By this time we are at the dawn of documentary history, and in the century between *circ.* 1420 and *circ.* 1520—that is to say, fifty years on either side of the impig-

noration—after the Scottish Sinclairs had come to Kirkwall, with all their influence and prestige, and before the Stewarts had established feudalism, a little something is definitely known of social Orkney. And bald though the few facts be, they are at least concerned with individuals considerate enough of the curiosity of posterity to adopt surnames. For instance, one finds John of Kirkness mentioned as having been Lawman of Orkney before 1438. In that year and in 1446 Henry Rendall filled the same office; and from one or two other sources we gather that the Rendalls were a native family of importance for some time subsequently. Of the Linklets or Linklaters, also, one gets a few glimpses. Cristi Ælingaklæt is referred to in the complaint of the commons of Orkney in 1426 as a “godman” (Danish—a good-man, noble); Andro Linclet sat on the Council of the Law-thing in 1514; and through the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries Linklaters of Linklater flourished till they sold the land from which they took their name to the Richans.

The intention and scope of this paper preclude the possibility of doing more than mention an instance or two; but one particularly interesting document deserves a passing reference. This is the Decreet of the Lawthing issued at Kirkwall in 1514. Here one finds a Sinclair buying the inheritance of a distressed Odaller; the Odaller's uncle disputing the sale; and a nice point of Odal law settled by Lawman Nicol Hall and a council, whose names, taken in conjunction with the authority they exercised, shows that the power of the law, even so lately as then, still lay in the hands of the native lairds and the odalised (if one may coin a word) early Scotch settlers. Three Craigies and an Aitken may be taken as the Scotch element; a Flett, Fowbister, Linclet, Cloustath (Clouston), Housgarth, Scarth, and Birsto (Berstane) as the Norse; with Loutfut (Louttit) and Comra (Cromarty?) to be settled by any genealogist able to decide their origin.

With the rule of the Stewarts came about the complete downfall of the Odallers as an influential and important class, and the feudalization of the greater part of Orkney; and from the fiefs at the disposal of the Earls and Bishops was endowed a genus of landowner new to the islands, the ancestors in blood, or the predecessors in title of the present larger proprietors. These were chiefly Scotchmen, but among them appears a sprinkling of native names; and another question is suggested. Were those Moodies, Scollays, Feas, and Halcros (who are somewhere spoken of as "the most ancient families in Orkney") of purely feudal origin so far as their lands and status were concerned? Were they, in fact, such enterprising Odallers as had adapted themselves to altered conditions and made a fair wind out of a foul? It is certainly a curious fact that the names of what one gathers from any documents so far obtainable to have been representative Odal lairds at or shortly after the impignoration are not found among the larger feudatories when Stewart rule had begun; while the names of Moodie, Scollay, Fea, and Halcro are never mentioned before 1530 or later. The mere scarcity and chanciness of these documents may account for this; but the point is interesting.

Since that time various families of the old Norse stock (chief among them the Baikies of Tankerness) have acquired considerable estates and made themselves kent folk within, and now and then without, the archipelago. And, on the other hand, there are most certainly dwelling to-day, in low straggling homesteads, beneath a roof lashed down with simmons, owning or renting a few unenclosed fields and a kail-yard garnished with a bunch of crouching bour-trees, families who, if they had but kept a record of the passing generations with the same diligence with which they strove to save pounds Scots or sterling, might justly claim to represent the Sweins and Kolbein Hrugas of the sagas.

But one is now in a region where material abounds

and the genealogist has already quarried ; a region with which a mere outline, such as this essay aims at being, is quite inadequate to deal. Besides, the exigencies of space call urgently, I fear, for its summary conclusion. If it shall in any way stimulate inquiry it will serve its purpose. To set an example, it herewith ends upon a note, or rather notes, of interrogation.

What is the earliest date on which the use of native surnames can be proved? How early a connection with land can any Orkney family show? What traditions or documentary facts, referring to a period before the eighteenth century, are obtainable with regard to any family?

J. STORER CLOUSTON.



DIVIDING SEA-WEED 100 YEARS AGO.

SEVERAL years ago the late Captain Oman, of Biggings, gave me the following information regarding the division of sea-weed, otherwise "ware" or "tang," as in the good old days of his boyhood. This information, however, only referred to the division made in the Bay of Ireland in Stenness.

It may be explained that down till 1829 the runrig system prevailed in the district, and the sea-weed, from Captain Oman's information, seems to have been divided in what, for lack of a better term, may also be called runrig fashion. At the same time, while the runrig system in land was about the most absurd that could be conceived, there seems to have been a sensible method in the conception of that system, as applied to ware, but, unfortunately, in practice it often turned out to be a system of chance or luck. In those days the landlord was said to "cut the shores"—in other words, he claimed the right to cut all the "ware" *ex adverso* of his land for kelp—and the Balfours (and doubtless others) had regular cutters with gaffers over them. That being so, it will at once be understood that the ware which fell to be divided among the tenants (and proprietors not bounded by the shore) was only such as was driven ashore by the wind.

In the township of Ireland the ware fell to be divided only among the Bús and the Boons. There were three Bús—Aglath, the Hall, and Cumminess—having priority in the order named, and six Boons, of which Captain Oman could only remember Ramsquoy, Fea, Bea, Biggings, or Cletyan. Among the Bús, however, there were two houses at Cumminess, each having to give a share of its privileges to the other. In the division of the ware the Bús and Boons were said to have so many "shifts." The measuring, which latterly was done by John Smith, of the Hall, began at the north edge of the burn of Coldomo (which, by the way, was a movable point), and proceeded northwards in the following order and measurements:—(1) Aglath, 24 fathoms; (2) the six

Boons, 24 fathoms among them, to be subdivided by them according to the extent of their respective holdings ; (3) the Hall, 24 fathoms ; (4) the six Boons, 24 fathoms, to be subdivided as in No. 2 ; (5) Cumminess, 24 fathoms ; (6) the six Boons, 24 fathoms, as before. If more ware remained the measurements were repeated in the same order, till the Hall was reached.

The Hall, Biggings, Cumminess, Chesmires, Foulmires and Outbrecks claimed all the ware on certain parts below their respective houses, and, omitting those parts, the measurements proceeded as from the commencement. Supposing, however, that the ware came in a lump or limited space, as very often happened, the measurements were made independent of the existence of ware, so that a clean shore might fall to be measured to one or more.

The privilege of taking all the ware driven in below their respective farms was also claimed by Coldomo, Ness, Norton, and Ottergill. I have endeavoured to find a reason for this claim being made and admitted, but can find none except a supposition of my own, namely, that those houses had been owned, or at least occupied, by the Halcros of Bea or their relatives ; at least, I know that four of those houses were so owned or occupied. Of some of those Halcros I may have something to say on a future occasion. In course of time those houses belonged to the Honeymans of Graemsay, and afterwards to the Balfours of Trenabie, but the ancient claim of the houses mentioned to the whole ware driven below them was respected down till the sale of the township in lots in 1857, notwithstanding that Mr. Balfour's servants cut all the ware from the Skerries of Clestrain to the Bush at Cumminess, a distance, I should say, of between two and three miles. To make the admission of the claim all the more surprising, it will be noticed that in addition both the Hall and Cumminess received shares of what may be called the divisible ware. It may be mentioned that in cutting the shores the same portion was only cut in alternate years ; in other words the weed had to be two years old before being cut.

J. T. SMITH LEASK.

SOME OLD-TIME SHETLANDIC WRECKS.

IN order to make the tale of wrecks on the coast of Zetland in some measure complete, perhaps one should commence with the wrecks mentioned in the Saga—the loss of the “FÍFA” and “HJÁLP,” ships of Earl Rögnvald of Orkney, driven ashore at Gulberwick in 1151; the romantic story of the flight from Aurland, in Norway, of Björn Brynjólfsson with the Lady Þora Hróaldsdóttir, of the stranding of their ship on Mousa (Mós-ey), and their marriage in the Broch of Mousa (circa 900). Then in the autumn of 1152 the magnificent Dragon-ship of Eindriði Ungi was lost on the coast of Zetland, when he was on his way to join Earl Rögnvald in the Orkneys; their ultimate destination being Jórsalir (Jerusalem); but all these are fairly well known, and more or less full accounts are given in the Sagas. There is also the supposed whelming of the King of Man in the Raust of Sumburgh (circa 1242), but from this date until the year 1567 there is a hiatus which I cannot fill.

The first sixteenth century account is that of the wreck of the “UNICORN,” in August, 1567. As is well known, Earl Bothwell, Duke of Orkney, fled to the Orkneys after the battle of Carberry Hill (celebrated for the surrender of Queen Mary to the confederated nobility, 15th June, 1567, and her final parting with Bothwell), and in order to attempt his capture, Sir William Kirkcaldie of Grange was put in charge of a squadron of four ships, named respectively, the “UNICORN,” on board of which was Sir William, the “ROBERT,” the “JAMES,” and the “PRIMROSE.” According to “Kircaldy of Grange” (by Louis A. Barbe), these vessels were heavily armed, and had on board, in addition to their respective crews, some 400 arquebusiers. In a letter written to “Hys Grace of Bedford,” before the departure of the ships from Dundee, Sir William said, “And for my part, albeit I be no gud seeman, I promess unto your Lordship, giff I may anes

encounter hym—eyther be see or land, he shall either carie me with hym, or else I shall bring him dead or quick to Edinburgh.”

Bothwell in the meantime had met with a very poor reception from Gilbert Balfour, the Keeper of Kirkwall, so fled to Shetland, where he was supplied with water, provisions, etc., by the more friendly Bailiff, Olaf Sinclair. The two ships with which he had come north were small and ill-found, so Bothwell seized two Hanseatic vessels belonging to one Geerte Hemelingk, a Bremen trader who had a “booth” at Dunrossness (Hibbert, in his “Journal,” thinks probably at or near the Pool of Virkie).

The names of the ships were the “PELICAN” and the “BREAME,” and Bothwell made the two German skippers sign a contract, so as to give his violence the semblance of an ordinary transaction, and the Earl, after causing the goods on board the vessels to be put on shore, set sail on a piratical cruise.

On 12th August, Kirkcaldie received Sea Brieves for “Ye seeking, searching and apprehension off Ye Earl of Bothwell and his complices,” and on the 17th August his ships set sail from Dundee to commence the search amongst the Orkneys.

Kirkcaldie duly arrived at Kirkwall, where he was told that the Earl was in Zetland. Accordingly all sail was made, and the little fleet “cracked on” for the Sound of Bressay, where it was hoped that tidings of Bothwell would be obtained. After an uneventful passage the ships, one afternoon, reached the South Entry to Bressay Sound, and, to the joy of those on board the “UNICORN,” the two small ships of Bothwell, together with the “PELICAN” and the “BREAME,” were seen lying at anchor in the harbour. Many of the seamen were on shore, and Bothwell was dining with Olaf Sinclair, but was apprised that strange vessels were to be seen entering the harbour. He at once went on board the “PELICAN,” and his ships weighed anchor, and stood out of the harbour by the North Entry. Kirkcaldie, fired with the sight of his

escaping enemy, ordered all sail to be set on the "UNICORN," despite the remonstrances of his Master Mariner, who feared rocks and shallows. The "UNICORN" was a capital sailer, and gained on the "PELICAN"; but the master of the latter vessel knew the channel well, and steered his vessel so close to a hidden rock (at that time called "Heog's Baa") that she actually grazed it, and the "UNICORN" coming foaming along on the same course, crashed on the rock with such violence that she split her bows. She rapidly filled, and sank so quickly that Kirkcaldie and his men were with the greatest difficulty saved by boats from his other ships.

This rock is now called "the Unicorn," and since Kirkcaldie's time several vessels have been wrecked on it.

Bothwell's ships fled to Unst, but were relentlessly pursued by Kirkcaldie, and an engagement took place; however, a south-westerly gale sprang up very suddenly and scattered the ships, the Earl escaping safely to Norway.

In the year 1574 a "ship of Emden" foundered off the coast of Zetland, presumably near Nesting. The account says: "She haid been lying in Nesting, being driven in by the storm off wedder for life and death. Which ship, Gilbert McReich, David Leslie, James Leslie, Normand Leslie, brothers, and Robert Rotter buiridit under silence of night, and took furth of her 2,000 Spanish ryalls or thirby, with ane dozen bolles of Holland clayth, and her haill tows, anchors and saills; putten the same men and ship to the sea in a great storm of wedder of which never word was gotten thereafter.

"The above named persons being convicted of this cruel deed were condemned to death, but were pardoned efter they were holden twa hours at ye gallows foot, and ane tow about their neck."

"They bribit Earl Robert Stewart to let them off by giving hym Im. of ye said ryalls and seven bolles of ye said Holland claith."

Three hundred and eighteen years ago a battered and

storm-tossed galleon plunged and rolled before the wind one night in August, the grey seas roaring from her bluff bows in torrents of foam and tossing their yeasty crests into the air. The night was dark, and an anxious look-out was kept; but suddenly, from the gloom, land seemed to rise up ahead, and before an order could be given the ill-fated ship crashed on the rocks and began to go to pieces. The boats were got out as quickly as possible, and the officers and men, some sorely wounded, got safely ashore after considerable difficulty, and were well received by the people.

It was then discovered that the vessel had been cast on the Fair Isle, one of the Shetland group lying almost midway between Shetland and Orkney.

The vessel, called "EL GRAN GRIFEN"—that is, "The Great Griffin," the ship probably having a griffin-like monster as a figurehead—was a remnant of the proudly named "Invincible Armada," and with many of her consorts had fled northwards in utter disorder from the fatal battle of Gravelines in August, 1588.

The "GRAN GRIFEN" was a vessel of Rostock, of six hundred and fifty tons, and was chartered by the Spaniards as one of a squadron of hired transports and store-ships (principally Dutch and German vessels) accompanying the fighting-ships proper. This ship carried thirty-eight guns, mostly small iron swivel pieces, and was the "capitana" or flagship of the "urca" or hulk squadron—numbering twenty ships or "houlkes." She was commanded by Admiral Don Juan Gomez de Medina (called "El Buen"—that is, "The Good"), and had a crew of forty-three mariners and two hundred and forty-three soldiers; one hundred and forty-seven of the soldiers being of the "Terció" or regiment of Nicolas de Isla, under Captain Patricio Antolinez, and another detachment of ninety-six men of the same "Terció," under Captain Estéban de Lagorreta. There were also aboard Captain de Luffera, Signor Serrano, and an Irish officer, Captain Mauricio Girardino. This Girardino was the

heir of the Earl of Desmond, and was in the Spanish service. His real name was Maurice Geraldine, and he is given in the Spanish list of "entrettenidos" or supernumeraries serving for pay. He had with him two "criados" (followers or servants).

The accounts of the number of men who landed on Fair Isle vary considerably. Robert Monteith gives the number as two hundred in his "Description of the Islands of Orkney and Zetland," 1633 (published under direction of Sir Robert Sibbald, Knight, in 1711); while James Melville, minister of Anstruther in Fife, in his "Diary" of date 1588 (published for the Wodrow Society), says that "threttin score, for the maist part young berdles men, sillie, trauchled and houngered, landed at Anstruther." In the Spanish account of the partial action with the English fleet off the Isle of Wight on 24th July, 1588, it is mentioned that the "GRAN GRIFEN" was cut off and nearly captured by the English, but escaped with the loss of seventy men killed and seventy wounded, and having forty shot-holes through her hull. We have, however, no means of knowing how many of the wounded recovered.

The admiral and his crew remained on the isle for six or seven weeks, and Don Juan behaved in a most chivalrous manner, commanding his men to pay handsomely for all provisions that they required from the natives, which—in justice to the Spanish soldiers and sailors—it must be said they did. As Robert Monteith very quaintly puts it, "The officers also strictly commanded the souldiers to take nothing but what they payed for, which they did very largely, so that the people were not great losers by them, having got a great many Spanish Ryalls for the victualls they gave them." Before very long the provisions began to give out, the Spaniards having bought up almost everything eatable in the island. "Not only Neat, Sheep, Fishes, and Fowls, but also Horses" (!). The Shetlanders, thus seeing themselves literally "eaten out of house and home," conveyed all

the food that remained to secret places in the isle, so that the Spaniards might not find it. The distress became so great that the unhappy Spaniards had to soak their ship-bread (which they had preserved) in "Fish Oyl . . . which also being spent . . . many died for hunger"; and so weak did the poor men become that the Fair Islanders are said, perhaps falsely, to have thrown many of them over the cliffs. At length all sustenance failed, and the islanders sent an open boat or "yole" to the mainland of Shetland to ask assistance of Andrew Umphray of Berry, who is said to have farmed Fair Isle at that time. Umphray at once sent a vessel, and conveyed the Spaniards to Quendale, on the mainland of Shetland, where they were most hospitably entertained by the laird, Malcolm Sinclair of Quendale. The crew encamped in the neighbourhood until Andrew Umphray could make ready his ship to convey the men south. The Spaniards sailed from Shetland in September, and were safely carried to Dunkirk in France, the ship calling at Anstruther in Fife *en route*.

For this service the admiral gave "Andro Vmphra" three thousand merks. Taking the merk at one shilling and a penny and four-twelfths, this would work out at one hundred and sixty-six pounds thirteen shillings and fourpence sterling.

An amusing story is told of the Admiral Don Juan when staying at Quendale, "where (imagining that the people did admire him)" he made his interpreter ask Malcolm Sinclair if ever he had seen such a man. To which Malcolm, in broad Scots (unintelligible to the interpreter), replied bluntly, "Farcie in that face. I have seen many prettier men hanging in the Burrow Moor!"

The Spaniards broke their passage to Dunkirk by putting in at Anstruther, where they first heard of the disaster that had befallen their ships; and when the minister of Anstruther, James Melville, showed Don Juan a printed list, that he "gat in St. Androis" of the galleons that had been wrecked on the coasts of Scotland and

Ireland, the unlucky admiral "cryed out for grieff, bursted and grat" (burst into weeping).

Apparently Don Juan was much gratified with the kindness of the Scots, for when he arrived at Cadiz he found an Anstruther ship arrested there; and after seeing that her men were well treated, he "red to court for hir (to the Court of King Philip), and maid grat rus (praise, commendation) of Scotland to his King, tuk the honest men to his hous, and inquiryrit for the Lard of Anstruther, for the minister, and his host, and sent hame manie commendationes." Don Juan obtained the permission of King Philip to set the ship free, and she was then released, and arrived home safely bearing many messages of goodwill to the people of Anstruther.

A few relics of the "GRAN GRIFEN" are still to be seen.

In Orkney there is one of her guns—an iron piece without trunnions or loops for fixing to a carriage—about thirty inches in length, with a bore of two inches, and weighing approximately two hundredweight. The gun was loaded when taken from the wreck, and the ball is in the possession of the owner of the piece.

In Shetland there are some chairs reputed to have been taken from the admiral's cabin, and a silver flagon or drinking-cup.

It is interesting to note that in a list of Spanish vessels lost on the coasts of Great Britain and Ireland, a jotting in the handwriting of Lord Burghley, Queen Elizabeth's Lord Treasurer, appears against the name of Don Juan de Medina: "This man's ship was drowned . . . in the Isle of Faire near Scotland."

Another vessel of the Armada is supposed (there being no documentary proof) to have foundered at Shetland on a haddock-sand near Reawick, called the "Meethe," and her men are traditionally reported to have landed on an islet called Kirkholm, where they threw up entrenchments and attempted to dig wells, being uncertain as to their reception by the Shetlanders.

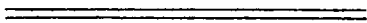
No account obtains as to the name of the ship or how her men were sent south.

On September 19th, 1588, Secretary Fenton wrote from Ireland to Lord Burghley enclosing "a note of ships 16 and men 5394 drowned, killed, and taken upon the coast of Ireland, also of two ships and 800 men drowned and sunk in the North-West Sea of Scotland." To this is added in Lord Burghley's handwriting: "But in truth they were lost in Zetland."

The Spanish authorities evidently did not discriminate betwixt the islands of Scotland and those of Ireland, since in the Spanish list of ships that never returned—sixty-five in all, forty-four never being accounted for—the "GRAN GRIFEN" is entered as "se Perdio en Irlanda" (lost in Ireland).

R. STUART BRUCE.

(Account of "EL GRAN GRIFEN" reprinted by permission of the publishers of "Chambers' Journal").



BIARNE KOLBEINSSON, THE SKALD, BISHOP OF ORKNEY, 1188-1223.

B IARNE KOLBEINSSON, the greatest name in Orkney literature, was the son of Kolbein Hróga,¹ the Cobble Row of Orkney tradition who built the castle of Weir (Vigr), the ruins of which are visible to-day. His mother was Herbjörg,² sister of Hakon Barn (bairn). Their mother was Sigríð, the daughter of Herborg,³ daughter of Earl Pál (Paul) Thorfinnsson (Paul I.) A.D. 1064-1098. He had three brothers, Kolbein Karl, Sumarliði, Áslák, and one sister, Fríða. The Orkneyinga Saga says the children were all highly gifted, and gives him the ekename he had all his life, the *Skald* (ch. 88). Biarne was thus descended from the Orkney Earls on his mother's side. Andres, a son of Svein Ásleifarson, who has been called "the last viking," a chieftain who wielded the power of an earl in Orkney, married Biarne's sister. The Flatey Book is therefore right in saying that Biarne had "a great stock of kinsmen" in the Islands.

The Flatey Book says that Biarne was consecrated Bishop of Orkney on the death of Vilhjálmm II., 1188, and that he was "the greatest chief and a dear friend of Earl Harald" Maddadhson, 1139-1206.

We do not know if Biarne was concerned in the rebellion against King Sverrir in 1193-94, in which many Orkneyings took part. The rebels, under the leadership of Hallkel Jonsson, started from Orkney with 23 ships and gave the name of a king to a pretender. The Eyjaskeggjar (Islanders), as these rebels are called in Sverri's Saga, took Oslo and Bergen, but King Sverrir surprised them at Bergen, and defeated them in a hard-

¹ According to the Flatey Book, II., 472, Kolbein married about A.D. 1150.

² Or Herborg.

³ Herborg, or Herbjörg, was the sister of Hákon Pálsson, Earl of Orkney, 1104-1122.

fought sea battle on April 3rd, 1194, at Flóruvágur. It is reported that all the rebels were put to the sword, 2,000 men. Sverri's crews numbered only 1,200 men. He now threatened to send a fleet to punish Orkney. To avert this Earl Harald Maddadhson and Bishop Biarne came to the meeting of notables at Bergen in 1195, where 6 Bishops and all the best men of the kingdom of Norway were gathered. The Earl had to humble himself and kneel in public to King Sverrir, who took Hjaltland from him and put it under the crown, confiscated all the lands of rebels, and appropriated to himself one-half of all taxes in Orkney.

Biarne seems to have taken sides with the great king, who was excommunicated by the Pope. It was a difficult choice to make.

He made his Court one of the literary and political centres of the time. He repeatedly acted on behalf of Orkney at the Norwegian Court on important political business. He even conducted the negotiations between Sæmund Jónsson of Oddi, Iceland, and Earl Harald about the marriage of Sæmund to Langlíf, the Earl's daughter. This never came to anything because the bride would not go to Iceland and the bridegroom would not come to Orkney. There was close friendship between Biarne and the leading chieftains in Iceland, especially the Oddi family, who were related to the Norwegian kings. Icelanders, above all the skalds of the time, were frequently his guests on their voyages to Norway. The Sturlunga Saga tells of the famous gifts he sent to the Iceland chieftain Rafn Sveinbiörnsson (+ 1213). One of them was a gold ring, weighing one eyrir, with the figure of a raven and Rafn's name engraved on it, the first example of a seal, or signet, recorded in Scandinavia. The Sturlunga also tells how Sæmund Jónsson of Oddi, the great grandson of Sæmund the Wise, protected Thorkel Rostung (Walrus), of Orkney, Biarne's nephew, against Snorre Sturluson himself. Thorkel was the captain of an Orkney trading ship. He stayed a

winter with Snorre at Borg, but refused to submit to some high-handed proceedings of his men. Snorre, in his capacity of *goði*, wanted to exercise his right of fixing the price of the Orkney flour. Whereupon a quarrel arose, in which Thorkel killed one of Snorre's men, A.D. 1202. Snorre was brought up at Oddi with Sæmund by the latter's father, Jón Loptsson, and would share their knowledge of Orkney lore and history. Biarne and Sæmund no doubt lent each other some of their literary treasures, and Snorre would be conversant with these. He quotes pieces of the *Jarlasögur* (Earls' Sagas), as he calls the stories of the Orkney Earls, in his *magnum opus* *Heimskringla* (St. Olaf's Saga, ch. 109). He must have got these directly or indirectly from Bishop Biarne, the skald, perhaps through Sæmund, in that old home of letters, Oddi. It is well known that Snorre, in *Háttatal*, imitated the *Háttalykill* (key to metres) of Earl Rögnvald (+ 1158), who had 6 Icelandic skalds at his Court. Indeed it was in collaboration with an Iclander, Hall Thórarinsson, that the Earl wrote the *Háttalykill*. Bótólf Begla, an Icelandic skald, saved the Earl's life on one occasion. He is described as having a farmhouse in Orkney. On Earl Ronald's Crusade, 1151-1153, three of these skalds accompanied him. One of them, Thorbiörn the Black, died in Acre, and Oddi the Little made a dirge on him. Thus the connection between Orkney and Iceland literature was close and intimate.

Biarne must have been a little boy when Earl Rögnvald was killed, 1158. In 1192 (*Icel. Annals*), he had the Earl's bones dug up, and the relics of the only Orkney man whose literary activity approaches that of Biarne were enshrined, and he was canonized by Pope Coelestinus III.

Biarne was five times in Norway that we know of (but probably went there oftener), namely, in 1195, 1208(?), 1210, 1218, and 1223, apparently always to Bergen. In 1208 (or 1209) he was sent by the Earls of Orkney, Jón and David, to make peace on their behalf with King

Ingi of Norway. He got a safe conduct for the Earls who came over in 1210, and had to pay fines, take oaths, and give hostages. A Norwegian fleet threatened Orkney, and he no doubt got the best terms possible for his country.

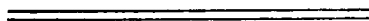
In 1218 Biarne was present with all the Norwegian bishops at the great meeting of notables in Bergen, when they all assembled in Church to witness the ordeal of King Hákon's mother. The Icelandic Annals put his death in 1222, on Sept. 15. This cannot be, since according to Hákonar Saga, ch. 86, written by a great authority, Sturla Thórðarson, Biarne is present at the assembly of notables in Bergen on July 29 (St. Olaf's Mass), 1223 together with Earl Jón of Orkney and a representative from Hialtland, Gregorius kíkr. It was on this occasion that Norway was divided between King Hákon and Duke Skùli. If Biarne's death-day is correct, and it is given independently in the *Necrologium Islando-Norvegicum* as Sept. 15, he probably died in Norway, perhaps in his favourite monastery, Munklífi, to which he willed his estates in Norway.¹ This would agree with the election of Jófreyr as his successor, which would not have followed so soon if the Bishop had died in Orkney. Even at Rome this man, who held his own with Earls and Kings, was held in estimation. Pope Innocentius charges him and the Bishop of Ross to compel Bishop Jón of Caithness to obey, thus passing by the Metropolitan of Nidaros, and later, when Bishop Jón is murdered by the Earl of Orkney's men, Biarne arranges the matter in the Roman Curia.

In the next number of the Miscellany I shall proceed to give the evidence upon which I base my belief that Biarne wrote, not only the *Jómsvíkinga Drápa*, which contemporary evidence attributes to him, and which forms the beginning of the class of epic poetry, called *Rímur*, but also the *Orkneyinga Saga*. Bugge and Vigfússon attribute to him the *Málsháttakvæði* (Poem of Proverbs),

¹ See *Diplomatarium Orcadense*, Vol. I. p. 26.

which follows Jónsvíkinga Drápa in the only MS., the codex regius of Snorra Edda. During the 35 years he was Bishop the literature, the politics, and even the art of Orkney seemed to centre round this man. For the authors of Monumenta Orcadica attribute to him the best part of St. Magnus' Cathedral. He seems to be, all in all, the greatest man that Orkney has yet produced.

JÓN STEFÁNSSON.



OBITUARY.

We regret to have to record in our first issue the death of Miss Catherine Stafford Spence, one of our earliest subscribers. The daughter of an Army Surgeon, William Spence, M.D., descended of an old Shetland family, she was born in Lerwick July 16th, 1823, and died there September 21st, 1906.

Miss Spence was an accomplished linguist, and possessed a considerable literary gift. She was a good Icelandic scholar, and intimately acquainted with other Northern languages, including Mæso-Gothic. She translated with great success many works from the Danish, German, Dutch, French and Italian, some of which were of a scientific and technical nature. Among other literary work, she was the author of "Earl Rögnvald and his Forebears," published in 1896, and a memoir of Arthur Laurenson (1901). Shortly before her death she had completed the translation of Dr. Jakobsen's "Det Norrøne Sprog på Shetland" and "Shetlandsøernes Stednavne," the publication of which is delayed until a fixed standard is decided upon to represent the pronunciation of the sounds peculiar to the dialect with the least possible use of special phonetic type.

Miss Spence's long life was spent in the teaching profession, from which she only retired in 1896. At one time she held the appointment of Principal of the Madras Government Female Normal School, which she conducted with great success, but was obliged to relinquish on account of the ill-health of the sister who was her life-long companion.

Miss Spence was a woman of singular beauty of character, and her kindly and sympathetic disposition made her deeply loved and admired by all, both young and old, with whom she came in contact.—T.M.

NOTES ON BOOKS.

“The Story of Shetland.” By W. Fordyce Clark, author of “Northern Gleams.” Edinburgh and London, Oliver and Boyd, 1906. *Price 2s. 6d. net, by post 2s. 9d.*

This work forms a useful guide to the history, antiquities, and modern condition of Shetland, and its price places it within the reach of everyone interested in the Islands. It deals with the Prehistoric Period, the Heroic Age, the Dark Age and after, an account of the Political Emancipation of the Islands, Herring Fishery, Church, Education, Mail Service, County Government, Bygone Industries, and lastly, Shetland as a Holiday Resort.

Old-lore subscribers abroad, hailing from the old Rock, should give themselves a treat by obtaining this interesting and instructive sketch.—A. W. JOHNSTON.

Monumenta Orcadica. Normændene paa Orknøerne og deres efterladte Mindesmærker. By L. Dietrichson and Johan Meyer. *Christiania, 1906, Cammermeyers. £3 net. (London, Williams & Norgate.)*

This is the first attempt at a scientific historical account of Orkney, its archæology and architecture. The views of the authors on the earliest missionary bishops of Orkney are borne out by evidence in the first volume of the *Diplomatarium Orcadense et Hialtlandense*. This splendid work, with 152 illustrations, is a storehouse of information upon ecclesiastical and other architecture in the islands. The conjectural plan of the Earl's Bú in relation to the Round Church of Orphir, is fully proved by the excavations made by the writer and Mr. Robert Flett. Svein did not fly by way of the Ward Hill, but across the slack between the hills of Lyradale and Keely-lang, from which Damsay can first be seen, as mentioned in the Saga. This is the route still followed by pedestrians. It is remarkable that the renewed interest of Norway in her old Viking colony (which is highly

appreciated) should coincide with the present popular subscription to the Orkney and Shetland Old-lore series of the Viking Club.—A. W. JOHNSTON.

Alexander Bugge: *Vesterlandenes Indflydelse paa Nordboernes og sorlig Nordmændenes ydre Kultur, Levesæt of Samfundsforhold. Christiania, 1905. 15s. (Viking Club Book Agency.)*

The author who is professor of history in the University of Christiania seems likely to emulate the fame of his father. His book on the influence of the West (the British Isles and France) on the Northmen, especially the Norwegians, their culture, life and institutions, is full of fresh matter and of old matter looked at in a new light. Coins, trade, all the departments of life in the Viking period are reviewed in order to show the external influences bearing upon them. "The influence of the West was deepest in Orkney and Shetland, these places may be called the Cyprus and Crete of our culture" (p. 401). He shows that about one fourth of the settlers of Iceland came from the British Isles.—JÓN STEFÁNSSON.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

All communications must bear the name and address of sender.

Each note, query or reply must be written on one side only of a separate slip of paper, with the writer's name and address, or initials, as desired to be printed.

Editorial communications, advertisements, orders for back numbers, etc., must be addressed to A. W. JOHNSTON, 59, Oakley Street, Chelsea, London, S.W.

Subscriptions must be sent to the Honorary Treasurer, A. SHAW MELLOR, 14, Westbourne Street, Hyde Park, London, W.



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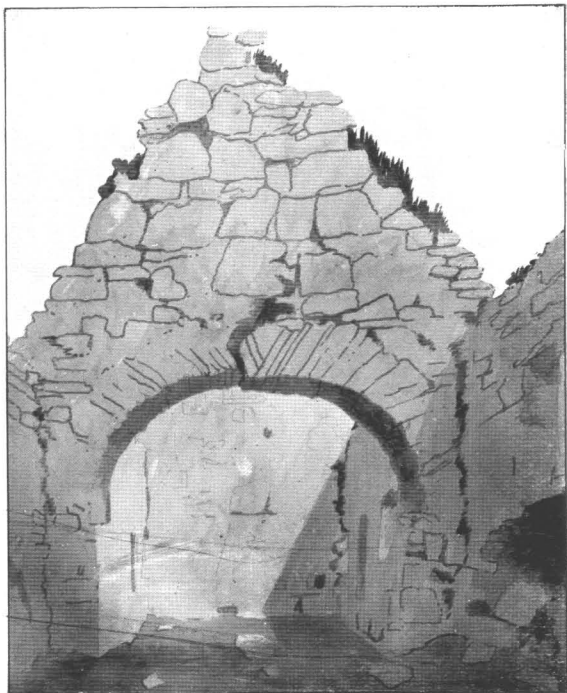
Gifts are invited to the Fund of £2,000, to be invested and the interest used for the collection of Orkney and Shetland Place-Names and Folklore, and the publication of the results.

ORKNEY AND SHETLAND OLD-LORE SERIES.—The first number has had a good reception, and congratulations on its success have poured in from all quarters. The following remarks, taken from letters received from subscribers, will be of interest:—"It should stimulate all who see it to subscribe." "A palpable hit. The Notes scattered through the *Diplomatarium* will be a valuable addition to the text, and I am specially grateful to Jón Stefánsson for the sketch of Bishop Biarne." "Your labours have been Herculean, and deserve the success they have met." "The series promises to be a venture worthy of the islands." "In Norway it is looked upon as a most important publication, which is sure to attract interest also in that country."

The verdict of the Press so far has also been highly appreciative. *The People's Journal* says that the series "has got a splendid start, issued under the auspices of the vigorous Viking Club." *The Daily Mail*:—"The islands which extend from the north coast of Scotland toward Iceland retain a certain romantic isolation and no little show of local enthusiasm. The Orkneys and

Shetlands bore a very prominent position in the early mediæval history of Europe, and all that belongs to them rightly interests that hardy Society, the Viking Club. It has just started a magazine, of which the first number is before us, which, if it keeps up to the level of its opening number, will be prized by antiquaries, besides enlivening tea-tables at Kirkwall and at Lerwick." *The Aberdeen Free Press*:—"The new quarterly promises to be of great interest to Orcadians and Shetlanders, and the many from those islands scattered throughout the colonies." *Stockholm's Dagblad*:—"The publication ought to be of the greatest value to enquirers into the history of these islands." *The Orkney Herald*:—"The first number gives promise that the work will prove of great interest and value to all students of Northern history, literature, antiquities and folklore, and to many general readers. We wish the Old-lore Series all success." *The Pall Mall Gazette*:—"Among the fresh meritorious work now done by the Viking Club (Society for Northern Research) is to be mentioned the publication of Orkney and Shetland Old-lore." *The Shetland News*:—"The first number of this series has now been published, and a perusal of its contents shows that the editing is in very capable hands. The contents are sufficiently varied to be interesting and readable, even to a layman, and the arrangement and get-up of the volume is all that can be desired. The first number augurs well for the success of the scheme from an antiquarian and literary point of view. There is not the slightest doubt that the series will supply a felt want."

With this number is issued the first part of Shetland Sasines, which should prove a veritable mine to the genealogist. Orkney Sasines will commence in October. With the July quarterly will appear a number of Scotch, Latin and Norse documents, collected last year in Scotland, by Professor A. Taranger, of Christiania, on behalf of the Norwegian Government, for a forthcoming volume of *Diplomatarium Norvegicum*. Copies of these docu-



CHANCEL ARCH (NOW FALLEN).

*From the original water colour drawing by the late Sir Henry
Dryden, Bt., 1855.*

In the possession of A. W. Johnston.

KIRK OF THE NESS, CULLYAVOE, YELL, SHETLAND.



OLD BELL, IN USE ABOUT 200 YEARS AGO.

*In the possession of Provost J. M. Goudie, Lerwick.
From a photograph by R. H. Ramsay, Lerwick.*

ments have been given to the Viking Club on condition that they are printed at once. The texts will be edited by Professor A. Taranger. Translations of the Latin and Norse papers will be made by Dr. Jón Stefánsson. The Norwegian Government has conferred a great honour on the Club by presenting it with these documents in advance of their publication.

KIRK OF THE NESS, SHETLAND.—The late Sir Henry Dryden, in his description of this Church (which he measured in 1855) in his series of articles which appeared in the *Orcadian*, 1867-1871, says that it is the most complete of the old Churches of Shetland. It consisted of a Nave and Chancel with bell-cot on the west gable. The Church was used until about 1750. The Chancel has a sedile, and perhaps an Easter sepulchre. According to Mr. Irvine there was a few years ago (before 1855), a rude cross grave stone here, like that at Uya. A bell, which in 1855 was lying on the shore at Cullyavoe, once hung at this Church. It is said to have been obtained from a wrecked ship, but is evidently a church bell. It has an inscription in Dutch, and the date 1694. The late Mr. Irvine of Midbrigg had a small bell, said to have come from this Church. It had no inscription. Since 1855 the Chancel arch and gable over it have fallen.

SHEEP-MARKS.—“A sheep mark warand Bealyea Halcrow to John Johnston 1742. Thes are giving full power and Warrant to you John Johnstoun Merchant in Stromness to mark what Sheep and Bestall you and your aires may have upon the mark Following viz. (the Top of the Left Lug and fouer Lops in the Stump and two Staiers in ech Side of the right Lug) with full pouer to you and yours to Bruck and enjoy the same as your proper Stock Mark In all time coming discharging any other By mark as ye will Be ansuerable Subscribed for warrand and extracted out of the Court Bookes of Stromness the twenty third day of February on thousand seaven hundred and thirty seven years By (*signed*) Wm. Halcro Bailie.”

The late Mr. Joshua Hay of Winbrek in Orphir gave me the following description of marks in Orphir. *Laps* are made by the ear being slit or cut into two or three laps parallel with the length of the ear. A *shear mark*, a piece cut out of the end of ear. A *bit*, a small piece cut out of the side of the ear. A *crop off*, the end of the ear cut off straight. A *skirt* in the left or right nose, a slit in the nose.—A. W. JOHNSTON.

QUERIES.

RELICS OF THE ARMADA.—It would be very interesting to know who are the possessors of the chairs and the silver flagon mentioned by Mr. Stuart Bruce in his interesting paper, "Shetland Wrecks."—NORNA.

THE BIRCH-TREE IN SHETLAND.—The only record of the occurrence of this tree in Shetland is found in the "New Statistical Account of Scotland" (Shetland, p. 153). No specimens are known to exist, and I have failed to meet with it during a study of the Shetland Flora extending over twenty years. There are, however, certain place-names which indicate that the Birch was formerly abundant, at all events locally. There is a loch called *Birka-water* out by the west banks, three miles south of Uyea, Northmaven. I was there last summer, but just as the hunting-ground was reached a thick fog came down, and it became necessary to give up botany. Since then Mr. Burgess, of North Roe, has kindly been over to Birka-water, but he did not succeed in finding the Birch. There is also a ward hill called *Birka Vird* in the southern part of Northmaven, about a quarter of a mile north of the head of Gunnister Voe, but this locality has not yet been searched. Both of these places no doubt owe their names to Birches which formerly grew on or about them. Any information on the subject will be valued, as well as notes of any other Shetland place-names which contain the word "Birka." Mr. A. W. Johnston suggests that the names "Limtegs" and "Limvelteg" may have reference to the Birch.—W. H. BEEBY.

ELPHINSTONE.—A contributor to a recent issue of *The Scottish Field* (September, 1906) makes the following statement relating to Eilean Dearg, situated in the mouth of Loch Riddan:—"The former (Eilean Dearg) has a few remains of an ancient castle, which was the headquarters of the Earl of Argyle when he invaded Scotland from Holland in 1685. Charge of the castle was given to Colonel Elphinstone of Lapness, while the Earl, with 1,200 volunteers, made a descent on Inveraray. Two days after the English warships appeared in sight of the castle; the garrison were panic-stricken, rushed to their boats without firing a shot, and sought refuge in the Portaneilean woods." Is anything known about Colonel Elphinstone's career?—A STARLING.

THE NAME FLAWS OR FLAUS.—About the middle of the 18th century two brothers of the name of Flaws came from Orkney to Shetland, one settled in the island of Yell, and the other in Dunrossness. The family tradition is that they originally came from Ireland. It would be interesting to know if any representatives of the family are still in Orkney, and if they will kindly give, if they can, any information about the first settler of the name there.—NORNA.

HJALTLAND.—With regard to the old name for Shetland, Dr. Jakobsen writes: "It has been explained from the man's name *Hjalti*, . . . but there are no instances of countries being named after single men" ("Old Shetland Dialect," p. 119). There is, however, the classic instance of Gardarsholm. That the name "Gardarsholm" was afterwards changed to "Iceland" does not of course affect the question. The fact that Gardar *did* name Gardarsholm after himself seems to dispose of the statement "that there are no instances, etc."—W. H. BEEBY.

MOWAT.—Mr. Fergusson, in "Rambling Sketches in the Far North," quotes an inscription from an old tombstone in Flotta churchyard, which begins: "Heir is the Burrial Place of the Antient Names of the Mouats in

Feera." He goes on to state, "these Mouats were a branch of the Royal Mouats of Hoy, the baronetcy of which family has been allowed to drop." On what foundation do these statements rest? Why "royal," and what "baronetcy" is meant? What is known of the Mowats of Hoy, and how were Captain (or Admiral) Mowat, R.N., and his aunt, Marion Mowat, who about 1700 married Thomas Clouston of Stromness, related to that family?—J. S. C.

POMONA.—Why and when was the Mainland of Orkney called Pomona? What is the meaning of the name? The old Norse name was Hrossey, *i.e.*, Horse-Isle. The late Professor Munch has a paper on Pomona, but I have been unable to see it. A reprint of this paper, or a note on the name in your next number would, I am sure, be welcomed by many readers of "Old-lore."—T. M.

SARLE.—Information is wanted regarding the family of Sarle in Rousay, Orkney. It is understood that one of the Sarles built a house in Rousay, latterly used as an inn, which has the Sarle arms over the door—a chevron sable between three birds.

VOLE-MOUSE.—Professor Skeat asks if the name *vole-mouse* is still used in Orkney and Shetland, and whether it is ever called *vole* for short. Mr. William Traill says that he always heard it called, about Kirkwall, *vol-mūs* (*o* sounded short), and also the *Cuttack*. Readers will much oblige by informing the editor of the names they have heard, and their pronunciation.—A. W. JOHNSTON.

REPLIES.

ARMADA RELICS.—The owners of the relics mentioned by "Norna" are known, but they do not wish their names to be published.

MURRAY.—I have a note (but unfortunately without a reference) that Francis Murray, brother german of John Murray, Commissary of Orkney, married, 9th September, 1670, Elspeth, daughter of James Mudie of Melsetter. Her brother, Harie Mudie, designed "of Melsetter," died

25th April, 1690, having married Katherine, daughter of John Graham of Breckness, who was born 14th June, 1651, and had been married (contract dated 19th December, 1668), first, to John Murray, Commissary of Orkney. She died 19th November, 1686. Henderson's "Caithness Family History" states that John Murray of Pennyland had five sons, four of whom were James, his successor, David of Clairden, John, a writer in Edinburgh in 1667, who afterwards, I believe, became Commissary of Orkney, and Francis. Perhaps this may help "A. S. M."—
A. FRANCIS STEUART.

POMONA.—The following is a summary of remarks made by P. A. Munch in his "Geographical Elucidations of the Scottish and Irish local names occurring in the Sagas" (*Mémoires de la Société Royale des Antiquaires du Nord*, 1845-1849, p. 223) regarding the name *Pomona* for *Mainland* of Orkney. *Pomona* is mentioned first by Fordun (*Scotichronicon* II., cap. 11), and thus not before the close of the fourteenth century. Misled by an erroneous reading, some authors have supposed they had found *Pomona* even in Julius Solinus. Torfæus (*Orcad.*, p. 5) says of *Mainland*: "A Julio Solino polyhistore *Diutina* appellatur." But if we refer to Solinus himself we find no such name. His whole passage is as follows (c. 22):—"Secundam a continenti stationem Orcades præbent . . . vacant homine, non habent silvas, tantum juncis herbis intorrescunt. Cetera earum nudæ arenæ. Ab Orcadibus Thylen usque 5 dierum ac noctium navigatio est; sed Thyle larga et diutina pomona copiosa est," which reads, "but Thyle is fruitful and rich in long-continuing crops." If "*diutina*" was read by Torfæus as a proper name, the word "*pomona*" must often have been exposed to the same mischance. We do not doubt that this is the key of the whole mystery, and explains a name otherwise so bizarre and inexplicable. When Buchanan, in his geographical introduction, referred to old writers for the word "*Pomona*"—"Orcadum maxima multis veterum *Pomona* vocatur"—

he must have been thinking of Solinus, for no other author uses this word in conjunction with "Thyle" or "Orcades." Possibly Fordun himself was the first to introduce "Pomona." However this may be, it is evidently our duty to do away with it altogether, as being merely the product of a gross mistake.—A. W. JOHNSTON.

SARLE.—A correspondent sends the following extracts from an old family bible:—Charles Sarle, youngest son of Hugh Sarle of St. Allen by his wife Sarah Richards of St. Paul both in Cornwall; born May 2nd, 1755, in St. Paul. Married Patience Rogers fourth daughter of James Rogers, Trenhall; by his wife Patience Blight of Kirton Wood, both in St. Erth, Cornwall, born May, 1755. Died at Westness, Rousay, Jan. 5th, 1823, interred at Skiel in the same island. Had issue:—(1) Charles Sarle, born at Falmouth 1788,—married, 1812, Fanny, fourth daughter of Digory King Marshall of St. Mary's, Truro, by his wife Phœbe Allen. *This Charles Sarle built the house in question at Rousay.* (2) Patience Sarle, born 1792, married — Harvey. (3) John Roger Sarle, born 1794. (4) Harriet Sarle, born 1786, married at Lisbon [June 9th, 1817] William Traill of Woodwick. Charles Sarle and Fanny Marshall had issue:—Phœbe Allen Sarle, married — Trew. (2) Harriet Sarle, married Captain Lamb. (3) Emmeline Rogers Sarle, married — Lloyd. (4) Mary Sarle, married Colonel Irving. (5) Elizabeth Sarle. (6) Charles Lanyon Sarle. (7) Sir Allen Lanyon Sarle, late of the L.B. & S.C. Railway.

Another correspondent writes that Fanny Marshall Sarle, a sister of Sir Allen Sarle, was married in Singapore to Haldane Wilsone of Dalnair, Stirlingshire.

AN ORCADIAN BATTLE, A HUNDRED YEARS AGO.

SOME years ago, when visiting an old friend, I was asked whether I had ever heard of the great battle between the Stenness men and the Ireland men in the days of the Pressgang. On answering in the negative, he narrated the following story, which is given in as nearly his own words as I can recollect. The battle was fought a year or two before Trafalgar, and was in connection with getting men for Nelson. My friend informed me that he had received it from his father, who was one of the combatants:—Tinks du will we ever hae da days o' pressan ower again? Boy, boy, am hard me faither tellan wheer yarns aboot da ploys dey hed i' the auld times whin he waas a growan chield, an' hoo some wan aff ae wey an' some anither, bit am tinkan da best he ever telt waas aboot a tullya they hed ae night ower aboot the Dams. Id cam aboot dis wey. The Irelan' men hed hidie holes i' the hill, whar they bed for days api' en' whin dere waas ony wurd o' a warship bean aboot han's. Bit id waas suerly aisy tae hide dere dan for da heather waas sae lang, min, the corbies laid amang id, an' jeust hapes o' catawhissies. Beesweel a warship cam tae da back o' the Holmes an' da Irelan' men teuk tae da hill as euswal. They gaed ap aboot the waal o' Stennarian. I'se wirran thu kens her owerweel, an' a bony piece sheu's in, an' a fine piece for hidan dere i' da burn, is id no noo? Foo bony dey could dick dem doon aboot the edges o'er. Weel, ae day, whin a hale lock o' them waar lyan dere dey saa a ting they teuk tae be a man api' da tap o' the hill abeun Babylon. He waand 'is wey aboot seustu an' noos an' dans looted doon—whasacco he waas leukan for so'nting-bit aye cam narer till whar they waar hidan. Ane o' them hed a spyglass an' whin he cam doon aboot da ald hoose o' Gyre, they jaloosed id waas Velzian o' Hoosewhie. Ane

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gaed ap till 'im an' pat speech api'm an' speered da neus. Haena ye hard, co' he, ye needna fash hidan noo, dere's a neu la oot 'at deres no tae be ony mair pressan, gin every perish'll 'gree amang dersels tae gae twa men, sae as we're gotten twa i' Stenness 'at'll de, ye may a' geong hame. The men waarna jeust ower seur o' Velzian as he waas said tae be a filty leean taed, sae whin he gaed awa they held a Cooncil o' war, an' t'out dey wadna be ony the waar o' sendan oot spies. They gaed dere-waas till the wives o' the Hillwhy wha waar aye gaan a hooseagettan an' gossapan onywey, an' sent them ower tae Stenness till see foo the lan' lay. The wives gaed bit seun cam hame wi' da neus 'at Velzian hed telt them a lock o' lees, an' the Stenness men waar plannan tae geong ower tae Irelan' an' press twa fae dere. Noo dis is a bit am no sae seur aboot for id seems dere waas a air o' treuth i' whit Velzian telt, else hoo could they press onybody, an' treu aneuch bit twa waas wanted. Hooever, onywey, the wives neus pat the Irelan' men jeust fair yivers, an' dey vood dey wad hae revenge api' Velzian, whit waas amas am seur. Weel, min, dan dey hed anither cooncil an' made it ap amang dersels tae geong ower tae Stenness api the heud o' the night and press ald Velzian an' Omand o' Bigswal. I kinno whit Omand hed deun 'at dey wanted vengeance api' 'im, bit dat waas da twa dey war gan tae hae. Dan dey ged der waas hame an' leuked oot for handy wapons, an' whin id waas dark aneuch dey met a' ermed, boy, an' seckan erms. I deuna min dem a' noo bit dere waas saetrees, an' flaal-sooples an' han'staffs, an' ald Tam Aglath teuk 'is mither's bismar. Dey buist a' been a wheer leukan crood. I cinno min dem a', bit dere waas Tam Aglath wi' 'is mither's bismar, min's du him? an' ald John Clouston, du'll min' o' him, he bed i' a peerie bit o' tecket hoose abeun the Burn o' Villis, an' I tink dee gutcher Smith wad been dere for dey waar aye efter 'im, an' dan dere waas me faither. I wad say dere buist a' been ower therty a' taegither. Weel, whin they met they gaed tae Oot-

brecks for ald Johnstan, he waas o' the sam Johnstans 'ats i' Gear noo, an' waas whit dey ca'd the Toons Constable. Du sees buddie 'at the Johnstans aa'd Ootbrecks than-a-days.¹ I kinno gin dere waar mair nor ae Constable at a time i' the toon, bit I ken 'at Jock Smith o' the Ha' an' Jamie Smith o' Ramswhy waar Constables teu ae time or anither. Noo du buist min' on 'at id seems tae a' been la dan 'at onyane could press, I kinno foo id could a' been bit id waas the case, an' whin onyane waas pressed an' pittan i' tae the han's o' the constable he waas a' the sam as he been abeurd a man-o-war, an' could be shot for rinnan awa. Beesweel dey teuk Johnstan wi' them, an' gaed their waas ower the hill tae Hoosewee tae tak' a ha'd o' Velzian, bit alis, alis, boy, ne'er a Velzian could dey fin' an' the ald wife waas i' her bed. Dey sowt an' sowt waan an' oonwaan, but an' ben, ap an' doon, i' the paetie neuk, aye an' even lifted the lud o' the ald plowt kirn bit nae hair o'm fand dey, sae aff they set for Bigswal tae tak' Omand onywey. Dey hedno gaen far till ane o' them said, I'se tell ye whit id is, bairns, ald Velzian's i' the hoose, for noo whin I tink api' id I saa 'is pants wi' straps api' them. Noo, du sees dat waas preuf anouch 'at he waasna far awa, sae they 'boot leg at aince, an', boy, whar tinks du dud dey get 'im—anunder the bed—an' de ald wife api da tap o'm, sleepan bae her tale. He waas dregged oot a' piveran wi' gluff an' handed ower tae the constable as a prisoner, an' aff for Bigswal they set as hard as they could pelt. A, bit, whan awan, boy, da neus hed gotten oot ae wey or anither, Best kens hoo, an' the Stenness men gathered i' force a' ermed teu tae drive the Irelan' men hame. The twa ermies met somewhar atween Whys an' the Dams—thu kens whar Tam o' Whys bides owerweel, am seur. Weel, dey met dere an' fell teu at aince an' laid on wi'

¹ Outbrecks was sold by the Johnstons before 1799, when it was in the possession of William Velzian. None of the family ever lived there. From 1752-78 it was let to a tenant, James Johnston, but he was no relation of the family.—EDITOR.

their naves an' seck wapons as they hed wi' a' their poo'r. I kinno hoo lang the feicht lested, bit i' the end baith sides ha'led aff for a rest an' air o' braith, an' dan da Irelan' men fand oot 'at the Stenness men hed taen John Clouston a prisoner, bit the Irelan' men aye hed a had o' Velzian. Boy, boy, id waas weel said id waas a blessin o' "The Best" dat John Clouston's brither Herry waasna dere dat night or dere wad a' been murder. Herry hed a gun an' car'dna for guid or bad, dog or deil. Efter restan a peerie meenit an' gettan ceuled an' the bleud rubbed aff, da twa sides hed a kind o' parly, an' id waas 'greed dat dere so'odna be ony mair feichtin' dat night, an' dat da twa prisoners—Velzian an' Clouston—wad be sent tae the man-o'-war i' the mornin. Dan dey skailed. The twa waar sent abeurd bit waar baith hame again the neist day as no bean fit for sea. Velzian waas fit anouch bit played the feul sae weel dat dere waas narlans a row aboot 'is bean sent, bit I cinno min' on a' the oots an' ins o'd noo. I kinno whit the Stenness men dud, bit da Irelan' men got a cook aff a whaller for twa poun' twal, tae geong i' Velzian's piece.

J. T. SMITH LEASK.



THE AUTHORSHIP OF ORKNEYINGA SAGA (JARLA SÖGUR).

THE proper name for the Orkneyinga Saga, the only name for which there is authority in the old MSS., is Jarla Sögur, *i.e.*, the (Orkney) Earls' Sagas, the Earls of Orkney being regarded as the Earls *par excellence*. The authorities for this name are the following:—(1) Snorre Sturluson himself, who refers to the saga by name in St. Olaf's Saga ch. 103 (II. 214, in Finnur Jónsson's edition of Heimskringla): "yet it is told in the Earls' Sagas" (þá er þat þó sagt í Jarlasögunum) and in ch. 100 of the same saga: "as is told in Jarlasögur" (sem segir í Jarlasögum). He uses it especially in the Sagas of Harald Fairhair and St. Olaf. He makes use of it for the first conquest of the isles and for the story of Torf-Einar, one of whose verses he has moved to its due place in the context. Of the sons of Earl Þorfinn he says: "and there are long tales of them" (ok eru miklar frásagnir frá þeim). He relies on the Jarlasögur for Eirik Bloodaxe in Orkney and for the meeting of Olaf Tryggvason and Earl Sigurd. In telling of Harald Hardrada leaving his Queen in Orkney he deviates from Morkinskinna in favour of the Jarlasögur. (2) The Flateyjarbók II. 347: "as is told in the Jarlasögur" (sem segir í jallasögum), of St. Olaf speaking to Rögnvald Brúsason at Stiklastað. (3) Flateyjarbók III. 270: "as is told in the Jarlasögur" (sem segir í Jarlasögum), of the quarrel between Earls Rögnvald and Þorfinn (The Saga of Magnus the Good). (4) Fornmannasögur VI. 45: "sem segir í jarlasögum," and (5) Fms. VI. 47: "sem segir í sögu þeirra (jarlanna)," "as it is told in their (*i.e.*, the Earls') Saga." (6) Fms. V. 201: "sem segir í jarlasögum," (7) Fagrskinna p. 99: "sem getit er í jarlasögunni" (jarlasögunum MS. B), "as is mentioned in the Earls' Saga(s)," referring to Earl Rögnvald Brúsason and Þorfinn. (8) Fms. I. 196: "Saga Orkneyinga jarla,"

(9) Flateyjarbók II. 55: "Þátttr Orkneyinga jarla," (10) Vatnsdæla ch. 9: "Torfeinar . . . af honum eru komnir allir Orkneyinga jarlar sem segir í æfiþeirra," "Turf Einar . . . from him are descended all the Orkney earls, as is told in their lives." (11) Landnáma IV. 8: "eptir þat fór Einar vestr ok lagði undir sik eyjarnar, sem segir í sögu hans," "thereupon Einar went westwards and subdued the isles, as is told in his saga." (12) Magnús Ólafsson in his Lexicon Runicum, written about 1630, gives over 100 quotations from Jarlasaga or Jarlasögur.

The only authority for the name Orkneyinga Saga (sögur) is the following heading in St. Olaf's Saga, p. 90 of the edition of 1853: "Upphaf Orcneyinga sagna," "the beginning of the Orkney sagas," or tales, as *sagna* may be gen. plural of both *saga* and *sögn*. While this saga itself is supposed to date from c. 1250, this heading was probably inserted in a later copy of the MS.

This investigation of MSS. leaves no doubt of Jarlasögur being the name of the saga. It also provides us with a *terminus ad quem*, with a date before which the saga existed. Snorre's Heimskringla was written 1220-1230, Fagrskinna in 1230-40. Our saga existed before these dates, as it is quoted in Heimskringla and Fagrskinna.

¹ The saga itself provides us with a *terminus a quo*. In ch. 24 (p. 38) we read: "sem segir í æfi Noregskonunga." The work referred to is generally supposed to be the so-called *Ágrip*, written about 1190. Further, in ch. 113, p. 217, Earl Rögnvald is spoken of as a Saint. Bishop Biarne had Earl Rögnvald's relics enshrined in 1192, and he was canonized in that year. In the additions from the Flatey Book appended to Vigfusson's edition of Jarlasögur he is also called "the holy Earl Rögnvald." If the passage in ch. 113 is genuine, which there is no reason to doubt, we may then take it that the saga was written between 1192 (1190) and 1220 (or 1225).

¹ All quotations are from Vigfusson's edition of Jarlasögur (Orkneyinga Saga).

The Jarlasögur fall into three parts. After the introduction ch. 1-3: Fundinn Noregr, we have:

I. ch. 4-38, Earl Sigurd to Earl Þorfinn, A.D. 880-1064.

II. ch. 39-56, Earl (St.) Magnus and Earl Hákon Pálsson, A.D. 1064-1126.

III. ch. 61-113, Earl Rögnvald, A.D. 1134-1158.

The author then in ch. 114-117 continues the saga, and tells of Svein Ásleifarson as if he were an earl. Svein was killed in 1171. Chapter 60 deals with the miracles of St. Magnus.

Maurer and Vigfusson thought there were three sagas, or a compilation of three sagas. But even if these existed in oral tradition the author has wrought out of them an artistic whole, a continuous history of the Orkney earls, which naturally falls into divisions, grouping themselves round the earl who is the hero of each part. In spite of Vigfusson's assertion to the contrary there is unity of style throughout. The use of skaldic verse, which reminds one of Snorre's use of it, is similar throughout. And, since style may be a matter of individual opinion, direct evidence for the unity of the saga is fortunately found in ch. 59, p. 88: "Þessir menn allir koma við söguna síðarr," "all these men (enumerated above) come into the saga later."

The author had intimate local knowledge of the Orkneys, of their headlands and currents, of all the tradition collected in the islands, of the dates of events, so exact a knowledge as to be able to determine if this or that happened at full moon or quarter. *Prima facie* it seems needless to suppose that he was an Icelander who knew the Orkneys well. Why should not Orkney men who were competing with Icelanders in skaldship be capable of writing of their own earls? Besides, as Vigfusson says, "the whole tone of it differs from the sagas of known Icelandic origin. The vivid pictures of the Viking Age which recall the lays of Helgi and the almost complete absence of Law are quite a contrast to sagas depicting contemporary life in Iceland or Norway."

So far, then, we may infer that an Orkney man wrote the saga in 1192-1225. He was a cleric, a clergyman who knew Latin, as is proved by the Saga of St. Magnus.

P. A. Munch wrote, in his *History of the Norwegian People*, III. 1051: "Snorre had older fragments of sagas of which several may perhaps be due to the literary Bishop Biarne, who was in friendly intercourse with several Icelandic chieftains, and especially may have sent his own historical works or those of others to Jón Loptsson or Sæmund Jónsson, who was his intimate friend." Sophus Bugge writes in 1875: "It would be highly surprising, if Snorre had not had an intimate knowledge of the poetical works of the Orkney Bishop."

These two great scholars have believed, then, that Snorre knew and used works which he learnt to know through Bishop Biarne. We have seen above that Snorre had before him the *Jarlasögur* when he wrote *Heimskringla* in 1220-1230. It is safe to say that it is in the highest degree probable that he acquired his copy through the good offices of the chief literary man of the Orkneys, with whom he stood in friendly relations, through the Oddi family.

In the life of Biarne we have seen how "the last of the Vikings," the mightiest man in the West without earl's or king's name, Svein Ásleifarson, was closely related to Biarne. Of Svein's two sons one, Olaf, was brought up with Biarne and his brothers, a kind of fosterbrother, by Biarne's father the chieftain, Kolbein Hríuga in Weir, while the other, Andres, married Fríða, a sister of Biarne.

Now the author of *Jarlasögur* is evidently a friend and admirer of Svein. He makes him the hero of the last part of the saga, as if he were an earl. In ch. 79, p. 129, he writes: "ok er þetta frásögn Sveins um þenna atburð," "and this is Svein's story of this event." Of the statements of others about the matter he says that it fits in worse (*samir verr*). He thus believes Svein's statements, when they disagree with those of other men.

Now Biarne could listen to Svein telling of his exploits in Weir or in Gareksey, on winter evenings. And here we may ask, is there the least probability that anyone (1) an Orkney man (2) and a clergyman, (3) who lived in 1192-1120 and was (4) a close friend of Svein Ásleifarson, had the historical sense and gifts, had the necessary access to the traditions of the family of the earls to write their saga, except the literary Bishop, who had showed in *Jómsvíkinga drápa* his sense of history and his sympathy with Viking life of the Svein type? The character of Svein is drawn with the same loving touches as that of Vagn Ákason in the epic of the *Jómsvíking*s which we *know* is by Biarne.

Biarne was frequently in Norway, and was more likely to get hold of the *Ágrip* (*Lives of the Kings of Norway*, quoted in *Orkn. S.*) soon after it was written, in 1190, than any other Orkneying. He says little of the earls contemporary with himself, Harald Maddadhson, co-earl 1139-1158, sole earl 1158-1206, and his sons, David, earl 1206-1214, and Jón, earl 1206-1231. Biarne's sympathies must have been with the Poet Earl Rögnvald Kali, who was killed in 1158, but he was careful not to offend his enemy, the reigning earl, Harald, whom he calls "the greatest chief" (*hinn mesti höfðingi*, ch. 117), a somewhat indifferent phrase. The *Flatey Book* addition to *Jarlasögur* tries to mend this by calling Harald one of the three most powerful Orkney earls.

It has been remarked by Vigfusson that the *Saga of Earl Rögnvald Kali* bears a likeness in style to the *Saga of King Sverrir*. Biarne in 1195 saw the Earl of Orkney humiliate himself at Bergen before the Conqueror, the only King in Europe who defied the Pope. He must have been impressed with the greatness of the King, and, with his literary interests, he is certain to have acquired a copy of his saga, written at the dictation of the King himself by Karl Jónsson of Þingeyra monastery, Iceland. Great events in contemporary history written down so soon and so impartially—this

was bound to stimulate the literary genius of Biarne, to make him eager to emulate such a history in the Orkneys whose national heroes only lacked name and fame in the North, as the poet says :

quia carent vate sacro.

Biarne's close connection with the leading chieftains and literary men in Iceland has been pointed out in his life. Besides the families mentioned there we read in Bishop Pál's Saga (*Biskupa Sögur*, I. 143) : " at that time Lopt, son of Bishop Paul, went abroad and visited great men in other countries, Bishop Biarne in Orkney and then King Ingi in Norway and Earl Hákon . . . and received from them noble gifts and much property." From many sources we find that Biarne was well known and held in high repute in Iceland, and it is only fair to suppose that the knowledge was mutual, that Biarne knew the works written in Iceland, in the twelfth century, and the beginning of the thirteenth century, the golden age of Icelandic literature.

From the days of Turf Einar, Earl of Orkney, of whose poetry five verses are preserved by Snorre, who calls one of the metres in *Háttatal* by his name, since the days of this excellent poet who lived towards the end of the ninth century Orkney had been a literary centre. The Icelander, Arnór jarlaskald (the earls' poet), was married to a relative of the earls, and lived for years in Orkney. He was present at the battle of Rauðabjörg, A.D. 1044, and refused to avail himself of the offer of Earl Þorfinn to go ashore before the battle and be out of it. He made a funeral poem on Earl Rögnvald Brúsason, who was killed in the battle. When the great Earl, Þorfinn, died in 1064, he also wrote a dirge on him. He recalls how he sat opposite him in his hall, in the high seat, "drinking the bluid-red wine." The sun will darken, the land will sink, the bright stars will leave the sky ere such an earl is born again in the islands, he says, quoting *Vóluspá*.

Earl Rögnvald Kali is evidently a favourite with the author of *Jarlasögur*, who gets information about his crusade from men who went with him (see p. 173). Biarne could easily have done this. Rögnvald's court was a place to which Icelandic skalds flocked.

Biarne's interest in history, his impartiality and his faithful and truthful rendering of fact, come out clearly in his *Jómsvíkinga drápa*. Of this epic poem 45 stanzas are preserved, in the metre called *munnnvörp*, by Snorre. He tells of the defeat of the Jómsvíkings in *Hiörungavag* by Earl Hákon. The introduction is a complaint about unhappiness in love, a complaint which recurs in the burden (*stef*) throughout. It has been said that Biarne must have written this before he was elected a Bishop, or before 1188. But Bishops, as we have seen in the case of Tegnér, are not above writing love poetry, occasionally, and the time of its composition must be left in doubt. But the circumstantial evidence, both internal and external, that the *Sagas of the Orkney Earls*, in their present form, are due to his historical genius is so weighty as to amount to more than a probability. For an unbiassed mind it is impossible to come to any other conclusion than that the *Saga of the Earls* comes from the court of the poet, the builder of Cathedrals, the politician, the historian, from the court which in 1192-1220, *i.e.*, during the years when the saga was written, was the literary centre of Orkney, Bishop Biarne's. If we accept the converging evidence pointing to his authorship, he has raised himself a monument more imperishable than his own minster of St. Magnus.

JÓN STEFÁNSSON.

A LEGEND OF SHETLAND FROM FLJÓTSDÆLA SAGA.

I.

THE Yule-tide tale here translated has a special interest because the scene of the story is laid in Shetland. Not only that, but it appears to be a piece of Celtic folk-lore transplanted into Iceland, and grafted in a curious way upon matter otherwise historical. The step between fact and fiction is often very short, but it is not often so boldly taken as in this instance, where the simple traditions of a real family have been adorned by a later scribe with an episode from fairyland.

The Greater Fljótsdæla Saga, or story of the sons of Droplaug, was edited by Dr. Kristian Kaalund in 1883, and again by Valdimar Ásmundarson in 1896. Gudbrand Vigfússon, in the Prolegomena to Sturlunga Saga, dismissed it curtly as spurious work; he said that the paper copy of about 1650 (A.M. 551) in which it exists was founded on the text of A.M. 132 (the short, early saga), and filled up from many sources. Conrad Maurer also called it a fabrication of the seventeenth century. Dr. Kaalund thought that it was put together in the earlier part of the sixteenth; while Valdimar Ásmundarson assigns it to the fifteenth, or late in the fourteenth century. At any rate it is late and not authentic.

The genuine saga of which this is a fanciful enlargement is one of the oldest. The MS. is of the thirteenth century (A.M. 132), and from the mention of the author, a unique instance in sagas, it can be dated early in the twelfth century (Vigfússon, *op. cit.* lxviii). It tells the story of the sons of Droplaug in what Vigfússon called "the uncouth, broken style of early Icelandic prose." It gives a totally different account of the birth and wedding of Droplaug from that given in the longer

and later saga. She was really no fairy-tale heroine, but the daughter of Thorgrim of Gil in Jökulsdal; though in our legend she is made the daughter of an earl of Shetland, born about 93—, carried off by a giant, and rescued by the Iclander who became her husband. About such a legend one cannot help asking how it could have come into the story.

Not that there were no giants in Iceland. Mr. Craigie, in his collection of Scandinavian Folk-lore (p. 57) tells (from Jón Árnason) of a troll in a cave among the fells of Iceland who was supposed to have charmed to himself a woman of the neighbourhood. But as the Icelandic saying, "Then laughed the merman," can be traced back to Ireland and Wales, so the rescue of a lady from a giant's cave is almost common form in Celtic mythology; for example, the well-known adventure of King Arthur at Mont St. Michel, and the rescue-fights with giants like Cuchullain's battle with Echaid Glas. All these go back, according to one theory of folk-lore, to the solar hero and his visit to the underworld. But here we have the old tale new set; the surroundings are purely Scandinavian; Shetland and Iceland had been Norse for centuries when this later saga was written; and yet the legend betrays its Viking-Age Celtic origin by one curious touch. In describing the giant's "paws," the word *lám*, representing the Gaelic word *lamh*, is used (*m* standing for *mh*); and the only other use of the word in Icelandic seems to be in the Edda.

The giant's name, however, is Scandinavian—Geitir. In England giants had foreign names, presumably Celtic in origin—Cormoran and Blunderbore and other strange compounds, down to Davy Jones, who is certainly Celtic. But in Norse countries even the giants were naturalised; Hallmund and Thórir of Grettis Saga were not known as half-trolls by their names, and in Shetland Saxa of Saxafjord, Herman of Hermaness, Siggeir of "Siggerhill benorth Colviedell" (Black and Thomas, "Folk-lore

of Orkney and Shetland," Folk-lore Society, xlix., p. 261) are Norse giants, while Cobbie Row in Orkney was once plain, historical Kolbein Hróga. It is much as if we should call the bugbears of our ancestors by such familiar appellations as John Smith or Mr. Wilkinson; indeed, even then there might be some hidden allusion to Völund the smith and the Vilkinasaga; but these Icelandic and Shetlandic supernaturals had quite forgotten their Celtic or Pictish origins.

Our legend has not survived in Shetland, but there are, or were, the materials for it surviving. The fact of a giant-lore has been noticed: another point of contact may be found in the very curious description of the magic sword carried off by the Icelandic hero. It had iron hilts, beautifully ornamented, but the blade was green in colour and brown at the edges, without a fleck of iron-rust—clearly a *bronze* sword. Such objects the Northmen must have found in their howe-breaking exploits, though the saga says that our hero had never seen such a weapon before, and it does not hint, even by the description, that it was known to be of bronze. But in 1876 a bronze "trow's sword," long used for magical purposes, and evidently from a grave in Shetland, was presented to the Scottish National Museum of Antiquities. It is described in the Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot. (v. xi., p. 471) as a small bronze knife or dagger with tang, 4 inches in length, found at Nordhouse, Sulem, Northmavine. So here we have the very thing surviving "in reduced circumstances," a minor example of the class of article described in the saga.

Now a story containing this incident cannot be a real Icelandic story, for bronze swords are not found in Iceland. But it might be a real Shetland story, for there the bronze weapon was actually attributed to a troll.

Treasures in a giant's cave are common in fairy-tales, but play an important part in this legend. The hero found all sorts of Icelandic wares and linen, gold and great riches; and the theory of the legend is that they

were the proceeds of the giant's raids on his neighbours and from shipwrecks. His cave was a Davy Jones's locker. In Shetland the howes were supposed to contain great treasures, especially those of Trolhouland, near Bigsetter Voe. The New Statistical Account interprets this name as "the high land of the Trows"; and Hibbert's description (published 1812) gives the following paragraph:—

"Several Shetlanders, among whom are warlocks and witches, have enjoyed a communion with the *guid folk*, and by a special indulgence have been transported in the air, whenever occasion served, from one island to another. On their visits to Trolhouland or any other knoll of a similar description they have been allowed to enter the interior of the hill at one side and come out of it at the other; and in this subterranean journey have been dazzled by the splendour exhibited within the recesses through which they have passed. They report that all the interior walls are adorned with gold and silver, and that the domestic utensils of the place, peculiar to Fairyland, resemble the strange implements that are sometimes found lying abroad on the hills."

That is to say, objects of the prehistoric ages, found in graves and sometimes loose in the soil, were explained as dwarf-wrought or fairy implements; as indeed is well known to all folk-lore students. Fairyland might be almost described as the antiquarian museum, treated poetically. Fairy-tales are to archæology as alchemy and astrology to chemistry and astronomy. But here again we have distinct local colour in our legend, attributable to Shetland, but not attributable to an Icelandic origin.

Another important feature is the giant's bed in his cave. It is represented as enormous every way, to suit the size of the giant; but it is not impossible that it may have been suggested by the famous Dwarfie Stone of Hoy, described and figured in full by Mr. A. W. Johnston in the "Reliquary" for 1895. We know from the Latin account, written by "Jo. Ben.," that so long ago as 1529 this curious artificial dwelling or sepulchre, carved in the solid rock was attributed to trows—"gigantes" is his word, though the real scale of it is diminutive. Such

a story as he tells may have grown in the telling, and passed from Orkney to Iceland by way of Shetland, may have come into our legend. But as Mr. Johnston points out to me, the real cave might be paralleled in Shetland in the Orkneyman's cave (*i.e.*, the Seal-man's, from Icelandic *örkn*, a seal), in which there are halls and cupboards enough to accommodate a real giant family, if such tenants could be found. The giant in our story, however, was no seal-man, for he did not like wetting his feet.

The name of the place does not appear to survive. The cave was Geitishellir, the crag which contained it bore the name of Geitishamarr, and the mountain above was Geitissúlur. One would like to find a Gaitsshellier or Gateshammar on the map of Shetland, but it is no great disappointment to fail in the search. In Orkney there is Gaitnip, which Dr. J. Anderson ("Orkneyinga Saga," p. 110) identifies with the Geitaberg of the Viking Age, but this place has no claims to be the scene of our story.

It will be news to students of history that Shetland in the middle of the tenth century was ruled by an earl named Björgólf, and he may well be considered as fictitious as Geitir the Giant. At the same time there must have been local chiefs, concerning whom we know very little. The curious point is that we have two distinct stories about an actual Icelandic family, both containing romances, and both giving the same set of names; but the earlier saga has the corroboration of Landnámabók, and its romance is not impossible; the later saga is, on the face of it, fictitious, but drags in this legend which evidently comes from Shetland.

The meeting-point of the two accounts is in the home-
stead of Arneidarstadir, in East Iceland. The place was so called, according to the fairy-tale, from Arneid of Shetland, the mother of the rescued Droplaug, whom she accompanied to her new home. But in the earlier Droplaugarsona Saga (i.) and in Landnáma (iv., 2) the

origin of the name is otherwise told. Ketil, the son of Thidrandi, travelling east to Jamtaland in Sweden, found there a captive girl, Arneid, the daughter of Earl Ásbjörn Skerjablesi (Skerryblaze), who had ruled the Hebrides after Tryggvi and before Guthorm. Ketil bought Arneid and married her. When they were in Víkin (south of Norway) she went ashore to gather nuts, and found a hoard of buried treasure. With this they went to Iceland and built Arneidarstadir. Their son was Thidrandi, father of Ketil and of Thorvald, the husband of Droplaug, about whom no strange adventures are told. The real romance occurred in the previous generation, and it may be noted in passing that it was not without connection with Scotland, for Arneid was born in the Hebrides.

The later saga makes this Thorvald Thidrandason, husband of Droplaug, into the hero of the romantic episode. He is described as very handsome, melancholy, inoffensive, and trustworthy. His brother Ketil, by-named Thrym (as his grandfather Ketil is by-named in the earlier saga), was dark and ugly, but lordly and imposing, and from an early age taciturn and cold. The two brothers lived at Njardvík, in Eastern Iceland. There was little love between them. Ketil would have his own way in everything. At last Thorvald asked for his share of the goods that fell to him, and sold off what he could get.

W. G. COLLINGWOOD.

(To be continued.)

OBITUARY.

SIR JOHN CHEYNE, K.C., LL.D.—On 15th January, 1907, at his residence, 13, Chester Street, Edinburgh, Sir John Cheyne, Knight, K.C., died from heart failure after a protracted illness. He was born in 1841, and was the eldest son of Henry Cheyne, of Tangwick, Zetland, writer to this signet, and Barbara Hay, his wife, and was educated first at the Edinburgh Academy, where he was “dux” in 1857. He proceeded to the University of Glasgow, and after a brilliant career there gained the Snell Exhibition, which, however, as he obtained a Scholarship at Trinity College, Oxford, he did not assume. At Oxford he graduated with high honours, and took a First Class both in “mods,” and “greats.” He was called to the Scottish Bar in 1865, and became in 1870 Sheriff-Substitute at Dundee. In this position he won golden opinions from his careful decisions and his firm grasp of mercantile law, and he retained the post until 1885, when he was made Sheriff of Roxburgh, Berwick, and Selkirk. In 1886 he was transferred to the Sheriffship of Ross, Cromarty, and Sutherland, and in 1889 to that of Renfrew and Bute, which he held until his death. Among many other legal appointments he was for many years Vice Dean of the Faculty of Advocates, and Chairman in 1890-93 of the Boundary Commissioners for Scotland. He was also nominated by the Crown as Commissioner to settle *ad interim* certain questions between the Free and the United Free Churches. From 1891 to his death he held the important office of Procurator of the Church of Scotland, with which Church he had always identified himself, and in 1897 a Knighthood was conferred upon him. Sir John was twice married. First, to Margaret (who died in 1872), youngest daughter of Archibald Simson of Commedpore, Bengal; three of whose sisters married into the Zetland families of Bruce of Symbister, Hay of Laxfirth, and Ogilvy of Seafeld; and, secondly, in 1875, to Mary Isabella, daughter of James



CATHERINE STAFFORD SPENCE.

Born July 16th, 1823, died September 21st, 1906.

From a photograph by R. H. Ramsay, Lerwick.

Edward of Balruddery. He is survived by Lady Cheyne, and by one daughter of each marriage.

R. P. GILBERTSON.—Born in Lerwick, 1841, died January 28th, 1907, aged 66 years. Mr. Gilbertson presented a public park to Lerwick in 1897, and he has left a Trust Fund for the benefit of the poor, firstly of Lerwick, and secondly of Shetland. The Capital Fund will ultimately amount to between £45,000 and £50,000.

THOMAS GRAHAM, A.R.S.A.—Born in Kirkwall, 1840, died in Edinburgh on Christmas Eve, 1906, aged 66 years. His father and grandfather were Crown Chamberlains of Orkney. Mr. Graham was better known as Tom Graham. "Forty years ago, when the group of young Scotchmen—Pettie, Orchardson, MacWhirter, and the Grahams—had recently come to London, and were beginning to attract attention at the Royal Academy, there were good judges who thought that Tom Graham was the most talented of them all."

JAMES C. MANSON.—Born 1863, died January 9th, 1907. Mr. Manson was Editor of the *Shetland News*, and partner of the firm of Messrs. T. and J. Manson, printers and publishers, Lerwick. The last words he wrote were these:—"It will be seen that the year 1906 has been an eventful one in the history of the Islands. We venture to express the hope that the coming year may have something good in store for all, and in that hope we wish all our readers, at home and abroad, A Happy New Year."

JOHN B. ROSEY.—Born October 12th, 1842, died at Stromness, January 11th, 1907, aged 64 years. Mr. Rosey was a Justice of the Peace for Orkney, Chairman of the Stromness School Board, and in 1896 Provost of Stromness.

NOTES ON BOOKS.

Shetland Family Histories: being a new, revised, and enlarged edition of "Zetland County Families." By Francis J. Grant, W.S., *Rothsay Herald*. Lerwick, T. and J. Manson. 12s. 6d. to subscribers.

In response to many requests, the author and publishers have resolved to issue a new edition of this work. It is now 13 years since the first edition appeared, and during that time many changes have taken place in the records of the various families. Further investigation has thrown fresh light on the earlier history of many of them. The new edition will include these additions and corrections, many pedigrees being entirely re-written; and opportunity will be taken to add accounts of some families—*e.g.*, Adie, Barclay, Duncan, Hamilton, Mouat of Brookpoint, Sandison, etc.—not previously given. The volume will be bound in half calf, and printed on antique vellum paper from new type; size, crown 4to.—the size and style being the same as the first edition. The special subscription period has been extended for readers of Old-Lore, who should take this opportunity of acquiring a copy, before the price is raised.

On British Stone Circles. By Edward Milles Nelson. London, Robert Atkinson, 1907. 32 pp. Price 1/-.

This pamphlet describes the stone circle of Hestingot, near Sumburgh, Shetland, and others, in which attention is called to the repeated use of the numeral 3 and its multiples. A hypothetical "Hestingot foot" is constructed = 12.96 English inches, with which startling results are obtained by its application to other circles, showing that the foot, and not the yard, was used in their construction. The origin of the number 666 is shown to be that of the Sun God. It is contended that the Phœnicians, who had learnt Sun-worship from the Egyptians, came to England and built Avebury, Stone-

henge, etc., and on being driven out by the Celtic Belgæ, took ship and went to Scotland, Orkney, and Shetland. They built the Brochs, the Circles of Broigar, Stenness, and Hestingot. No Brochs are found in England, because the colonization of the south of England was a trading and peaceful immigration, while that of Scotland was a hostile invasion. Latterly the Phœnicians (Picts) united with the Celts against the Romans, when their Brochs, no longer needed for defence, had their tops pulled down, scarcements, and secondary constructions being built with stones.

Hestingot is a peculiarly interesting Circle, as it has no less than three solar Solstitial Amplitudes, and two Stellar Coamplitudes indicated.

A Text Book of Irish Literature, Part I. By Eleanor Hull, author of "Pagan Ireland," "Early Christian Ireland," etc. London, David Nutt, 1906. 3/- net.

This text book of Irish Literature, which has been prepared to meet the requirements of the students of the Intermediate Board, takes in generally the period up to the early years of the sixteenth century.

In chapter xv., on the Poetry of Nature, Miss Hull draws attention "to the fact that the period of which we have been speaking as the best period of early Irish verse, that is the eighth to the tenth or eleventh centuries, is the very period during which, if we are to credit the repeated assertions of early Munster annalists and modern historians, the literature of Ireland was being stamped out, the schools destroyed, and the books dispersed by the Norsemen. To the Dane is attributed not only the burning of Churches and Monasteries, but the extinction of all social, artistic, and literary life among the people. But the witness of facts points exactly in the opposite direction. The meeting and intermingling of the two nationalities, in many ways so dissimilar, yet so fitted to supplement each other, was accompanied with a great

outburst of activity, not only in the practical directions of building and mercantile industry, but in artistic and intellectual advance."

Miss Hull's book is indispensable to Northern students, and to everyone interested in the important part played by Orkney and Shetland in Viking colonization.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

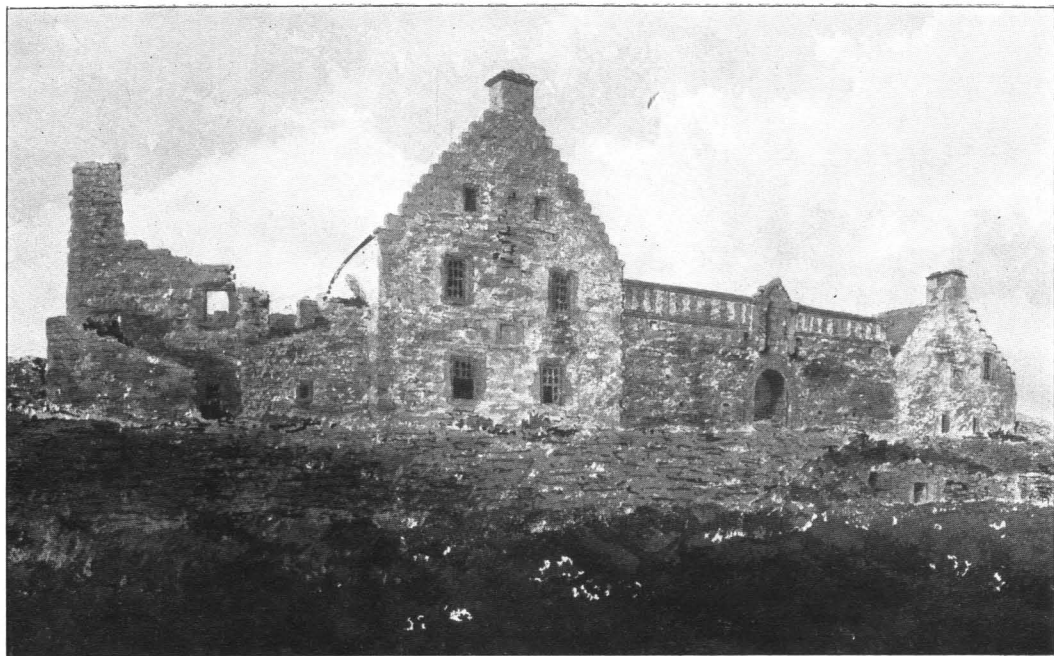
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Editorial communications, advertisements, orders for back numbers, etc., must be addressed to A. W. JOHNSTON, 59, Oakley Street, Chelsea, London, S.W.

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THE OLD HOUSE OF THE CRAIGIES IN GAIRSEY, ORKNEY.
*From the original water-colour drawing by the late Sir Henry Dryden, Bt., 1851.
In the possession of A. W. Johnston,*

Orkney and Shetland Miscellany

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Society for Northern Research.

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VOL. I. PART III. JULY, 1907.

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NOTES.

New Subscribers.—The following Subscribers have been added to the list since the second number was printed.

Original Annual Subscribers.

Gad, G. E. C., Copenhagen, c/o Messrs. Asher & Co., 13, Bedford Street, Covent Garden, London, W.C. (Omitted in first list).

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Black, G. F., New York Public Library, Lafayette Place, New York, N.Y., U.S.A.

Davidson-Wilsone, Charles R., c/o Miss Malet, 37, Porchester Square, Bayswater, London, W.

Elphinstone, Miss Rose, 28, Cambridge Street, Hyde Park Square, London, W.

Gunn, A. B. M., M.B., Saintear House, Westray, Kirkwall.

Hay, William J., John Knox's House, High Street, Edinburgh.

Ker, Professor W. Paton, M.A., 95, Gower Street, London, W.C.

Rücker, Miss S. C., 4, Vanbrugh Terrace, Blackheath, London, S.E.

Traill, R. H., 7, Drapers Gardens, London, E.C.

ORKNEY AND SHETLAND RECORDS.— It was fully intended that the records published in the latter pages of this number should consist of those Norse, Latin, and Scotch documents of which mention was made in our April issue. But, unfortunately, the considerable labour and the extreme care necessary for their accurate translation have made it impossible that they could be ready in time for this number. Under these circumstances we should naturally have wished to preserve the balance of interest between our Orkney and our Shetland readers by bringing out a series of Orkney Sasines corresponding to the Shetland Sasines printed last time. But an Editor can, no more than a Prime Minister, achieve everything that is in his heart. A sufficient supply of transcribed and digested Shetland Sasines was still left over, whereas in the time at our disposal it would have been impossible to prepare an instalment of Orkney Sasines. We have therefore perforce given Shetland a helping out of her turn, but our Orcadian readers may rest assured that we shall restore the balance ere long.

Errors occurring in the *Diplomatarium* will be printed on the completion of each volume. It may, however, be useful to subscribers to note the following mistakes in Vol. I., Part I.:—No. 14, p. 20, for *Amo* read *Anno*. No. 16, p. 25, 2nd line from end of text, after *eum* insert *facias*. No. 18, p. 27, 5th line from end of text, for *aa* read *æ*. No. 21, p. 32, 5th line from end of text, after *defectu* insert *natalium, quem pateris de presbytero genitus et soluta, cum defectum*. No. 23, p. 35, 8th line from end of text, after *tribus* insert *diebus*. No. 25, p. 38, 12th line from end of page, for *saði* read *sagði*.

Ib. In footnote, for *King Magnússon . . . appenage* read *King Magnús in . . . appanage*.

It should be pointed out that the names given in the Sasines are exactly as they are spelt in the Register. The correction of errors in the original text must form the subject of a special enquiry, which the Editors have decided not to attempt at present, however apparent these errors may be, such as *Ganth* for *Garth*, *Coit* for *Goit*, etc.

OLD-LORE SERIES.—The second number has been received with general approval by our readers and the Press. *The Aberdeen Daily Journal* says that the second number “fully maintains the promise given in the first number—of a magazine concerning itself in an interesting and attractive manner with the literature of the Northern Isles.” *The Aberdeen Free Press*:—“The portion devoted to Notes, Queries, and Replies, is evidence that it has already caught on, and will prove a useful medium between persons interested in everything that relates to the Northern Islands. . . . Shetland Sasines . . . offer an inexhaustible quarry to the genealogist.” *The People's Journal*:—“Orkney and Shetland Old-lore is a publication which makes a strong appeal to natives of these isles, and to all who are interested in Northern research. . . . Altogether Orkney and Shetland are fortunate in possessing so scholarly a magazine.” *The Scotsman*:—“The Club which is protean in its titles and activities is evidently doing good work in Orkney and Shetland folk-lore and history.” *The Shetland News*:—“The articles and old records make very interesting reading.” *The Shetland Times*:—“If subscribers . . . were pleased with No. 1, they will be delighted with No. 2. . . . It is not merely a book for antiquaries—it appeals strongly to readers of the present day, and the briefest glance at the contents of the number before us shows a rich harvest of information gathered with care and forethought. . . . The work cannot fail being a success, even if its success does not reach the level of its merits.” *The Scottish Historical Review*

(Gilbert Goudie):—"The Series . . . is a praiseworthy side effort of the Viking Club. The first instalment . . . is a very creditable example. . . . The commencement of a Diplomatarium . . . is a feature of lasting importance which no one interested in the history of the islands can afford to ignore." *The Glasgow Herald*:—"The volumes which are being published quarterly are finely printed, and will form a splendid collection of matter relating to the ancient history of the islands."

Nothing has given more encouragement to the Editors and Committee than the gratifying and already increasing number of notes and of queries sent to them by readers in various parts of the country. At the same time it cannot be too clearly understood that we welcome such contributions from anyone whatsoever, whether he be a subscriber or not. It is, we fear, scarcely to be expected that Old-lore should take its place in every farmhouse beside the family Bible and the illustrated Transatlantic agricultural journal. That would be too millennial a hope. Yet it is just in these farmhouses that the traditions, legends, and fragments of ancient information are stored which we are most anxious to publish here; and if this paragraph meets the eye of any man who has a tale to tell he may rest assured that we want to hear it. The odal pedigrees touched upon in our first issue are a case in point. Information, whether from Orkney or Shetland, on this subject is not requested in a mere figure-of-speech, newspaper-editor kind of way, but as genuinely sought as a detective seeks a clue. And so it is with everything else (such as folklore) bearing on our islands' past. In brief, we desire the help of all who, for their sake, will lend us a hand in this adventure.

CAPTAIN JOHN LAUGHTON, H.E.I.C.—Thousands of Scotland's gallant sons sleep—the last sleep—far from their native heath and much loved land. Among those resting in Australian soil are Dr. Thomas Braidwood Wilson, R.N.; George Wilson; George Wilson, junior; Captain David Ogilvy, H.E.I.C.; Major-General Evan

Murray-Macgregor; and Captain John Laughton, H.E.I.C. Captain Laughton was born in the Orkneys, and at an early age went to sea.

I have been informed that he was a Captain in the H. East Indian Co.'s service at the age of 19. However, after several voyages to Tasmania, he was drowned at the wreck of the "Hope." There is a beach on the south coast of Tasmania named after this vessel.

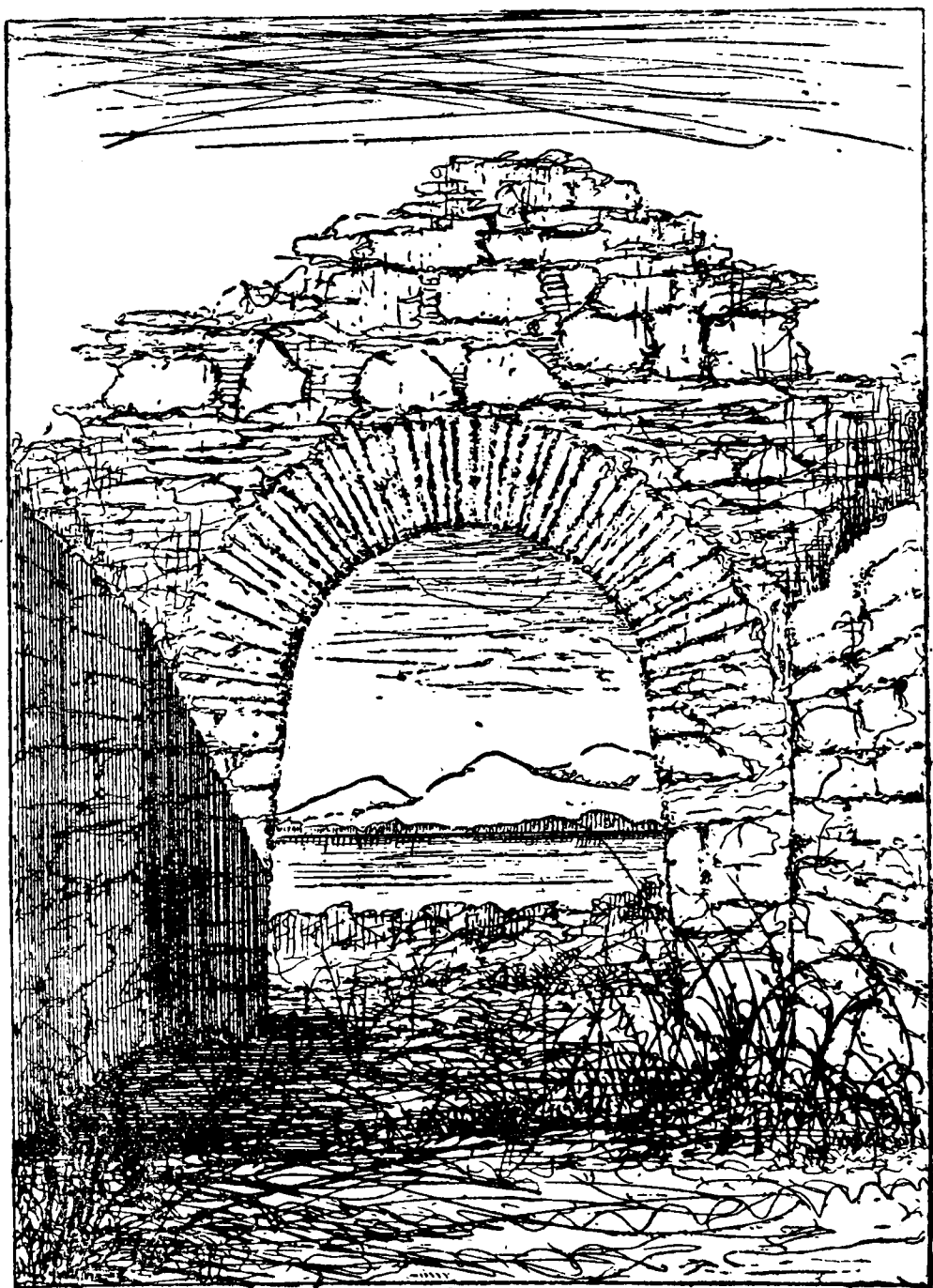
Captain Laughton bought the wreck, and after visiting it was upset and drowned. He must have struck a rock, as his head was deeply cut. This was in the year 1827. He was a young man at the time of his death. Captain Laughton left three sons. The eldest, Thomas, was last heard of in Vancouver's Island many years ago; the second, John, died, aged 23. The third son, James, died in Hobart, September, 1895. He left six sons and four daughters, the eldest of these being Mrs. Thirkell.—
R. A. C. THIRKELL.

SPANISH ARMADA.—Mr. Stuart Bruce, in his article on "Shetlandic Wrecks" in "Old-lore" for January, mentions a tradition that a vessel of the Armada foundered

on a haddock-sand near Reawick, called the Meeths, and her men are traditionally reported to have landed on an islet called Kirkholm, where they threw up entrenchments and attempted to dig wells, being uncertain as to their reception by the Shetlanders.

In reference to this tradition, Mr. P. Fraser Jamieson, Skeld, Sandsting, writes:—

"Some years ago I visited Kirk Holm and traced the turf foundations of at least eleven small enclosures huddled together, and described as the Spaniards' huts. There is also a large hole, or well, which was pointed out as the Spaniards' well, but in my opinion it may have been provided at a much later period for retaining water for stock in dry seasons. I also examined the remaining portion of the Roman Church erected and dedicated to the Virgin Mary as a thank-offering for



SANDSTING CHURCH, WEST ELEVATION OF CHANCEL ARCH.

From T. S. Muir's "Ecclesiological Notes."

Reproduced by permission of Mr. David Douglas.

their providential preservation from a watery grave. The Chancel Arch still remains in a wonderful state of preservation, the late Mr. Andrew Umphray, of Reawick, having taken every care that none of the stones were knocked down or removed."

Full particulars of this tradition, measurements of the entrenchments, foundations of houses, etc., will be found in the New Stat. Account of Shetland, pp. 109-110, Tudor's "Orkneys and Shetland," pp. 434-35, Hibbert's "Shetland Islands," p. 454. An account of the Church at Sand, with an illustration of the chancel arch, will be found in T. S. Muir's "Ecclesiological Notes," pp. 171-173. This illustration is reproduced here, with the kind permission of Mr. David Douglas, Edinburgh. The arch, 10ft. 7in. in height, together with a small portion of the nave walls, are all that remain of the building. Mr. Muir was of opinion that the Church, which is much larger than any of the votive Chapels, is older by some hundreds of years than the end of the sixteenth century. In the New Stat. Account it is stated that the tradition of the shipwreck was supported by the fact that a particular spot, where the fishermen set their lines, and where the ship was said to have foundered, was known at that time (1840) by the "name of the ship."

SPINNING SONG.—Now that cottage spinning has become a lost art and spinning wheels a curiosity, it would be interesting to know if your readers have heard of an Orcadian Spinning Song. I remember what appears to be the refrain of such a song, which about 1859 my younger brothers learnt from a nurse. Putting the sound into words it would be as follows:—

Till-lill-ēē-arum
 Tēēden ōōden, Tēēden ōōden
 Till-lill-ēē-arum
 Tēēn ōōden ah.
 A tow and a tēēden
 A tow and a tēēden
 A tow and a tēēden
 Tēēn ōōden ah.

The second verse is sung faster than the first—*ōō* in *ōōden* is sounded as in *wooden*, and *tow* as *ow* in *vow*.

The first and third lines seem to come from Telary (Spinning Webs), with the additional syllables or feet *lill-ee* put in for euphony.

"A tow and a tēden" seems certainly to mean a tuft of wool, and the spreading or loosening of the same for the wheel, and possibly "teeden ooden" means "spreading wool."

Your readers may know of a song of which the above is the refrain, or there may be nothing more of it. Indeed, it may not be distinctive of Orkney at all.

Tow, in English pronounced toe, and meaning flax or hemp, in Scotland is pronounced broad, as in vow, and means wool, and the Anglo-Saxon and Icelandic root is more precisely "a tuft of wool."

Ted, to spread out. Welsh teddn, to spread out. Early modern English, tedde teede. Middle English, teden, tethen. Icelandic, teðja, taða, to spread hay or manure on a field. Swedish and Norwegian also much the same.
—R. H. TRAILL.

QUERIES.

CATAWHISSIES AND BISMARS.—The Reviewer in the *Aberdeen Free Press* asks what are *catawhissies* and *bismars*, mentioned in "An Orcadian Battle" in the April number?

MURRAY.—In a manuscript in my possession it is stated that Captain John Murray, only son of Francis Murray, Commissary of Shetland, and brother of Lady Mitchell, of Westshore, married Christian Skene, only daughter of Alexander Skene, who was Principal of the College of St. Andrew's in 1688. In the "Memorials of the family of Skene," by W. F. Skene, I find that Katharine Skene, niece of the aforesaid Alexander, married Lord Edward Murray, of the Athole family, as her third husband. Is my manuscript correct, or has the writer confused Captain John Murray with Lord Edward Murray, and married him to the wrong lady?—A. S. M.

OLD-TIME WRECKS IN ZETLAND.—If readers of "Old-lore" who possess information of any kind with reference to vessels wrecked on the coast of Zetland would communicate with me I should be much indebted.—R. STUART BRUCE, 28, Castle Terrace, Edinburgh.

OMAN.—What is the derivation of the name, *Oman* or *Omand*?

"PARAGON."—Could any of your readers say where, when, and by whom the original Kirkwall and Leith clipper "Paragon" was built? Was she built specially for the trade?—SHOREY.

SHETLAND GENEALOGIES.—About the year 1830, mention was made of a book containing the genealogy of many of the Shetland families: this book was stated to have been in the possession of the late Thomas Mouat, of Belmont and Gardie, and was produced in the Busta trial at Edinburgh. Can anyone give any information regarding this book; was it in manuscript or printed, and is a copy in existence at the present time?—A. S. M.

SPANISH ARMADA.—With reference to the statement in the Stat. Account (see *Notes*, p. 89) that the place where the Armada ship is said to have foundered, near Rea-
wick, was known at that time (1840) "by the name of the ship," it is not quite clear whether the place was called "the ship," or called after the *name* of the ship, which *name* is not mentioned. Can anyone explain this?—ORPHIR.

REPLIES.

THE BIRCH-TREE IN SHETLAND.—In reply to my query, Mr. William J. Gordon, of Windhouse, Yell, has sent me some fine specimens of branches, etc., from the peat-moss by the Windhouse Burn. Mr. Gordon writes:—"For a considerable part of its course the burn has, in the course of centuries, worn its way through the peaty ground until it has reached a harder bottom, so that in many places the banks are both deep and steep. For considerable distances the branches and roots protrude

from the peaty sides. The largest specimen I have seen was about the thickness of a man's leg; it was picked out of a hole on the hillside not far from the burn." Mr. Gordon also writes of the same locality:—"There is abundant evidence of what at one time must have been a very extensive forest of birch-trees."

So far I have not received any evidence that the birch still exists as a living tree.—W. H. BEEBY.

Mr. J. A. Teit, Spence's Bridge, B.C., Canada, writes:—"I may say there is a saying in the nature of a simile which I have heard in Shetland, viz., *as bare as the birk on Yöl-dae*. Another more common saying is, *as bare as the back of Yöl*. The significance of both those similes is self-evident."

ELPHINSTONE.—The following extract is taken from a copy of a genealogical account of the Elphinstones of Lopness, which Mr. Malcolm Laing, in a letter to Mr. Kerr, dated Kirkwall, September 29th, 1815, considered "quite correct, as it coincides with the information I received from my father and from Mr. John Scollay, minister of Tankerness, two old men, whose grandmother was the 1st John Elphinstone of Lopness's daughter."

To John Elphinstone succeeded his son Robert Elphinstone, who from his youth had been brought up in military affairs, and was Collonel in the expedition of the Earle of Argile when he invaded Scotland, and had the command next to himself both by sea and land. The said Robert was, for the Prince of Orange, with the countenance of the Earle, in opposition to the Duke of Monmouth. He returned again in safety to Holland, where he was countenanced by the Prince of Orange, and did bring over his officers with him for a regiment at the Prince's landing in England, who afterwards was made Steward Justiciar, High Admiral, and Collonel of the Militia in the said islands of the Orkneys. The said Collonel Robt. Elphinstone did raise the inhabitants of Scotland in the revolution without order from his Majesty, necessitated the Convention of Estates to accept of King William, and overthrew the Prelatic Government and got the Prince of Orange declared King, and the Presbyterian Government erected in that Kingdom which otherwise might have cost much bloodshed, the generality of the Convention of Estates being in opposition to him, and were ready to take arms

under Generall Clavors. The said Robert Elphinstone is settled in Holland with his Lady, whom he there married. She was born in Utrecht, and descended of a honourable family, whose cousin german is one of the States Generalls, who is grandchild to his Lady's uncle, who teliat his estate, which his grandchild now possesses, to her and her heirs.

Copious references to Colonel Elphinstone will be found in Mr. Hossack's "Kirkwall," where his career as Steward of Orkney is adversely criticised from a political point of view.—A. W. J.

FLAUS.—Regarding the surname variously spelt Flaas, Flaws, Flaus, and Flause, which "Norna" seeks information about, I may say if a family tradition exists ascribing an Irish origin to this family it is entirely wrong, and probably on a par with a similar tradition about the Pottingers, which it has been proved originated as a joke. No doubt the name is of native origin, and comes from a place-name. There is at least one place of this name in Orkney, and I believe it also occurs in Shetland. Regarding the etymology of the name, Dr. Jakobsen, or some other authority, will no doubt be able to throw light on it. It is probably Norse, like the vast majority of our place-names. People bearing this surname are to be found in both Orkney and Shetland, but not outside of these islands, excepting, of course, natives and their descendants in other countries. I never heard of the name occurring in Yell, but it occurs in Dunrossness and Aithsting, and in Shetland it has always been popularly regarded as a "Ness" name. The name is to be found in Shetland at a much earlier date than that ascribed by "Norna" as the time of its introduction. From what evidence I have at hand it seems highly probable that it came into Dunrossness from Orkney about the beginning of the seventeenth century.—MAGNUS.

In Sasine No. 79 (see Records at end of this number, p. 48), September 27th, 1624, there is mentioned Nicoll Flais in Dunrosness.

In Peterkin's Rentals of Orkney the place-name Flawis occurs in Paplay and Grenewall. As this place was

quoyland (land reclaimed from the Commons), it seems probable that the name indicates a place from which turf had been cut. Icelandic *Flag*, English *Flaw*, the place where turf has been cut out. In Shetland *flaas* is the name given to thin turf or soft spongy peat (see Hibbert and Edmondston). In the Norwegian dialect *flaa* is a layer.—ORPHIR.

OMAN.—This name is undoubtedly the modern form of the old Norse Há-mundr, literally *high gift*. I believe it has been in Orkney in recent times, either spelt or pronounced *Homand*.—ORPHIR.

POMONA.—In his learned work on "Pytheas von Massilien" (Göttingen, 1858), W. Bessell fully discusses the question of the meaning of Pomona. He, too, sees, of course, that the description of one of those isles of the North, as exceedingly rich in fruit, is impossible. He is also struck by the curiously superabundant language—not to mention the bad Latin—used for such an apparent description. And he comes to the obvious conclusion that the text must have become corrupted by copyists. Considering the many other good pieces of information contained in Solinus, Bessell strongly inclines to the belief that the chief fault must be found in "Pomona"—that is to say, that this word cannot be explained in the classic sense as meaning the gifts of the Garden Goddess, but that it really points to the native name of the largest Orkney Island. I confess that, having devoted much thought to the subject, years ago, when writing on Pytheas, the Greek astronomer and discoverer of Britain and the High North, to whom we also owe the first mention of Teutons and Goths, I found the riddle of that corrupted passage insoluble. Still, if Pomona *were* an ancient Orkney name, I would suggest that it could be explained as Pōmona, with the accent on the first syllable—in other words, as Pomon island. A, aa; ay; ey; ö: all mean an island in Germanic tongues. Perhaps Pevensey, on the south coast, might be referred to by way of comparsion.—KARL BLIND.

Professor Rhys, Principal of Jesus College, Oxford, writes, in answer to the Editors: "I see no evidence that Pomona is a Celtic word at all, and supposing there were, I should have no notion how to explain it. 'The two British words, *pou mon*, *parva patria*, or small country,' mentioned by Dr. Barry as having also been assigned as the origin of this name, is nonsense as far as I can judge."

SARLE.—A correspondent writes that Charles Sarle did not build a house in Rousay (see Miscellany, pp. 58, 60).

SPANISH ARMADA RELICS.—In reference to "Norna's" query in the April number of "Old-lore," some relics are mentioned in Tudor's "Orkneys and Shetlands," p. 437, viz., a chair which had belonged to a Sinclair of Quendale, presented by Mr. Strong, tacksman of Fair Isle, to Sir Walter Scott when he was in the island, and which Scott said, a more zealous antiquary would have dubbed "the Duke's Chair," adding, "I will have it refitted for Abbotsford, however" (Scott's Life, 1837, Vol. III., p. 177). Another chair, said to have belonged to Don Gomez, was presented by Mr. Edmondston of Bunness to the Scottish Antiquaries (Proc.S.A.Scot. Vol. III., p. 470). A silver cup with heraldic shields, given by Don Gomez to Malcolm Sinclair, was in the possession of the late Colonel D. Balfour of Balfour, into whose family it came through a marriage of one of the Sinclairs to a Balfour (Proc.S.A.Scot., Vol. VIII., p. 470).—A. W. J.

A LEGEND OF SHETLAND FROM FLJÓTSDÆLA SAGA.

II.

Then the saga goes on with the chapters which I have translated in the following pages, and I may add that the translation is as literal as I can make it.

* * * * *

A ship arrived in the district of Fljótsdal over against the eastern fells at the place called Unaóss (the mouth of the Selfjót, halfway between Seydisfjord and Vopnafjord). Thorvald took his goods and joined that ship and set forth. When they put out to sea they got unfavourable winds and tossed about all the summer long. When summer was far spent they met foul weather and a fierce storm, which drove them out of the high seas, and brought them by night to Shetland. There was a strong ebb-tide, and they sailed in among the breakers. Their ship was broken to flinders, and everything they had was lost, though the crew got ashore with their lives.

Among the rest Thorvald landed, with nothing but the Iceland clothes he stood in. Not a scrap of his goods washed up, except a big spear, which he rescued; and though he waited for two nights on the beach, hoping that some of his property would be saved, nothing of any value was found. It was no good, he thought, to sit there and starve; and so one day he left the spot.

Shetland was then under the rule of an earl named Björgólf, by that time an old man; and to his court Thorvald determined to betake himself. He sat at the door all night, and in the morning went before the earl. Now this earl was greatly beloved of his people, and yet he was sad. When Thorvald offered his greeting the earl received him kindly, and asked who he was.

“I am an Icelander,” said Thorvald, “a freedman, of

no good family, new come from shipwreck, and penniless. Grant me, lord, shelter for the winter, for I would fain abide with thee."

"It seems to me thou must need it," said the earl: and when Thorvald asked for his place in hall, the earl told him, "Sit on the lower bench, between the thralls and the freemen; see that thou be no meddler, and be pleasant in thy requirements with all men."

Thorvald went to his seat, and there he sat the winter through. He did as the earl bade him, and was pleasant with his bench-mates. In a while they would give him a friendly answer, and many a question he asked them. So the winter passed on toward Yule, and then the household folk became very downcast, and the earl was most melancholy, although he had a young wife and two sons, lads in years, but with a look of promise. One afternoon Thorvald asked his neighbours what was the reason of their heaviness. Nobody would tell him, and yet it was now drawing on for Yule-tide.

Once, at night, the men who lay next Thorvald heard him toss and shout in his sleep: they wanted to wake him, but the earl bade them let him dream his dream out. When he awoke they asked what he had been dreaming, but he would not tell.

Two nights before Yule he went up to the earl with a fair and courteous greeting, and the earl answered kindly. Said Thorvald, "I have come here to ask what no one else will tell me. I want to know the reason why everybody here is dismal; for they enjoy neither sleep nor food, and it makes me unhappy. You, of all here, are most likely to tell me, I think, for you are the chief of them all."

"There is no need for thee to pry," said the earl, "for it is no matter of thine. Have nothing to do with it, and no thanks for thy question. It is an idle curiosity and quite useless. Indeed it would be right if it cost thee something."

Thorvald said he would not have asked if he had

known that it vexed him. "Let me change the subject," he said, "and ask you to rede my dream."

"I am no man of dreams," said the earl. "I cannot rede them, because I never talk of such things. And yet thou mayst tell me, if thou wishest."

"I thought," said Thorvald, "that I was walking seaward in this same dress I wear every day. I thought the way was clear, and I saw my path. I had my spear in my hand. I thought the foreshore was not flooded, and I went out toward the sea over great sands at ebb-tide. When I had crossed the sands there was a green cove in front of me, and when I went through the cleft of the rocks great tangles of seaweed had grown there. Then shorewards and upbank I saw a great height or fell. In the fell yonder were crags looking toward the sea, and a great high rock. And I thought there were shallows beyond, and deep sea. Then I came to gravel-beds, and walked along them between the sea and the rock. Then in front of me was a great cave, and I went into it. I saw there a light burning, of such a kind that it threw no shadows. I saw an iron pillar in the cave, standing up to the roof, and to that pillar was tied a girl. Her hands were fastened behind her back, and her hair was wound about the pillar. A chain of iron was round her; there was a lock at each end, and she was locked in with them. I thought I tried to set her free, and got the chain loose. I saw nothing there alive but herself. I went out and away with her. I thought I went out into the shallows and escaped. Then I thought some living thing was chasing me; it frightened me dreadfully. We met, and I cannot remember which of us won—that must have been when I shouted in my sleep. Then I awoke."

The earl grew so red when he heard the story that he might almost have been bled from one finger; he swelled all over!

"Wonderful impudence," he cried, "to tell me you dreamt what you have picked up by gossiping! It pro-

vokes me enough, even if I see no tricks in it, for it brings before me my daughter who is lost. I forbade all to speak of it, and the man who told you ought to hear of it to his cost."

"You shall know all, my lord," said Thorvald. "Not one of your men has told me this story: it was shown me in a dream. I will assure you of that as strongly as you like."

The earl was silent, and after a while he answered, "Here are two chances for thee—either to be a fore-sighted man or a dead one ere long."

Thorvald answered, "I wanted you to tell me the adventures that have befallen here in your homestead: I think I know that much must have happened."

"Why not?" said the earl. "Beside my two boys I had a daughter named Droplaug. They called her well beseen; I loved her dearly. Last Yule she was lost. A giant called Geitir took her. He has the lair where you dreamt you went; it is called Geitir's Rock, and the fell is called Geitir's Pillars. He is the cause of great mischief; he maims both man and beast, and he is the evillest wight in all Shetland. I have said I would give her to the man, if any were so bold, who should rescue her."

Thorvald said he thought it unlikely that she could be rescued.

"It was not my choice," said the earl, "that she went into that peril. As you have chosen to meddle in the matter, I think you ought to take the risk."

"I wish I had never asked about it," answered Thorvald, turning away and going to his seat.

After supper men went to their beds. When Thorvald found that all were asleep, he rose and took his spear in his hand. He crossed certain sands and aimed to the north, much the same way that he had seen in his dream. He went to the place where the green cove spread out, and the cleft in the rocks, and the great tangle of seaweed: there before him lay the gravel-beds. He went on to the place where the shallows were, and waded

through them. At last he came to the spot he had seen in his dream, and climbed up to the cave, and entered it. He saw the light burning; on the further side he saw a bed-place, much bigger than he had ever seen such a thing before; and thought that although he lay down in that bed with another man as big as himself, and they spurned one another with the soles of their feet, even then it would be quite long enough: and Thorvald was a very tall man. This bed was no less in other ways: it had hangings on one side only, and over it was a broad velvet counterpane. The bolsters were huge, high up above the bed.

Over it he saw a great sword hanging. He took it down, and then followed a mighty fall of stones. The sword was well fitted with its sheath; its pommel and guard were of iron, most beautifully ornamented. He drew the sword, and it was green in colour, but brown at the edges; there were no flecks of rust on the sword. He had never seen a weapon like it.

On the other side of the cave he saw a heap of goods, all sorts of Iceland wares and linen, and many kinds of gear he saw lying there and noted by their names. There were all sorts of good things which were better to have than to lack.

In the middle of the cave he saw an iron pillar, and there, tied to it, a girl in that same peril he had seen in his sleep. She sat in a red kirtle; and so fair as she had seemed to him in his dream, now he thought her much fairer. He went up to her, and she greeted him. He answered courteously, and asked who she was. She told him that her name was Droplaug, and that she was the daughter of Earl Björgólf; but said he must not talk much with her.

"Thou art in great danger of thy life," she said, "for thou art in worse case than thou thinkest. The master of this place is a giant so big that no other like him can be found. I am fast prisoner here," she said, "but thou mayest get away from me."

He said she must go with him. She said she could not.

"He is a much bigger giant than men-kind can raise shield against. He will be coming home soon, because he goes out of nights to plunder, and ties me to the pillar while he is away; but by day he lies in his bed and plays with me, throwing me from hand to hand and catching me. And then when he wants to sleep he gives me gold and treasures for toys. He gives me nothing to eat that I do not like, and never a whit does he think of ill-treating me as he might."

Thorvald answered. "Both of us shall go hence, or neither!"

He drew the sword and hewed the iron fetters off her, and it bit so well that forthwith they fell asunder. Then he led her out of the cave; he took no goods away but the sword.

So they went out over the gravel-beds and through the shallows. He found that her strength was failing, for she was overtired; and he took her up in his arms and waded into the shoal water, which now seemingly was deeper than before because the tide was flowing strongly. He found that a little upwards in the rocks over against him there was a notch, like as if a quarry had been cut there; but he did not go to it. He saw the lights of heaven, and the day began to dawn. He had almost come to the green cove; they were travelling very slowly, when he heard a great outcry behind him at the cave.

This uproar startled the girl terribly, and she bade him let her down. "I told thee before," she said, "that thou must not stay chattering with me: thou art trying more than thou canst do. Now he has come home, and he will be wanting me. He will not hunt after thee if he finds me."

"That shall never be," he answered; "one fate shall overtake us both as long as I can hold thee fast."

So he took off his shaggy cape and wrapped her up

in it ; then set her down in the cleft of the rock, laid the spear beside her, and turned back in the path. Then he saw that the giant's head reached heavenward, much higher than the rock. He was aiming at her so big a stone that she could not have escaped. Then he took the sword and went to meet the giant.

The giant shouted loud, bidding him lay down his giant-bride. "Thou thinkest to carry much in thy grasp, thou worthless wretch, when thou wilt take from me her whom I have owned so long."

Then he stepped up to the notch in the rock, where Thorvald had set himself, but his other foot was in the green cove, and he was not wetshod. Thorvald saw that the notch had been cut as a step, so that the giant might not have to wade the water. At this moment Thorvald came at him, and ran in under him. The giant spread out his paws and tried to catch him. Then Thorvald hacked at him, reaching the middle of the giant's thigh ; he took off the left leg just below the knee, and the sword came down into the sand. The giant fell.

Speaking with pain, he said, "Foullly hast thou tricked me ; it was more than I looked for that thou shouldst take the only weapon that could hurt me. I fared unfearing after thee, for I never thought small folk would be my bane. Now thou wilt think thou hast won a great victory. Thou wilt reckon to bear that weapon, and thy kinsmen after thee ; but this curse I lay on it :—it will help them least when need is greatest."

Thorvald looked to it that he should speak no more needless words, and hewed at his neck so that he took off the head. This he did not try sooner because the giant groped about with his hands, and Thorvald could not get within reach of him until he was quiet. Then he went away to the place where she lay, and found her strengthless and senseless. He took her up and ran off with her swiftly, just as in his dream, until he came back to the hall.

At that time men were at their drinking after break-

fast; they had missed Thorvald, but gave little heed to it. And now he came into the hall, with Droplaug on his arm and a sword in the other hand. He went up to the earl and spoke to him, saying he was bringing him his daughter. The earl was unco fain (*einkar feginn*) of her, and so were many others. The earl asked with what danger or adventure he had found her, and he told the whole story, saying that it had gone much according to his dream.

"Great is thy good luck and fortune," answered the earl, "if thou hast conquered the enemy who has been the greatest one in the country; however, we shall soon see that."

The henchmen said that it could not have been so big a giant as people had thought; "he has made one conquest, and that may be one lie."

After that, Thorvald meant to return to his seat; but the earl called after him and bade him sit on the fore-bench in front of the high seat. "As to thy lot henceforth," he said, "thou must either be worthier than I reckoned thee, or else thou wilt not be a long-lived man. One thing is plain, thou hast brought us a welcome offering; thy journey has ended happily, and we are now as well off as when no man ventured to take the risk. I, at least, will never deny that we are glad to get this girl back, even though we are not sure that the enemy is overcome."

After that men drank, and yet but more shortly than was their wont. When the tables were cleared Earl Björgólf bade them take their weapons and go to see what had happened. They went, and Thorvald with them. When they came to the place they all saw what a fight had been gained. Many would not venture near—they who at first said that it had been no daring deed. The earl bade them fell wood, and drag it together; he made them heap a bonfire and then haul the giant out upon it and burn him to cold ashes; after that they threw the ashes out into the sea. Then they went to the

cave in boats, and carried thence much treasure, and all that was of value, and brought it home. The place is now called Geitir's cave or Geitir's crag; and they say it has never since been haunted by giants.

When they came home the goods were divided. Among them, it is said, were most of the wares from the ship in which Thorvald had been; he found all his property there. He and the earl let every man have what he knew to be his own; even then there was much over, which no one claimed, because Iceland wares were little worth beside that which was won, for it was the treasure of many men. Thorvald richly rewarded all who had been put to trouble on this account.

Thenceforward he stayed in Shetland, a famous man. His adventure was reckoned a deed of the highest courage. The earl gave him the greatest honour, and so did all the rest. He stayed there throughout the following year, and in the summer his fame in Shetland reached Iceland. Many in the east firths were glad when they learnt what had happened—except his brother Ketil, who pretended to know nothing about it. People thought Thorvald in luck after being disinherited by Ketil.

Thorvald stayed in Shetland until Yule. Then he went to the earl and spoke to him, asking whether he remembered anything about that Yule before. He said he certainly remembered it.

"Then I will claim the promise which you yourself made, when I told my dream. You said you would give your daughter to the man who rescued her. Now I want to have my answer. I will not stay here unless something is done for me."

"On that matter my mind is the same now as it was then," said the earl. "Thou art the right man to have her, I think, if it is to thy liking. But I think the match is not so much to thy advantage now, for this girl's temper would not suit everyone, while thou art able to pick and choose at thy will. Still I will hold to my word, and pay my debt, even if there is a crack in the coin.

It is likely to turn out well, for her heart is set upon thee; whenever thou art named she says there is none like thee. Now I will give thee the earldom until my sons are old enough to take the rule."

"I do not wish for that," said Thorvald, "because I think it best for you to keep it until they can take it. Indeed it is not meet for me, because I am not of noble birth."

On that they sent for Droplaug's mother. Her name was Arneid. Her brother was Grim, and her father was Helgi, a Dane; their mother was Hallerna. Arneid and Grim came, and when they heard of the match, they agreed that no other man would be more suitable to have the girl, and they said that their goodwill would be added to the wedding gifts. Upon that, Droplaug was betrothed to Thorvald with a great dowry. Then they set going a handsome feast; it was not short of victuals nor of company, and all went merrily forward. At that meeting Thorvald gave good gifts to every one; he got so much friendship that nearly everyone wished him well, and he stayed there that winter until spring came on.

Then he bought a ship that had arrived at Thurso (Thórsá), and set on board of her his wealth and his wife. They made good companions, for each wished the other well, though with other men she was cold and lofty; other women she was far beyond both in looks and in learning.

Arneid, her mother, had many children in wedlock; she was a widow before she had this daughter Droplaug. That spring she sold her homestead to her sons and married another daughter named Gró; and then took ship with Thorvald, desiring to follow her daughter to Iceland. Her brother Grim also went with them.

So when they were ready they put to sea, and getting good weather and fair, they reached Iceland early in the summer.

W. G. COLLINGWOOD.

OBITUARY.

KARL BLIND.—Born in Mannheim, September 4th, 1826, died in Hampstead, London, May 31st, 1907, in his 81st year. Educated in his native town and at Karlsruhe, and at the Universities of Bonn and Heidelberg. Mr. Blind took an active part in the German Revolutionary Movement. He came to London in 1852, where he resided until the time of his death, and continued to carry on his Republican campaign both in Germany and elsewhere, always extending his hearty sympathy and support to persecuted nationalities. Mr. Blind acted as the correspondent of several German papers, and wrote numerous articles on politics, history, mythology, etc. He was an Honorary Life Member, President 1897-8, and since then Vice-President of the Viking Club, having joined the Society in 1893. He contributed the following papers to the SAGA-BOOK (Proceedings) of the Club:—"Shetland Folklore and the Old Faith of the Scandinavians and Teutons"; "The Earliest Traveller in the High North"; "Discovery of a Pre-historic Sun-chariot in Denmark." Mr. Blind was also a subscriber to "Orkney and Shetland Old-lore," and took a keen interest in the history and folklore of the Islands and in the grievances of the odallers. A communication from him on the name *Pomona* appears in this issue, the proof of which was revised on his death-bed. Mr. Blind married Friederike Ettlinger, widow of Herr Cohen, and is survived by a son and daughter.

LIEUT.-COL. SIR NICHOLAS ELPHINSTONE, BT.—Born in Riga, December 16th, 1825, died February 3rd, 1907, in Wiesbaden, where he had gone last winter for his health. He was the son of Captain A. Elphinstone, R.N., and grandson of Brig.-Gen. Sir Samuel Elphinstone, Bt.; and married the youngest daughter of the Rt. Hon. Sir George Arthur, Bt. Educated at Dresden and Bonn University. Entered the army in 1845, and served in Sutlej Campaign, 1845-46; in the Punjab Campaign, 1848-49

(medal); in the Mutinies (medal); correspondent of the *Times* in the Franco-German War. He is survived by his widow and two daughters. Sir Nicholas was the lineal representative of the Elphinstones of Lopness, Orkney, and took a great interest in the history and antiquities of the islands.

A. IRVINE FORTESCUE, of Kingcausie and Swanbister.—Born December, 1819, died February 7th, 1907. He was the son of the Rev. William Fortescue, Minehead, Somerset, and grandson of Captain Fortescue, R.N., a brother of the first Earl Fortescue. He married Miss Anne Irvine Syme, a granddaughter of Lord Balmuto of Balmuto (Claude Boswell). Educated at Aberdeen University. In 1845 he bought the estate of Swanbister, Orphir, from the late Mr. Sands. Mr. Fortescue was a keen sportsman and man of business, an extensive farmer, Director of the North of Scotland Bank, and of the North of Scotland and Orkney and Shetland Steam Navigation Co.; Deputy Lieutenant for Orkney and Kincardineshire. He is survived by his widow, two sons and four daughters.

ANDREW GOLD.—Born in Fifeshire, died in Edinburgh, January 29th, 1907, aged 87 years. Mr. Gold was Chamberlain in Orkney for the late Earl of Zetland and the present Marquis of Zetland for about 50 years until 1898. He took a prominent part in all County work, and was Vice-Convener of the County Council. The volunteer movement had his hearty support from the first. Mr. Gold married Miss Robina Firth, and is survived by two daughters.

ARTHUR H. HARRISON.—Mr. Harrison was the youngest and last surviving son of the late Gilbert Harrison, Lerwick, and died in Cartagena, Spain, April 8th, 1907, aged 52. He carried on extensive lead smelting works in La Union, and was also interested in various mining properties in different parts of Spain.

JAMES T. A. INKSTER.—Mr. Inkster died at Brae, Shetland, March 30th, 1907, aged 52 years. He took an

active part in County work. As treasurer of the Muckle Roe Bridge he did much work, and was one of the moving spirits in the scheme.

ROBERT H. ISBISTER.—Died in Grutness, May 14th, 1907, about 54 years of age. He was a son of the late Mr. Henry Isbister, postmaster, Boddam. Mr. Isbister was a partner in the firm of Isbister and Co., Factor for the estates of Sumburgh and Lunna, Member of the Parish Council of Dunrossness, and County Council of Shetland, and was a Justice of the Peace. He is survived by a widow and family.

A. J. ROBERTSON, S.S.C.—Born in Edinburgh in 1840, died in Lerwick, April 23rd, 1907. Educated at Glenalmond College, Perth. Entered the legal profession in India. From India he went to Australia. In 1889 he went to Lerwick on account of his health, and continued to practice his profession there for seventeen years. He is survived by his widow.

BENJAMIN WINSTONE, M.D.—Died in London, February 1st, 1907, aged 87, and had been a member of the Viking Club since 1894. His pen and purse were ever at the disposal of antiquarian objects that appealed to him, and he will not only be mourned by his family and friends, but missed by a large circle of scientific acquaintances.

NOTES ON BOOKS.

Argyllshire Galleys. Some Typical Examples from Tomb Slabs and Crosses. By Lord Archibald Campbell. London, C. J. Clark. Price 3s. 6d.

The aim of the writer of this monograph is heraldic rather than archæological, to show the variation in the Galleys borne as blazons by different chiefs and clans, not to illustrate the origin or development of the Galley itself. None of the Galleys here figured, some 27 in all, show the side-rudder, or steering-oar, while more than half distinctly show the rudder hung at the stern, which came into use in the latter half of the twelfth century.

We may therefore conclude, with some degree of certainty, that most of the carvings here represented date from a period later than this. One, however, without a rudder, from a Cross fragment in Iona, in Plate VII., is archaic in style, somewhat resembling ships in the rock carvings of Sweden and Norway, and may be very much earlier. In spite, however, of their comparatively late date, almost all the Galleys represented show a distinct affinity to the Norse type in the high stem and stern-posts, which in many instances also terminate in animal carvings. One especially resembles somewhat nearly the Orkney Galley figured on the cover of "Old-Lore." These characteristics are most marked in the case of the Galleys figured on the monuments at Iona, which might be expected to approximate to the Viking type more closely than those on the mainland.—ALBANY F. MAJOR.

The Elder or Poetic Edda, commonly known as Sæmund's Edda. Part I. The Mythological Poems. Forming Vol. II. of the Translation Series of the Viking Club. Edited and translated with Introduction and Notes by Olive Bray, with Illustrations by W. G. Collingwood.

It is proposed to issue an English version of the Poetic Edda, accompanied by the old Norse text. At present there is no English edition of the text which would satisfy the latest demands of scholars, nor any English translation both adequate and easily obtainable. Since the version by Benjamin Thorpe appeared great advances have been made in the critical study of the Edda, and his volume is now scarce. The same may be said, though in a less degree, of the text and translation in the *Corpus Poeticum Boreale*, a costly work which, published many years ago, does not contain the results of recent research, nor does the translation there given aim at representing with any fulness the literary character of the original poems.

Seeing the great importance of the Edda, as the source of almost everything we know concerning the ancient beliefs of the Northern nations, it is hoped that the work now in the printer's hands will be found useful to many who desire a closer acquaintance with the subject than can be obtained from extracts in handbooks. The old Norse text is founded on the latest and best editions, and the translation gives a close rendering of the original, together with an attempt to present its poetical form in a readable manner.

The volume, of over 400 pages, will comprise an Introduction, giving an account and criticism of each poem, followed by Text and Translation on opposite pages, with Notes, Bibliography and Index.

It will be sold to members of the Viking Club and to all Subscribers before issue at 10s. 6d. nett. After issue the price to non-members will be raised to 15s.

Subscriptions must be sent to Mr. Titus Wilson, 28, Highgate, Kendal.

European Animals: Their Geological History and Geographical Distribution. By R. F. Scharff, Ph.D., B.Sc., Swiney Lecturer in Geology. London: Archibald Constable and Co., Ltd., 1907. Price 7s. 6d. net.

Dr. Wallace's remark that we may be enabled, by an accurate knowledge of any group of birds or insects, and of their geographical distribution, to map out the islands and continents of a former epoch, encouraged Mr. Scharff to attempt to apply his ideas in dealing with our own Continent, and to extend them to other groups of animals. Professor E. Forbes was the first to recognize the significance of the geographical distribution of living animals in deciphering their past wanderings.

The chapters dealing with Scotland, Orkney, Shetland, Farøe, Iceland, and Scandinavia, are particularly interest-

ing to Northern students, showing the land connection which once existed between Scotland and Greenland by way of Orkney, Shetland, Faröe, and Iceland.

The fact that the Orkney vole-mouse (*microtus orcadensis*), has recently been identified as being distinct from the British vole-mouse, appears to show that the vole-mice of the *M. agrestis* type have come to Britain in very early times, as they must have travelled to the extreme north at a time when the Orkneys were still connected with the mainland. And these again must have been isolated sufficiently long to enable the new species to become evolved from the ancestral type. Is the Shetland vole-mouse of the same type as that in Orkney? It is surmised that the land connection between Scotland and Iceland might have existed as far back as Pliocene times. The book is copiously illustrated with maps and diagrams, and is written in such a clear manner that it can be read with pleasure and instruction by all.—A. W. JOHNSTON.

Scottish Kings, A Revised Chronology of Scottish History, 1005-1625. With notices of the principal events, Tables of Regnal Years, Pedigrees, Tables, Calendars, etc. With 4 Maps. By Sir Archibald A. Dunbar, Bt. Second Edition. Edinburgh: David Douglas. Price 12s. 6d. net.

This handsome volume is an indispensable book of reference to students of British History. It fully realizes its endeavour "to settle, as far as possible, the exact date of the noteworthy events in Scottish history during those centuries," 1005-1625. The 5,000 references to the sources of information not only place its facts beyond question, but also provide a valuable clue for students who wish to follow up any particular event or period. Events are arranged under the reigns of sovereigns, on a workman-like plan, which makes reference a pleasure. The arrangement of explanatory matter is excellent, and

besides the pedigrees, explanation of double dates (so confusing in State documents), etc., there are the following maps—Alban *circa*, 1005; Scotia *circa*, 1018; State of the Church, 1124-1153; and the ancient divisions of the land. To crown all, a good index of 37 pp. goes to complete this excellent work. It will be particularly helpful to Viking students, as Scottish history is so bound up with that of Norway and its old Colonies of Orkney, Shetland, the Hebrides and Man.—A. W. JOHNSTON.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

All communications must bear the name and address of sender.

Each note, query or reply must be written on one side only of a separate slip of paper, with the writer's name and address, or initials, as desired to be printed.

Editorial communications, advertisements, orders for back numbers, etc., must be addressed to A. W. JOHNSTON, 59, Oakley Street, Chelsea, London, S.W.

Subscriptions must be sent to the Honorary Treasurer, A. SHAW MELLOR, 14, Westbourne Street, Hyde Park, London, W.



MILL NEAR HILLSWICK, SHETLAND.

From the original water-colour drawing by the late Sir Henry Dryden, Bt., August, 1852.

In the possession of A. W. Johnston.

Orkney and Shetland Miscellany

OF

THE VIKING CLUB.

Society for Northern Research.

(Founded in 1892, as the Orkney, Shetland and Northern Society.)

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NOTES.

New Subscribers.—The following Subscribers have been added to the list since the third number was printed.

Annual Subscribers.

Aberdeen, University Library, per P. J. Anderson, Librarian.

Anderson, John N., J.P., Solicitor, Provost of Stornoway (Rights of Original Subscription transferred from Rev. Thos. Mathewson).

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MacCormick, Rev. F., F.S.A.Scot., Wrockwardine Wood Rectory, Wellington, Salop.

Omond, T. S., 14, Calverley Park, Tunbridge Wells.

Rendall, Robert J., 72, Grand Street, New York City, U.S.A.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION NOTICE.—The subscription for the second year of the Old-lore Series is now due, and should be sent either to the subscribers' agents, or to the Honorary Treasurer of the Club, Mr. A. Shaw Mellor, 14, Westbourne Street, Hyde Park, London, W. It is important that subscriptions should be sent at once, so as to ensure subscribers' names appearing correctly in the January number. Original annual subscription, 7s. 6d.; ordinary annual subscription, 10s. 6d.

OLD-LORE.—The Press notices continue to be highly appreciative. The following quotations will be of interest:—"The object of the series should meet with the sympathy of every Scotsman who is interested in the history of his country."—(*Aberdeen Free Press*). "To northern antiquaries this promises to be a mine of good things, and from what we have seen of the two previous numbers we are safe to commend it to the notice of Caithness and Sutherland antiquaries. From time to time much information will be found in its pages about the Norse race in early times in the North of Scotland."—(*Northern Ensign*). "The very names of the founders form a guarantee that the work will be gone into with vigour, and that all sources available—

printed, written, or archæological—will be tapped for desired information. Altogether, Orkney and Shetland set an example for other counties to do likewise, in recalling ‘the brave days of old.’”—(*The Northern Herald*). “This is a quarterly publication . . . so rich in historical research that it merits not only a place in the library of every man who has a racial connection with the Orkney and Shetland islands themselves, but it is valuable to all men who take an interest in tracing the origin and character of the customs and institutions of the various peoples that have contributed to the making and growth of our British Empire. The articles are evidently prepared by experts, and written with excellent literary taste. Although the Orkney and Shetland islands now form part of Great Britain, they were until a comparatively recent period claimed as belonging to Denmark. That claim, let us hope, disappeared when our present Queen came over as the bride of our future King, and when our then Poet Laureate, speaking for the British people, said to her, ‘We are all of us Dane in our welcome of thee.’ The Orkney and Shetland islands have a peculiar claim on the interest and respect of the people of Canada. The Hudson Bay Company, at a very early date, began drawing its best navigators and sailors and its most successful explorers from these islands. And to that hardy and humane race we chiefly owe the long and peaceable intercourse that has subsisted between the Company and the aboriginal tribes of our North-west. If mutual confidence and goodwill exist to-day between the Indians and ourselves, it is largely due to the kindly considerate men that were sent out from these northern islands. Many of the names of those men are now familiar in the history and commercial life of Canada—the Raes, the Cloustons, the Inksters, the Norquays, and the Isbisters, for example. The Viking Club have done, and no doubt will continue to do, a valuable service not only to the local history but to general history also, and, therefore, their magazine

deserves a place on the shelves of our public libraries as well as on the shelves of private collectors.”—(*The Gazette*, Montreal).

ORKNEY SASINES.—The January number will contain the first instalment of Orkney Sasines.

SHETLAND SASINES.—The following amended readings have been made:—Nos. 1, for Nescheom, read Nescheon. 2, Snar, Suorde. 3, Lagasetter, Lugasetter. 4, 5, Land, Lund. 6, Grenis might be read Greind. 7, Gratting, Grutting. Greinstnat might be Greinstuat. 8, Wattin, wattil. Gewing, Gew. 10, Upssaall, Upswald. Sonda, Sanda. 11, Branieclet, Branceclet. Villoch, Tulloch. 12, Haveny, Haveray. 13, Woddesta, Wodersta. Jeaisone, Jeansone. Quhaesay, Quhailsay. 14, Bow Rafurth, Bowrafurth. 14, Sta, Ska. 15, Crosswik, Horswik. Gonnyesounde, Grunyesound. Bodsetter, Boosetter. Hoveista, Hoversta. Ganth, Garth. Sand, Sound. Fiovo might be Firvo. Nestren might be Nescien. Bernald, Bernard. 17, Brea, Brew. 19, Delete [*? lege* Binnaness]. Tassaness [*? lege* Russaness], Russaness. 20, Cloustra, Clousta. 26, Decease, diocese. 29, Levanwat, Levanwick. 30, Weis, Wirs. 31, Barwick, Bawick. 39, Windlone, Vidlone. Kickroum, Kickroun. 40, Housyard, Housgord. Houseard, Houscard. 41, Undcabister might be Uverabister. Digrand, Degrand. 43, Ringista, Ringasta. Uttauo might be Uttamo. 49, Ornssoun, Ormssoun. 52, Suarrovo, Snarravo. Gairdrie, Gairdie. Borrabreck, Burrabreck. Suaburghe, Snaburghe.

PLACE-NAME SURVEY.—The Treasury has sanctioned the issue by the Director-General of the Ordnance Surveys to the Viking Club, of three sets of the six-inch maps of Shetland, to be used in making a survey of the place-names of Shetland similar to that now being made in Orkney.

It is the ultimate intention of the Club to include in this survey, besides Orkney and Shetland, that district of the North of Scotland which once formed part of the old Norse earldom. There is naturally so much in

common throughout the whole of the old earldom, that a complete survey cannot fail to supply useful comparative results.

The Club also hopes to embrace folklore and dialect in the enquiry, as these subjects are necessary for the elucidation of place-names. The sooner the survey is made the better, as place-names, traditions, dialect words, old customs, games, etc., are being irretrievably lost with each generation.

The work of editing will be placed in the hands of Dr. Jakob Jakobsen, who has already done such good work in Shetland. This will necessitate a prolonged residence in the islands for the purpose of making researches and personal explorations, and entail considerable expense in advance of publication.

A prospectus of a financial scheme will shortly be issued to all who are interested in the subject. Meanwhile the whole matter could be settled right off, if one or more patriotic friends would come forward with £2,000, to be invested and the interest used for the expenses of the survey, and thereafter for the record publications of the series. The formation of such a fund would immortalise the founders, and save an enormous amount of work and expense. Communications should be addressed to the Editors, 59, Oakley Street, Chelsea, London, S.W.

MARKLANDS.—Professor A. Taranger, of Christiania University, writes that the paragraph in Orkney and Shetland Records, Vol. I., Part I., No. 25 (translation), which begins: "There will never be found higher *dues*," etc., should read:—

There will never be proved higher *prices* of land in all Papey than those which are common from of old: one mark burnt gold for every pening-land of arable land; and as land-skyld one mælir and a half from every mark burnt (*i.e.* silver), and there are then 2 sáld [due] for every pening-land.

Verðaurar, never means *dues*, but always the *purchase* or *sale price*.

From this we find that the sale price of a pennyland in Papey, in A.D. 1299, was 1 mark burnt gold. And as the rent of a burnt silver mark of land was $1\frac{1}{2}$ mælr, and the rent of a pennyland 2 sáld = 12 mælr, therefore 1 pennyland = 8 burnt silver marklands. In Orkney the pennylands are valued at from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 12 marks burnt silver.

As regards rent, the 2 sáld or 12 mælr paid in Papey for a pennyland, if of corn, was worth in Norway C. 1300, $3\frac{1}{3}$ penny mark = about 1 old mark = $\frac{1}{3}$ silver mark. The rent would thus be $\frac{1}{24}$ of the sale price, which was the common standard of rent in Denmark about A.D. 1200. In Norway the rent is higher in the 14th century.

However, in the Shetland Rental of 1628, it is stated that 1 Shetland shilling of twelve pence = 2 meills = 1 lispund of butter + 1 bull (= 4 cans) of oil. If this *meill* is the same as the *mælr* mentioned in the deed, then the rent of a pennyland in Papey would be 6 Shetland shillings = $\frac{1}{2}$ burnt silver mark, and the rent of a markland 9 Shetland pennies of butter and oil, valued in 1628 at £3 Scots = 5s. sterling. As there were no Earldom lands in Papey, the Rentals only give the skatt paid.

The Shetland shilling is $\frac{1}{12}$ of a burnt silver mark (Orkney and Shetland Records I., No. 41), and as the mark = 13s. 4d. sterling, therefore the Shetland shilling = 1s. $1\frac{1}{3}$ d. sterling (S.A.Scot. Proceed., 1884, p. 273; D.N. II., p. 146).

In the Shetland Rental of 1716 there are 216 marklands in Papey, which at 8 marks per pennyland = 27 pennylands. The total skatt paid for the 216 marklands in Papey, in 1628 and 1716, was—

Skatt.	Shetland money.	Value of Skatt paid in Scotch money.	Sterling money.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
48 cuttells wodmell (cloth)	= 0 8 0	= 9 12 0	= 0 16 0
4 " " leanger	= 0 0 8	= 0 16 0	= 0 1 4
8 lispund butter ..	= 0 4 0	= 19 4 0	= 1 12 0
Total Skatt	.. £0 12 8	= £29 12 0	= £2 9 4

The skatt paid in Shetland bears no relation to the

marklands, so that we shall be safe in concluding that it was originally assessed (as in Orkney) on a pennyland valuation which is now lost. If several instances of the number of marks in a pennyland can be obtained, such as we have here in the case of Papey, so as to ascertain the amount of skat paid by a pennyland, it is possible that we may be able thereby to restore the Shetland pennyland valuation.

On the assumption that there are in Papey 216 marklands = 27 pennylands, and that skatt was rated on the pennyland, then we find that each pennyland paid (excluding *leanger*, which is an irregular tax) $5\frac{1}{3}$ Shetland pennies = $1\frac{7}{8}$ cuttell wodmell + $7\frac{1}{8}$ marks of butter—the lispund being equal to 24 marks.

In Orkney, 18 pennylands = 1 eyrisland or ounceland. In Shetland, 18 marklands = 1 last of land, and 4 lasts of land = 1 piece of corn teind. Putting these together in the case of Papey, we get:—216 marklands = 12 lasts of land = 3 pieces of corn teind = 27 pennylands [= $1\frac{1}{2}$ eyrisland in Orkney reckoning].

In Papey, in 1299, rent appears to be assessed on the marklands, whereas in the 16th and 17th centuries rent was assessed in Shetland on the number of “pennies” in the mark, varying from 4 to 12. The amount of rent assessed on each *penny* in the mark was exactly one Shetland *penny* worth of wodmell and butter, which is undoubtedly the origin of this denomination. As the cloth and butter rent were latterly converted into money at the current market price, the Shetland penny enumeration, being no longer of practical use, was dropped.

In Orkney, rent was assessed on the marklands up to the last.—A. W. JOHNSTON.

SHETLAND MILL.—The frontispiece is an illustration of an old Shetland water mill, of the type known variously as the clack, klik, or Norse mill, worked by a horizontal water wheel, the axle turning the mill stone. For a full description of these mills, see Goudie’s “Shetland.”

QUERIES.

STOUK.—Can anyone give the meaning of the word *Stouk* in its ecclesiastical sense, as when applied to St. Catherine's or St. Lawrence's Stouk? And when did this word come into use?—ALEX. GOODFELLOW.

GIANT'S WET FEET.—Can any instances be given in folklore of a giant's dislike to wet his feet, such as given in Mr. Collingwood's translation of the Shetland legend from *Fljótsdæla Saga* (see Old-lore No. 3, Miscellany, p. 102). Is there anything in the folklore of Shetland resembling this legend?

CRAIGIE'S OLD HOUSE, GAIRSEY.—Any information regarding the history of this old house, illustrated in Old-lore No. 3, and of the various owners of the island, will be gladly received.

SINCLAIR OF STROME AND BRUGH.—Can any one tell what became of Hugh Sinclair, last of Strome and Brugh, or his family, after he lost his property. He married a daughter of Murray of Clairden. He was served heir to his father in June, 1676, and again in June 11, 1706.—GRAY.

REPLIES.

CATAWHISSIES AND BISMARS.—In answer to the Reviewer in the *Aberdeen Free Press*, a catawhissie or catyface is the Orkney name for an owl, called in Shetland a katyugle, and in Norway katugle. A bismar is a small "steelyard" made of wood, one end being thicker than the other, thus forming an excellent cudgel.

OMAN.—Regarding the name Oman this, like many others of our native Norse names, was originally a 'forename' and not a surname. It may be derived from the Old Norse Hámundr as suggested by Orphir, or from the Common Old Norse name Ögmund, which in my opinion is more likely. The 'g' would gradually become elided in the natural process of language change, as it has in Sigurd, and several other of our names. I believe

this evasion of the 'g' in certain combinations is common to several modern Scandinavian dialects.

Oman is a common surname in Orkney. In Shetland it is invariably spelled Omond, and Omand, and is confined mostly to the island of Yell. I cannot say whether the name in Shetland has originated independently, or been introduced from Orkney after attaining there the status of a surname. However the name is certainly a good many generations old in Shetland.—MAGNUS.

Mr. Eiríkr Magnússon, of Cambridge, writes, in answer to the Editors: In Ögmund, the *m* immediately following the *g* hardened the *g*, so that instead of having a slide sound (*gh*), it became an explosive=*gg*: Oggmund=Engl. Egmond-t, perhaps=older Agmond-t. The primary forms of Omand are much more likely to be either Hámund, or even Ámund, Ámundi being an old name in the North. Is Omand the oldest form known of the name? *H* in many names as an initial has gone, though in others, e.g., Howard, it has remained. The attenuated *ö* in Ögmund could not go into the deep guttural *ō*, which you say is the sound volume of *o* in Omand in Orkney. The choice of type seems to lie between Hámund and Ámund. In either case the *á* was bound, in the West, to go into *ō*.

SKATT, ETC.—In answer to the Reviewer in *The Gazette* of Montreal, explanations of unusual terms in the records will be given in a glossary, on the completion of each volume. *Sasine* in Scottish law is the act of giving legal possession of feudal property, infeftment, a form of seizin. *Scatt* is the old Norse for land tax, which is still paid in Orkney and Shetland, the same as scot in scot-free, and scot and lot. *Wattill*, a tax paid in Orkney and Shetland. *Townmaill*, or *tún-moll*, the plot of uncultivated ground immediately in front of a cottage, a house stance. *Quoy*, land reclaimed from the commons and enclosed.

SPANISH ARMADA.—With reference to Mr. Fraser

Jamieson's interesting letter, and that of "Orphir" in the last number, I may say that I wrote to Mr. Julian S. Corbett, the well-known author of "Drake and the Tudor Navy," about the Armada ship supposed to have been wrecked on the haddock sand at Reawick. Mr. Corbett is an authority on matters concerning the Armada, and he replied that (as one might imagine!) there was no vessel in the Armada lists with a name the least like "Meeth." He suggested that the vessel on the haddock sand might be "La Anunciada," a "Levant" ship of 703 tons, 14 guns, carrying a crew of 79 mariners and 196 soldiers. She was particularly badly armed . . . "she carrying but six periers and two demi-culverins, the rest of her armament consisting of six small quick-firers, called esmeriles . . ."

This vessel and "El Gran Grifen" are returned in the Spanish lists, as "se fué a fondo en Irlanda" ("sunk in Ireland"); but we know that the "Gran Grifen" was lost on the Fair Isle, and Mr. Corbett says that the "Anunciada" was "certainly not wrecked" in Ireland. The identification of the Reawick ship is, I fear, a problem that will not be readily solved.

Mr. Corbett adds:—"Armada wreck traditions and the like, I am sure, are often traceable to the next two centuries. I am sure it is so with many so-called Armada guns."

It is, of course, impossible that the name of the Reawick ship was "Meeth," as the words "Meeth," "Meith," and "Mead" are well known in Shetland, and are in everyday use. The word means merely a fishing mark or bearing: "I took meads ipo 'er" being a common expression, meaning, "I took bearings on her."—
R. STUART BRUCE.

SOME OLD-TIME SHETLANDIC WRECKS.

II.

THE wreck-tales of the seventeenth century are very numerous, and in many cases are well supported by documentary proof ; but, undoubtedly, in the case of the earlier happenings the stumbling-block is to obtain the exact date ; indeed, I have accounts of the loss of some thirty ships, which I can only put down as "*circa* 1600." I am quite unable to say, with any degree of certainty, when these wrecks occurred ; possibly, however, a period from 1570 to 1630 would cover the dates of these vessels.

The next authenticated wreck after "EL GRAN GRIFEN" is that of a "Ship of Force" (Brand's "Description," and various traditionary accounts), lost in the year 1611 on an islet near Whalsay. The vessel's nationality was unknown, and I have failed to find her name. She is supposed to have been a man-of-war, but as all merchant ships of the period carried guns no reliance can be placed on this surmise.

It is thought that this vessel was wrecked on either the "Rumble" or the "Holm of Sandwick" (both islets lying off the south end of Whalsay).

After the lapse of eighty years (*viz.*, in 1691) three of the guns of this ship were recovered and taken to Lerwick.

The account says :—

Three Iron Cannon, a six, a seven, and a ten pounder were taken to the Fort at Lerwick, after being eighty years in the sea. The inhabitants of Lerwick, to take off the rust, and so fit them for their use, did set a heap of peats about them, which they putting fire unto, the guns as soon as they were warmed and hot did discharge themselves, to the great surprise of the spectators, and the Balls, as some observed, went half-way over Bressay Sound.

Our next wreck occurred in the summer of the year 1640. The Rev. Hugh Leigh, in "A Geographical Description of the Island of Bressay, 1684,"¹ gives the following rather meagre account:—

Here [*i.e.*, in Bressay Sound] in anno 1640, in ye summer tyme, ten Spanish Men of War under name of Dunkirkers surprised four Hollands Men of War waiting for ye East India Fleet: two whereof were sunk at ye West Shore of ye Sound, [on the Lerwick side] and one fled hence some 8 or 10 miles North-westward, where running on shore her own Captain caused blow her up, & ye fourth was taken & carried.

The last-mentioned vessel is supposed to have been run ashore at the south Voe of Gletness, Nesting, and it is reported traditionally that the captain, after seeing that all his men had got to land in safety, destroyed his vessel.

From various accounts, including "A Geographical Description of the Island of Burray, 1654," by the Rev. Hugh Leigh, we glean a few particulars of the great disaster that befel the Dutch fleet under Cornelius Van Tromp in Shetland waters.

Tromp had 102 warships and 10 fireships, and was in search of an English squadron under Blake, Holland and England being then at war. Blake had fallen in with a Dutch squadron of twelve ships in the North Sea, and in three hours had sunk three vessels and captured the remainder. I have not been able to ascertain the exact date of this engagement, but it was probably in July, 1652.

After this victory, Blake suffered severely from gales, and his ships were scattered amongst the roadsteads of the Orkney Islands for repair, but, on hearing that his enemy (Tromp) was following him northwards, he heartily prepared for an encounter of the two navies.

Blake got his ships together, and put to sea, and on the evening of 5th August, 1652, he sighted Tromp's fleet between Foula and Fair Isle, but before a shot could be fired "a violent tempest suddenly arose," and raged without cessation throughout the night, and

¹ MS. in Advocates' Library.

when morning broke on the tossing billows, instead of the Imperial fleet—which rode so proudly amongst the islands a few hours previously, anxious in their fancied strength to put the freedom of the sea to an hour's arbitration—a remnant of scattered ships was all that could be seen from the “BREDERODE” (the Flagship of the Dutch Admiral).

A fire-ship was smashed to atoms on the west side of West Burra Isle, and all hands perished during this hurricane, which is reported to have blown from the N.N.W. Two other fire-ships are known to have been lost off Burra, as next morning Tromp and his men picked up, or saw, fragments of these vessels. Another Dutch man-of-war is known to have foundered off the south end of Burra, all her crew, as well as the men on the two fire-ships above-mentioned, having perished.

Tromp lost other warships in this dreadful gale, several of his vessels being “dashed on the rocks,” and every soul on board “thrown into the foaming surges,” whilst their ships were “splintered into a myriad fragments.”

Another account, descriptive of the gale, says:—

Many of the ships were soon unmanageable, rudders were wrested violently off, sails were torn and twisted into knots, and the waves went through and through them, every swell throwing its white and seething foam into the very sky. The darkness, danger, and distance from aid and shelter filled the imaginations of the sailors with horror—the fleet, being as it were, buried by the sea in the most horrible abysses, rose out of them, only to be tossed up to the clouds, here the masts were beaten down into the sea, then the deck was overflooded with the prevailing waves, the tempest was so much the mistress of the ships, they could be governed no longer, and on every side appeared all the dreadful forerunners of a dismal wreck!

I have so far failed to find the names of the wrecked ships, or, indeed, any particular information regarding them.

Blake's ships managed to keep the sea, although some of his vessels were severely battered; and he managed with his fleet of 62 sail (including prizes) to pursue the shattered Dutch ships as far as Scheveningen. Only some 40 vessels of the Dutch fleet reached Scheveningen, some fled to Norway, others brought up in the Voes of Shet-

land, and the rest undoubtedly were lost off the Shetland coast.

In the year 1654, the "LASTANDRAGER," a Russian armed merchantman (the name appears to be Dutch), outward-bound, was wrecked at Crook's Ayre, Cullivoe Ness, Island of Yell.

The vessel had put into Blue Mull Sound (a narrow strait between the Islands of Unst and Yell) to take shelter from a violent easterly gale, and her master thought it would be advisable to bring his vessel to anchor in the Bight of Westing, on the west side of the Island of Unst. Accordingly the sails were furled, everything made snug, both anchors were let go, and the "LASTANDRAGER" rode safely until a terrific squall came suddenly down from the heights above Westing, and, striking the ship with irresistible force, both cables parted, and the ship was driven before the wind until she struck the rocks at the "back" of Cullivoe Ness. Only a few of the seamen managed to save their lives, and the ship broke up quickly.

The place in the Bight of Westing where the "LASTANDRAGER" anchored (a shallow piece of water) is to this day known as the "Lastandrager Skurr." The word "Skurr" means, I am told, a fishing "seat."

Four or five years ago one of the guns of this vessel was being made ready for firing a salute, on the occasion of a wedding at Cullivoe, when it was found to be loaded, both shot and powder being still in the bore of the piece.

The last seventeenth century wreck of which I have many particulars is that of the "CARMERLANDT" ship of Amsterdam, lost on Stoora Stack, Out Skerries, on the night of 31st December, 1664 (O.S.).

This vessel was an East Indiaman, outward-bound to Batavia, and the ship-master was apparently anxious as to his position, since he had posted four men in the shrouds to keep a lookout for land. The "CARMERLANDT" was running before the wind (tradition says that it was blowing a gale from the south at the time), but

so dark was the night that nothing could be seen of the Skerries, until, without the slightest warning, breakers appeared almost under the bows of the ship. The men in the fore-shrouds had no time to warn the rest of the crew, and the ship struck the "face" of a cliff on the south end of Stoorá Stack. Her masts "went by the board," and the fore-mast falling on the land enabled the seamen in the rigging to save their lives. They were the only men of the crew saved, as in a few moments the "CARMERLANDT" broke in half, the fore part foundering in deep water alongside the stack, and the stern portion, in which was reported to have been great treasure, was swept away by the tide, and cast up near where the fishing station now is, on the Island of Bruray, but with the succeeding tide the greater part of the wreckage was carried out to sea.

According to Hibbert, the "CARMERLANDT" was an exceedingly "rich" ship, his account putting the treasure at three million guilders, in her captain's safe-keeping, besides many chests of coined gold.

It is traditionally said that so many kegs and casks of spirits were washed ashore from this wreck that the male population of Skerries were in a state of intoxication for twenty days. The hardy Skerry men evidently did not fear a headache!

The following fragment of doggerel is still current in Skerries:—

The "Carmelan" frae Amsterdam,
Cam' on a Maunsmas day,
On Stoorá's Stack, she broke her back,
And the Skerry Folk got a prey!

This wreck is known in Skerries as the "Armada Ship," some of the inhabitants thinking that this was a Spanish vessel, and her name is always spelt "CARMELAN" by them.

The body of the ship's drummer was cast ashore on the Island of Bruray, and was buried on a knoll near the fishing station. The place is known as the "Drummer's Grave."

When the Earl of Morton—at that time “Sheriff Principal of the Earldome of Orkney and Lordship of Zetland and justiciar and Admiral thereof”—heard of the wreck, he at once repaired to the scene of the disaster, and his men were soon actively employed in salving such part of the wreckage as remained on the shore, and they were also successful in rescuing from the water several chests of gold. By reason of the war with the States of Holland, the ship and her cargo were prescribed, and should have fallen to the share of His Majesty Charles II., and when the King heard of the Earl’s private appropriation he is said to have become decided in the views that he had previously entertained, viz., of recalling the Crown estates of Orkney and Shetland which had fallen into the hands of the Morton family on the fictitious plea of a mortgage by Charles I.

The wreckage was very extensively plundered by the people of Shetland: boats came from far and near, but apparently steps were taken to punish some of the people, since by Decree dated 21st September, 1675¹ (things moved slowly in these days!) :—

The late Gilbert Murray in Laxo, was ordered to restore to Robert Hunter of Lunna, as Chamberlain for the Earl of Morton, and Walter Dick, Skalloway, as pror. fiscall, for ye Admiralty Court . . . ye sox wobbis of Linding Cloate [Cloth] extending to four hundred and four score ells, ane quag of brandie of eleven pynts, ane quag of soap lykewise of eleven pynts, together with ane hundred and thirtie . . . [skins?] of poarling lard, nyne hundred ells of ribbands, and sundrie dollars of Silber, or to pay ye soumme of nine hundred and thirtie punds, aught shillings scots monie as for ye pryce of ye same . . .

As the Decree against Murray had been obtained *in absentia*, and, furthermore, as he was dead, and his relict, Joan Sinclair, was in poor circumstances, she was discharged of all payment by the said Robert Hunter and the said Walter Dick.

R. STUART BRUCE.

¹ MS. Among Symbister Papers.

SHIPPING PEATS FROM ORKNEY.

IT may not be generally known that for several years a considerable trade was carried on in shipping peats from Orkney to the Forth. It provided work all summer for many people and was a great boon to those who had the privilege of cutting peats for sale. The privilege, however, was only granted to certain houses and the quantity allowed to be cut usually depended on the size or rent of the farm or croft. At least such was the general rule in Stenness. The quantity was measured by "fadoms" (fathoms), "half fadoms" and "tuskars," and was in addition to the quantity necessary for the tenant's own household use. The privilege so far as the Honeymans and Balfours were concerned was by "fadoms," while Captain Halcro of Norton and others usually measured by "tuskars." It may be mentioned that in those days the Honeymans and Balfours granted to all their tenants, irrespective of the size of their farms or crofts, the right to an unlimited supply of peats for their own use.

A "tuskar" is the implement with which the peats are cut, and the man who works it is the "tuskarman," and what was known as "a tuskar of peats" was as much as a man could cut in one day. However, what constituted "a day" in those days was a disputed point, but was generally reckoned as extending to twelve hours at least, or from sunrise to sunset. The modern demand for an eight hours' day had not then been dreamt of, hence a 1907 tuskar would be a very minor affair when compared with that of 1807 or even fifty years later. It can readily be understood that after cutting for a few hours in the warm days our ancestors seem to have had, a man's energies would fail, but one tenant fell upon an original plan for making the most of his opportunities. The landlord, Captain Halcro, was an extremely hard one, and not being troubled with the provisions of a Crofters'

Act, his tenants had few chances of getting square with him. It was known that during the peat-cutting season, Captain Halcro lay in the hill, day after day, spying at his tenants, to make sure they did not cut more than their allotted quantity. The tenant indicated, had the privilege of cutting "a tuskar," and he sagely went on the assumption that that meant not as much as a man could cut, but as much as a tuskar could cut in a day. Consequently he engaged three strong young men to cut by turn with the one tuskar, so that the tuskarmen were always fresh, and not a moment was lost in changing hands. The result was that at the end of the day, fully double the quantity had been cut than should have been, but no objection could be taken as only one tuskar had been used.

On the other hand when the tenant had the privilege of cutting "a fadom" it meant the dried article built in a stack ready for shipment. In those days fadoms varied in quantity according to the district, but in Stenness a fadom stack measured sixteen by sixteen by six feet, locally known as "the big fadom." In the district there was another measurement known as "the peerie fadom" which contained forty-two loads in the maizie on horseback or about fourteen cart loads of those days or six good cartloads from forty to sixty years ago, and from this may be calculated the value of peat cutting. It may be safely assumed from the number of loads mentioned that "the peerie fadom" was the somewhat peculiar one of eight by eight by four feet.¹ If this were so there

¹ On the estate of Coubister, Orphir, including the island of Cava, the fathom was 8 feet \times 4 feet \times 5 feet high. In Greenigoe, Orphir, the fathom was 20 feet \times 10 feet \times 4 feet = 800 cubic feet, containing 84 maizie "leds" on horseback, or 28 cartloads; 3 maizie "leds" being equivalent to a cartload. In Flotta the fathom was 24 feet \times 12 feet \times 4 feet. Eday, 433 cubic feet. In the Shetland Rental of 1628, it is stated that the faddome was, in 1604, 20 feet high \times 16 feet broad \times 14 feet long "and that the peattis be thre quarteris deip." The sizes of the Greenigoe, Flotta, and Eday fathoms are from Mr. Robert Sinclair, Greenigoe. If any of our readers know of any other fathoms, will they kindly communicate same to the Editors. A. W. JOHNSTON.

would be exactly six times more peats in the "muckle" than in the "peerie" fadom or eighty-four cartloads. Peats at that time were sold in Ireland at nine shillings for a small fadom and landed in Stromness at twelve shillings. A big fadom would therefore be worth £2 14s. or £3 12s. to the tenant, which, considering the value of money in those days must have been a small fortune to many. Nearly all the peats despatched to Stromness were sold by the peerie fadom, and for this purpose the sellers had boats built of definite sizes known as fadom or half fadom boats as the case might be, as they were presumed to carry these quantities exactly.

In those days the peats were carted to the shore mostly during the night, as it was considered too hot to do so during the day. It is a thousand pities similar weather does not pay Orkney an occasional visit now-a-days. When brought to the shore the peats were built in stacks, to await shipment and for the purpose of being measured, where the privilege of cutting was by measurement. It was observable that when being shipped, it took a tremendous time to make any appreciable difference on the size of the stacks. It is superfluous to explain that the stacks were replenished nightly by as many loads as could be conveniently brought down. The tenants did not regard this procedure as theft, oh, dear no, it was only "peat smuggling," but while this term doubtless sounded less objectionable, the action was not thereby purified. Of course it must be remembered that in those days smuggling in any shape was considered neither sinful nor criminal, but rather something of which to boast in after years if successfully carried through. A man who would have insisted on his neighbour being brought before the kirk session for whistling on his dog on Sunday, or for dancing at his own wedding during the week, would have smuggled a fathom of peats or a few puncheons of rum (besides drinking a fair quantity of it) without the slightest compunction.

Several people who had not the privilege of cutting

peats for sale, did not hesitate to smuggle some, and regarding one of this class a very good and absolutely true story is told. Old Tam K——, who was famous in his day for his utter disregard of witchcraft and superstition, when those institutions flourished all around him, smuggled peats rather extensively. He was a tenant of Honeyman of Graemsay, and on one occasion when the factor, Mr. Rae of the Hall of Clestrain (father of Dr. Rae, the Arctic explorer) was measuring the stacks, he came upon a fairly large one belonging to Tam, and at once charged Tam with theft. Tam endeavoured to justify himself by pleading poverty, and urged that he was compelled to do something towards maintaining his large family. Mr. Rae swore at him and asked the absurd question why he had so many children, to which Tam rather naïvely replied, “Weel, sir, they’re dere noo, an’ I cinna cut der necks an’ haave dem ower da dyke like vales.”¹ Mr. Rae’s answer is not preserved, but Tam was forgiven and henceforth had the privilege of cutting half a fathom yearly for sale. This privilege, however, was not accepted in the proper spirit, for instead of stopping the smuggling, it was only used as a cloak to cover smuggling on a still more extensive scale. The half fathom was carted to the shore and duly built and measured, but like the widow’s cruse, it never seemed to grow less, although almost daily boatloads were presumably shipped from it. In addition to smuggling the tenants had another method of cheating the landlords. It was the rule that the stacks should be measured at the bottom without any reference to the top. The tenants therefore were very careful that the “steeth” (bottom) measurement should be correct but after that, the stack was built with outward slopes, so that while it measured sixteen feet square at the bottom it might be fully eighteen feet at the top. At this species of fraud the factors seemingly winked, for no mention is made of such procedure being objected to.

¹ Vales meant veals, *i.e.*, dead calves. A calf in those days was worth about 1s. 6d.

A word may be said in favour of peat smuggling. The peat ground, as well as the grazing on it, was common to the udallers while the county was under the udal law, and as it was always contended, and tradition often gives weight to the contention, that the land had been illegally taken from them, the tenants doubtless considered they were justified in taking all they could get by fair means or foul. It is also worthy of notice that the earlier proprietors were not very strict in enforcing their acquired rights, knowing perhaps too well that if justice were obtained, their proprietorship would soon terminate. One other remark may be made on this view of the matter. The late Nicol Clouston of Netherbigging, who was an exceedingly wise man in his day and generation, and was regarded as an authority on many subjects, particularly on the ancient laws of Orkney, maintained that under the old laws it was provided "The poor to take as many peats from the nearest moss to keep them warm, but not to sell." This privilege in favour of the poor would likewise have led to the belief that the rights of the proprietors were far from being absolute.

Besides those shipped to the Forth, Stromness was also a large consumer of peats from Stenness prior to the importation of coal. From this it is evident that Stenness must have had very large tracts of moss, now unknown, and in this respect it is surprising to learn of places where peats were cut within comparatively recent years. In one part within two hundred yards of the sea peats were cut within the last eighty years, where no one would now believe moss had been "since Adam was a boy," as the local expression goes, seeing no trace of moss remains. The same remark holds good of various other parts.

The people in those good (?) old days did not burn many of what they called "tuskar peats,"—these were the best and were reserved chiefly for sale. They burned rough kinds known by various names such as, steeps, yarpha, bracken, sandy, spade or foggy peats, greenheads,

flaymeurs, &c. It is a pity so much moss was used, for when all was taken as was too frequently the case, only a dead white clay remained, too poor for even the cultivation of weeds. On the top of the proper moss for tuskar peats there may be anything from six to eighteen inches of turf which, while good enough for burning, is not moss and should be left for soil for future cultivation. Many landlords insisted on this being done, but unscrupulous tenants often took it. The process of removing this turf from the moss is known as "flaying," the worker is the "flayer," and the turf removed is the "flaymeur." The flaying is done with an instrument called a "hack spade." This spade is of the shape of a jet of gas from an ordinary burner with a slight curve forward, so that the cutting is done slantwise. It is about eight inches at the widest part or edge. At the top is a very stout straight handle about four feet in length. At a suitable height is a piece of wood called "the hack" resembling the step of a boy's stilt. This is for driving the instrument down with the foot. Most of the rougher sorts of peats such as "steeps" were cut with this instrument. The "steep" was regarded by many as the best peat for burning and was often sold. It was said to be "tap an' boddam." In other words, the proper moss was not of sufficient depth for tuskar peats and the "flaymeur" was also small, perhaps only three inches, so that it and the moss, or top and bottom were taken together.

J. T. SMITH LEASK.

A NOTE ON AN ODAL FAMILY.

IN Peterkin's Notes (p. 128) may be found some extracts from a document that gives (so far as I am aware) the most circumstantial description extant of an odal estate in the 16th century—an estate not acquired by any immigrant Scotchman, but the actual heritage of a native Norse family. This document—now in the possession of Mr. J. W. Cursiter, of Kirkwall, to whose courtesy I am indebted for its perusal—is a feu charter granted by Earl Robert Stewart in 1587 to Magnus Cursetter of Cursetter, by which that whilome odaller became a feudal vassal of the earl. The lands, of which he and his predecessors “is and hes bein in peaceabill possessioun past memorie of man,” may be, in plain modern language, thus defined:—the whole of the three penny land of Cursetter, the whole of the one penny land of Wasdale and of the one penny land of Setter, the meadows of Rossmyre, and three mark land (or about a fifth of the township) in Binscarth; the property forming a long strip (interrupted at one point by the townships of Grimbister and Firth) which stretched from the foot of Wideford Hill to the Harray boundary.

To one question raised in my previous paper (Vol. I., No. 1) this catalogue suggests an answer. Evidently, even under the pulverising odal code, all the Norse lairds' properties had not crumbled quite to fragments, each no greater than the single farm of the modern Norwegian bonde. Here, on the contrary, is an authentic specimen of a 16th century Magnus Troil, with a tolerably extensive estate, and (probably) a slender purse and interminable pedigree. In 1587 this picture is taken, early in the Stewart régime. The odaller of Cursetter himself was married to an Agnes Stewart, possibly a kinswoman (bar-sinistered, the odds are, the family habits being

considered) of the potentate who signed the charter. It is at least noteworthy that one of the witnesses is of that standing—to wit, James Stewart of Graemsay, a natural son of Earl Robert. Further, another Cursetter—Thomas—associated with Magnus in a tack of a certain three penny land (the name of it apparently undecipherable), was married to a Janet Stewart. The heir to the Cursetter property is designated as James, “sone and air to umqle Andrew Cursetter, brother germane to the said Magnus”; though by the end of the Stewart reign it is likely enough that what with fleecings, finings, and taxings there was little of that straggling estate left to inherit. Certainly the family disappear from view as Cursetter of Cursetter. Cursetters in Cursetter, Wasdale, and Setter are found, however, in the commissariot records through the 17th century, and one branch owned the present Binscarth (presumably the three mark land quoted in the charter) up till comparatively recent times. Two sons of the last proprietor went to America, and one of these is believed to have been the father of General Custer of the U.S. army; while a third son, Magnus (of a second marriage), was tenant of Gorn in Rendall, and only died some four or five years ago. In conclusion, it is needless to remind Orcadians that this ancient name is now identified with the most enthusiastic and distinguished of our native archæologists.

J. STORER CLOUSTON.

OBITUARY.

We regret to have to record the death of the following subscribers and others:—

COLONEL J. W. BALFOUR, of Balfour.—Died June 6th, 1907, in Balfour Castle, Orkney, in his 80th year. The eldest son of the second marriage of Captain William Balfour, R.N., succeeded his brother, Colonel David Balfour, of Balfour, in 1887. Deputy Lieutenant, Commissioner of Supply, Justice of the Peace, and Convener of Orkney. Chairman of the Orkney Harbour Commissioners, and of the Orkney Steam Navigation Company. He retired from the Army soon after the abolition of purchase, and settled at Berstane, near Kirkwall. He took a keen interest in the Volunteers, becoming Major of the Orkney Artillery Volunteers in 1880, and succeeded the late General Sir Frederick Burroughs in command of the corps. He married Isabella Craster, daughter of the late Captain Craster, and is survived by one son and two daughters.

MRS. MATHEW ANDERSON.—Original subscriber. Died in Glasgow, June 13th, aged 74 years. Widow of the late Mathew Anderson, writer, Glasgow, and youngest daughter of the late James Bain, Lerwick.

HON. W. M. BOLT, M.L.C.—Died April 19th, 1907, in New Zealand. Born in Shetland. Married, in 1861, a daughter of Captain F. Lawson, Lerwick, and is survived by five sons and three daughters.

JAMES BRAND, I.S.O.—Born October 21st, 1843, in Lerwick, died May 21st, 1907, in Lee, Kent, aged 63 years. Second son of the late Captain William Brand, and his wife Christina Cecilia, second daughter of James Greig, Shetland. Mr. Brand was until lately in His Majesty's Exchequer and Audit Department. Married a daughter of George Edwards, Streatham, and is survived by a daughter.

JOHN BRUCE, of Sumburgh.—An original founder of

the Old-lore Series, and life member of the Viking Club. Born June 9th, 1837, died July 4th, 1907, in Edinburgh, 70 years of age. Deputy Lieutenant, Commissioner of Supply, and Justice of the Peace for Shetland. Member of the Dunrossness Parish Council and School Board. Mr. Bruce took a great interest in County affairs, and was Convener of the County Council since its commencement in 1890. He took a lively interest in all Shetland societies in and out of the islands, especially in those dealing with the literature and antiquities of the Old Rock. He married, December 13th, 1871, Mary Dalziel, daughter of the late Ralph Erskine Scott, Edinburgh, a descendant of the Rev. Henry Erskine, of Chirnside and his wife Margaret Halcro, daughter of Hugh Halcro, of Wyre, Orkney. Mr. Bruce is survived by his widow, three sisters, and two brothers.

SIR WILLIAM ROBERTSON COPLAND, M. INST. C.E., J.P., LL.D.—Original subscriber. Born in Stirling in 1838, died in Glasgow, August 19th, 1907. Educated at the High School, Stirling, and Glasgow University. He made a special study of drainage and water supply, and was recognized at home and abroad as a leading authority. Among his many works he was engineer of the Stromness water works, and consulting engineer to the Kirkwall Town Council. He rendered valuable public service to Glasgow, in connection with the extension and organization of technical education, and with the erection of the splendid structure in which is now housed the West of Scotland Technical College, of which the foundation stone was laid by the King in 1903. As a member of Glasgow University Court he took a warm interest in the subjects of university education. He received the honorary degree of LL.D., when the new medical and natural philosophy departments of the University were opened by the Prince of Wales last April. The honour of knighthood was conferred on him last year by the King. Among the public offices he held was that of Deacon Convener of the Incorporated Trades of Glasgow,

which gave him *ex-officio* a seat in the Town Council.

Sir William belonged to an Orkney family, where he has relatives. He is survived by his wife, one daughter and five sons.

ROBERT MUIR, of Scapa.—Original subscriber. Born in Sanday, Orkney, died June 7th, 1907, in Edinburgh, aged 54 years. Supervisor of Inland Revenue. Past Master of Kirkwall Kilwinning Lodge of Freemasons, and at the time of his death was Proxy Master. The funeral, a masonic one, took place at Kirkwall, where he was buried in St. Magnus' Churchyard.

NOTES ON BOOKS.

Forty years in a Moorland Parish. By the Rev. J. C. Atkinson, D.C.L. New edition. London, Macmillan, 1907. 5s. net.

It is only sixteen years since this book was first published, but it is already an English classic, and its influence on the study of local history and characteristics has been noteworthy. The new edition, with its memoir of the author and portraits, will be welcome to readers interested in the Scandinavian origins of certain parts of Britain—for Canon Atkinson's own Cleveland was, as he shows, an especial haunt and settlement of the Northmen, and contains many survivals of their folklore and customs. The fairy rings and fairy butter, Hob the brownie, witches and wise men, the Mark's e'en watch, the wedding race (brullaup), and the funeral feast (avril or arval bread), are all described with much fullness and picturesque effect. In some cases perhaps we may hesitate to follow the author, as when he seems to suggest that the burial of a cast calf was a sacrifice to Odin; his alternative (p. 132) that it was a propitiatory offering to the earth spirits carries more conviction; or that the Noaship (the overhead boat of cirrus clouds) contains Odin's name; or again that "telling the bees" of their master's death meant a fear of his return to claim honey for mead in Odin's house. But as a reper-

tory of Northern folklore the book must always be valuable, no less than as a charming introduction to a district where Orkney and Shetland readers will find much akin to their own traditions.

Manx Crosses. By P. M. C. Kermode, F.S.A., Scot.
London, Bemrose and Sons, Ltd., 1907. 3 guineas net.

This handsome and beautifully illustrated volume is the result of many years' labour of love on the part of its author, whose illustrated "Catalogue of the Manks Crosses" appeared so far back as 1887. In these twenty years, by fresh discoveries and further studies, he has greatly increased his knowledge of the subject, and now has made a most valuable contribution, not only to the survey of early art, but to the history of the Northmen and their predecessors in the Western seas. Indeed, there are points in Orkney and Shetland old-lore which we can see by the help of these monuments in a somewhat clearer light. For instance, though the peculiar Pictish symbols are absent in Man, the remarkable name, read by some on the Bressay stone as "Son of the Druid," is actually found in ogams at Rushen (No. 1) and the ecclesiastics, the horsemen and beasts of the Bressay stone are seen again in the cross at Maughold (No. 67). A curious motive, the human head between two monsters, portrayed on the Papil stone, finds a parallel at Braddan (No. 69). The Runes on the Manx crosses, though not identical with those of the Maeshowe, are closely akin to them, and to the Thurbiarn inscription from Cunningsburgh: and the elaborately interlaced crosses of Holm (Orkney) and Flotta are not unlike those of many Manx examples. It is possible that a closer comparison may enable us to date some pieces hitherto undecided, for this one district supplies links in the chain of evidence left incomplete in the other.

Saga-Book of the Viking Club. Proceedings of the Society for 1906. London, 1907.

This number contains:—Ship Burial at Kiloran Bay, Colonsay, Scotland; by Haakon Schetelig. The Life of Bishop Gudmund Arason; by Professor W. P. Ker, M.A. Gringolet, Gawain's Horse; by Professor I. Gollancz, Litt.D. Some Illustrations of the Archæology of the Viking Age in England; by W. G. Collingwood, M.A., F.S.A., President (Illustrated). Tradition and Folklore of the Quantocks; by Rev. C. W. Whistler, M.A., M.R.C.S. Northern Folksongs: Danish, Icelandic, Norwegian, and Swedish; by Sveinbjörn Sveinbjörnsson (with Musical Illustrations).

There are also several items of special interest to Orkney and Shetland members. Mr. Magnus Spence sends an interesting report on the work of restoring the Stones of Stenness. Mrs. Jessie M. E. Saxby writes on the Shetland dialect, in which she questions the generally accepted view as to the origin of such names as Paupil and Paupa Stoor. There is also a brief account, reproduced from the *Scotsman*, of the underground chamber discovered in May, 1906, on the farm of Yinstay, Tankerness, Orkney.

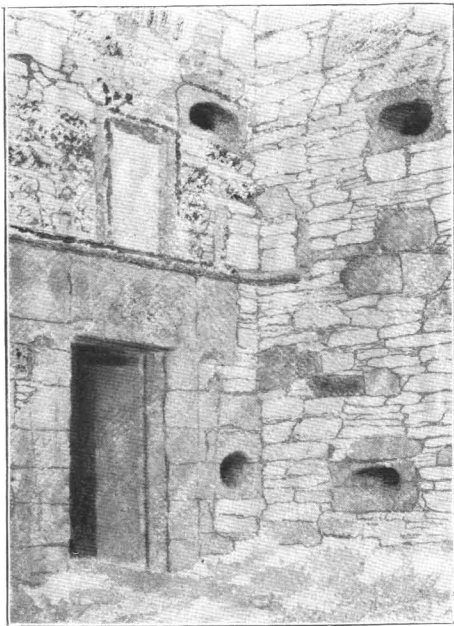
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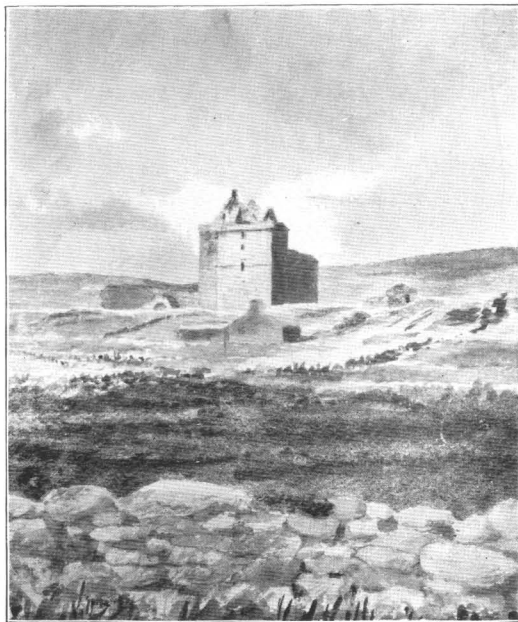
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VIEW FROM N.E.

NOLTLAND CASTLE, WESTREY, ORKNEY.

*From the original water colour drawings by the late Sir Henry Dryden, Bt., 1870.
In the possession of A. W. Johnston.*

Orkney and Shetland Miscellany

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NOTES.

NOASHIP.—The reviewer of "Forty Years in a Moorland Parish," in the October number of OLD-LORE (p. 139), doubts whether the word "Noaship (the overhead boat of cirrus clouds) contains Odin's name," and with this many will probably agree. We would suggest, however, that the word may contain the ancient word "nór," to which Mr. Eiríkr Magnússon alludes in his "Notes on Shipbuilding and Nautical Terms of Old in the North," in the SAGA-BOOK, Vol. III., p. 191. He describes it as "an exceedingly old name for ship, which is found, and that rarely, only in poetry and in one compound proper name from mythic times." The latter name is "Nóatún," the town of ships, the abode of Niord, the god who ruled the winds and stilled the sea. Mr. Magnússon thinks the word is akin to "noe," "nór," one of the oldest words for ship in the Irish tongue, and may be a Celtic loan-word to the Norwegian, whence it passed to the Icelandic, as he states that it is not found in Denmark or Sweden. Professor W. G. Collingwood, however, reviewing "Forty Years in a Moorland Parish" for the next SAGA-BOOK, while suggesting the above origin for the word "noaship," gives "noeskeppit" as the Danish equivalent. In any case its occurrence in Yorkshire, whether coming from Norwegian or Danish sources, is significant, and should be noted.—ALBANY F. MAJOR.

NOLTLAND CASTLE.—The frontispiece gives a view of Noltland Castle, in Westrey, Orkney, from the N.E., and of the main entrance.

ORKNEY JOTTINGS.—From time to time I will give extracts, from my note-books, of Orkney folklore, etc., taken down on the spot. As it is too laborious to arrange these notes, they will be given as they come to hand. They are all from Orphir, Orkney, unless where otherwise stated.

RHYMES— (a) Hate a wimble, hate a wimble,
 Bore a hole, bore a hole.
 Whaur piece, whaur piece,
 In his puggie, in his puggle.

(Variant) In there, in there.

The above rhyme was accompanied by a circular motion of the forefinger, ending by poking the child in the ribs or stomach.

(b) There the broo o' brinkie (*pointing to the child's brow*),
 There the ee o' life (*pointing to the eye*),
 There the bubbly ocean (*pointing to the nose*),
 There the penknife (*pointing to the teeth*).

The first verse of the Scottish song "Bessie Bell and Mary Gray" is current in Orphir. For an account of this song, which was well known in the end of the seventeenth century, see Child's "English and Scottish Popular Ballads"; also Trans. S. A. Scot., II., 108, 1822.

PROVERBS— (a) A hole i' the cheek,
 A dimple i' the chin,
 Wherever that is,
 There's never grace in.
 (b) When the gossamer is flying
 The air is drying.

(c) He's been to Barnisdale—applied to a person telling a long story. Can anyone explain *Barnisdale*?

PARISH DIALECTS.—In Orphir, Mary is called *Merrick*, William *Wullack*; in Evie and Rendall, *Merro* and *Willo*; in Stromness, Utertoun, *Willu*; in Firth, *Meroo*. In the North Isles, stable, bread and table are called steeble, breed and teeble.

SPELLS, ETC.—Blood drawing was resorted to, to drive the fairies away. A sixpence in a sieve was sifted over a cow affected by the fairies. "Casting the heart" in South Ronaldsay, in 1848, was performed by a witch to cure jaundice, as follows:—Commencing with the usual objectionable draught, the patient had the first thing in the

morning to sit on an iron pot. A meal sieve was then placed on his head, in which was placed a bunch of keys, comb, pair of shears, knife, and a basin of water in the middle. Lead, melted in an old iron cruse lamp, was toomed or emptied into the cold water in the basin. The lead was poured in three times, and the third time it assumed the shape of a heart. The lead heart had to be carried in the patient's pocket until he lost it. (The patient lost it unaccountably a month or so after, when he was cured.) Small cakes of bere meal and water were squeezed between the heated flat points of the teengs (tongs), a dozen had to be eat the first day, thereafter decreasing the number. The egg of a black hen had to be taken every morning until better.

A lying-in woman was "sained" to keep the fairies off, by having a smouldering rag circled three times over her. The fairies were heard saying:—

Wig wag, jig jag,
 Ill healt so weel
 Thu wes sained
 Wi' a linen rag.

—A. W. JOHNSTON.

ORKNEY PEATS.—The Reviewer in the *Northern Ensign* mentions that "in July last we had an illustration of the fact that the Orkney peat trade is not yet dead. While passing along the harbour here [Wick] we noticed a tourist party overlooking, with evident curiosity, a smack from Orkney discharging peats for Pulteney Distillery. Clearly they had never before seen such a curious cargo, and would have no idea that this was the natural product which gave to our world-famed 'Old Pulteney' the peculiar flavour so agreeable to the palates of connoisseurs in *aqua vitae*!"

ORKNEY PRAYER.—The following is the prayer of an old man, Deddie Clouston, who died more than thirty-

five years ago. He lived somewhere between Clouston and Ireland, Stenness. Captain A. Work heard it about forty years ago, and remembered it:—

Oot lums in lums
 Oot share whittles,
 Cutted may their craigs be
 Wha's cum here to ate oor victuals.
 Doon about the burn
 An' in about sea and styne,
 An' I hoop a' w're freens,
 'Ill luk in as they gōng bye.

The first four lines were used in Deerness as a grace at meat, when there were unwelcome guests present.—
 MAGNUS SPENCE.

SHEEP-MARKS.—The following list of some Orphir sheep-marks was made by the late Mr. James Johnston, of Coubister, in 1827. Andw. Flett, 3 laps right lug. Bengy Brass, Boull, crop in right lug, cross bitted and hemling behind on left. Robt. Balantine, Gossaquoy, crop on right lug, a bit behint on right lug and a hemling before on the left. Margt. Gunny, Nurquoy, rit in both lugs. Wilm. Gray, Croval, a pundlar mark in right lug and an anker mark in the left. Harry Gray, Boull, crop in both lugs, a hole in right and the mid nose out. Andw. Taylor, Schigibist, 3 laps in right lug and a sheer mark in left. Charles Hay, Heatherquoy, crop in both the lugs and 3 laps in both lugs. Thos. Wishart, Millhouse, right lug off, sheer-mark and a hole in left, a bit before. W. Nicolson, right lug off, sheer mark a bit behint in left lug and tail off and a clout affore. Andw. Flett in Sorpol, hole in both lugs and button on the face. Thos. Wishart in Walkmill, right lug off, sheer mark and a bit before in left and a hole.

From another list:—Wilm. Harvey in Musaquoy, a sheer mark, a hole and cross bitted in the right lug, and a crop and three laps in the left lug. Wilm. Inkster in Grindaly, a crop in right lug and a hole in left lug. Joshua Hay in Grindaly, crop and three laps in the right

lug and a bit before on left lug, and a skirt in right nose. Robt. Inkster in Grindaly, a bit before in right lug, a crop in left lug, and a mark in the nose. Charles Hay in Heatherquoy, a crop in every lug and 3 laps . . . (1) hole in right lug and 2 bits in left lug. Andw. Clouston in Newhouse (2) hemling behind in right and a hole and a bit before in left lug. David Finlay in Fea (3) ex mark behind in right and hole in left lug. Fleck (4) 3 laps in right lug and left lug off. W. Sinclair, Swartabreak, (5) crop in left lug and a hole (and he has another mark). Peter Sinclair, in Sorpol, cross in right lug and a bit before, hemling before on left lug. Magy Gray in Tween-breaks, 3 laps in right lug and left lug and tail off and rip in the nose. Wilm. Hutchen in Fleck, hole in right lug and hemling before and hole and two bits behind in left lug.

For explanation of some of these marks see *Miscellany*, p. 56. Mr. Robert Flett, of Bellevue, Orphir, has been informed that a *hemling* is a semi-circular piece cut out of the ear, and an *anchor mark* was formed by two triangular pieces being cut out near the tip of the ear, one at each side, resembling the fluke of an anchor. Can any reader explain the following marks, *pundlar mark*, *clout*, *button* on the face?—A. W. JOHNSTON.

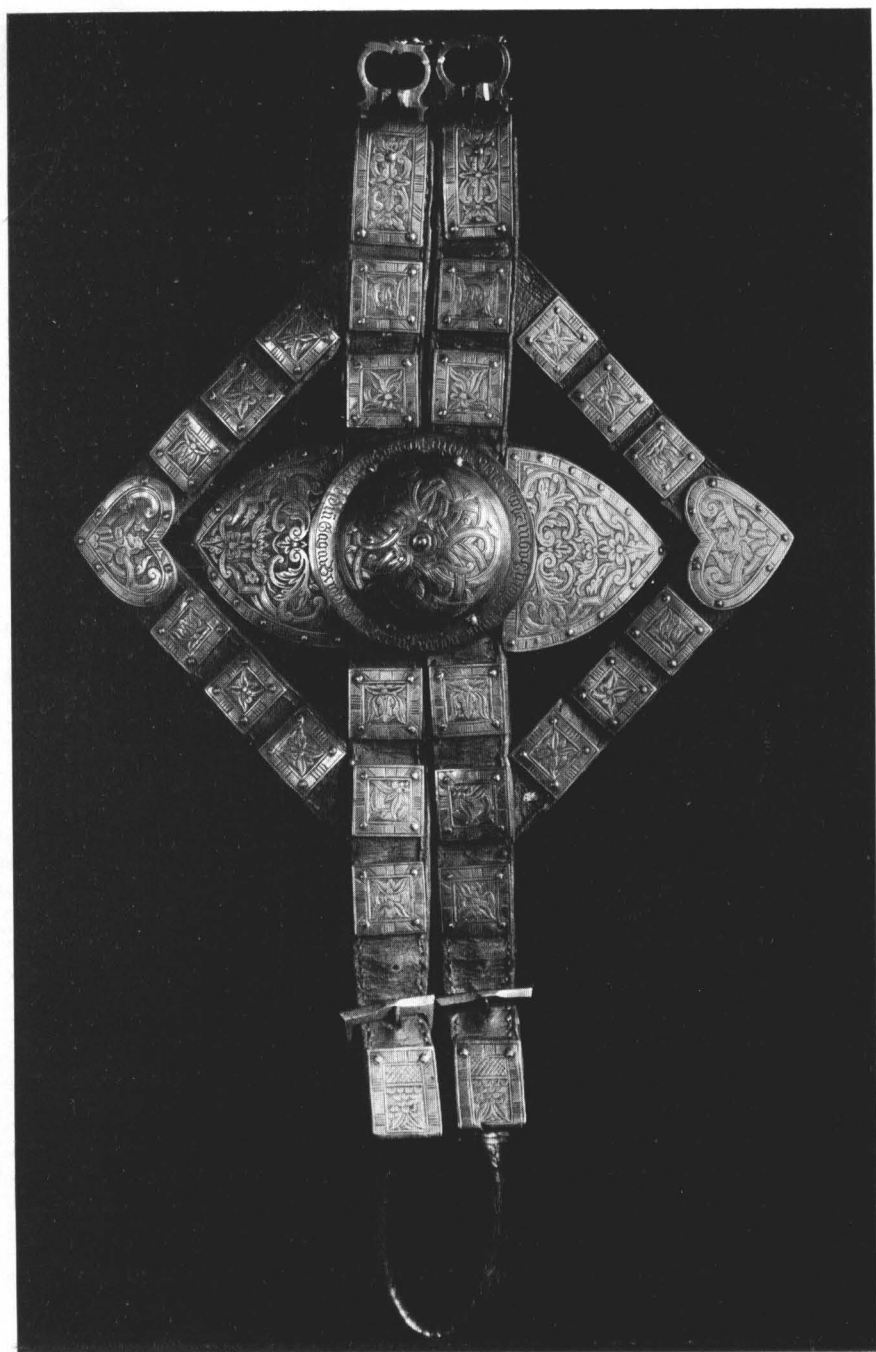
QUERIES.

JO. BEN.—In the list of authorities given at the end of J. R. Tudor's work on "The Orkneys and Shetland" is the following:—"Bellenden John.—Descriptio Insularum Orchadiarum per me Jo. Ben, ibidem colentem, in anno 1529." Is there any good foundation for the identification of Jo. Ben with Maister John Bellenden, the translator of Boece and Livy, Archdean of Moray and Canon of Ross? Bellenden seems to have been Secretary to Archibald, 6th Earl of Angus, at the time of the Earl's attainder in 1528, and appeared in Parliament in September of that year to lodge a protest on behalf of his

master, who instead of appearing to underlie the judgment of the estates, fled to England. His Secretary, being thus compromised, may have also fled till the peril had passed. But his movements after September, 1528, and during 1529 are unknown. He was back at Court as "Clerk of the Comptis," and received his first payment for the translation of Boece's *Cronykill* in 1531. The dates may thus be said to fit the conjecture; but is it anything more than a mere conjecture? Is anything known of the original manuscript of the "Description"? There are two transcripts in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, one in the handwriting of Sir James Balfour, and the other in that of Sir Robert Sibbald. —J. A.

COUPLAND.—In Orkney and Shetland Records, Vol. I., No. 30, a lease granted by Bishop Thomas (Tulloch) of Orkney, July 12, 1455, to Thome of Coupland of the lands of Stanbuster, is confirmed by Bishop William (Tulloch) of Orkney, March, 1456. The first witness to a letter of Reversion by Thomas Coupland of Uddo relating to the lands of Melros and Jackstown in Banffshire, dated at Edinburgh, 10th March, 1528-9 (see original, No. 1038, in H.M. Register House, Edinburgh), is Mr. Adam Stewart, parson of Stronsay. I am desirous of learning, if possible, if these Couplands were of Norse extraction, and also information relative to their connection with Orkney. Possibly some of your readers may be able to satisfy me on these points. If so, I shall be obliged.—JAMES ALEX. BEATTIE, Cults, Aberdeen.

ICELANDIC HORSE CRUPPER FROM KIRKWALL.—The accompanying illustration shows an Icelandic ornamental horse crupper, probably 18th century work, from Kirkwall, described in the *Proceedings* S.A.Scot., 1906, p. 48. It is known to have been in Kirkwall for at least fifty years, but no traces of its previous history appear to be obtainable. Any information will be gladly received.—EDITOR.



ICELANDIC HORSE CRUPPER.

ING.—Can someone inform me as to the meaning of “Ing” occurring in old Norse names, such as Ingerid, Ingebjörg, etc. Inga still obtains as a name amongst women in Shetland, under the forms Inga and Enga.—MAGNA.

POTTINGER.—Can any reader throw light on the derivation of the name Pottinger, or on the origin of the Orkney and Shetland family of that name?—AFRICANUS.

A correspondent writes that families of this name are to be found in England (Cumberland) and Ireland (County Down), but so far as he knows the Orkney and Shetland Pottingers are the only ones in Scotland. One family has been in Deerness for 200 years or so, where there is a tradition that two brothers came to work in a lead mine at Scarvataing, Deerness. They were having their midday meal in the excavation, when a crow picked up the cap of one of the brothers and flew away with it; he followed to recover the cap, and when he returned the mine had fallen in and killed his brother. There was a Pottinger of Hobbister who was a bailie of Kirkwall—had he any descendants?

SHETLANDIC WRECKS.—If any reader of “Old-Lore” could give additional information with regard to the following wrecks I would be much obliged:—

(1) 1728. A Dutch East India ship lost on the island of West Burra. . . . All the specie on board was recovered by Robert Hunter of Lunna and Captain Jacob Roe.

(2) 1729. “Curaçoa,” a Dutch 64-gun warship, lost at Haroldswick, Unst. Greater part of crew saved.

(3) 1730. March 12th. “St. Helena,” a Greenland whaler, outward-bound from Hamburg. Ship went ashore in the Wick of Skaw, Unst, and only six men of the crew were saved.—R. STUART BRUCE, 28, Castle Terrace, Edinburgh.

STUMPIE’S REEL.—There was a man in Unst, a fisherman, and a fiddler, whose ekename was Stumpie. One

day, while steering his boat, at the haaf, he composed a tune which became popular, and which has been known ever since as Stumpie's Reel. It was first printed in one of Neil Gow's collections of Scots music. In a footnote in that book the compiler, Neil Gow, says he got the tune from Mrs. Bruce of Sumburgh. I have forgot Stumpie's real name. Can any reader inform me?—JUNDA.

REPLIES.

JOHNSTON.—In answer to my query in *Miscellany*, p. 23, as to the parentage of James Johnston of Outbrecks, Stenness, and his brother, Richard Johnston, merchant, Stromness, I have ascertained that James Jonstoun (*signs* Ja. Johnstoune), son to Robert Jonstoun in Birsay, witnessed a Disposition by Edward Omond to his youngest son, Patrick Omond, of lands of Onstoun, Stenness. The Disposition is written and witnessed at Onstoun, which is near to Outbrecks, March 16th, 1677. The Charter, of same date, is also witnessed by Ja: Johnstoune. The Sasine following the Charter does not enumerate all the witnesses, and omits the name of James Johnstoune. In an Obligation of same date by Patrick Omond to his brothers Magnus and George, Jaes. Jonstoun (*signs* Ja: Johnstone) also acts as witness, and is described as servitor to the notary public, Patrick Murray.

The above shows the importance of consulting the Charter, as the Sasine does not always enumerate all the witnesses.

Can anyone identify Robert Johnston in Birsay, who was apparently alive in 1677? The Omond Charters are in the possession of Provost Andrew Wylie, Stromness.—A. W. JOHNSTON.

MURRAY.—In reply to A. S. M., *Miscellany*, p. 90, Lord Edward Murray married before 12th March, 1690, Katherine, daughter of John Skene of Hallyards, widow of Sir James Anstruther of Airdrie and Major Andrew

Whyte, Lt. Governor of Edinburgh Castle. She died in February, 1743. There does not appear to be any confusion in the statements, as the ladies were different persons and married different men.—F. J. G.

OMAN.—We are much indebted to Mr. E. Magnússon for his explanations *re* the name Ogmund, and for giving us the forms from which Oman has probably been derived. I do not know of any older spellings of the name in Shetland than the present ones of Omond, and Omand. The name is generally pronounced Oman, accent on the *ō*. The last vowel is somewhat indistinct, and might be written *a*, *e*, *o*, or *u*. I believe in Orkney the name is nowadays generally spelt Oman.—MAGNUS.

SHETLAND GENEALOGIES.—In reply to A. S. M., in *Miscellany*, p. 91, I believe the book of Shetland Genealogies, mentioned in 1830, is probably the same as one which was in the possession of the late Mr. G. H. B. Hay of Hayfield, and is probably now in the possession of Mrs. Hay. The pedigrees are quite unreliable.—F. J. G.

STOUK.—In reply to the Rev. A. Goodfellow, in *Miscellany*, p. 120 (No. 4, October, 1907), *stouk* is the old Norse word *stúka*, a sleeve, and also applied to the parts of a church which are built out from the main building, such as a chapel, and commonly containing an altar. There are two such *stúkúr* built on the east side of the transepts of St. Magnus' Cathedral, Kirkwall.—HERMAN M. SCHIRMIR, Norwegian Society of Antiquaries, Christiania, Norway.

In reply to the Rev. A. Goodfellow, *stouk* is mentioned in 1609. As in that year Patrick, Earl of Orkney, grants discharge to Malcolm Sinclair of Quendale "of the sowme of sevin angill nobillis for the dewties of St. Petires Stouk in Fair Iyle." Mr. Gilbert Goudie says it is not clear whether it was a small revenue or tithing or a collecting box for donations in the name of St. Peter.—ISLESMAN.

AN ADVENTURE WITH THE PRESS GANG IN SHETLAND IN 1805.

THE Press-gang at this time was composed entirely of natives of the islands, under the command of Lieutenants Malcolmson and Keith Scott. The former was reared at Sandness, and, having entered the navy at an early age, rose gradually to the position he then occupied. The other was a son of Sheriff Walter Scott, of Lerwick. Among the subordinates were Malcolm Smith of Seater, Sandwick, and Henry Mainland of Garthsbanks.

After a ball on Christmas night in my house at Scarvister, in Sandsting Parish, I travelled fully twenty miles to play the fiddle to a wedding party near the manse of Tingwall.

Mainland having assured me, under oath of secrecy, that the house would be surrounded in the course of the evening, and myself and the other young men seized, I mentioned the information I had got to the company when the festivities were half through. All who were eligible at once quitted the house, with the exception of myself and another youth, who consented to remain on being shown a place of concealment deemed safe in case of surprise by the press-men. It was a hole dug beneath the floor in the sleeping apartment of the house, and capable of holding two persons, being boarded over above as a covering by a large chest.

Watch was set of the non-seafaring men who remained, two and two alternately ; but, a shower coming on about eleven o'clock, the watchmen came inside while the relieving couple were preparing to take their place. All at once the door burst open, and Lieutenant Scott appeared. Mr. Turnbull, the minister of Tingwall parish,

who with others was dancing on the floor, at once stopped the Lieutenant short with an extra hearty salutation, "How are you, Mr. Scott, how are you?" and a furious shaking of the hand. I instantly pushed the fiddle on which I was playing into the hand of a cripple lad from Scalloway who was next me, and made for the window on the opposite side of the barn where the dancing was going on. But when I came there some of the press-gang were standing before it. I was thus forced to rush back, and pushed my way through a small window into the byre, in the hope of getting out at its door, but I found that it also was guarded by members of the gang. Without loss of a moment's time I hastened past the cattle to the other gable of the byre, and got one foot upon a stone in the corner and the other upon the back of a cow, with the view of making my escape by a hole in the roof. Here again I was foiled, however, for my first glance through the hole revealed my pursuers already on the roof before me.

In trying to get back I heard a bustle outside the door, and at the same moment a woman whispered in the hole through which I had slipped into the byre, "For God's sake come dis wye." The bustle at the door, as I afterwards learned, was occasioned by a woman stepping forward at the outside, and, seizing the candle from the officer who was entering, extinguished the light with her foot.

In obedience to the whispered direction, I crept through the hole or small window; and, just as I got into the house again, I observed the heels of the man who had been in lighting the candle the second time passing out at the door. His search in the byre was now, of course, a fruitless one, and I made my way to the sleeping apartment at the opposite end of the main house, where the place of concealment was, striking down every *kollie* as I passed, and leaving the dancing room in darkness.

I got through the door (which I had marked), and

was soon squeezed down into the hole, in which the bridegroom and the "best man" already lay concealed.

The officer, persuaded that some men must be about the house, returned with a lighted candle, and a renewed and thorough search was made. In the room where we lay confined "not a stone was left unturned," the very lid of the chest above us being lifted and its contents examined.

Disappointed and wrathful, the Lieutenant and men retired, and we remained in the hole till daylight, changing one above the two alternately, and did not leave till we were satisfied the way was entirely clear.

While the Press-gang continued in Shetland I had occasion frequently to retire for concealment to a hole in Glisigio, near my native place in Sandsting, and also in Hoepool, near Spiggie, in Dunrosness.

Taken down verbatim from Sinclair Thomson,
Baptist Missionary in Shetland, on 17th
September, 1862.

GILBERT GOUDIE.

NOTE.—There may be some uncertainty as to the precise date of the above incident, given as in 1805, possibly due, partly, to the complication of the old style, then prevalent in the islands. The clergyman referred to, Mr. Turnbull, was not admitted minister of Tingwall until 11th September, 1806, previous to which time he was assistant in the neighbouring parish of Bressay. But he might have been present at such an entertainment at any time after 1800, when he was licensed by the Presbytery of Lerwick. He was previously tutor in the family of Mr. Scott, of Scalloway, close by.

Thomson's birthplace, written above in the present map form as "Scarvister," was pronounced by himself *Scarbaster*. This seems more accurate, the equivalent of "Scrabster" in Caithness, the *Skarabolstaðr* of the "Orkneyinga Saga."—G. G.



THE SELKIE WIFE.

THE following variant of the seal wife story was told to the writer by his grandfather many years ago in Deerness, Orkney:—

Ae mornin' i' the Vore a yong chiel hed taen a lük tae the banks tae see if there hed been a waar brak i' the night. Am no sayin' he wisna mebbe comin' hame frae the lasses for, heth,¹ I've häard say they deudna stir ower sune i' the morning i' thae days.

Weel, it wis chüst daebrak, and the sun was lipping abune the scrüf² o' the waater. When he got under the banks, he was clean befundered tae hear a soond o' fiddles playin' and folk dancin' and laffin' and caerryin' on a hümlin' rumpis.

"Bi me sa'l," sed he tae himsel, "this is no verra canny, bit I'll be bünd I'll see what a' this deil's murgis³ is."

So he craaled roond a muckle nose o' the craig and, heth, there afore his een was men and women, a' mither nakit dancin' on a smüith beenkie⁴ o' rock, and sittin' on the cungles⁵ three o' them playin' awa' like guid eens. Weel, by me sa'l, the hair o' 'im stüd on end wi' gluff, but wi' the soond o' the fiddles and the skreeks o' the weemen, and bonnie weemen they was (be's teel) he heartened up a bit and scravelled⁶ roond intae a cunye,⁷ whaur he could sit and see a' that was gaan on.

Noo, he saw whit wis afit, for lying on the stanes was mair than a score o' selkie skins 'at they hed slippit aff tae get a better waald⁸ o' their legs i' the dance.

¹ Faith, an oath.

² Turmoil.

³ Round seaworn boulders.

⁴ Hole or nook.

⁵ Surface.

⁶ A smooth ledge of rock.

⁷ Crawled with difficulty, scrambled.

⁸ Wield.

Weel, this wis like the feenish o' the pairty, for the sun wis gettin' a bit o' strent; the fiddlers stoppit, and they a' meed for their selkie claes an' slippit intae them and awa' doon the beach. Wan selkie skin wis lyin' bae itsel', so, heth, the cheelder grippit a had o' it and roond his corner as häard as he could had on.

When he teuk a lük roond, they were a' i' the sea but ee lass and sheu was lüking in ilka cunyie for her skin and pifferin'¹ wi' fright. Weel, tae mak a short teel o' it, sheu cam runnin' roond the nose o' the craig and wi' that he grippit a had o' her and bi me sa'l, sheu wis a ermfu'. Sheu grat and sheu skreekit oot i' the selkie tong, for am teelin' thee the selkies can spaek tae ane anither as weel as thee or me.

Sheu wis a bonnie lass, and he t'ought it a peety to let her gang, so he tuik her hame wi' him and a gey fashus job it wis for he cairried her a' the wey and she nearly cloored² the lugs aff o' him i' her madrum.

I niver häard what his auld mither said but am tink-ing sheu här'ly kent what tae sae whan the cheelder steppit in wi' a nakit lass under ee erm and a selkie skin under the ither.

Weel, sheu grat and cairried on peetifu' for twa tree weeks and than got kind o' paecifeed. She sune got intae the way o' wearing claes and it was ooncanny hoo sune sheu pickit up wur wey o' spaekin'.

An bi me sa'l, sheu wis a strappin' lass and there wisna her aamal,³ auld folks said, i' the cuntry. Naiteral eneugh, the yong cheelder cudna keep his een aff o' her and, heth, sheu deudna seem to bear him ony bad will for sheu could niver bear tae hae him oot o' her sight. His auld mither, teu, teuk an unco fancy tae her, and was never tired o' reüsin⁴ her. At de lang and de len't,

¹ Quivering.

² Scratched.

³ Equal. Cf. O.N. *jafni*, also spelt *jamni*, an equal, match. The Orkney word *yamalt*, Shetland, *yammel*, of equal age, is possibly O.N. *jafn* or *jamn-aldri*, one of the same age.—A. W. J.

⁴ Extolling.

they got mairried and for manny a day they lived taegither as man and wife.

Her man wis aye carefu' tae ha' her auld selkie skin lockit awa' i' a muckle sea-kist and he never let her ken whaur the key o't wis, for sheu telt him hersel' it wis better tae keep her selkie days oot o' her mind.

Weel, as am teelin' thee, they lived taegither and had bairns and braw bonnie bairns teü and noo am comin' tae the end o' me teel and aboot time, am tinkin'.

Ane day, aboot the Lammas time I daur say, the man geed aff tae the toon and teuk the bairns wi' him for a bit o' a ootin, for langsyne it wisna every day folk geed tae the toon, and, heth, plenty o' them was grouwn men and weemen afore they hed buits on their feet.

Am no sheur hoo it cam aboot but the wife was mebbe lüking tro' some auld drawers or press or somethin' o' that kind i' the chaumer and onywey sheu lippeden on ¹ the key o' the big kist. Mebbe sheu wantid tae feel the auld selkie skin on her back again, for am no tinkin' sheu wanted tae leave her man and bairns; bit onny-way, when her peür man cam back, there was no wife; the kist was open, the skin wasna to be fund and a' her claes were lying aboot i' a raffle.

Weel, he niver saw her again, but I've häard say that when her bairns teuk a walk o' a summer's evenin' alangst the banks a muckle selkie wad sweem fornen'st them closs in amang the reed waar and sometimes they wad hear her greetin' like tae brak her hert.

J. A. POTTINGER.

¹ *Lippeden on*, accidentally came across.

SOME OLD-TIME SHETLANDIC WRECKS.

III.

IN the year 1688, November or December, a vessel, probably English or Scottish, was wrecked on the island of Unst, and the crew were saved. The exact locality of this wreck does not appear to be known, and its interest lies principally in the upsetting of the tradition current in Shetland that the people there were not aware of the landing of the Prince of Orange at Torbay until May, 1689.

From a letter, of date 15th December, 1688, Andrew Mouat of Garth writes to George Cheyne of Esslemont :

. . . . I can give no account of news, save only that the skipper of the wreckt ship confirms the former report of the Prince of Orange his landing in England with an considerable number of men, bot upon what pretence I cannot condishend.¹

On 19th March, 1730, the ship "Saint Lucus," of Moss in Norway, 190 tons, was totally wrecked on a "baa" (or sunken rock) near the east end of the Holm of Sandwick, island of Whalsay. The vessel was bound for London, and was laden with deals, iron, tar, and other goods; the cargo being partly salvaged.

Peter Fitty, the master, was the only man saved, and the ship's cat was also brought ashore in safety. The "baa" on which the vessel was lost is to this day called "Fitty's Baa," from the name of the master.

The "Saint Lucus" was driven on the Holm of Sandwick by a southerly gale, and quickly went to pieces.

The inhabitants of Whalsay, Nesting, and Lunnasting plundered the vessel, and carried off goods to the

¹ Symbister Papers.

value of £500 sterling. Proclamation was made on the Holm of Sandwick that the people were to restore all goods taken from the wreck on pain of being proceeded against.

The "best anker and cable" were taken for behoof of the Vice-Admiral Depute of Zetland, then Magnus Henderson of Gardie.

The following is a copy of petition *re* this wreck:—

Petition by George Fenton, writter in Lerwick, unto the much Honoured Magnus Henderson of Gardie, Vice Admirall Depute of Zetland.

The petition and representation of George Fenton, writter in Lerwick, pror. fiscale to the Admirall Court of Zetland.

Humbly sheweth :

That upon the nineteenth day of March instant one thousand seven hundred and thirty years there was forced and driven ashoar by violence and stress of weather upon the Air or Strand of Sandwick, Clett or other parts about the south end of the iseland of Whalsay the ship named Saint Lucas burdened one hundred and ninety tuns or thereabouts belonging to Muss in Norraway bound for London whereof Pither Fitty the only person saved of the said ship's crew alloadges himself mester and who by his tossing at sea and other illusage and bad dyot before the said totall wrack hath contracted such sickness as incapacitates him to look after the cargoe of the said ship which ship by the foresaids tompestousnness of storm and forceing ashoar as said is, is intirely stranded wracked and incapable to goe to sea. By all which misfortunes there are all or most pairt of the inhabitants of Whalsay and other plaices next adjacent thireto who have taken the advantage and repaired to the saids wrack with there boats or otherwayes and have away taken and carried off considerable quantities of saids wracks consisting of tress dealls iron tar and other goods to the value of five hundred pound sterling money and that without the least regard to the Admirall's interest as grantie of the Crown nor to the owners of the saids goods in case any should appear in due time and instruct a legall title thereto in the terms of the Act of Parliamt.

May it therefore please your lordship to cause convene before you such persons as shall be given in by the petitioner in list to any lawfull day and place you lordship shall think fitt for takeing tryall of the above representation to the end the saids persons may be punished as accords and a stop put to such abusses in time comeing, after your lordships shall find and declare the ship wrackt as above which is hereby humbly prayed by

Your Los. humble sert.

GEO. FENTON.

On the back of this petition are two docquets, as follows:—

(1) Sandwick in Whalsay the twenty third day of March one thousand seven hundred and thirty years the above petition given in and publickly read *Curia legitima affirmata* upon the Holm of Clett where the ship lys intirely wracked.

The judge haveing seriously considered the above petition and representation finds and declares the said ship to be wract and incapable to goe to sea as above represented and decerns the best anker and cable to pertain and belong to the pror fiscall of Court for behoove of the Admirall as use is and [commands?] the salvers and intrometters with the said wrack to bring in exact inventarys to ths Admirall Court at Lerwick betwixt and the twenty eight instant under the pain of being proceeded against as intrometters and appoints the Clerk of Court to issue out placads. Directed Officers of Court to make intimation thereof to all concerned.

Mag. Henderson.

(2) Lerwick, the said 28th March 1730. The above interlige [interlocutor] read the present who in respect of a letter directed to the judge upon the from Rob. Bruce of Simbester promising compearance by himself and concerned in salvage agt. Wednesday noon being the ffirst of Appril as by his said missive dated 27th instant appears propr ffrom certification contained in the above interliyr and craving the action continued till the said ffirst of Aprile which the judge sustains and ordains placads to be put upon the Tol booth door of Lerwick to the end the inhabitants of the said town being salvers may advise.

Mag. Henderson.

Note.—Several words in the above docquet are illegible.
The petition is in my possession.

R. STUART BRUCE.



ORKNEY BONFIRES.

IN pagan times four great festivals were religiously observed, Yule, Beltane, Midsummer, and Hallowmas. Two of these represent great turning points in the course of the Sun-god in the heavens. At Yule he made the most momentous turn of his yearly course. The powers of the enemy, of death, were holding all plant-life in their icy grip, but the Sun-god had now given promise of a return to more genial warmth, life, and renewed existence. Beltane is derived from *Bel*, the sun, and *tein*, fire. Midsummer was the time of the summer solstice, when the sun reached the zenith of his glory and poured down warmth and life-giving energy. Hallowmas was the time when the ingathering of the crops ended, and when witches and warlocks paced abroad, and the grim king of darkness sought to gain the ascendancy over life and sunshine. These four were the outstanding feasts in pagan times. Bonfires were the common expression of the people on these feast days; but what was the meaning of these fire festivals? Probably the best answer is to quote from Dr. Frazer's *Golden Bough* :—

The best general explanation of these European fire festivals is that they are sun-charms, or magical ceremonies, intended to ensure a proper supply of sunshine for men, animals, and plants. Considering the cold and cloudy climate of Europe, these festivals are believed to exert a great influence on the weather and vegetation. By counteracting the sun's progress through the heavens you really help the luminary to pursue his celestial journey with punctuality and despatch. They are sun charms.

Besides these four main festivals there were minor ones, Candlemas, Lammas, &c.

It is now established beyond controversy that these pagan feast-days were adopted by Christians as a means of reconciling the converts of Christianity to their new religious environments; Christmas, St. John's, St. Peter's, etc., are instances. Sir James Marwick gives instances of

most towns in Scotland holding their fairs on these pagan sun-worship days. In Orkney we find the same custom, *e.g.*, at St. Andrews the three market days were Candlemas, Midsummer, and Hallowmas.

The symbolic bonfires of Orkney have now, I understand, been entirely given up. Fifty years ago most parishes had them; to-day not one. In Orkney we have sun-temples, sun-fires, sun alignments, and sun myths in considerable numbers.

The only bonfires in Orkney during the memory of the oldest inhabitants were the Johnsmas bonfires. There is just a faint tradition of Lammas ones being observed also. A fortnight before Johnsmas, all the boys and girls of the district from 12 to 16 years of age, set out after sunset for the hill. In Birsay it meant a distance of two miles. Heather, the longest we could get, was pulled, bound, thrown on our backs and home we came with our burdens about 1 or 2 o'clock in the morning. This was repeated for five or six nights till we had filled a little house in the neighbourhood, which was the measure of our responsibilities. Johnsmas fire was all the juvenile talk for days previous. On Johnsmas eve, cattle, horses, sheep and geese, were all housed earlier than usual, say 8 o'clock. It seems stranger still how our elders became imbued with a similar spirit. Fathers, of solemn religious disposition, who on ordinary occasions would never dream of going abed till the youngsters were asleep, relaxed their moral code for the ten days previous, and actually assisted to make farm stock secure earlier on that eve. Two of the strongest youths yoked themselves in a wheelbarrow, tandem fashion, and set off to the nearest peat-stack. From each peat-stack they were allowed as much as could be built on the barrow, and so on from the five or six farms in the neighbourhood—well nigh two cart-loads. These were built in a heap, and a bone sometimes inserted. In Birsay, if I remember correctly, the bone was thrown in when the fire was at its height. The site was generally a prominence used

from time immemorial, *e.g.*, the brow of Greeny Hill in Birsay. Each member provided himself repeatedly with a large bunch of heather, ignited it, ran up, down and round the face of the hill. Twenty or more doing this caused an animated hill-side in the “grimlings” of midnight. By this time some young men who considered they had outgrown these superstitions joined in making the hill-side aglow with fiery halos. Leaping through the flames was indulged in, especially towards morning. Thus it continued till 2 o'clock, when daylight had fairly set in, and all sought their beds, ignorant of the meaning of the whole show, and quite oblivious as to what Johnsmas eve meant; religious clothes donned for the time being, found somewhere in the wardrobes of the Past, aired once a year, and now for ever cast aside; religious ceremonies now unreal and shadowy through the mists of successive generations.

Such were the bonfires I have taken part in. Probably the only other bonfires in Birsay were at Hundland and Ravey Hill. There the bone was generally built in before the fire was lit. In Orphir there were at least two—one at Yarpa and the other above Clestrain. Mr. R. Flett, Orphir, informs me that the Clestrain one ceased about fifty years ago. Some old people told him a bone was thrown in the fire, others said no. One old woman told him the bone represented the bones of the man who killed the martyr, but could not say who the martyr was. There were two in Stenness—at Bigswell and Germiston; in Stromness, one above Uttertown; in Rousay, several; one near Hullion, one north of Westness, and others on the opposite side of the island. In Evie, Mr. Mainland, Kirkwall, informs me that several could be seen from Hullion, Rousay. In Westray there were at least two—one in Skelwick and another above Pierowall. As peats and heather were not abundant, old boats and other combustibles were used. In Firth there were three—one above Moan, one in Kingsdale, and a third above the shore near the boundary between Firth and Rendale.

I find no trace of any in Deerness, and there were few, if any, in the east Mainland and Stronsay. At Moan, Firth, the bonfire was associated with more of the superstitious element. Mr. J. Firth, Finstown, says:—

The fire had to be lit with a live coal from a neighbouring house. When the flames were at their height, young people jumped through them. Maidens who wished a peep into the future pulled from the fire a half burnt peat. This was carried carefully home, dipped in the 'strang bing' and laid above the 'odder stone,' or lintel, till next morning when it was taken down with much fear and trembling, broken across, and the colour of the fibry material still holding between the two parts, decided the colour of her future husband's hair. A bone was thrown in whenever one could be readily got. The farmer who wished a bountiful crop the ensuing harvest had a large heathery torch made, probably a number of them, lit one at the Johnsmas fire and never allowed it to get extinguished till the whole circumference of the field had been traversed. This ceremony was gone through with the utmost gravity. The two fires on the north-side of Firth could be easily seen by those taking part in each, and probably two miles apart. At a certain previously understood hour, a party from each set out with several heather torches, one of which was lit at each fire and carried along hurriedly till both parties met. This successfully accomplished meant that the farming interests of the two communities would meet with prosperity.

Mr. Thos. Brown, Hundland, Birsay, gathered the following information for me. Old Mrs. Johnston, Grindlay, told him that in her young days she was staying at Aikerness, and How, Evie, when every community with a goodly number of young folks had a bonfire. The custom there only differed from that at other bonfires in the practice of fixing bundles of heather on forks to chase one another with and circle round the fire. Another old woman he consulted was Betsy Craigie, Myre, who had at one time lived in Rousay, and remembered those taking part in the proceedings (elderly people, no doubt) carrying the blazing heather into the byres among the cattle, and where possible around them to make them thrive. This was especially done with the cows in calf, to prevent them "casting" calf, and round those not in calf to ensure procreation. Mrs. Jean Spence told him that a bone was regularly put in the one on Ravey Hill.

The following interesting account of a bonfire near Hobbister, Orphir, was given me by Mrs. R. Reid, Kirkwall.

The old woman in whose vernacular she tells the story is 88 years of age, and when asked if she remembered bonfires, replied: "Div I no, I dae that, and many a night's sleep I hae wanted owre them, but that's lang, lang ago, an' I dinna think they fash wi' the like o' that things noo. A lock o' his youngsters, aye and bairns frae the schule, for at least a munt afore the time used tae gather as muckle heather as we could carry hame till near the time tae make the bonfire; then a lock o' peerie aens—aye an' big aens tae—wad gather frae the hooses roond aboot, taking their heather wi them, an' big the heather for lichting on the highest knowe near at hand, but clear o' hooses ye ken for fair o' settan fire tae the thaik. Thus we had a big lowe an' we keepit it gaun till the morning an' we thowt it was rale fun, only wi' the want o' darkness it did not shaw sae bright. After it was burned a whiley the boys used tae tak some o' the lichted coves an' run about till they slocket, whan they cam back and played the same plunkie tae the end o' the bonfire, aye, aye, bit it was grand fun. I niver heard any reason for the rinnin round wi' the lichted coves, but I wadna winder if this wis nae sumthin tae dae aboot keepin aff fairies for the year, bit I never even heard my grandmither say anyting about that but I ken there was some auld bit o' superstition in it, folk wis verra ignorant in auld times, an that was what kept sa many fairies an' ghosts about."

Mr. J. W. Cursiter assures me there were no periodic bonfires in Kirkwall. The others, special not periodic rejoicings, were often on an elaborate scale. One in front of the Cathedral scorched the paint and woodwork of the windows of the houses in Broad Street, when the authorities ordered that they should take place in future at Gallowha, where a long pole, with flag emblematic of the occasion, formed the centre of the fire.

We have most definite recognition of both Beltane and Midsummer sun-worship at the circles and Maeshow of Stenness. The Beltane alignment of Barnstone, Watchstone and centre of large circle pointing clearly to sunset during the Beltane feast, is undoubted; and again the alignment of the Barnstone, through the centre of Maeshow, with walls of passage and sides of chamber parallel to this and pointing to the rising sun on Midsummer morn, is evidence of a prehistoric period when both feasts were religiously observed. These feasts were not for the youths of the community to make sport at, but genuine sun-charms, where sacrifices were offered, and very probably the bone thrown into the Orkney bonfires towards morning was symbolic of the animal sacrifices offered to the Sun-god as he neared the horizon, heralded by the glorious halo of dawn. Sir Norman Lockyer, in *Stonehenge, and other British Stone Circles*, suggests that Beltane sun-worship was an older form than Midsummer; the finer workmanship of Maeshow, and the mechanical skill and careful orientation would certainly give prominence to this theory.

Herbs, we are told, were gathered on Midsummer eve for medicinal purposes and for enchantments. At the trial of Elspeth Reoch, in Orkney, March, 1616, it appeared that she cured diseases by an herb "melefour," probably *achilea millefolium*, or milfoil, and subsequently used in Orkney as a tea plant, which she pulled between her midfinger and thumb whilst resting on her right knee. Sir J. G. Dalryell says:—

St. John's Day was the season principally devoted to the collection of plants to be used for medicinal or occult purposes. This was in all probability derived from the heathen times, and solar worship.

One family of plants has received the name St. John's wort from the sacred uses to which it was applied at this time. Only one of them is found in Orkney, viz., *hypericum pulcrum*. It is one of our prettiest flowers, is in full bloom at the summer solstice, and is a plant that

lends itself to decorative purposes owing to its long, wiry, tough stem and beautiful flowers. The leaves have pellucid dots which enhance its appearance. In another species *h. perforatum* the pellucid dots are more numerous and exude a fragrant, liquid oil, owing to which it is found suitable for sanctuary purposes, as holy grass. This one is not now found north of Sutherland.

The traditions regarding midsummer worship at the Standing Stones although suitable need not be repeated; the betrothals and divorces; the cures of the insane, imbecile, deformed and bewitched. Nor need we tell again the stories of aching heads laid believingly in the hole of Odin. The older people relate how their fathers often saw fires burning on Maeshow, in the circles, and on Brownie, a slope near the larger circle, which disappeared when approached; a kind of reflex evidence getting lost amid the mists of tradition.

There are traces of other fires at one time fairly common in Orkney, but of which even tradition is silent. In most parishes there are knowes which are covered with ashes and burnt stones, broken by the action of fire till they resemble road metal. They are generally near water or wells. In most cases they bear no names, probably the Norse conquerors did not know their purpose and allowed the names to drop. In Birsay, near a very powerful spring called Furs-a-Kelda, or well with a force of water, there are two knowes close together called the Knowes of Furs-a-Kelda. One not far from the smaller circle near the Harray Loch is called Kok-na-Cumming; I think there is a pair here also. Near Seater, Deerness, on the south slope of the Wart, there is one called Koffer Howe. No ordinary bonfires could have broken hard, igneous, sea-beach stones in fragments as we find them. In most parishes there is one or more, but there is no tradition left to help us. Fairies dance on them and dwell in them. Whether they are the sites of the need-fires of the district it is hard to say.

We have already seen that a good crop was secured if

the field had been surrounded deasil, or with the sun, by fire lit at the bonfire; diseased subjects went round the Stenness circles three times in like manner. In Lewis the house occupied by an invalid was so surrounded. In North Ronaldsay the people "circled round in fairy dance" a perforated standing stone nine or ten feet in height, on the first day of the year, with no music but their own singing, and when practicable by moonlight.¹ At Huntiscarth, Harray, in 1858, a cist was found covered by a large flat stone. On either side of the cist two upright stones, placed at right angles to the stones forming its sides, and 5 or 6 ft. high, rose nearly to the surface of the earthen mound covering the whole. In one corner lay four discs of thin gold. The discs are about 3 inches in diameter, pierced by a circular hole in the centre, and ornamented.² Dr. Karl Blind describes a disc of the same material in the *Saga Book*, Vol. III., found in a moor in the Danish island of Zeeland, but of larger dimensions. The disc was placed in a small chariot which he has no doubt was representative of the sun riding in his chariot through the heavens, in his daily course. Circles, semicircles, fire circles, circles made sunwise and sun discs are all enduring evidence of the same psychological phenomenon.

MAGNUS SPENCE.

¹ *Old Statistical Account*, vol. vii., p. 489.

² *Anderson's Pagan Times (Bronze Age)*, p. 67.

OBITUARY.

ROBERT SMITH, Cumliewick, Sandwick Parish, Shetland.—Original subscriber. Died June 17th, 1907, in the Edinburgh Royal Infirmary, after an illness of three months, at the early age of 32. His early ambition was to be a ship-master, and since schooldays he has been chiefly connected with the sea, partly as a fisherman, and partly as a skipper of a packet boat trading between Sandwick and Lerwick. Of a quiet and obliging disposition, added to which was a true Christian character, and love for his native islands and their history, he did not fail to influence those with whom he came in contact. He was the son of the late Mr. John Smith, Cumliewick, whose ancestors for centuries have belonged to Sandwick. He is survived by his mother, brothers, and sisters. One of his brothers is at present attending classes at the University of Edinburgh, while another is teacher of the Public School, Burra Isle.—T. M.

MISS PHILOTHEA FEA SPENCE.—Died August 19th, 1907, in Edinburgh, where she had recently gone for a change. She was sister of the late Miss Catherine Stafford Spence, and the youngest daughter of the late Dr. William Spence of Greenfield, Lerwick. She had been the lifelong companion of her sister, and had accompanied her in all her travels. She had a great affection for her native town and islands. Her body was brought to Lerwick, and interred in the family burying-ground there. The only survivor of the family is Mrs. Spence, of Hammar, who resides in New Zealand.—T. M.

NOTES ON BOOKS.

Beowulf, an old English Epic (the earliest epic of the Germanic race), translated into modern English prose by Wentworth Huyshe, with notes and illustrations. London, Routledge, 1907. 2s. 6d. net.

We read through the earlier sections of the Introduction with much interest. The story of the manuscript and its

editors is lucidly set forth; the date and authorship of *Beowulf* are discussed with a fulness which, to the non-specialist reader, appears convincing. Of the illustrations the author says that they represent "authentic examples of the antiquities of the period preserved in Northern museums"; and this is true to a certain extent, but there is nothing to warn the reader when the examples shown are of a very different date, as the "gift-stool" (p. 8), and the dragon (p. 151). Coming to the last section of the Introduction, with its attempt to enhance the praise of *Beowulf* by denunciations of the *Edda* and *Völsunga Saga*, we can only regret that the author has allowed himself to quote Professor Harrison, of Washington and Lee University, instead of reading the *Edda* once more to see whether it is really "tragedy in crude lumps . . . unredeemed by a single trait of human beauty or love"; nor can we accept his criticism of *Völsunga* as compared with the Arthurian cycle. "Who can read that famous saga," he asks, "without a feeling of disgust at its brutal savagery—a hotch-potch of murder, parricide, fratricide, incest, treachery—a long-drawn tale of vile thoughts and bloody deeds[?]" But what then of Æschylus and Shakspeare, not to speak of *Morte d'Arthur*, before its "fumigation" by Tennyson? It is difficult, no doubt, to translate *Beowulf* with dignity and ease combined, but we can imagine a rendering which would avoid phrases like "Beloved Beowulf, do thy best all round"; or, "He lived rightly; never slew his hearth-companions when drunk"; or again, "I will to the sea to keep ward against hostile bands."

The Young Norseman. By William Brighty Rands.
Illustrated by M. M. Williams. London, David
Nutt, 1907. 3s. 6d.

The Young Norseman is really a young Iclander, to whose home arrive a shipwrecked pair of Provençals. The Iclander knows enough Romance, and the Provençal

damsel knows enough Old Norse to hold animated conversation, in which many of the Edda myths are retold, with "fumigation." The Young Norseman does not fall in love with the Rosebud of Provence, but they have plenty of pleasant adventures together with a minimum of sentimentality. It is all quite prettily done, and the writing is bright and unaffected. The book—it is an old favourite—is well worth republication; but when the next edition is in hand little blunders in proper names and details must be corrected before the book becomes, as the editor claims, an "introduction to the world of Asgard and the gods, and of the heroes who, believing in Odin and Thor, sailed every sea from the Arctic Ocean to the Euxine."

Note.—This work originally came out in a periodical, and this is its first appearance in book form.

Popular Tales from the Norse. By Sir George Webbe Dasent. With an Introductory Essay on the Origin and Diffusion of Popular Tales. (The London Library.) London, George Routledge [1907]. 2s. 6d. net.

The appearance of a reprint of this standard work serves to remind us of the length of time which has elapsed since its first appearance, for it has now ceased to be copyright. In spite of this it still holds its place in the first rank of similar collections, and even in the introductory essay there is little or nothing the author would wish to change in the light of the last forty years' study of folklore, though his field of illustration would no doubt be considerably widened. It is a work which should never be allowed to go out of print, and will be invaluable to the collectors employed on the survey of Orkney and Shetland place-names, for the supplementary work of recording folklore, etc., which should prove not the least valuable part of their work. The cheap price at which it is issued places it within the reach of everyone interested in the North.

Zetland Family Histories. Compiled from Public Records and other Sources. By Francis J. Grant, W.S., *Rothsay Herald*. Lerwick, T. and J. Manson, 1907. 12s. 6d. net.

Mr. Grant has already, by several important publications, established his reputation as *facile princeps* in the domain of Scottish heraldry and genealogy, and the present work fully sustains that reputation. In 1893 the first edition appeared under the title of "The County Families of the Zetland Islands," but the new edition, extended and improved, as now issued, bears the more accurate and comprehensive, if less ambitious, title of "Zetland Family Histories," and rightly embraces most of the families in the islands who can lay claim to pedigrees of acknowledged antiquity. The prevalence to nearly our own day of the patronymic system, inherited from Norway, under which family surnames underwent a change in each generation, has rendered the continued identification of some families almost an impossibility, and but for this circumstance some more local families of considerable antiquity might have been added to the contents of the volume. It is an old saying that the tree of genealogy is the only tree that flourishes in Shetland, and the truth of this is exemplified by the fact that no less than 85 families in the islands have been traced to a more or less remote ancestry, and their ramifications in this country and abroad have been elaborated in this work with the utmost care and accuracy by the laborious researches of Mr. Grant. Several of the families show pedigrees of 10, 12, or 15 generations, but the Nicolsons of Lochend, represented by Sir Arthur Thomas Bennet Robert Nicolson, Bart., head the list with a line of 22 Nicolsons in succession. Few of the families reach back to the purely Norse period, that is, prior to 1468, when the islands were pawned to the Scottish King, the older families starting for the most part about, or shortly after, the Reformation.

The "Zetland Family Histories" is not to be regarded as merely a series of bare genealogical lists. At many points interesting historical reminiscences are introduced, and local customs are incidentally illustrated in a way that adds point and picturesqueness to otherwise formal details. The rise and fall of some families, and the total disappearance of others who were at one time numerous and flourishing, are unavoidable features in works of this kind; and one of the most pathetic of such instances is that of Sir Charles William Hookaday Dick, representative of the old Shetland family of the Dicks of Frackafield, who was reduced to such poverty that for long he supported himself by acting as custodian of the Brighton Museum, and in extreme old age (he died in 1876) was unable to do more than to keep the sticks and umbrellas of visitors at the door of the gallery.

Upon the whole the work before us, which is issued from a local press, is one that reflects great credit upon all concerned in its production, and it must remain for all time the indispensable authority upon the *personnel* of Shetland life and history. If occasional errors or misprints may be detected, the wonder is not that such do occur, but that they are so few in a work containing thousands of dates and names and references, involving special liability to accidents of the kind.—G. G.

The Church in Orkney. By John Smith. Kirkwall, W. R. Mackintosh, 1907. 4s. net.

This handsome volume and valuable work consists of 360 pages, and is divided into four parts. (1) An Introduction, which reveals the grasp of Church history possessed by the author, and shows the different phases of the Church as she passed from Roman Catholicism to Protestantism at the Reformation period, with the various struggles in her Presbyterian and Episcopal forms until

the State Church seemed to be firmly established in its Presbyterian government at the Revolution settlement in 1688. Here we have glimpses of the deplorable social and moral conditions of the people in 1612—"The lower classes were sunk in poverty, ignorance, and superstition." It did not matter much to them "what form of Church government they were under. It was all one to them whether it was Papacy, Prelacy, or Presbytery." (2) The Annals of all the ministers of the county belonging to the Church of Scotland from 1560 downwards to the present. This is the main part of the volume, and fills nearly 300 pages. We have here Dr. Scott's "Fasti," enlarged and modernized, and made suitable for the reading public. Of course, the "Fasti" goes almost no further than the Disruption in 1843. Mr. Smith, by filling up the remaining blank years, has performed a good service to those interested in the completed annals of the various parishes. (3) The third part is occupied with the history of the Secession Church, as seen in the Anti-Burghers and United Presbyterians. It dates from 1767 down to the present, and fills only 34 pages, but here the main facts or particulars are given about each minister and congregation. (4) The last few pages are taken up with a short account of the Succession of the Episcopal Church, from the pen of Rev. J. B. Craven, the rector of St. Olaf's, Kirkwall.

The author has performed his work in a workmanlike manner, and deserves the approbation of all Church annalists. Of course, from the title—"Church in Orkney"—some might expect to find a treatise on the Celtic, Norse, and Roman Churches, but pre-Reformation history is not given. Also the title might suggest to others a reference to all the various Churches, or branches of the Church, in these islands, but the author has strictly kept himself to the Established, Secession, and Episcopal Churches. We may add that a good index enhances the value of the book.

London-Scottish Associations Year Book, 1907-08. Compiled and published by John Douglas, Douglas Wharf, Putney, London, 1907. 6d.

This useful year-book is indispensable to every patriotic Scot in London. It contains:—A Scottish Calendar of Events, list of Scottish representative Peers and M.P.'s, Presbyterian Churches, the Scottish Festival Service, Obituary Notice of David Hepburn, St. Andrew's Festival of the Royal Scottish Corporation, an account of the London Morayshire Club, Comunn Pbiobairean Lunnain, with notes on the bagpipes (illustrated), cottage industries in the Hebrides, lists of Scottish Societies, list of meetings, 1907-8.

The Scots' Peerage, founded on Wood's Edition of Sir Robert Douglas's Peerage of Scotland, containing an Historical and Genealogical Account of the Nobility of that Kingdom. Edited by Sir James Balfour Paul, Lord Lyon King of Arms. Edinburgh, David Douglas. Vols. I. to IV., 1904-7, in progress, expected to be completed in 8 vols., royal 8vo. Price, 25s. net each to subscribers for the complete book. Single vols. may be had at 30s. net.

It is now 143 years since Sir Robert Douglas, of Glenbervie, published his great work on the Peerage of Scotland, which after a lapse of 50 years was re-issued in two large folio volumes by Mr. John Philip Wood. This later edition, which has until now been the recognized authority on the noble families of Scotland, was written at a time previous to the issue of the splendid series of Record volumes issued by the Government, the publications of the Spalding, Bannatyne, Maitland, Scottish History and Scottish Record Societies, and the Reports of the Historical Manuscript Commission, which have so facilitated the labours of the antiquary and genealogist.

It was long an ardent aspiration of his, the editor informs us, to prepare a new edition of this monumental work, but financial difficulties seemed to bar the way until the bequest of the late Sir William Fraser for the printing of works elucidating the history of Scotland enabled his Trustees to finance the work. The first four volumes, which have now been issued, cover the titles from Abercorn to Hyndford, being those included in the first volume of Wood's edition. It is expected that three more volumes will finish the work, while a supplemental volume will be devoted to a General Index. The scheme of the work has been that the memoir of each family has been entrusted to an expert. There are fourteen contributors to Volume I., twenty-two to Vol. II., fourteen to Vol. III., and fifteen to Vol. IV., the whole being edited by Lyon, and the Rev. John Anderson, Curator of the Historical Department of H.M. General Register House, while contributing many of the most valuable accounts, has filled the position of sub-editor.

The result of their labours has been the production of a Peerage of Scotland, which will be the standing authority on the subject for many years to come. The work, though said to be founded on that of Douglas and Wood, is practically an entirely new one. Almost every fact is directly vouched for by a reference to records, which allows readers to refer to original authorities for fuller information if they so desire.

Of titles which will interest the northern reader, that of Bellenden of Broughton recalls the cadet family thereof which settled at Stenness in Orkney, and whose descendants are still there to be found. Other families are Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell, created Duke of Orkney by Queen Mary, the ancient Earls of Caithness (from the pen of the Rev. J. B. Craven), the Stewart Earls of Caithness, the Crichton Earls of Caithness, and the Sinclair Earls of Caithness, the last by the Rev. A. T. Grant, Wemyss Castle, who had access to many ancient

documents relating to Caithness and Orkney preserved among the papers formerly belonging to the Earl of Rosslyn. At page 571, Vol. II., under the title Colville of Culross, mention is made of the murder at the Noup of Nesting, in Shetland, of Mr. Harry Colville, parson of Orphir, son of Robert Colville, of Cleish, on 9th July, 1596.

In Vol. III. occurs Sutherland Lord Duffus, a title now dormant, owing to the loss of the patent, whose terms cannot now be ascertained, and that of King, Lord Eythin, a family connected with Warbister in Hoy, which afterwards settled in Sweden.

A leading feature of the work are the beautiful full-page drawings of the arms of the peerages still extant, which have been prepared by Mr. Graham Johnston, Herald Painter to the Lyon Court.

Diplomatarium Færoense: Føroyskt Fodnbrævasavn: við søguligun rannsóknun av Jakob Jakobsen. Tórshavn, Jacobsen, and Copenhagen, Prior, 1907. Part I.

This collection of documents relating to the history of the Færoes, edited with introductory studies by Dr. Jakob Jakobsen, will be of interest to Orkney and Shetland antiquaries. In the first place, a series of deeds here printed, two of which were executed in Shetland in 1405, give many particulars of Shetland folk mentioned in Mr. Gilbert Goudie's *Antiquities of Shetland* (p. 194), and closely connected with the Færoes. Secondly, in "Seyðabrævið" (the sheep-letter), a code of laws for the island farmers, dated 1298, we have materials for comparison with old pastoral customs and rights among similar Norse peoples in Britain. Moreover, in Dr. Jakobsen's notes on the language and place-names of the documents there is much information bearing on the "Norn," which underwent a parallel development from Old Norse. His chapters on early monu-

ments, ecclesiastical history and records contribute fuller knowledge than is generally accessible of these islands, too little known as they are; and it need not be said that Dr. Jakobsen's name guarantees thorough workmanship. The introduction and the translations of the documents are in Færoese, which any reader with a smattering of Icelandic will find little difficulty in deciphering; and students of the "Norn" will be glad to possess this helpful repertory of a kindred tongue.—W. G. C.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

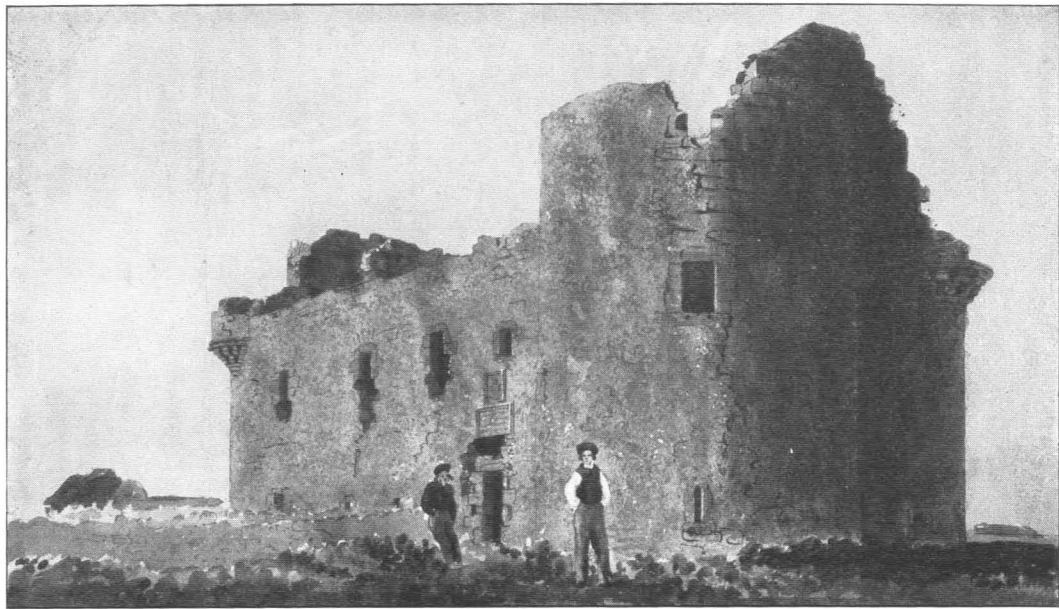
All communications must bear the name and address of sender.

Each note, query or reply must be written on one side only of a separate slip of paper, with the writer's name and address, or initials, as desired to be printed.

Editorial communications, advertisements, orders for back numbers, etc., must be addressed to A. W. JOHNSTON, 59, Oakley Street, Chelsea, London, S.W.

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MUNESS CASTLE, UNST, SHETLAND.

*From the original water colour drawing by the late Sir Henry Dryden, Bt., July 20th, 1855.
In the possession of A. W. Johnston.*

Orkney and Shetland Miscellany

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NOTES.

SUBSCRIBERS.—The following Subscribers have been added to the list since the January number was printed.

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GIFTS.—The Hon. Sir Robert Stout, Chief Justice, Wellington, New Zealand, sends £1 to the Old-lore funds.

CHARMS USED IN THE ISLAND OF SANDAY.—[The following notice of five charms formerly used in the Island of Sanday is taken from one of the Note Books of the late George Petrie, now in the Library of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. It is there said to be "from a manuscript book belonging to the late Dr. Wood, Kirkwall," which is undated, but seems to have been compiled about the year 1836.]

Among the superstitious practices still observed in the Island of Sanday is the use of charms for the cure of certain diseases:—

I.—WORMY LINES.

Toothache in that island is called The Worm, from a notion the country people have that this painful affection is caused by a worm in the tooth, or jawbone. For the cure of this disease the following charm, called Wormy Lines, is written on a slip of paper, which must be sewed into some part of the dress of the person affected, and must be carried about with him as long as the paper lasts:—

Peter sat on a marble stone weeping,
Christ came past and said what ails thee Peter?
O my Lord, my God! my tooth doth ache!
Arise O Peter, go thy way—thy tooth shall ache no more.

II.—STEMMING BLOOD.

For suppressing hemorrhage, as spitting of blood, bleeding from the nose, bleeding from a wound, etc., the following charm is solemnly repeated, once, twice, or oftener, according to the urgency of the case, by some old man or woman accounted more sagacious than their neighbours. It is not to be repeated aloud, nor in presence of anyone except the patient:—

Three Virgins came across Jordan Land,
Each with a bloody knife in her hand ;
Stem blood, stem ! setherly stand !
Bloody nose (or mouth, etc.) in God's name mend !

III.—TELLING OUT THE SWEY.

The pain occasioned by a burn or scald is here called *swey*, or *sweying*. To relieve the *swey* this charm is employed, and must also be repeated by a wise one in private:—

A dead wife out of the grave arose,
And thro' the sea she swimmèd ;
Through the water wade to the cradle,
God save the bairn burnt sair !
Het fire cool soon in God's name !

IV.—FORESPOKEN WATER.

When a healthy child suddenly becomes sickly, and no one can account for the change, the child is said to have been *Forespoken*; or when a grown-up person becomes hypochondriac, or affected with nervous complaints, he is said to be *Forespoken*. Someone has perhaps said "He's a bonny bairn," or "Thou'r lookin' weel the day," but they have spoken with an *ill tongue*; they have neglected to add "God saif the Bairn!" or, "Safe be thou." For the cure of this malady the following charm is repeated over water which the patient must drink of, or be washed with. There is a certain weed put into the water during the repetition of the charm. I have not been able to ascertain what plant

this is—it is called by the country people “forespoken grass”:—

Father, Son, Holy Ghost!
 Bitten sall they be
 Wha haif bitten thee;
 Care to their near vein
 Until thou get'st thy health again!
 Mend thou in God's name.

Cattle and horses may also be “forespoken,” and the same charm is applied towards their cure.

V.—THE WRISTING THREAD.

The following charm is used for the cure of sprains. A linen thread is tied around the injured part, after the solemn repetition of the charm. The thread is called the *wristing thread*, from the wrist or ankle being the parts to which it is most commonly applied; but perhaps it is *wresting* and not *wristing thread*, from “wrest,” a twist or sprain. During the time of repeating this charm nine knots must be tied on the thread at regular distances, and to insure success the charm should be repeated at every knot:—

Our Saviour rade,
 His foal's foot slade,
 Our Saviour lichtit down;
 Sinew to sinew, vein to vein,
 Joint to joint, and bane to bane;
 Mend thou in God's name!

—J. A.

ELF.—Elves or fairies were supposed to dwell in the hills or moors, and presumed to exercise a certain influence on human affairs, and capable of petty depredations.

Peter Smith, a farmer in Tankerness, Orkney, having found a small splinter of wood at a particular spot, immediately concluded that this was an elf-arrow. This was considered a precious relic. It was esteemed so sacred that he kept it locked up in his chest, so that no one was allowed to look on it or handle it. Having this in his keeping he supposed himself secure against

the attacks of these small foes. This bit of wood was found hidden away with some other relics in his trunk after his death.

He also believed that there was great luck connected with shrew-mice. Whenever one was caught it was tied up by the tail to the rape or cord stretching across the room above the fireplace for the purpose of drying fish. There might have been some half-dozen or more of these mice hanging there, dried hard as bones.

In olden times flint arrow-heads were found in various places in Orkney. The people, not knowing their origin, concluded that they were elf-arrows. If a beast happened to be ill, or die, it was said to have been shot with one of these arrows, although there was no wound to be seen. If at any time one of these weapons was found, it was supposed to have missed the mark or fallen short. If anyone had any in their possession the warlocks had no power over his cattle or his person.

The finding of these arrows clearly shows that bows and arrows were used in ancient times in warfare or in the chase.—JOHN SMITH, Kirkwall.

MUNESS CASTLE.—The frontispiece is a view of Muness Castle in Unst, Shetland, built in 1598 by Laurence Bruce of Cultmalindie. Laurence Bruce was the eldest son of John Bruce of Cultmalindie, Perthshire, by his wife Euphame, daughter of Lord Elphinstone, the mother of Earl Robert Stewart, of Orkney, by King James V. Laurence Bruce went to Shetland in 1571, and was appointed underfowde by his half-brother, Lord Robert Stewart. He died in August, 1617.

PRESS-GANG.—About 1812, Edward Groundwater, a farmer in Tankerness, was captured by the press-gang and sent aboard a man-of-war. After cruising about for some time without meeting the enemy the frigate put into a port in the south of England. An opportunity occurring, Edward made his escape. Here he was a stranger and without a friend to help him, 700

miles from his native place. What was he to do? Being a young man, and resourceful, he immediately directed his course inland, and it being the harvest time, to allay suspicion, he purchased a reaping hook and hired himself out as a harvest-hand, by which he got means to carry him through. Passing on northward with his coat on his shoulder and the hook under his arm, avoiding the high road and taking bypaths, sleeping under the shelter of hay stacks or in barns, he found himself at the ferries. Here he was suspected and brought before the Court in Tain, and there examined as to what he was, where he had come from, and where he was going. He told them he was a farmer from Ireland, going to Wick to see a brother of his, who lived there, and that his name was Edward Smith. In the absence of proof to the contrary he was allowed to proceed on his journey. About the middle of October he found himself on the shore of the Pentland Firth. But how was he to get to Orkney? He could not venture to cross with the mail, the risk was too great of being seized again. He lingered about the coast a few days, after which he persuaded some fishermen to ferry him across. He landed at Orphir with sixpence in his pocket, in rags and almost barefoot. He found refuge in Stromness with a friend, and hid there until peace came. He was sought after even where he was concealed.—JOHN SMITH, Kirkwall.

RECORD COLLECTION.—It is proposed to form a Collection of Orkney and Shetland Records, to be deposited for preservation in the General Register House, Edinburgh. The Register of Orkney Sasines begins on September 1st, 1617, and that of Shetland on July 1st, 1623, so that all sasines previous to these dates can only be consulted in private collections, and should they get destroyed, the information contained in them is for ever lost. It would be of the greatest importance if all such papers could be collected and permanently preserved in Edinburgh.

Will the owners of all such records, of any kind, there-

fore send them by registered letter-post to A. W. Johnston, 59, Oakley Street, Chelsea, London, S.W., to be first noted for future publication in "Old-lore," and then deposited by him, on behalf of the donors, in the General Register House, Edinburgh. Sasines and Charters included in the Registers should also be sent, as they give additional information.

It is in the interests of the owners themselves to have their records permanently preserved, while at the same time placing the information they contain at the disposal of those requiring to make researches.

QUERIES.

THE CISTERCIAN ABBEY-LANDS OF ENHALLOW.—Dietrichson and Meyer locate the twelfth century monastery at Eyin Helga (Enhallow), and five miles distant is the well-known stone at Birsay, inscribed "S. BELLUS," which is by no means certainly continuous with the fragment found by Mr. A. W. Johnston, inscribed "MON." The lettering in the two fragments appears to be slightly different, so that something may yet be to seek as the beginning of the word before "BELLUS." Since the Cistercians were fond of calling their lands *Locus Bellus*, is it possible that the stone may have marked a boundary (as such stones often did), and that near or at Birsay there was a place once known as *Locus Bellus*, or *Bellus Locus*, *Beaulieu*, or *Bewley*? Are the abbey-lands known, or determinable from place-names or records?—W. G. C.

GOODLAD AND GARRIOCK.—Two friends ask me to insert a query as to the origins of the names Goodlad (also sometimes spelled Goodlat, Goodlet and Gudlad) and Garriock (also spelled Garrioch and Garrick). Goodlad is generally pronounced Goylat or Goalet in Shetland, and is chiefly confined to "The Ness," Tingwall and Burra. In the latter district it is particularly common. The name is a very old one in Shetland, and I think

does not occur in Orkney. I believe the late Mr. Arthur Lawrenson held the opinion it was derived from the old Norse names Gudlaug or Gudleik. Garriock appears to be an old name in Orkney, probably dating back at least to the middle of the sixteenth century. Some of the Shetland people of the name have a tradition their ancestor came from Orkney, and previous to that from Caithness, or at least had some connection with, or relatives in the latter place. I believe the name appears in Shetland early in the seventeenth century. At the present day it is found mostly in the west of Shetland, and at "The Ness," and is pronounced Gerrik or Gjerrik (with the Norwegian pronunciation of the "j"). The name Gerog (pronounced almost the same as the Shetland name) occurs in Germany, and also Guericke. Garrick occurs as a surname in England, and there is a place called Garrioch in Scotland. It has been suggested that the Orkney and Shetland name may be of Norse origin, derived from a place-name such as Gjer-vik. Surnames such as Gjerstad, Sandvik, etc., occur in Norway.—MAGNUS.

HENDERSON.—David Henderson, son of Donald Henderson, of Stemster, in Caithness, is said to have settled in Shetland about the year 1710. Is there any record of him or his descendants?—A. S. M.

MOODIES.—Confirmation of the following Moodie marriages is desired, and the names of the parties:—

Alexander Skeen, second son of the family of Halyards, married Christian Forbes, daughter of the Bishop of Caithness. The bishop had five daughters, one married first, Captain Moodie, brother to him that was shot, then Captain Buchanan and afterwards Fea of Whitehall, one to Hay of Bara, and one to Kennedy of Karmunx. Alexander Skeen had only one child, Christian, who married Captain John Murray.

Francis Murray, Commissary of Shetland, second son of (John) Murray of Pennyland, in Caithness, married Elizabeth Moodie, eldest sister of Captain Moodie aforesaid, by whom he had three daughters one of whom, Margaret, married Sir John Mitchell of Westshore, and an only son, Captain John Murray, married Christian Skeen aforesaid.

In Hossack's *Kirkwall*, p. 231, it is mentioned that Jacobina Forbes, daughter of Patrick Forbes, Bishop of Caithness, married Captain William Buchanan of Rusland in 1672, and then James Fea of Whitehall. In the *Diary of Thomas Brown* we find William Buchanan of Rusland died in 1679, and Jacobina Forbes married James Fea in 1700. It is also mentioned that John Moodie married Jacobina Forbes April 13, 1683. In *The Moodie Book*, p. 25, Captain James Moodie (who was shot) had a brother John, whose wife's name is not given. There is no mention of Elizabeth Moodie, sister of Captain James Moodie. Harrie Moodie, brother of Captain James Moodie, married Margaret Graham (daughter of John Graham of Breckness), widow of John Murray of Pennyland family. In *Zetland Family Histories* the name is not given of the mother (Elizabeth Moodie), of Margaret Murray, who married Sir John Mitchell.—A. W. JOHNSTON.

MOWBRAY.—Of what family was John Mowbray, who is mentioned in various documents from 1699 to 1721, and who owned property in Lerwick and Tingwall? He married Elizabeth Jeroms-daughter. Arthur Mowbray and Thomas Mowbray were contemporary with him and lived at Lerwick.—A. S. M.

ORKNEY SHIPWRECKS.—Among the shipwrecks in Orkney one stands out conspicuously, and is spoken about to the present day. It took place at North Ronaldsay in 1740. The ship had a valuable cargo of silks, cottons, prints, etc., which were washed ashore and lay strewn about the beach and mixed up with seaweed. People came from all parts, even from Caithness, to gather the spoil. Can anyone give information as to the name of the ship, nationality, where she came from, and where bound?—JOHN SMITH, Kirkwall.

ROMAN INVASION.—In Shapinsey there is a tradition that on the west side of the island one of Agricola's ships was wrecked on a rock called Keesocleat. For-

merly there was a house near called Grukilty, and near it was what is believed to be the remains of a fort erected by Agricola's men. The names given are phonetically spelt. No notice seems to have been taken of this tradition by such writers as Tudor, Barry or Hossack, although the last mentions the fact that Agricola discovered and annexed our islands. Can any of your readers give further information on the subject, or give the correct spelling of the names mentioned?—A. CRAB.

SINCLAIR OF STROME AND OMAND.—Does anyone know where the original of the undermentioned Charter is to be found. There are seventeenth and nineteenth century extracts from it. The Charter is dated at Kirkwall, August 29th, 1546, and is granted by Edward Sinclair of Strome to John Leith, son to William Leith and Margaret Cromertie, and the rest of the heirs of William and Margaret, viz., Edward Omand [*Homondson*, in the nineteenth century extract], Edey Leith, younger, Edey Leith, elder, brother and sisters to the said John Leith and lawfull heirs to the said Margaret Cromertie. The Charter conveys, to the Leiths, 6 merks land in Vnstane, Stenness, in exchange for 6 merks land in Campstowne, St. Andrews, and the half merk land which John Leith "outlowsit" from James Aikine.

It is mentioned that the 6 merks land in Unstane had been bought by Edward Sinclair from John Nisbit, the spoused son of the deceased William Nisbit and Margaret Irland, daughter and heir of deceased William Irland, apparently with the consent of Irving Courtson? [so in the nineteenth century extract, but blank left for name in the seventeenth century extract], spoused son and heir of deceased Christian or Kirston Irland, spoused daughter of said William Irland. There is also mentioned a Charter of alienation to Sinclair by Gilbert Irland and the other heirs of Irland. The witnesses are: William Sinclair, George Monypenny, Gilbert —, Sir James Steill [James Scollay, in seventeenth century extract], notary public.—A. W. JOHNSTON.

REPLIES.

JO. BEN.—With reference to the query of “J. A.” *re* “Jo. Ben,” I think there is every reason to believe, from the numerous writings recorded of John Bellenden, the translator of “Boece,” that he and “Jo. Ben” were one and the same person. He is not, however, the Bellenden who figured so prominently in the affairs of Archibald, sixth Earl of Angus. This was Sir John of Auchinoul, afterwards Lord Justice Clerk and supposed nephew to “Jo. Ben.”

John Bellenden, described as a Scottish poet of eminence, was born about the close of the fifteenth century. He studied at the University of St. Andrews, and afterwards at Paris, where he was made a doctor of the Sorbonne. He returned to Scotland during the minority of James V., and became established to that monarch as “Clerk of his Comptes.” Bellenden seems to have been a favourite with the King, at whose request he undertook the translation of Boece’s *History*, which had been published at Paris in 1526. He delivered a manuscript copy to the King in the summer of 1533, and about the same time he appears to have been engaged on a translation of Livy. As a reward for his labours he was appointed to the Archdeaconry of Moray, and was also made a Canon of Ross. Bellenden appears to have lived happily in the sunshine of Court favour during the reign of James V. The opposition, however, which he afterwards presented to the Reformation brought him into such odium that he retired from his country in disgust, and died at Rome in the year 1550.

His works included a topography of Scotland with a poetical proem ; Epistles of King James V. ; Poems, part of which only have been published, and a translation, with addition and corrections, of the “History of Chronicles of Scotland” from the Latin of Hector Boëthius (Edinb. 1536).

Many of his works are lost, among others a tract

on the Pythagoric letter, and a discourse upon Virtue and Pleasure, also most of his political pieces, of which he wrote many.

Sir John Bellenden of Auchinoul, eldest son of Thomas of Auchinoul, was, like his predecessors, attached to the House of Douglas, and it was he who protested in Parliament on behalf of Archibald, sixth Earl of Angus. According to D. Hume, in his history of the Douglas Family, pp. 258-9, "Sir John Ballandine, who was then one of their (the Douglass's) dependers, and afterwards Justice Clerk, did freely and courageously protest in open audience that nothing done there should be hurtful or prejudicial to the Earl," etc.

Sir John did not flee the country with the Douglasses.

Sir Patrick Bellenden of Stenness, the progenitor of the Orkney Bellendens, was brother to Sir John of Auchinoul.—JAMES MACWILLIAMS.

COPELAND.—Copeland is the ancient name for the middle part of West Cumberland, inland from the old harbours of Ravenglass and Ellenborough, from which trade was carried on in the early middle age with Ireland. As this trade was in the hands of Northmen, the name Copeland or Coupland probably represents the Norse *Kaupland* (compare *Kaupmannahöfn*, "Chapmen's haven," Copenhagen), and there was a mediæval family "de Copeland," which may account for the origin of this name in various parts of Britain.—W. G. C.

COUPLAND, COPELAND, COPLAND (pronounced Kooplán).—There are people of this name in Shetland, mostly, I think, in the district of North Maben. They are said to be descended from two Orkney men who came to Shetland. One a long time ago, and the other at a comparatively recent date. The descendants of the latter are said to be now extinct in Shetland, whilst those of the former still abound. Regarding the origin of the name I know nothing. It is probably from a place-name. Perhaps some readers of "Old-lore" can throw light

on the subject. It seems to be an old name in Orkney.—
MAGNUS.

ING.—In reply to the query of "Magna," in *Miscellany*, p. 167, the following may be of interest. Miss Charlotte Yonge, in her "History of Christian Names," ii., p. 246, writes:—

"Ing is far more interesting, but infinitely more inexplicable. At the end of a man's name it means his son; at the end of that of a place, an inhabitant; when *in* the name of a place, a meadow. It is tempting to suppose it related to *young*, but they are absolutely apart, and it probably conveys the sense of the clearness and brightness of the divinity.

"Ing, or Yngve, was looked on as the ancestor of the Swedish kings, who thence were called Ynglinga; and the history which rationalizes Odin is thence termed the Ynglinga Saga, as it makes Yngve his son, and deduces the line from him. Ing, the son of Tuisco, is, however, a far more universal forefather, being almost without a doubt the name-father of that great race that we have called Angeln, Anglo-Saxons, and English."

Is this last statement at all generally accepted?—
ERNEST A. ELLIOTT.

PARAGON.—In reply to "Shorey," in July number, the original "Paragon" was specially built for the Kirkwall and Leith trade, at Montrose, in 1845, by Messrs. John Brown and Sons. Her first master was Captain John Scott, afterwards of the s.s. "*Northman*."—G. T.

POTTINGER.—The origin of this name has always been a kind of puzzle. The name appears in Orkney Sasines, Nos. 8, 9, and 18, Part V., of "Old-lore," dates 1617 and 1618, so the name is no doubt over 300 years old in Orkney. The Shetland Pottingers claim that their ancestor came from Orkney, probably about the beginning of the eighteenth century. In Shetland the name is confined nearly altogether to Burra and Nesting, par-

ticularly to the first-named place. The name appears to be neither of Scottish nor of Norse origin, and I have heard a German origin ascribed to it. I have come across the name a few times in the United States and Canada spelled Pottenger, the bearers being natives of these countries. In one case the descent was unknown, and in another case the person claimed to be of English descent.—MAGNUS.

SHEEP-MARKS.—In answer to A. W. Johnston, *Miscellany*, p. 165, the *clout*, or, as it was more commonly called, the *euchkin*, was a patch of Orkney claith about three inches square sewn on to the wool of the hip. If on a black sheep the claith was white, and if on a white sheep the claith was black or dark grey.

The *button* on the face was made by pinching up the skin of both sides of the nose till it stood out about the size of a pea. It was then tied at the base with a little wool or woollen thread to prevent the skin returning to its natural position.—JOHN FIRTH.



COTTAGE CALLED HAM, AT THE LANDING PLACE, FOULA, SHETLAND.

*From the original water colour drawing by the late Sir Henry Dryden, Bt., August 3rd, 1855.
In the possession of A. W. Johnston.*

THE BALLAD OF HILDINA.

THIS "Foula Ballad," written down in 1774 by the Rev. George Low from the dictation of William Henry of Guttorm, or Guttern, in the island of Foula, is the principal relic of the old tongue called Norn (in Icelandic *Norrœna*). Low's manuscript, copied with some evident mistranscriptions from the notes he took while listening to a recital which he did not understand, from the lips of an old man to whom the full sense of the words was perhaps never familiar, has remained for a century and a quarter as a puzzle to Northern philologists. The general sense of it was no doubt correctly guessed by some of its later students, but much of the ballad appeared to be little better than a corrupt gibberish, until Professor Marius Hægstad published his edition (*Hildinakvædet*, Christiania, 1900), in which he cleared up the difficulties by learned comparison of the words with Norse, Færoese, etc., and by ingenious reconstruction of the rhyming stanzas. From his recension this rendering has been made, as an attempt to represent the ballad in readable English, without sacrificing rhyme and metre to literal translation, though at the same time without needless paraphrase. Additions to the text are marked with brackets, and asterisks denote the breaks in the story, though it is not certain that any stanzas are missing. In one or two places I have ventured to give a turn to the dialogue, not suggested by Prof. Hægstad's notes, but most of the stanzas are line for line, and almost word for word, in the ballad-metre of the original.

W. G. COLLINGWOOD.

NOTE.—A translation of Professor Marius Hægstad's *Hildinakvædet*, by G. F. Black, is in progress, and will be issued in the Old-lore Series when completed.—EDITORS.

The Ballad of Hildina.

HILDINA.

[The story opens in Norway.]

It was the Earl of Orkney
 Of his friend has taken rede
 Whereby to bring a maiden
 Forth of her perilous need—
 From the broch of glass to save her.

“Take ye the maid from the broch of glass,
 Dearest friend of mine,
 And aye as long as the world may stand
 Shall be told this deed of thine.”

* * * * * * *

Homeward comes the noble king
 From the hosting as he rides,
 But gone is the lady Hildina;
 At home her step-dame bides.

[The King of Norway speaks:]

“Whoever in all the land he be
 Is guilty of this thing,
 He shall be hanged on the highest tree
 That forth of root may spring!”

[The Queen's rede.]

“If the earl be come to Orkney,
 St. Magnus will keep him there,
 For his home is aye in Orkney;
 Then forth with thy hosting fare.”

Whereat he gave the queen a clout
 On the cheek in wrath and spite,
 And O but the tears went coursing
 Adown her cheek so white.

* * * * * * *

[The scene shifts to Orkney.]

In came the earl and fondled
 Hildina's cheek in glee:—
 “Now whether of us are ye fainer of—
 Your father, or of me?”

"I would sooner be fain of my father
And of aught that he can say,
So shall I and my lord have Orkney
To rule for many a day.

"Now shalt thou take thy horse in hand
And down to the water wend,
And greet my father fair and blithe;
He will gladly be thy friend."

[The Earl meets the King.]

Then said the king—for a many
Came riding to meet him there—
"What gift hast thou gotten to give me
In fee for my daughter fair?"

"Thirty marks of the gold so red
Is the gift that I will give;
Forbye for a son ye never shall lack
The while that I may live."

Now long stood the King before him,
And long on the earl looked he:—
"Well worth many a son art thou!
I would that it so might be!

"[When Orkney's earl and Norroway's king
In league together stand]
So need I fear no foe so'er
Might come within my land."

Then up and spoke Illugi—
The Lord to him give shame!—
"This fee shall ye take for Hildina
As I shall set the same:—

"Every horse and four-foot beast
That trails a load [in snow];
Every horse and four-foot beast
That in the plough can go."

Then stood the earl before him
And a long look on him cast:
"Never shall Orkney grant that gift
The while my life may last!"

* * * * *

*The Ballad of Hildina.**[The Earl goes back to Hildina.]*

"Now never more his troth and trust
 Will the king thy father yield;
 And sore I doubt me Illugi
 Would plough his neighbour's field."

And the lady Hildina answered him,
 As behind the door she sat:
 "Then meet him in the battle,
 And come what will of that!"

Forth goes the earl to the field of war
 And orders his array—
 The peaceful Orkney-beardies
 [For the fearsome battle-play].

[News of the battle brought to Hildina.]

"He is marching through thy fields, lady,
 [He has broken garth and wall,]
 And all his friends are following
 And thy noble folk they fall!"

Now lady Hildina hies her
 Forth to the field of strife:—
 "Father, for manhood's sake forbear,
 And stay this waste of life!"

Then up and spoke Illugi—
 The Lord God him requite!—
 "No sooner than the earl, thy love,
 Has fallen in the fight."

Then gat the earl his death-stroke—
 No hand could heal him more.
 He* cast his head into her arms,
 And O but her heart was sore!

* * * * * * *

[Illugi's boon.]

"Grant me to be the bridegroom,
 So bold have I followed thee;
 To the lady Hildina wed me now
 With gold and festing-fee."

* Illugi, though not named here in the original.

"Forbear thou then till the bairn be born,
And fair in swaddling dight;
Then shall lady Hildina order this
Even as she deemeth right."

* * * * *

On tapestry fair Hildina lay,
Her eye was dim with dole;
But while they dressed the bridal-feast
She brewed a drowsy bowl.

Then up and spoke Hildina,
And prayed her father dear:—
"Now grant me leave to fill the cup
And pour the wine so clear."

"And who but thou should fill the cup,
And pour for us the wine?
But think no more upon the earl,
That worthy lord of thine."

"Upon the earl, my worthy lord,
Though ever I should think,
Yet shall I bring my father dear
No draught of ill to drink."

Thus wrought the lady Hildina—
She bore the wine around,
And fast asleep her father lay,
With his folk upon the ground.

Thus wrought she:—her father and all his folk
Forth of the hall she bore,
Thereafter fire she laid alow
To the outermost gate of the door.

And nothing Illugi heeded,
And nought he knew at all,
Till the fire came in at the loft-house door,
On his silken sark so small.

Then up Illugi started,
[And the flame around was rife]:
"Thou dearest lady Hildina,
O grant me peace and life!"

“So much of good peace shalt thou behold,
[To ease thee in thy pain ;]
As thou thyself wouldst give my lord
Upon the battle-plain.

“Little ye recked though yonder I looked
On his body all bloodied o’er,
But cast his head into my arms,
And O but my heart was sore ! ”

And as she took both mould and stone
On the embers for to fling :—
“Never now shalt thou work thy evil will
On the daughter of a king ! ”

SOME OLD-TIME SHETLANDIC WRECKS.

IV.

ON December 18th-19th, 1737, the "Wendela," a full-rigged ship belonging to the "Danish Asiatick Company," Jörgen Mathiasen Foss, master, was wrecked either on the night of the 18th or early morning of the 19th December, at Heilinabretta, not far from Strand, in the island of Fetlar.

The ship was outward-bound for Tranquebar (22 miles north of Negapatam, India; a Danish possession from 1624-1807), and was a fairly "rich" vessel, as she had on board about £22,000 in specie and bars of silver. Of this amount some £18,000 were recovered.

The crew of the "Wendela" perished, and only two bodies were washed ashore.

It is curious to note that this ship was nearly three months out from Elsinore, and during all that time had been battling with gales in the North Sea, not having been in any harbour.

The hull of the "Wendela" was sold by Safron Lyckie (Factor for the Danish Asiatic Company) at Edinburgh, to a Mr. Dingwall, of Edinburgh, for behoof of Mr. William Irvine, for £200 sterling.

This wreck is known in Fetlar as the "Silver Ship," and old men in the island say that on very calm days some of the guns belonging to the ship have been seen lying on the bottom.

The following quaint story is told in connection with this wreck:—

A Fetlar man had been off at the "eela" (piltock fishing) shortly after the "Wendela" was lost, and on his return with his catch he drew his boat up in a gio (a creek or inlet with precipitous sides). Seeing, much to his delight, a large number of gold and silver coins

lying about, he quickly put into his "büdie" (a basket for carrying fish) as much of the money as he could carry away, and on reaching his home he poured the coins on the earthen floor, saying to his wife, "Sees du quhat am gotten? If it hadna been fir dee, I might'll 'a marrit a leddy!"¹

The "Memorial and Representation, Wm. Bruce of Urie annent the wreck of a Danish East India vessel (supposed to have stranded here, 'twixt the 18th and 19th of Dec., 1737, upon the east part of the island of Fetlar)" is, although rather long, sufficiently interesting for publication, and runs as follows:—

. . . . Jan. 3rd, 1738. By account then received of some wrack found upon the island of Unst, made me conjecture (by wind and weather past) that said vessel might have probably stranded upon the east part of Fetlar. In order for discovery thereof, I went thither with several more in company, where there were found two corps drove ashore to the northerd of that place where the wrack was afterwards discovered, but nothing more to my knowledge save some tatered pieces of canvas.

9th Curt. Proving pretty easy weather, wind westerly, made me anxious to view the shoar with a boat, and accordingly going thither, I took along with me two youlls and rowed along the shoar where we supposed such accidents might have happened, but no symptoms thereof to us appeared that day, only spyed two boys upon the rocks and being pretty near them had no reason to think of any such discovery they made (as we afterwards found) they giving us no signs as we might have expected. We therefore returned back pretty much fatigued.

The 11th Curt. Was snowing and a hard gale wind at north, when I had accounts by Robert Tait and Henry Reid that these boys we saw had found some money at that place, and that it was likely the vessel had there about wracked, which made me instantly order my boat thither going over land myself to the place in order to know the certainty of the matter.

The 12th Curt. In the morning (several boats in company) we were at the rock, but the breack, great, after sundry attempts made for landing with the utmost hazard. I got ashore with three or four more hands of our crew (no boat there more landed). We discovered several pieces loose money in the crevices of the rocks, but then unaccissible for the breack, but found one large silver bar (had been by these boys discovered overtly the day as reported, but not

¹ Symbister Papers: Midbrake Papers.

imagined for such). I took care to get safe into the boat, and with much hazard got off and ashorar.

Thereafter mad it my business to inquire what had been gained the first day of the discovery, which I advised to be brought to my house, and hastened there to advise the Admiral's deputs of the affair, withall giving express orders, that watch should be kept over the place and no person should offer to go on said ure or without warrant.

The 13th Curt. A hard gale and snow at N.W., so that a 6 oared boat could not cross over to Yell with any advices, to the Admiral but said Tait and Reed coming to my house brought with them some money : the account &c. thereof I have given to the Admiral ; but as I suspected more, of that subject in their custodies, advised them to bring it instantly to me which they complied in doing.

Saturday, 14th Curt. The boat got over sound to Yell with the accounts I had sent to Admiral's deputs, and finding Mr. Andrew Mitchell and Mr. Andrew Ross at Swarrasetter, they both returned same day with the boat, with them.

I went in company to the east side the island, and met Tait with several others in company with him on the road thither with the money he promised to deliver.

After that was assistant in searching the houses thereabouts, that could be suspected for any of said wrack. What was found was delivered to the Admirals. Returning here pretty late and not without good cause of fatigue.

Monday, 16, being windy weather at W. and W.N.W. an oppertunity offering that day several of my people went down upon the wrack, and, in company with Mr. William Irvine's people they recovered six bags of silver with one large broke bag, and two small whole bags of money coined, all delivered to the Admirals.

Most of the people I had ordered to watch the place, and look to the salving what they could, returned here this day with the purchase foresaid (at same time I desired the Admiral's deputs to continue or not the orders I had given for guarding the place or allowing what purchase might be made by these people, which was approved and homologated).

Tuesday the 17th Curt. These people upon the wreck espied a chest in the water, called to their assistance my brother (whom I had advised to repair hither, not only as confiding in him to inspect the people, but views of some benefit to himself). He proved a very great help, if I may say chief hand, in recovering said chest, which contained seven silver bars, and said day our people saved two bars more in company with it. Mr. Craigie's people with a considerable deal of coined money all delivered to the Admirals.

Wednesday, 18th Curt. That day was salved by my people and others, in company, two bars silver with three bags coined money, delivered the Admirals at Still House, and afterwards carried here.

The 19th weather proving very rough, what trifles I received that

day's labour was inconsiderable, and contained in my receipts to the Admirals being some pieces work.

The 20th there was salved by these people of mine, in company with Mr. Irvine's people, and my brother present also, three silver bars, considerable dale loose money, which was delivered as said to the Admirals.

The 21st was salved by some of my people with my brother in company, and others, one silver bar, and some small money, a particular account of which, as of all formerly mentioned, I refer to the Admiral's receipts, their journals kept upon the affair.

From this time to the 23rd February, what was salved by any of my people concerned me, was left in my hands and receipt thereof given to the Admiral's deput, including Tait's and Reed's money delivered me on the 13th past, amounting in all to 515 dollars, 911 pieces smaller value, and 9 quarter dollars. From February 23rd to the 20th June, recovered by myself and boat's crew on sea and shore, 580 dollars, 115 half-dollars and drittles, with 192 quarter-dollars and lesser pieces as also three bars silver, for which the Admiral deputs have my receipts, excepting the three bars delivered them as per receipt June 7th, 1738.

The aforesaid accounts are as exact as I am able to give of the matter, being but very seldom upon the place myself, and small domestic affairs as well as company resorting to the house, in duty I could not but attend them." ¹

¹ Urie Papers.

R. STUART BRUCE.

BULLIERS.

IT seems strange that Scott, when describing the Kirk-wall Lammas Market in his "Pirate," makes no mention of "bullies" or "bulliers," as those gentry were called by the last two or three generations. Certainly Scott does not describe Cleveland or his men as angels, yet even their actions do not rise to the level of the now traditional bulliers. It can scarcely be conceived that Orkney men were such cowards as to allow those brutes to behave in the manner they seem to have done. They apparently ruled the market with the proverbial rods of iron during the whole fortnight of its run, took what they wanted from the stalls without payment, struck whom they pleased without cause, and went away without being molested or punished in any way. Several old people, lately dead, who were born about the end of the eighteenth century, spoke of the "bulliers" with almost bated breath, and it would be interesting if any authentic information could be gathered regarding them. The following story, which was a common one thirty or forty years ago, regarding the overthrow of one of them, may interest Old-lore readers:—

Kens thu whar Patie's Pillar is awa ap dere api' the Broon Hill atween the Muckleraes (McIlliriach), an' Balfour. Aye, I'se wirran thu kens her. Am no been nar her noo dis minya day. Blaeu berries graeu tick aboot her teu whin I war a bairn gan tae da ald schule at Button. Weel, min, sheu waas bigged bi a ravsay chield dey caa'd Patie o' Roulan'. He waas Cloostan bi name, bit he bed i' Roulan' wi' 'is sister Babbo o' Roulan'. Am seur du're hard o' har an' har twal cats. Sheu hed names for da hale swad o' them. Eh, na, boy, min's du dem on? Am maistlins forgotten dem bit I aye mind on Murboys. Aye, buddoo, that's dem wha telt dee dem? Aye, min

bit am seur dee mither wadna minded o' har, cis Babbo wad a' been dade lang anouch afore sheu waas born. Eh, boy, tells du dat noo—da sam year? I kent me faither waas a ald chield whin sheu dee'd. Bi whit am hard 'im sayin', I aye toucht he wad a' been snorrin ap for terty onywey, bit dat wad a' made 'im aboot twa score, for is du kens he waas born aboot seeventeen hunder an eighty. Patie dee'd a guid while afore har t'o. Kens du whitten Cloostans they waar o'? Whit? Skithwhy? whit maks dee tink dat? Oh, boy, du'll be right for noo whin I tink api' 'id dere waar Cloostans intil 'id indeed afore the Girricks. Och, min, I see trou 'id noo an' dats been the wey dey bed i' Roulan' an' ald Jeanie Hey waas sae guid till Babbo. Yea, haith, dey wad a' been sib for wasna Jeanie a oy o' ald Billy o' Skithwhy? Thu'll no ken the sibbrit t'o, I'se wirran?

Weel, min, puir craters, fae whit am hard, am dootan they deudna hae dere deenin,¹ an' puir Patie haed tae bare hame 'is pates api' 'is ain back i' a casie or maybe a creel, guid kens fae wha, bit 'e bigged a lock o' stanes taegither i' a roo tae rest 'is casie api' is 'e cam doon wi' 'is burdens an' dats da wey 'ids caa'd Patie's Pillar. He buist a' bigged 'er weel cis sheu man hae steud noo I wad tink a guid bittick ower a hunder year.

Bit whit I waas gan tae tell dee waasna aboot dat ava. Hid waas aboot ae day 'at Patie gaed 'is waas tae the Kirkwas Market. Da Market waas a grand affair dan-a-days. Packies cam doon fae the Sooth wi' dere braas an' ae ting an' anither an' bed the hale rin o'd. Am telt 'at a' the Isles folk, Sooth an' Nort an' fae is far is Shetlan' cam tae the Market an' boucht anouch tae had dem fill de neist ane. Dan dey hed bony ongans wi' whit they caa'd Lammas brithers an' Lammas sisters, an' Lammas boolds. Hid's a puir market noo bi whit 'id waas dan. Bit min dere waasna ony polis i' Orkna dan an' fine deud dey ken dat i' the Sooth, cis whalps

¹ *Deenin*, necessities of life, *i.e.*, food.

dey caa'd bulliers cam tae the market an' jeust deud onyting dey set dere min's api'. Dey teuk whitiver dey liked an' peety help onyane 'at tried tae hinder them. Dey! dey wad challenge the hale market tae fight dem. Ane o' dat filloos waas api da market whin Patie o' Roulan' cam dere. He waas shaftin 'is nave an' daaran ane tae try an' lay a fing-er api' 'im. Patie steud ganan¹ at 'im a peerie meenit an' dan said he toucht 'e wad hae a try at 'im. A lock o' Deerness men staan about hans waar blide an' reused 'im for 'is pluck, an' speered 'im gin 'e wadna hae a air o' the Ald Kirk afore he begood. Haith, co' he, he wad be blide o' a air, an' toucht he wad be naine the waar o' 'd is he hed hed naithin a' day bit a tristoo o' kail afore lavan hame i' the mornin. I kinno foo muckle a tristoo waas, bit sal, boy, 'id waas a puir brakfast tae geong fourteen mile apin an' maybe hame again withoot anither bite. Da Deerness men gaed 'im a gless—am seur dey might hae gaen 'im tree onywey. I wad a' deun dat messel t'o guid kens I could ill affeurd 'id noo i' dis bad times. Whitna odds id wad mak gin folk lived noo is dey eused tae deu. Dere wis naine o' yer loaf or fleury binnocks whin I waas a grouan chield nor lang efter I hed groun me greuth—a air o' kirn milk an' male or a sap o' loots an' burstan, or a grain o' tin baremale porridge or boiled sooans waas a' we hed. Hid waas a' right i' hairst whin we got wir fills o' neu tattas an' sat herrin steeped, or maybe twa tree moogellins we caught wirsils, or maybe dried dogs fae Houton, min am rightly silted² for a bit o' dog, bit I can get nain o' dem noo. Boy, boy, dey wadna leuk at seckan fare noo, na, deed dey wadna. Wir peerie anes man hae dere bit o' mate fae Adam or the vans. Warls winder api' the vans—they'll ruin puir folk. An' the waages is sae heich, an' no a price i' onyting. I got bit ten pound wi' a half a croon back, an' a hale saxpence wirt o' bargain ale, for a bony bit o'

¹ *Ganan*, gazing open-mouthed.

² *Rightly silted*, a strong craving.

a twa yearald dudded whyoo¹ fae a Caitness drover at the Doonbi Market afore last. I so'od a' gotten aleeven plyless,² an' dan jeust tink api' 'id,—I man gae Slappy tree pound for da hairst; guid warl waas whin da wal o' hairst hans got bit aboot seeven shilling an' a stane o' male for dere hale hairsts wark an' cuttan wi' the heuk teu. Oh, whan, awhan, an' dey waar better folk dan nor noo, an' is weel farred.

Beesweel, is I waas tellan dee whin Patie hed pitten ower 'is gless, he fell tae the bullier an' gaed 'im seekena bruickin 'at 'e narlins dang da sowl oot o' 'im. Dat bullier deudna fash ony ither bothy dat day I can assure dee. Haith, Patie seun settled 'im an' 'id waas amas.

Bit I man tell dee a fun api' Patie for efter a' 's said an' deun he waas no jeust a' dere. Aince 'e waas ap i' the hill raisan 'is pates an' tae hain 'is shoon 'e cuist 'em o'm, an' whit tinks du deud da gappas deu wi' them. He led dem doon aside a lock o' sheep sae 'at 'e wad fin' dem again. Da sheep waas tae be 'is mark du sees. Bit alis, alis, whin da grimlins cam' an' he gaed tae geong hame feinty sheep nor shoon fand he, an' niver deud.

Na, I cinna tell dee whit Patie dee'd o'—maybe hassbiles.³ Oh, bit, boy, dats only me fun for I niver hard o' ane deean o' them, t'o guid kens dere sair anouch tae hae an' affilly yeucky.

J. T. SMITH LEASK.

¹ *Dudded whyoo*, a polled quey.

² *Plyless*, for the asking without haggling.

³ *Hassbiles*, "weeping" eczema on the head.

SHETLAND PHRASE AND IDIOM.

I.

THE dialect common to our Isles not thirty years ago is fast falling into disuse, certainly losing its force. Speech that was the fireside talk in my childhood is now seldom heard on any lips but the shrivelled, trembling ones of age. A young face will lighten tenderly if the words you speak are interspersed with those that recall a sweet memory of indulgent grandparents, but, as a rule, you will not hear much of the dialect nowadays, though the plaintive pronunciation can seldom be eradicated. No doubt it is natural that, as the life of the people changes, and the old Scandinavian usages, implements, food, etc., give place to those of modern days, we should assimilate more closely in speech with the Empire to which we belong; but I venture to think there are a few reasons why our ancient dialect should not perish. It contains many still necessary words for which there is no English equivalent, and many of its idioms are poetical and expressive, its phrases terse and cogent.

Above all, it casts light upon a past which holds much we cannot advantageously replace. All thoughtful persons now fully recognize the necessity for preserving such knowledge, though a time was (not so long ago) when tradition, legend, folk-lore, and local dialect were considered by learned men as pretty foolishness, only fit to adorn a nursery tale.

Now we recognize that when a dialect perishes there also dies much useful and interesting information; so one tries to preserve as much as one can of the precious store. This preserving is like saving autumn's withered leaves with which to nourish the plants of next spring. Nothing feeds plant-life better than the faded herbage

of former seasons. Nothing helps our culture more than the knowledge we cull from the past.

Would that some rousing voice could stir all classes in our Isles to the same sort of patriotism which has brought about the wonderful Keltic Renaissance.

The absence of a literature, and our isolated position, naturally caused the language of our forebears not only to grow out of the life they led, but for a long period to be restricted to it and the facts of surrounding nature. But this limitation does not seem to have made the dialect meagre in any sense. It is copious and full of fine images. For instance, "He rows ta nae sense at rows without a humlabaund." The "humlabaund" is the strap fixed to the thole-pin which keeps the oar in position. Anyone who has seen the square-hafted oar in a Shetland boat used without this band will recognize the aptness of this phrase applied to one who attempts to exercise his powers without the guidance of a restraining wisdom.

And what could be more vivid and poetical than this, "Dau aye keens hoo da laud cam ta be wilt idda daalamist"—The father (of the lass) always knows how it happens that the sweetheart gets lost in the slight mist. "Daalamist" hangs over only small portions of land, and it is absurd to think of a young man losing his way in it. But our boys are shy in their courting, and excuse themselves (for arriving without an ostensible errand) in some very lame manner.

"Du crugset him dat time." "To corner" would be a translation of "to crugset," but the Shetland word is more emphatic. When a tameless creature had to be caught, you brought all your powers to bear, you hemmed him in with ropes, you made him crug (crouch) with fear, and you left him no loophole of escape till he was secured with ropes.

"Just lek a pellit rül." Pells are rags. A "rül" is a young pony, and if the poor thing has been

wandering afield all winter, starved of cold and hunger, he becomes so weak he is unable to cast the dreggled bunches of his thick winter coat which hangs about him in forlorn "pells." A more wretched image of poverty can scarcely be imagined than a "pellit rül" dragging itself wearily along the roadside seeking in vain for a picking of green grass. So when a Shetlander speaks compassionately, or contemptuously, of some unfortunate being as looking like a "pellit rül" we have a graphic picture of that individual's miserable appearance.

"Never ye be ower cast doon. Dey'll come back ta der auld haglet." This is how anxious parents were comforted when their children had gone astray, or left home for what they fondly believed was a better place. "Hagmets" were the boundaries of enclosed and fertile pastures. They were composed of slight "roogues" (piles) of stones at first, but later were replaced by stone fences or "felly-deks" (turf walls). The "haglet" was the enclosure, and we may be sure these bits of land were the choice bits from the neighbouring "scattalds." They are not to be confused with the "gerts." Ponies reared within certain "hagmets" were sure to return to the neighbourhood if they had chanced to stray, or had been removed to some other locality. So certain was this that if a pony was missing his owner always sought for him by his "calf-ground," his "haglet."

Then when a wastrel came back to Fatherland it was said, "He's steered hame be da moder-dy." A "dy" is a wave, and the "moder-dy" (mother-wave) is an undercurrent which it was believed always set landwards, no matter how the wind or tide might be going. By this, it is affirmed, the Shetland fishermen knew how to find home when they possessed no compass. The beauty of this phrase applied to the return of a prodigal is obvious.

"Gude grant 'at da sun be upo his butterday." That is the reverse of a benediction, though it sounds like

one, and requires explanation. On a certain day each summer the tenants had to carry to their laird a fixed quantity of butter—so many pounds weight for each merk of land. It was a tax particularly distasteful to the housewives. Sunshine has the effect of making butter taste badly, so that if the sun shone hotly on the laird's butterday the value of his butter was seriously diminished.

“Da fighting wife 'ill close her mooth
When da Yule Star is idda sooth.”

As the Pole star is everlastingly faithful to its place in the north, that couplet is intended to show that a scolding woman can never be cured of her besetting sin. And if you wished to declare your determination not to do a certain thing you said, “I'll do *that* when the Yule star is in the south.”

“To dreng” is to draw tightly on a rope, bringing it near to the breaking point. So a poor woman almost crushed by the sin of son or husband, said pathetically, “He's drenging me hertstrings.”

I once overheard two men talking of the way in which they had “done” an unscrupulous and wealthy landlord, who was a hard man and very corpulent. The one said, “I got me flesh-penny-wirts oot o' him ageen,” and the other replied, “What's da lek o' him fur bit ta flinch.” To “flinch” is to slice the blubber off a whale. “Flesh-penny-werts” is money earned with life-blood, or exorbitant charges screwed out of poor toiling mortals. These phrases so applied struck me as being most humorously apt and picturesque.

The husk of corn was known as “heul,” and when a man said, “Me hert is oot o' heul,” he meant that a hope, or wish, nestling in his heart had been torn from its covert, and had left an empty husk behind.

“Inbu da fremmd” was the sacred duty of the hearty old Udallers. And, truth to tell, though their descendants say it in English, they are as ready as their fathers

to "welcome the stranger." "Inbu" has grown into meaning "bow in," and as hand-shaking was not in vogue lang-syne, the visitor was bowed in with words of welcome and respectful genuflexions. Obviously our use of *inbu* is derived from O.N. *innbjóða*, to invite to an entertainment.

To "lay on an awmous" dates from patriarchal times, and long before the Bible was in their hands it was the Norse custom to "vow a vow." So in Shetland, if one fervently desired something that seemed unlikely to be realized he laid on an awmous on some "puir body"—that is, he pledged himself to himself to give a certain gift to a certain object of charity if the "Powers that be" granted his desire. This is a custom still in vogue, though now done with sceptical smiles, and no belief in its efficacy.

In olden times the ropes by which animals were tethered were made of horse-hair, and were very liable to twist into inextricable knots; so they were divided into two or three lengths connected by "swills." A "swill" is a bit of wood about six inches long and three broad, rounded at the ends, and with two holes in it. Through those holes the knotted ends of rope were passed, and the "swill" had the curious effect of preventing the ropes from tangling. Now for the application of this. It happened that I once got into a warm argument with Mr. Irvine, of Midbrake, whose interest in ancient Shetland lore was as keen as my own. We were on board ship. There was an empty deck-stool between us, and over it we were bending in energetic argument. At an opportune moment the Rev. John Spence (who knows his native dialect in all its most subtle shades of expression) slipped into the vacant seat that divided the disputants, and said, "So, bairns, I'se be da swill atween you twa." Our twists and knots were smoothed out directly, and the swill kept our tether straight for the rest of the voyage. I have since then wished that other clergymen would

regard themselves as the "swill" of the parish tether.

"Never trust ta him. He's just a slip-me-laubur." The word labour is used to denote *any* employment, pleasure as well as duty. We use "me" in preference to "his" or "it" in such a case which gives emphasis to the term, so that "slip-me-laubur" becomes a more forcible phrase than "sliding out of his work, or duty."¹

When one was urged to seize the right opportunity he was counselled with one pithy word, "Tak da snaar." The "snaar" is the slack between ebb and tide, the loop of cord between things balanced. So to take the "snaar" meant to judge precisely when to act, and do so wisely without loss of time.

When a man was "stone-broke" he was referred to as a "stane-loppen image," one bruised and disfigured by a fall of stones, yet not beyond the possibility of renewal.

Terms of endearment were not lavishly used, but the few employed were strong. "Hits me ain sukkraburd," murmured the doting mother to her little one, and granny would add, "wir dawtie peerie oy" (our dearest little grandchild). "Sukkraburd" comes directly from the Norse, and means "sugar bairn, sweet child." "Yart o' mine yarta," "heart of my heart," the lover whispered in his lass's ear, and she would bashfully reply, "had de villyaroo, boy," "stop your foolish talk," but it was said so sweetly that of course he went on "du is a kurry ting if iver een wiz," for which compliment he would perhaps be told that he was "fiarmin" (flattering and caressing) for his own ends. "Kurry" means neat,

¹ *Slip-ma-lawber*, a lazy, careless worker, Banffshire (see Jamieson). In "The Brownie of Blednoch," by William Nicholson, occurs the following:—

"Puir slipmalabors! ye hae little wit!
Is't na hallowmass now, and ta crap out yet?"
Sae she silenced them a' wi' a stamp o' her fit;
"Sit yer wa's down, Aiken-drum!"

This is what the auld guidwife said (1) to the wenches, (2) to the Brownie, when he offered to work for the whole establishment.—A.W.J.

pretty, active—three virtues which recommend themselves to our folk.

A Shetland man's maledictions were not usually of an extremely severe type. "Da Muckle Maister sit in onder de" was about the most violent. The Muckle Maister was one of the many respectful titles given to His Satanic Majesty, and I imagine *his* sitting under was often as hard upon him as upon the person so honoured.

"I wiss do may swee fur dat." "To swee" means to singe, or make the skin smart with pain; and that is a very modified form of consigning an enemy to the furnace of Vulcan. Indeed, the Gehenna of our forebears became a place of terror only when Protestant clergymen came to preach everlasting hell-fire in place of the purgatory of the Catholic faith. Indeed, the cold of our climate, the necessity of warm fires, and the extreme difficulty of obtaining fuel, robbed the "fiery furnace" of its chief alarms. In illustration of this there is told the story of a widow, who no doubt desired all happiness for the dear departed. When the funeral was over the "neebur-wives" came to condole, and the lorn one hastened to pile peats on the hearth till a cheerful blaze was raised. Then, heaving a deep sigh, she said, "Him ats geen laekit a gude fire. Lord, grant him fire everlasting!"

Curiously, the Shetland women used stronger expressions than the men, but these were borrowed from the evils of this life only. What folk regarded as a very bitter curse indeed was "May shu geng manless to her grave." This indicates the pre-eminent value women set upon man in those days.

The "Brenna-ban" was a much more malicious thing, but perhaps the crime which evoked it deserved severe reprisals. A girl who has been deceived and forsaken can, by the use of certain spells, call down the curse of betrayed Brenda on the recreant lover.

Brenda, the daughter of a witch, taught girls how to curse the man's firstborn lawful child, so that it was either a cripple or an imbecile. Or if the child was not so maimed it could be doomed to die before its father. A horrible ban this. There is one estate in Shetland that lies under this curse up to the present time. When the laird, who did the wrong, came home with his bride, the peasant girl cast her child at his feet and said, "May never son follow faither idda hadden o' dy laund. An whan da son is no a 'puir' may he geng ta his end wi' a flumpter." "May never son follow father in holding your land, and when the son is not defective in mind or body may he meet death violently and prematurely." Generations have come and gone since then, but the heir has always borne the curse, and consequently the property is now held by one very remotely connected with the original owner.

Benedictions were most abundant, and more generously expressed, than curses. "Gude grant 'at blessings may lippen ta de, an laiste lek da greesh o' Farquar's pig." "Farquar's pig" was a tiny brown jar, which a man of that name got from a trow. It contained an ointment which could cure everything, and the "pig" was always full, no matter how often its contents were used. An old woman gave me "Farquar's pig." There are a few "pigs" in existence purporting to be the real original one, so mine is probably as genuine as the rest. The donor of mine was a direct descendant of Farquar's granddaughter, and, as such relics were seldom allowed to go out of the family, I think mine is genuine. It contains no unguent now, and has a broken "lug."

JESSIE M. E. SAXBY.

(To be continued.)

OBITUARY.

We regret to have to record the death of the following subscribers and others :—

LADY ELIZA D'OYLY TRAILL-BURROUGHS.—Died in London, February 1st, 1908, aged 57. The daughter of the late Colonel W. Geddes, C.B., and widow of the late General Sir Frederick William Traill-Burroughs, K.C.B., of Rousey and Veira, Orkney.

HON. MRS. DUNDAS.—Died at West Stoke House, Chichester, on December 8th, 1907. The daughter of Mr. James Talbot, of Mary Ville, County Wexford. Married, in 1843, the Hon. John Charles Dundas, M.P., fourth son of the first Earl of Zetland, by whom she had a family of six sons and six daughters, of whom there survive the present Marquis of Zetland, who succeeded his uncle in the Earldom, the Hon. William Dundas, Lady Harriet Bunbury, Lady Mary Plowden, and Lady Charlotte and Lady Alice Dundas. Among her grandchildren are Lord Ronaldshay, M.P., Lady Southampton, and Countess Fitzwilliam.

ALEXANDER MALCOLM SUTHERLAND-GRÆME OF GRÆMES-HALL.—Died at St. Leonards-on-Sea, Sussex, February 4th, 1908, aged 63. Educated at Bradfield College. Entered the Navy, and served for some years in H.M.S. *Topaze* on the Pacific Station. The son of Alexander Sutherland (who assumed the name of Græme, and who succeeded to the Græmeshall estate on the death of his cousin, Admiral Alexander Græme) and Mary Ann daughter of Mr. Robert Graham of Corrington, Somersetshire. Succeeded to the Græmeshall estate on the death of his father in 1894. For a number of years Mr. Græme was an officer of the Orkney Artillery Volunteers. Married in 1874, Margaret Isabel, youngest daughter of the Rev. John Mason Neale, D.D., the hymnologist, and Warden of Sackville College, East

Grinstead. He is survived by his widow, four sons and a daughter. His eldest son, Patrick Neale Sutherland-Græme, barrister, who succeeds to the estate, is Secretary to Lord Alverstone, the Lord Chief Justice of England.

JAMES STOVE.—Died in Nanaimo, B.C., January 14th, 1908, in his eightieth year. He was one of the last of the pioneers of British Columbia, having come to the country in 1848 or '49 in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Coy. He was then a very young man fresh from Orkney, and no doubt was one of the batch of men (most of them Orkneyans) brought out by the Company to the Pacific stations 1848 to 1852, through the Rocky Mountains *via* the Yellowhead Pass and down the Columbia. He was attached to Fort Rupert station, north end of Vancouver Island, and in 1851 was sent with others from that place to sink the first coal mine at Nanaimo. Of these men he was the last survivor. He afterwards left the Company, but continued to live at Nanaimo up to the time of his death, a period of 57 years. Two of his sons were killed in the big explosion of the Nanaimo mine in 1885? Up to 1858 British Columbia was a wilderness, inhabited only by Indians, and a few hundred whites and half-breeds scattered in small groups here and there around the Company's posts at locations favourable for fur trading. On that year commenced the great rush of gold miners from California, resulting finally in the proper settlement of the country. At that time many employees quitted the service of the Company, and repaired to the new gold diggings, many Orkney and Shetland men amongst them. Most of those men left the diggings after a few years, and settled on land where they commenced farming, or drifted back to the larger settlements and young, growing cities, where they engaged in business and in various kinds of employment. A large proportion of the men (if not the majority of them) who started the first coal mine, and also built the Hudson's Bay Fort

at Nanaimo, were Orkneymen. Besides Stove, I have heard of Gullion, Stockan, two Harolds, Stanger, Peace, Marwick, Horne, and three Sabistons, all from Orkney, and one Shetlander, Magnus Edgar, who afterwards settled on Gabriola Island. One of the Sabistons, viz., Captain John Sabiston, was a pilot on the coast for many years. All of the pioneers are now dead.

The above is interesting as showing to what a degree British Columbia was pioneered by men from the Northern Islands, particularly Orkney.—Communicated by a subscriber in British Columbia.

MISS GRACE MARGARET SANDS TURNBULL-STEWART, of Massater, Orkney, died on 16th November, 1907, in her house, the Old Manse, Lerwick, at the age of 85. She was the last survivor of the fifteen children of the Rev. John Turnbull, minister of Tingwall (died 19th February, 1867, aged 92), whose wonderful hospitality will be long remembered. It was said of him that every visitor who came to his parish, whether he was a wandering sea-captain or H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh, received the same kind pat on his shoulder and the same hearty invitation into the Manse of Tingwall, where he had entertained Sir Walter Scott and supplied him with much information for "The Pirate." His family were the victims of many tragic histories. His wife (*née* Wilhelmina Sands, daughter of the preceding minister in Tingwall), a son John, and a daughter Barbara, were all drowned in Tingwall Loch. His son Robert was drowned near Scalloway on a pleasure cruise later, and his elder daughter, Elizabeth (wife of the Rev. William Paterson) suffered shipwreck on the way to Australia, and eventually died from the effects. Miss Turnbull, the only living child, succeeded (subject to a liferent) to the estate of Massater on the death, in 1853, of her kinswoman, Mrs. Barry (*née* Mary Stewart), to whom she was related through her mother. The Stewarts of Massater derived their descent from the Rev. Walter Stewart, Dean

of Orkney (died 1652), and among their cadets was the unfortunate George Stewart, R.N., one of the mutineers of the "Bounty," who perished in the "Pandora" in 1791. Miss Turnbull-Stewart's charity and hospitable kindness will be much missed, and her good work (*inter alia*) as President of the Lerwick Women's Guild was gratefully alluded to recently in "Life and Work."

NOTES ON BOOKS.

Ancient Britain and the Invasions of Julius Caesar. By T. Rice Holmes, Hon. Litt.D. (Dublin). Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1907. 21s. net.

Of this volume, which runs to some 750 pages, the first part is an attempt at an account of Britain from the earliest Stone Age to Caesar; the second part consists of detached papers on British ethnology and on subjects connected with Caesar's invasions. The author's method is perhaps the only one which can be followed at present, until some great constructive genius appears. He has read widely in English, French and German, and gives his notes and criticisms on the various hypotheses of antiquaries and ethnologists. It is useless to expect such a review to be either encyclopædic or conclusive; the mere mass of material is already much greater than when Charles Elton wrote; and if this work lacks the perspicuity of the *Origins*, it is more the fault of the subject than of the writer.

Turning to look for matter of special interest to students of Orkney and Shetland, we glean but little. The author notes that relics of the neolithic people are found in Shetland, and states (p. 102) that the chambered cairns of Orkney "and Papa Westray" belonged to the latest period of the Stone Age or the time of transition. He mentions the chambered mound of Stromness as an instance of such a structure used as a dwelling-house, but leaves its age undecided. Ornament in the chambered

cairn at Unstan, referred (p. 97) to the Bronze Age, is connected (p. 198) with the Neolithic and Palaeolithic Ages. The chambered cairn at Rousay (spelt Ronsay, *sic* also in Index) is only quoted as abnormal.

To the Bronze Age he refers all stone circles, though that at Callernish, built in the Scottish Stone Age, "may have been contemporary with the Bronze Age of England" (p. 215): and he considers all stone circles as interment sites, strenuously opposing astronomical theories. In one case where no interment was found after search which seemed to the explorers to be conclusive (Sunkenkirk in "Westmorland," for which read *Cumberland*, as elsewhere for "Gilpin Bridge, Cumberland," read *Gilpin Bridge, Westmorland*) he denies the thoroughness of the search (p. 212), though he does not seem to have read Mr. Dymond's full account of the exploration. On page 408 he quotes Dr. Garson as assigning the Orkney round barrows to "the unpolished stone period," but on page 175 he dates them from the Bronze Age; also noting that bronze weapons have been found in both Orkney and Shetland, and an amber necklace of the Bronze Age in Orkney. Of the holed stones seen near barrows and circles in Orkney, he remarks that their significance is unknown. For the Brochs he accepts the date of the Early Iron Age.

Passing to more speculative enquiries, on the question of the site of Thule he concludes:—

"For the Romans of the Empire Thule, as the northernmost of the British Isles, was Mainland, which Agricola visited [Orkney?]. But on the whole it seems most probable that Pytheas described it from hearsay; that he was misled into believing it to be in the British Archipelago; and that the Thule to which his informants pointed was the Scandinavian peninsula."

Dr. Holmes thinks (p. 227) that the natives of Britain in the time of Pytheas (about 330 B.C.) had learnt of its existence from Scandinavian sailors. But this is not the first appearance of the Scandinavians in Britain, according to him. After discussing many opinions on the

Roundheaded men, who must have arrived in Britain towards the close of the Neolithic Age ("at the latest between 1400 and 1200 B.C"—p. 127) he is "inclined to believe [with the late Prof. Rolleston] that those who belonged to the characteristic rugged Round Barrow type crossed over, for the most part, from Denmark or the outlying islands" (p. 444), "and possibly also from the Scandinavian peninsula" (455).

The "Nechtan" ogams of Lunasting he does not attempt to read, but after a review of the Pictish controversy sums up the matter thus (p. 456):—

"The Picts of Romano-British history were a medley of tribes among whom Celts were, as everywhere, predominant, but who probably included a greater proportion of the descendants of the neolithic and other pre-Aryan peoples than any other British group. It is possible that in the remoter parts of Pictland a non Aryan dialect was still spoken when the Romans invaded Britain; but the pre-Aryan Picts as a whole had been Celticized, and the Celtic language had prevailed, although it had been largely modified by the speech with which it had come into contact."

The Saint-Clairs of the Isles. Being a history of the sea-kings of Orkney and their Scottish successors of the surname of Sinclair. By Roland William Saint-Clair. Forty-six illustrations, genealogical tables, 558 pp., 7 × 9 $\frac{3}{4}$. Auckland, N.Z., 1898. (Published at 45s.) A few copies to be had through the Viking Club Book Agency (see p. 2 of cover) at 20s.

A few copies remain of this remarkably interesting work, which is not only a complete history of the St. Clair-Sinclair lineage, but also a history of Orkney and Caithness down to the year 1600. It also contains notices of Orkney families, and should be in the library of every Orcadian. The original price was £2 5s., but a few copies are still available, and may be had by readers of "Old-lore" at the reduced price of £1.

The Appendix contains a number of historical documents otherwise inaccessible to the ordinary reader.



MELSETTER HOUSE, ORKNEY.

From the Moodie Book. By permission of The Marquis of Ruigny and Raineval.

The Moodie Book. Being an Account of the Families of Melsetter, Muir, Cocklaw, Blairhill, Bryanton, Gilchorn, Pitmuies, Arbekie, Masterton, etc. By the Marquis of Ruvigny and Raineval. Large post 4to, 132 pp. Twenty illustrations and genealogical table. Privately printed, 1906. To be had through the Viking Club Book Agency (see p. 2 of cover), 21s.

Of this handsome work only 150 copies were privately printed, of which a few are now offered for sale to readers of "Old-lore." Everyone connected with the family of Moodie, or interested in Orkney history, should possess a copy.

It has now been proved that the family springs from Forfarshire, and not from Orkney. The founders of the Orkney branch after a probably short residence in Ayrshire passed north into Caithness, and thence into Orkney. The Moodies of that ilk became extinct in the male line at an early date. The other principal landed families of the name are divided into four groups. First, the Orkney Moodies, first of Breckness and afterwards (1630) of Melsetter. They descended from Gilbert Moodie of Caldwell, in Ayr, brother to William Bishop of Caithness. Melsetter was sold in 1819, and the three sons of the last laird emigrated to Cape Colony, Natal and Canada. The other three groups are represented by the Mudies of Muir, various Forfarshire lines, and the Mudies of Masterton.

Additional information as to the members of the family will be gladly received by the author.

The accompanying illustration of old Melsetter House, taken from the book, is given here by the kind permission of the author. The house has since been partly demolished and considerably enlarged for the present owner.

The Lineage Library, British Series, Vol. I., Orkney.
By Roland St. Clair. To be published by the end
of 1908, to subscribers, at 12s. 6d.

With this number is issued a prospectus of the above work, which will give an account of the Kings and Rulers of Norway (Suzerains of Orkney), the Earls and Rulers of Orkney, and Orcadian families and their branches.

It is not generally known that fifteen Kings and Rulers of Norway visited Orkney. One of the Kings of Norway (and Orkney) was a descendant of Tostig, brother of King Harald of England, who fell at Hastings in 1066. Much new information will be given as to the Angus and Stratherne succession. The method of treatment will be novel, differing essentially from the present cumbrous and confusing method of writing genealogy.

Information relating to Orkney family history, whether the names of such families are mentioned in the prospectus or not, should be sent immediately to Mr. Roland St. Clair, Auckland, New Zealand.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

All communications must bear the name and address of sender, and should reach the Editors not later than a month before publication.

Each note, query or reply must be written on one side only of a separate slip of paper, with the writer's name and address, or initials, as desired to be printed.

Editorial communications, advertisements, orders for back numbers, etc., must be addressed to A. W. JOHNSTON, 59, Oakley Street, Chelsea, London, S.W.

Subscriptions must be sent to the Honorary Treasurer, A. SHAW MELLOR, 14, Westbourne Street, Hyde Park, London, W.



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NOTES.

New Subscribers.

Munich Library, per Otto Harrassowitz, Leipzig, Germany.

Vienna, Imperial Court Library, c/o Messrs. Asher & Co., 13, Bedford Street, Covent Garden, London, W.C.

Captain Work, S.S. Florican, c/o Messrs. Bird & Co., Calcutta, India.

The following transfers of original subscription rights have taken place:—

James Fraser, Custom House, Leith. (From Rev. T. Mathewson).

James Grant, Solicitor, 25, Castle Street, Banff. (From Rev. T. Mathewson).

David W. Marwick, M.A., LL.B., W.S., 39, Inverleith Place, Edinburgh. (From the late Sir James Marwick).

Sandwick Mutual Improvement Association, per Wm. Smith, Newark, Sandwick, Stromness. (From the late R. Muir).

Mrs. James Thomason, Spurries House, Walls, Lerwick. (From the late P. F. Jamieson).

Donations.

Mrs. Bruce of Sumburgh has contributed one guinea to the Funds of the Club, one half being placed to the credit of the Old-lore Series.

Orkney and Shetland Societies.

The following Society's name was omitted in the January Number—Orkney and Shetland Society of Boston. *Secretary*, Geo. S. Laird, 62, Marion Street, Medford, Mass., U.S.A., James Learmouth, *President*.

BEE-LORE.—Egil Skallagrimsson in his *Sonatorrek* (date *circa* 980), a poem on his son's death (Egil's Saga), says:—

Burr es býskips
í bœ kominn,
kvánar son,
kynnis leita ;

Which the Rev. W. C. Green translates (SAGA-BOOK, vol. II. p. 389):—

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

An Aberdonian friend in Orphir informed me that when a person died it was said he or she had "gone to the beeskip," or beehive. The only similar idea in English literature which I can find is in Nicholson's *Kilwuddie*, p. 82 (Lanark), where going to rest at night is expressed thus:

Men an' beasts hae a' been skepit,
Nicht's black wing is deepenin' roun.

(*Eng. Dial. Dict.*, s.v., *Skep* 15).

Going to *rest* at night or at death appears to be the simile intended. It would be interesting if readers of Old-lore would send any bee customs they know of in Orkney and Shetland, such as *telling the bees*, etc.—
A. W. JOHNSTON.

ORKNEY BONFIRES.—Mr. Spence's paper on bonfires ("Miscellany," p. 179) was most interesting, and it would be presumption on the part of any ordinary mortal to question the correctness of his theory that those fires originated in the days of sun-worship. It is apparent that he has studied the subject carefully, and it is almost impossible to doubt his conclusions; at any rate, my respect for my old teacher is such that I would not dream of questioning his theory, and only wish to point out that the Rev. Alexander Pope (*circa*. 1780), in a note to his translation of Torfæus' *History*, gave a very different cause as the origin of those fires. In Torfæus' *History*, the name *Hareck*, of Njáll's Saga, is Latinised into Harecus. Pope, in his translation, retains the Latin form *Harecus*, and adds a note stating that "Harecus, Hacro, or Hacrow, of that ilk, is an ancient and brave family in Orkney, of whom some are still extant. The laird of Hacro commanded 300 men at the battle of Bannockburn, and fought like a hero. He afterwards returned to Orkney with great honour; in commemoration of which there is yearly, on St. John the Baptist's Day, a bonfire at every farmer's house in Orkney. All the islands and the mainland appear as if in a cloud of smoke that day."

Sir Walter Scott, while in Orkney in 1814 (Lockhart's *Memoirs*, 1837, vol. iii., p. 204), noted down the same tradition while at Stromness:—"Here we found the vestiges of a bonfire, lighted in memory of the battle of Bannockburn, concerning which every part of Scotland has its peculiar traditions. The Orcadians say that a Norwegian prince, then their ruler, called by them Harold, brought 1,400 men of Orkney to the assistance of Bruce, and that the King, at a critical period of the engagement, touched him with his scabbard, saying, 'The day is against us.' 'I trust,' returned the Orcadian, 'your Grace will venture again'; which has given rise to their motto, and passed into a proverb."

A similar tradition to that mentioned by Scott is current among descendants of the Halcro family, the hero being the Laird of Halcro. The motto of Halcro of Coubister is, "We'll put it to a venture." An old oak shield, with the Halcro arms and motto (*c.* 1700), taken from the old parish church of Orphir, is in the possession of Mr. James Johnston of Coubister, the representative of this branch of the family. There is, of course, no connection between the names Hareck or Hárekr and Marcus, nor between Marcus and Halcro.

It must be admitted that at first sight it might be contended that, having lived 128 years nearer the origin, Pope had better means of knowing the truth than Mr. Spence; but what are the facts? In the first place, we know more to-day regarding the rites and ceremonies of the ancients than did our forefathers of Pope's day; and in the second place, why should the Laird of Halcro be so highly honoured? At Bannockburn he was fighting a personal, not a national battle, so far as our islands were concerned.¹ Our islands then, and for 150 years afterwards, belonged to Norway and Denmark, and the war between Scotland and England did not affect us in the least; and besides, in those days, there was generally quite enough fighting nearer home to satisfy the strongest craving for that kind of amusement, while the Orcadians could not have forgotten the crushing defeat and massacre their countrymen had sustained at the hands of the Scots at Largs 51 years previously. Halcro is said to have harboured Bruce for some time while the latter was in hiding, and doubtless this was the sole reason for Halcro's presence at Bannockburn; and while he might have fought like a hero, it must be remembered that each one in Bruce's army fell under the same category. It is possible, therefore, and more than prob-

¹ As the Earl of Orkney, in 1314, held the Earldom of Caithness from the Scottish Crown, it is possible that some Orkneyingers may have accompanied a contingent from Caithness.—A. W. J.

able, that Pope arrived at his conclusion by failing to remember that the 24th of June was a celebrated day in the North and elsewhere for centuries prior to Bannockburn.

I may add that the other day I spoke to an old man who, over 70 years ago, lent a hand in getting up the annual bonfire near Settiscarth, in Firth, in two successive years. There were three farms who specially attended to the affair, and it seemed to be regarded almost in the light of a religious observance. The pulling of heather for it occupied two or three days, but the honour of carting home the heather fell to the house possessing a stallion foal, as those were considered of much greater value than foals of the other sex. My informant, who has been in many parts of the world, assured me that in no other place has he ever seen so much superstition as then existed in the Settiscarth district, and particularly in regard to the knowe on which the Johnsmas fire was lighted. He could not remember bones being put into the fire, nor lighted "coves" being carried for any special purpose.—A. CRAB.

ORKNEY JOTTINGS.

PEAT FATHOMS.—At Veness the dimensions were 20ft. \times 10ft. \times 4ft., which corresponds with those at Greenigoe (See Miscellany, p. 130, *ante*). The late Mrs. Halcro, of the Post Office, Orphir, said that the fathom of debt (rent) peats in the toon of Orphir was 8ft. \times 8ft. \times 8ft., and a half fathom, 8 \times 8 \times 4. The Coubister fathom, 8 \times 4 \times 5, mentioned p. 130 *ante*., should have been described as a half fathom. In 1790 one Coubister fathom was priced at 3s. sterling at Veness, and 6s. sterling at Ireland, in Stenness, which included the cost of boating from Veness to Ireland.

PACK-HORSES.—Before there were roads and carts, peats and other burdens were carried in panniers on pack-horses.

This method of carrying peats was called *leading peats*. A mat about 3 feet square, called a *flettie* or *flackie* (cf. Icel. *flaki*, *fleki*, a hurdle or shield wicker-work, *flekka*, a chequered jacket), made of straw and floss-bands—ropes made of beaten rushes—was placed on the horse's back. On the *flackie* was placed a wooden saddle, called a *klibber* (Icel. *klyf-beri*, pronounced and also spelt *klybberi*, a pack-saddle). The *klibber* was made of two oblong boards, each having a cross-piece nailed on it, with one end projecting beyond the edge of the board, one of these ends was perforated, through which the other end was passed, and both pinned together. The peats or other burdens to be carried were placed in nets, called *meissies*, there being one on each side of the horse, and hung on the projecting ends of the *klibber*. The *meissie* (pronounced *māzie*, Icel. *meiss*, a basket) was a net with 8 inch meshes, made of heather or straw ropes and floss-bands, about 5 feet long by 18 inches broad at the ends, and much broader in the middle. Each end had a loop of rope, by which it was gathered together to carry the burden and hung to the *klibber*.

A *led* of peats was what one horse could carry; three or four *leds* were equal to a small, and about five equal to a large cart-load.

Oats were carried in the *meissie* on horse-back in a *half-led* (pronounced *half-lud* in Birsay), a bag made of straw ropes and floss-bands, with loops at the mouth through which a floss-band was threaded to draw the mouth together. Some loose straw was placed in the mouth over the oats to keep them from spilling. In Icelandic a *hálf-leyfa* is a half *laupr*, a box or basket of lattice-work to carry on the back, also called *meiss*. *Laupr* is represented in Orkney and Shetland by *loopie*, a basket made of straw. Although the *half-led* was a half-load, still it may be a corruption of *hálf-leyfa*.

FESTIVALS.—Fastern's-e'en was also called Brose Day; this is also known in Harray. Football was played on

Yule Day, New-year's Day, and Uphelli Day, the fourth day after old New Year's Day.

FIRST-FOOTING.—Fair person lucky; dark, unlucky. To see a black lamb in the first of the season was unlucky. To meet a flat-footed or "plumb-soled" person was unlucky.

LUCKY DAYS.—For weddings, Thursday is lucky, also during the growing moon, while Friday is unlucky. Mr. Magnus Spence informs me that when animals were killed (in Birsay) for home consumption it had always to be done during the growing moon.

DANCE.—The late Morrison Snody danced an old Orkney step dance, which he called *Clumpie*, and which has died with him.

WITH THE SUN.—Called *Sun-gates*. It was lucky to turn the boat's bow *sun-gates* when it was launched.

RHYMES, ETC.—The snipe, horse-gock and waterpleep,
They a' tree rin upon twa feet.

These are three different names of the same bird.

Rivin cott and brunt frock,
Kilpick, kilpick.

FAIRIES.—A certain child, left in charge of a woman, went out at night during a snow-storm, and returned quite dry but imbecile, which is supposed to have been the work of the fairies. A certain woman, when her accouchement was about to take place, had the *howdie* (midwife) sleeping with her. In the morning it was found that the child had been born and had disappeared—it was supposed to have been kidnapped by the fairies.

FAIRY HAUNTS.—Fairies are said to frequent Estaquoy in Houton. There is a fairy knowe at Scoradale, on the east side of the road, facing Petertown. Fairies have been seen in the Fidge of Swanbister with "nice polled heads."

PROVERBS.—“It’s no’ the best coo that routs in the fald.” *Rout* pronounced *rōōt*, to roar. Icel. *rauta*, to roar.

“Robbing the kirk to pay the queer.” This probably originated at the time when the nave of the Church was maintained by the parish, and the choir or chancel by the incumbent. (See reference to *quire* under *games*, *infra*.)

GAMES.—*Gildroo* (Icelandic, *Gildra*, a trap), a trick-game in which two persons are so placed together that they cannot separate. A, bound hand and foot, kneels, with his elbows on the ground. B places his head under A’s ribs, with one leg and arm between A’s legs, and the other leg and arm between A’s arms. If the two are then turned over they cannot get apart until A is untied by a third person.

Kirk and queer, Church and quire, a tug-of-war.

CHURCHING.—A mother avoided baking bread until she was *kirked*.

SALUTATIONS.—“So faa ye,” in reply to “Good-day.”

NOTE.—All the above folklore and customs are and were current in Orphir. Whether any or all of them are of Norse or English origin is a question for the scientific specialist. Seeing that the Norse language in Orkney and Shetland has given place to English in recent times, it would be difficult to say what existing folklore is a translation of Norn, and what folklore has been introduced from English sources. As the currency of folklore is an important factor in the scientific study of the subject, it is clearly the duty of the collector to note everything that is current regardless of what he may personally consider to be of local or other origin. In some cases it might be even interesting to know what is *not current*, *e.g.*, is there any outlying part of Shetland where “Auld lang syne” has not yet become popular?—A. W. JOHNSTON.

QUERIES.

ELPHINSTONE GENEALOGY.—Malcolm Laing, writing from Kirkwall in 1815, sent to a correspondent “a copy of a Genealogical Account of the Elphinstones of Lopness, being the only memorial of the family that remains in the county.” In this *Genealogical Account* it is stated that Rainy Elphinstone of Henderson succeeded to Peter Elphinstone of Henderson, was born in France, came to Orkney with Robert Stewart, Earl of Orkney, and married the only daughter of Magnus Halcrow [of Brugh]. Does Malcolm Laing’s original copy of the above genealogy still exist, and can anyone prove that Rainy Elphinstone was a son of Peter Elphinstone of Henderson?—A. W. JOHNSTON.

SHETLAND MAMMALS.—In the “Vertebrate Fauna of the Shetland Islands”¹ no mention whatever is made of the wild-cat; and although that animal is perhaps not very likely to have occurred, there are one or two place-names that are suggestive. In the “Dialect and Place-names of Shetland” mention is made of a locality in Dunrossness called “de Kattismogs,” which Dr. Jakobsen renders the “wild-cats’ hiding holes”; while in the wildest part of Northmaven there is a rocky tract known as the “Kattarönis,” or cats’ rocks. Sometimes the domestic cat has been known to leave its home and settle in the wilds, but this is hardly likely to have been the case at the Kattarönis, as the place is about two hours’ good walking from the nearest habitation, and the walk involves crossing several ranges of hills, to say nothing of burns and bogs. There is, however, a possible explanation; for while the Icelandic *köttur*, *kattar* means simply *cat*, there is another word, *hreysi-köttur*, meaning the stoat or ermine. Now the stoat is known to have been introduced into the islands as long as three centuries ago (“Vertebrate Fauna,” p. 59), and it is still

¹ By T. E. Buckley and A. H. Evans; D. Douglas, Edinburgh, 1899.

common in certain parts, so that it would seem not at all improbable that the word "Kattarönis" is merely an abbreviation of the inconveniently lengthy "Hreysikattarönis." Can any of our Northmaven friends tell us of any legends connected with the locality?—W. H. BEEBY, F.L.S.

REPLIES.

BARNISDALE.—Miss C. S. Burne, Editor of *Folk-lore*, has called my attention to Barnsdale, in the Robin Hood country, as the place probably meant in the Orphir saying, "He's been to Barnsdale," applied to a person telling a long rigmarole story. The Shetland variant is "to tell a tale from Barnisdael and doun," explained by Edmondston as "to tell it from beginning to end, with all particulars."

The oldest mention of Robin Hood at present known occurs in the second edition of *Piers the Plowman*, about 1377. He is mentioned by Wyntoun in his *Scottish Chronicle*, about 1420:—

Lytel Jhon and Robin Hude
Waythmen were commendyd gude;
In Yngilwode and Barnysdale
Thai oysyd all this time [c. 1283] thare trawall;

next by Bower in his additions to Fordun's *Scotichronicon*, about 1450. The story is localized in Barnsdale and Sherwood, between Doncaster and Nottingham. (See *Ency. Brit.*, s.v., Robin Hood). "A Geste of Robyn Hode," printed in Child's *Ballads* runs to viii. Fyttes of 456 verses, which undoubtedly explains the Orkney and Shetland saying, "been to Barnsdale," as applied to a long story.

Miss Burne writes that "Sir John Paston (*temp.* Edw. IV.) writes of a servant who had left him: 'I have keypyd hym thys iii yer to pleye Seynt Jarge and Robin Hod and the shryf off Notyngnam, and now when I wolde have good horse *he is goon into Bernysdale*, and I withowt a keeper.' (Ritson's *Robin Hood*, p. LXVI.)

Child tells us that the Great North Road crossed Barnsdale between Doncaster and Ferrybridge, and quotes evidence of its unsafety for travellers (*temp.* Edw. I.).

It seemed to me that to be kept in Barnsdale meant originally, perhaps, to be detained by robbers—hence, to be away a long time.”

Are there any Robin Hood ballads current in Orkney and Shetland? Any information will be gladly received.
—A. W. JOHNSTON.

JO. BEN.—Referring to the reply by James MacWilliams to my query as to the identification of Jo. Ben, and without attempting to disentangle the identities (which have been confused with each other by various writers) of Sir John Bellenden of Achinoul, and the “Maister Johne Ballentyne,” who can be traced as “Clerk of the Accomptis” from 1515 to 1524, who appears before Parliament in September, 1528, as “servitor and secretar to the Earl of Angus,” and in 1531 (and afterwards) receives several payments for the translations of Boece and Livy, I think it may be interesting to revert to the original question of the possible or probable identity of the latter with the Jo. Ben who was resident in Orkney in 1529. Since the appearance of my query, in January last, the subject has been discussed with great fulness and lucidity by Sir Arthur Mitchell and Mr. J. T. Clark, late of the Advocates’ Library, in the preface to the third volume of Macfarlane’s *Geographical Collections*, issued by the Scottish History Society. In that volume Jo. Ben’s *Descriptio Insularum Orchadiarum* is included, with a translation, “probably for the first time given in print,” and with an account of all the known transcripts of the missing original manuscript, and all the known translations existing in manuscript.¹ The outcome of this ex-

¹ Text and translation of Jo. Ben’s *description*, with Sir Arthur Mitchell’s notes, will appear in the October or January number of *Miscellany*.—ED.

haustive examination of all that is known of the *Descriptio*, and of its author, is that "it is not yet known who Jo. Ben was." From internal evidence he seems to have been a priest; "but if he was an ordinary priest serving an Orkney Chapel, it is scarcely possible that he would have written Latin with freedom, nor is it likely that a settled priest would have been able to visit so many of the islands." The date and character of the *Descriptio* give it a place in the first rank among the topographical descriptions of Scotland. It is not only the earliest but the most characteristic record of personal observations made by any of the early travellers who have written topographical and descriptive notes on any part of Scotland.—J. A.

CHARMS USED IN THE ISLAND OF SANDAY.—The five charms published in Part VI. of "Old-lore," pp. 198-200, have long been known to students of folklore. In 1848 they were communicated to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland by Mr. W. H. Fotheringham, with the statement that they were found among the family papers of the Traills of Westray ("MS. Communications to the Society of Antiquaries," vol. 8, 1842-52). Several years later (in 1854) Mr. Fotheringham published the charms in "Notes and Queries," first series, vol. 10, pp. 220-221. In 1903 they were reprinted in my "Examples of Printed Folklore concerning the Orkney and Shetland Islands" (pp. 141-147), published by the Folklore Society in the County Folklore Series.—GEO. F. BLACK.

GIANT'S WET FEET.—The Editor of *Folklore*, in a review of the *Old-lore Series* (*Folklore*, March, 1908), refers to *County Folklore*, vol. iii. (Orkney and Shetland), p. 260, where an instance is given of a giant providing himself with a stepping-stone to avoid wetting his feet. "Grimm (D.M., ed., 1843, pp. 499 sqq.) tells of a giant of Rügen who tried to dam up the Baltic that he might cross to Pomerania dry-shod. The Roman road over the

moors in the North Riding, known as 'Wade's Causeway,' is said to have been made by the giant Wade for his wife's convenience in going to milk her cow (*County Folklore*, vol. ii., Yorkshire, p. 9). Whether any similar tradition attaches to the Giant's Causeway in Ireland is unknown to the present writer."

GOODLAD AND GARRIOCK.—The following notes on these two surnames may be of interest to your correspondent "Magnus."

Goodlad is simply a variant of Goodlet, an old surname in the "Kingdom" of Fife, and still in use. James Gudlad, king's sheriff, appears in record in 1491 ("Dundas of Dundas," p. lxvii.). Robert Guidett (a variant form) was a mariner of Kinghorn in 1574 ("Register of Privy Council"), and David Guidlaid appears on record as a scribe in St. Andrews in 1585 ("St. Andrews Kirk Session Records," p. 556). A criminal charge was made in 1671 against John Guidlet or Guidlett of Abbots-hall ("Justiciary Records," vol. ii., pp. 57, 74; Scot. Hist. Soc.). The name also occurs in Perth in 1543 as Gudlat. Some early sixteenth century emigrant from Fife has carried the name to the Northern Isles.

The surname Garriock is found in Orkney as early as 1576 in the forms Garyoch and Garryouche (Balfour, "Oppressions," p. 45). The name is clearly a variant of Garioch, introduced into Orkney by some sixteenth century "ferry-louper" from Aberdeenshire. Garioch, as a surname, is of territorial origin from the district of the same name in Aberdeenshire. Andrew de Garuiach appears as sheriff of Aberdeen in 1264 and 1266 ("Exchequer Rolls," vol. i., pp. 11, 34). Sir Andrew de Garuiach, probably the same individual, witnessed a charter by Alexander Cumyng, Earl of Buchan, 1272 ("Registrum Episcopatus Aberdonensis," vol. i., p. 34). Adam de Garuiagh "del counte de Edeneburk," Andrew de Garviaghe, and Sir John de Garviaghe, both "del counte de Aberdene," rendered homage in 1296 to Edward I.

of England (Bain, "Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland," vol. ii., pp. 201, 203, 207). The name appears frequently in Scottish records after this date under the forms Garuyach (1342), Garwoc (c. 1380), Gareache (1490), Gareach (1492), Gerreache (1493), Garrioch (1570), Gareauch (1574), Gareauch (1594). Other early forms, of which I have omitted to note the date, are Garviach and Garviauth. It is still in use.—GEO. F. BLACK.

MOWBRAY.—"A. S. M." (p. 205, *ante.*) asks of what family was John Mowbray, etc. When Hossack's book was published I wrote an appreciation of it along with some remarks which appeared in the "Orkney Herald" of 15th May, 1901. From this article is taken what I say about Matthew Mowbray, who was a "wealthy man," "Chamberlain Depute," and a "Bailie" in Kirkwall from 1621 to 1641. I do not know where he hailed from, or how he came to Orkney, but he seems to have been a man of good birth and breeding, of some literary attainments, and high position in the county. He had two sons, John, who was in business at Scalloway, and Harry, who died and was buried in Tingwall Churchyard, as his tombstone there testifies; also one daughter, Maggie, who was married to Rev. Walter Stewart of South Ronaldshay. She was his second wife, and he was her second husband. More than likely the Arthur and Thomas Mowbray, who were "contemporary with him [John] and lived in Lerwick," according to "A. S. M.," were sons of John. But of this I am not sure. Maggie Mowbray's first husband was said to be Patrick Scollay, of whom I know nothing, although there were many well-known Scollays in Kirkwall, and her third husband was one Archibald McCulloch, of whom nothing further is known. Alexander Stewart of Massitter, who in 1681 was married to Margaret, Bailie Edmondstoun's second daughter, was the son of Maggie Mowbray, the second wife of Rev. Walter Stewart. [See footnote of p. 14 in Brown's Diary.]

What Hossack says about Matthew Mowbray, on p. 348, is that one John Warwick, an Englishman, borrowed money from him, and this is the last transaction and word given about Matthew. As Hossack makes no mention of his death, it is because he did not know when or where he died. I discovered his tombstone in St. Peter's Churchyard, South Ronaldshay. It is in a fair state of preservation, although lying exposed to the fierce elements for 250 years; but being of sandstone the lettering is very illegible, and, in fact, cannot now be fully made out. Enough, however, remains to show that the inscription was in Latin, and his name and date of death have been deciphered—HIC IACET MATHEVS MVBRAV 1648. On the face of the stone there is a beautiful square with some ornamentations and two large letters, one at each side, M M—the initials of the name. There has been a long inscription setting forth the qualities of Matthew Mowbray, but the tooth of time has made havoc of the lettering. It seems that Matthew had gone on a visit to his daughter's manse, or had retired from business and settled down here, and died, and was buried. So the tombstones of both father-in-law and son-in-law, the minister and the bailie, lie close to one another, Stewart, who died in 1652, and Mowbray, who died in 1648. But of Maggie Mowbray nothing more is known than what has been said. It is believed that she left the country with her third husband.—ALEX. GOODFELLOW, South Ronaldshay.

OMAND OF UNSTANE.—In a document of 1605 a wadset is recorded of $\frac{1}{2}$ merkland together with $\frac{1}{2}$ pennyland of meadow, lying in Clouston, by George Cloustoun in that ilk, with consent of his wife Katherine Omand, to Richard Omand in Onstane. The names of Katherine and Richard are variously rendered as Ewmondson, Ewmound, Omondson, and *Onstoun*. Katherine, after the death of George Clouston, married Robert Boag, and in the Commissariot Records her name is entered twice; as

Katherine Omand spouse of George Clouston, and Katherine Unstane, spouse of Robert Boag. Furthermore, in the same records, the name occurs of Janet Inksetter in the parish of Stenhouse, spouse to Richard Oman in *Omistoun*. The presumption would be strong that Unstane or Onstoun is a corruption of Omondstoun and Omand an abbreviation of Omondson, both derived from one Hámund or Ámund, the original proprietor of the land and ancestor of the Omands, were it not for the contradictory implication contained in the charter granted by Edward Sinclair of Strome in 1546 and quoted in the April number of *Old-Lore*. By this charter 6 merklands in Unstane are granted by Sinclair to the heirs of the Leiths, who include Edward Omand. As the Rental of 1595 gives Unstane as $1\frac{1}{2}$ pennyland, *i.e.*, 6 merklands, this grant of 6 merklands out of 6 does not leave much over for any Omands who originally held lands there.¹ Can anyone suggest anything further with regard to the apparent connection of the names Omand and Onstane? I may add that William Leyth in Unstane was baillie at the time of the wadset.—J. S. C.

¹Unstane is not mentioned in the Rental of 1500. In 1595 it is described as $1\frac{1}{2}$ penny udal land. The number of marks in the penny is not given, and being udal land (not Earldom) there is no rent mentioned from which the marks could be calculated. The rent of Earldom land was charged on the Marklands, so that the number of marks can be ascertained from the rent. The statement inserted by a later writer in the Rental of 1595 that four marks made a pennyland is of course wrong. The number of marks in the pennyland varied from 1 to 12. In Stenhouse (township) there was only one mark in the pennyland. Cloustane and Ireland 4 marks in the pennyland. The Rental of 1595 contains 3 pennylands more than that of 1500, *viz.*, Ottergill $1\frac{1}{2}$ pennyland and Unstane $1\frac{1}{2}$ pennyland. On referring to my notes of the Omand Charters of Unston, I find that one property there is variously described as $2\frac{1}{4}$ farthingland, $2\frac{1}{4}$ marks of land, and $13\frac{1}{2}$ settings malt rent of land, being $\frac{3}{8}$ of the whole lands of Unston. From this it will be seen that the $1\frac{1}{2}$ pennyland of Unston = 6 marks of land (4 marks in the pennyland), and that the rent was 1 meil or 6 settings of malt per mark of land. In 1500 the rent of the Earldom land was usually 10 settings per mark, but in many cases reduced to 6 settings. In 1595 the rent of the adjoining land in Ireland was 6 settings per mark.—A. W. J.

POTTINGER.—This surname represents the once common “le potager,” or soup-maker, from “potage,” the ordinary term for soup, thickened well with vegetables and meat, a favourite dish in earlier days. Bardsley, in his well-known work on “Our English Surnames,” says (p. 173): “A strange and yet most natural change gradually crept over this word [Potage]. There can be no doubt that the original ‘potager’ or ‘potinger’ had his place in the baronial household as the superintendent of the mess-making department. From his knowledge of herbs thus acquired he evidently came to be looked upon in a medicinal capacity. Thus the terms came to be used synonymously with ‘apothecary.’” The intrusive “n” is quite regular, as shown by “messinger” and “passenger” for “messenger” and “passager.”—GEO F. BLACK.

ORKNEY AND SHETLAND PORTRAITS.

It is intended to give a series of reproductions of old portraits of Orkney and Shetland people. The Editors will be glad to have photographs of old portraits, oil paintings, miniatures, silhouettes, etc., together with a short biographical notice of each person.

MOODIES OF MELSETTER.

Captain James Moodie, R.N., seventh laird of Melsetter, born about 1645, entered the Royal Navy 1661, assassinated by Sir James Stewart, of Burray, Oct. 26th, 1725. He is said to have married first a daughter of the Earl of Morton, by whom he had John, younger of Melsetter, who died before 1718, and Sir James, younger of Melsetter, M.P. for Orkney and Shetland 1715-1722, who died before 1723. He married secondly Christian, widow of William Ballenden of Stenness, daughter and heiress of Alexander Crawford of Kerse, Ayrshire, by his wife the Hon. Christian, younger daughter and eventual co-heir of James (McGill) first Viscount Oxenford, by whom he had Benjamin Moodie, his successor (see *The Moodie Book*, p. 34).

The portraits of Captain James Moodie and his wife, Christian Crawford, are given by permission of the Marquis of Ruvigny.



CAPTAIN JAMES MOODIE, R.N., SEVENTH LAIRD
OF MELSETTER.



CHRISTIAN CRAWFORD, SECOND WIFE OF CAPTAIN
JAMES MOODIE, OF MELSETTER, R.N.

From miniatures in the possession of Miss Moodie Heidle.



CAPTAIN JAMES MOODIE, R.N., SEVENTH LAIRD OF
MELSETTER.

*From a painting by Godfrey Kneller, in the possession of
Miss Moodie.*

MAGNUS MATCHES.

Magnus Matches (a name common in and peculiar to Orkney), a native of Tankerness, was rather eccentric. Occasionally he became a little crazy, while at the same time cross-tempered, sharp-witted, and outspoken. He lived about 100 years ago. When he came to Kirkwall he got ready admittance to gentlemen's houses on account of the amusement afforded by his quaint answers and blunt manners. As a specimen: One morning, as he was passing along Broad Street, some of the "Nobs" who were lounging in front of the Old Town Hall hailed him with the following: "Magnus, what are they doing in hell this morning?" He immediately retorted, "Thrang¹ taking in the rich and keeping out the puir."

He seemed to have a good command of a certain kind of language. At favourable moments he could deliver a long rigmarole of doggerel rhymes. Cherishing a strong aversion to those who oppressed the poor, he committed to writing a number of pieces directed against these worthies. But in an evil hour Magnus lent his effusions to one of these gentry, which he never recovered, consequently these curious and erratic effusions were lost.

He had a great dislike to the Established Church clergy. On a certain occasion he took a strong antipathy to the parish minister. The tenant of Peterhouse being warned out, in order to increase the minister's glebe by the addition of the poor man's farm, it was more than Magnus could endure. He was determined not to let this slip without a strong protest, and he calculated that the best time to make it most effective would be when the people assembled for public worship on the Sabbath.

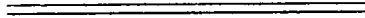
¹ Thrang, busy.

Accordingly, to be beforehand with the people, he carried his bed on his back to the Church on Saturday evening. The door being unlocked, he entered, and barred the door behind, made up his bed among the pews, and slept there over the night. On Sabbath morning there was no entrance for the people who crowded around the Church. When the hour of public worship drew near, Magnus opened a window and looked out, to be ready as soon as the minister appeared. In the meanwhile the people were calling on him to open the door, while he all the time was looking down on them with cool indifference without saying a word. As soon as the minister arrived he called out, "Magnus, open the door, and allow the people to get in." Without heeding the minister's request, he immediately bawled out, to the astonishment of the people, "If you are a minister be a minister, and if a farmer be a farmer, ye canna be baith, ye canna serve God and Mammon. Ye profess to serve your Maker, but by taking the puir man's land fae under him it's plainly seen ye're the servant o' the Deil. Woe to them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place that may be placed alone in the midst of the earth." By the time Magnus had finished his protest some people had got in by a window, when, gathering up his bed, he made a hasty retreat.

At another time, in one of his crazy moods, or after hearing of the power of faith, Magnus' emotions seemed to have overbalanced his judgment, or under some fanatical excitement he intended to put his faith literally to the test in a novel manner, and in a way in which there could be no deception. He determined to commit himself to the great deep in a most unlikely kind of craft, namely, his loom (he was a weaver). He resolved to do this, presuming that some supernatural power would protect him and guide his dangerous bark to some friendly shore. He got his loom dragged to the shore of the Cockle Sand, a shallow harbour, and having

launched it, he embarked, without either rudder, sail or oar. While drifting before the breeze across the shallow harbour, whether his faith failed him or not we cannot say, but the crazy vessel, being out of its proper element, and quarrelling with the crew, kicked the captain overboard. After narrowly escaping a watery grave, Magnus reached the shore not much the worse of his dangerous adventure, but thoroughly drenched, and his enthusiasm cooled, and probably a wiser man, while his loom landed on the rocks of Withick, where it became a wreck.

JOHN SMITH.



ACCOUNT OF THE NEW YEAR SONG. AS SUNG IN SANDAY.

[The following is copied from a note-book of the late Mr. George Petrie, preserved in the Library of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland. It is there said to have been taken "from a manuscript book belonging to the late Dr. Wood, Kirkwall," and seems to have been written down sometime about 1836.]

Among the amusements in Sanday, as well as in some other of the Orkney Islands, during the Christmas holidays (*Scottice* Daft Days) is the singing of the New Year's Song.

On the last night of the year (old style) the Hogmanay of Scotland and New Year's even of Orkney, young men, residing in the same district, collect in bands of from half-a-dozen to a score for the purpose of singing this song. The singers do not go out in *guises*, although that too would form a part of the amusements at the time the singing was introduced; but I have never heard the word *Gyseard* or *guiseard* used in Orkney. When the company is collected they repair to one of the principal houses in the district and commence singing at the door. When the song is finished the door is opened by the inmates of the house; the singers are taken in and regaled with bread and cheese and a cogue of ale; they then peaceably leave the house, and proceed to serenade another and another till they have visited all the principal houses of the district or parish. Perhaps something like instinct may lead them first to those houses where they can reckon on a hearty reception, or whose ale has got a good name—but let us judge charitably.

Although many, or I may say most, of the band are often what is termed *timmer-tuned*, yet the effect is very far from being unpleasant, especially when it is recollected that this is a remnant of an ancient and harmless pastime which is now fast wearing away.

The music is simple, and consists, like many of our old Scottish tunes, of only one part. The words, too, are simple and homely. The whole is undoubtedly a composition of the time of the lovely and amiable but unfortunate Queen Mary. Several of the words in the song are now obsolete in Orkney, or at least are never used in conversation but by very old people.

The following copy of the song is a corrected one from several editions repeated to me by natives of Sanday, North Ronaldshay, Westray, Egilshay, and the Mainland. They differed only in trifling particulars, such as the arrangement of the verses, or the lengthening of one line by the addition of a useless word, or the shortening of another line by the omission of a necessary word. Slight differences must occur in the several editions of anything trusted wholly to the care of tradition, as has been the case with

THE NEW YEAR'S SONG.

MUSIC OF THE NEW YEAR'S SONG.



NOTE.—The fourth notes of the third and fifth bars, and the second note of the seventh bar are so written—crochets—in the original M.S.

This nycht it is guid New Year's Ev'n's nycht,
We are a' Queen Marie's men;
 We've come here to claim our rycht,
An' that's before Our Leddie!

[The refrain forms the second and fourth lines of each succeeding verse.]

2.

Its O! be it rycht, or be it wrang,
 We sall hae't afore we gang.

3.

King Henrie 's knit us in a ring,
 He sent us out this sang to sing.

4.

We're a' come frae King Henrie's house,
 An he 's no hame nor yet his spouse.

5.

The Queen she wears upon her crown
 Fine silk ribbons—they're fu' brown.

6.

The Queen wears on her waist sae sma'
 Fine silk stays—an' they're fu' braw.

7.

The Queen wears on her legs sae lack,
 Fine silk hosen—they're fu' black.

8.

The Queen wears on her bonny feet
 American leather *—an' that fu' neat.

9.

Guid hour upon this buirdly biggan;
 Frae the steethe stane to the riggin!

10.

We wish monie stacks aboon your style,
 Some for maut, and some for meal.

* When I first heard the song recited, a thought struck me that perhaps America had usurped the place of Morocco, as I had never heard the New World famed for the manufacture of leather; all those however who repeated the song to me maintained that it was American leather, and I was forced to rest content. Sir Walter Scott has now put me to rights. In the romance of *Ivanhoe*, Prince John is made to appear at the passage of arms at *Ashby-de-la-zouche*, with *Maroquin boots*. The verse should therefore stand—*The Maroquin leather, &c.*

11.

Thrive weel a' your owsen an' kye
Monie to sell, an' few to buy.

12.

Thrive a' your horse upon the hill,
An' ilka mare wi' a staig foal.

13.

Thrive a' your flock, baith yowe an' ram
An' ilka yowe wi' a yowe lamb.

14.

Thrive a' your swine weel i' your stye
Wi' monie a gryce to rin thereby.

15.

We wish a' your geese weel to thrive
An' ilka goose wi' three times five.

16.

We wish a' your hens to thrive weel,
An' ilka hen twal at her heel.

17.

O! here we hae our Tullietan,
It's for the use o' the Gudeman.

18.

O! here we hae our little knife,
It's for the use o' the Gudewyfe.

19.

Gudeman gae to your bacon vat,
An' cut us out a daghan o' that.

20.

O! cut it muckle! cut it room!
Tak tent ye cutna yere big thumb.

21.

Gudewyfe gae to your kebbock creel,
See that you wyle your kebbocks weel.

22.

Gudewyfe gae to your butter ark
An' weigh us oot o' it ten mark.

23.

O ! weigh ten mark an' ten pund,
See that you grup weel to the grund.

24.

Gudewyfe gae to your geelin' vat,
An' draw us off a skeal o' that.

25.

O ! draw us ane, draw us twa,
An' we'se be merrie or we gae' wa'.

26.

O ! draw us twa, draw us three,
An' aye the merrier we will be.

27.

Here we hae our carryin' horse,
An' monie a vengeance on his corse.

28.

For he wad eat far mair meat,
Than a' that we can gather an' get.

29.

An' he wad drink far mair drink,
Than a' that in his wame can swink.

30.

Our shoon are made of mare's skin,
Our feet, they're cauld, we wad be in.

31.

Open the door ! we maun be in,
To keep us out is surely sin.

32.

But gif you dinna open the door,
We'll ding it owre upon your floor.

33.

And now our sang is at a close
Whaur is the cogue ! It's at your nose.



SHETLAND PHRASE AND IDIOM.

II.

"Puir body, its weel ta be seen at he's stude idda wister." There is no wind so blighting, so harsh, so dreaded in our Isles as the west wind. An honest gale from the north brings snow on its wings, but disperses disease. The tempest from the east is noisy and biting while it lasts, but leaves no ill-effects behind. But the "wister" blows fierce and long, and its withering breath kills and shrivels every green thing as if they had passed through fire. We fear and curse the "wister," and when we say that a man has stood in it, we mean to tell you that he has been overtaken and been beaten by the worst of ills.

"I wid gie me yatlin-bluid fur me folk"—living, flowing, best blood. No stagnant fluid, but the red leaping life-current freely and continuously shed. Nothing less than all these words I have used can express that one idiom, "yatlin-bluid."

"Eth-kent" is still a common word in use here. It means a good deal more than "*auð-kendr*,"¹ from which it is supposed to come. "He's ethkent"—he is readily and universally recognized by unique marks. That is the most explicit and brief translation that we can find for the term, but it embraces much more. The mark may be a blemish, or a beauty; a bodily or a spiritual mark. One of my neighbours suggested that the term may be derived from oath-known—eth being the common

¹O.N., *auð-kendr*, easy to ken. O.N., *auð*, Old English and Scotch, *eath*, easy.—A.W.J.

pronunciation of oath, and I do not think that is a far-fetched derivation by any means. In our olden times it was a common custom (as in all countries) for persons to bind themselves to some purpose by solemn oaths. Any person so bound to the fulfilment of some sacred duty wore a device, or peculiar dress, or mark that proclaimed them vowed to a special action. Such individuals were known as the oath-bound, and folk soon learned to recognize them, and their followers, by the cognizance of their oath—the unique mark which proclaimed them “eth-kent.”

“Slippin da okkragert” was a common phrase, now losing all its meaning. “Okkragert” is enclosed land that has had a crop on it, and when the harvest was all “idda yaurds” the “hill-grinnds” were removed, and the creatures from the common were allowed the run of the “toon.” The hungry beasts knew well the time when the “okkragert” would be slippit, and would haunt the neighbourhood of the hill-grinnd agog for the opening. So when a covetous heir was impatiently waiting for his coming fortune, and idling on the strength of his expectations, which might turn out not all he looked for, it was sneeringly said, “Yaa, yaa, he’s waitin’ till da okkragert’s slippit. Maybe he’ll no’ finnd mair upo da leys as he might hae got aff o’ da scattald.” That last sentence means that perhaps he would find himself disappointed in the amount of his fortune after all. “Leys” is ground from which the crop has been removed, and is left to rest. “Scattald” is a better known term. The people will never forgive the cruelty which robbed them of their “scattalds,” the common land for which in ages past their fathers had paid scat, and which they passionately (and rightly) believed was theirs. They held their “toons” free, or by voluntary service given the fowd, or yarl, or viking, under whose protection they lived. The rent (or scat) they gave for the use of the commons—the daals and fiels and saiteurs where their

animals fed, and from whence they got their fuel.¹

"Der muckle tryste afore wiz when da tushkar taks ta turven." The "tushkar" was the instrument which cut and brought the peats out of their bed. "Turven" is "the peats." "Muckle tryste" is much trouble and laborious work. Using the "tushkar" is the first step in the long and trying process of curing and bringing home the fuel. So when one began some difficult job which would heavily tax one's powers to bring to a satisfactory conclusion, it was remarked that there was much hard work and stress ahead when the "tushkar" began its duty.

"Riding da hagries" was a curious custom necessary in the days when no written deeds, no print, were available. At regular intervals—perhaps once a year—the owners of land rode round their scattald boundaries (which were mere stones set on end here and there) to

¹ In accordance with the practice of the mother country, Norway and of Orkney, skatt was a tax paid to the Government for the cultivated lands. There is absolutely no proof that the practice differed in Shetland. The assertion by Hibbert and others that skatt was paid in Shetland to the Government for the use of the scattald or common grazing ground is evidently put forward as an explanation of the meaning of the mysterious name scattald. The scattald was originally called *hagi* (O.N.=pasture, a hedged field), and riding the marches of the scattald or hagi continued to be called "riding the hagries." The scattald was a defined run of grazing land attached to a township, and used in common solely by the townfolk; it was quite separate from the hill land or commons proper. Skatt in Shetland can be proved to have been originally assessed on a pennyland valuation (now lost), as is still the case in Orkney. That it was not assessed on the merks of land is proved by the fact that the amount of skatt now paid *per* merk differs in the various townships. As in Orkney, the pennylands were subsequently for renting purposes valued at from 1 to 12 merks each. In Shetland the merks were further revalued in pennies for renting purposes. The pennies represented the actual value in Shetland currency of butter and cloth, which was paid in rent, as is clearly proved by all the rentals.

The alteration of the name *hagi* into *scattald* evidently occurred in this way. In the report of the Royal Commission appointed in 1575 to inquire into the oppressions in Shetland, the terms scattald, scattland, and scathald are used as meaning the whole township—the cultivated land and its hagi, the district paying skatt. It is only in recent times that the term scattald is used in a restricted sense for the hagi or common grazing land of the township.—A.W.J.

see that these had not been altered or obliterated. They were accompanied by their serving-men and some tenants, and, notably, by a few small boys. These were probably "greeting" sorely, for at every landmark a boy "got a sair treshin sae as he sood mind weel whaur da hagemts stude." Each season a different lot of boys had to undergo this discipline. So there was always someone living who could, by the memory of his floggings, tell accurately where the "hagemts" should be.

I have heard this phrase applied only once. The old man who used it was humorous and blessed with a vivid imagination. He was telling me a very "tall" story, and I think I smiled incredulously, for he said quickly, "It's true at am tellin you, for I mind it weel—as weel as Auld Daa minded da hagemts." When I asked how his grandfather remembered the boundaries, he scratched his head and glanced knowingly "oot o da tail o his ee," and replied, "Weel, ye see, Auld Daa wiz een o da boys at hed ta follow da lairds whan dey wir riding da hagries." As Auld Daa was probably an urchin about the middle of the eighteenth century, that custom must have been in vogue not more than one hundred and fifty years ago. When I pressed for further information about Auld Daa's unique juvenile experience, I was told that he "gowled dat odious 'at da laird roared oot, 'God save you, men, and gie da bairn a bit frae wir ferdie-mate ta stap his minn wi'.' So dan een stikit a morsel itta Auld Daa's haund, bit he gowled on for au dat. Lang an last, da laird grippit him be da lug an says, 'If du doesna had de sheeks I'se gie de a gude lunder upo da wrang side o de haffit.' So dan he gowled nae mair, bit—what wi' ae thing an anidder—Auld Daa had kaishin to mind upa dat riding o da hagries, yau, yau."

"Gowlin" is weeping loudly and vehemently. "Ferdie-mate" is journeying food, and was required on those prolonged meanderings over the land. "Lunder" and "haffit" are words commonly used in Scotland as well

as here, but in case they are not familiar I give their meanings as we use them—"lunder," a smart blow; "haffit" the side of the head. "Kaishin" is merely a corruption of "occasion." It is to be regretted that writers who know a little of our dialect, but less of modern English have confused our mispronunciations and corruptions, our distorted use of some words, and our ignorant application of others. For instance, "edder" is "either" with the "th" sounded as we always sound it. "Portridge," mispronunciation of portrait.

"A hair o da tek at bett de." "Nane sae deaf as he 'at winna hear." "An ill röt never sprang a gude branch." These are samples from lists of so-called Shetland proverbs. They are of course mere translations into the vernacular of common English saws. No doubt it may be interesting to some to note how this is rendered, but it reveals deplorable ignorance to call them Old Shetland, for, of course, scholars have detected the palpable error at once, and naturally put small value on what comes from such sources.

"Am no wantin ony o your back-faestes." That is what a generous giver said when one offered something in return for a benefit received. "Da Backfaeste" was an entertainment given by the principle groomsman in return for the wedding festivities to which the best-man contributed nothing, but where he was regarded as the most important guest, and treated accordingly. It is a fine trait in the Shetlander that if you give him (or her) anything, he will always strive to present you with some gift in return. This becomes sometimes an embarrassment when you have tried, as delicately as you know how, to help a poor person, and the attention is paid back with as much tact and good-feeling as a prince could show.

To get your hat "beggled" was to have it "bashed" out of all shape. Beggle is almost identical with the

old Norse word, "bögglaðr," which, I am told, means exactly the same thing.

The eccentric method of using the masculine and feminine gender has led to some confusion of terms. A woman would speak of her heart, or lip, or hand, or breast, as "him," and even her consoler, the stroopie (tea-pot), was "he." "It" was never applied except in contempt or derision. "Whau wid mind what da lek o *hit* said"—Who would pay heed to what an insignificant creature like that said.

When folk are all wondering and gossiping about some event, they are said to be "in a consternation aboot dat." This is obviously using an English word in a wrong sense. And as English was learned as a foreign tongue it is not wonderful that many words got misplaced.

"Dunna let da fools truck troo da grice's truss"—Don't let the fowls scatter and trample on the pig's refuse. Refuse hardly gives the full meaning of "truss," which may be potato skins, fish bones, leavings of porridge, and scrapings of any sort fit for an animal's eating.

"Shu's ay demblin idda blaand bit shu's no gotton smoren frae *dat* kit"—She is always dipping in the whey but she has not got butter out of *that* pail. This is applied to anyone who tries to grow a crop on soil unfit for the purpose.

We never spoke directly to the point. We asked a visitor who declared herself too hurried to stop any time, "Lass, canna du dip de?" And if one came to enquire for an invalid, one looked keenly in the face and then remarked, "Osla 'ill no be sae weel da day." The reader of a countenance had seen by the expression of Osla's folk that she was worse. Our folk were most accurate in reading one's mind from the features, and I suppose it was this faculty which enabled the wise-women to tell fortunes, and the like, so truthfully. Thus a certain

minnie (grandmother) was reputed to "keen what da very soond o a hert-shot cairied." Hert-shot, the noise of sneezing.

"I doot dey'll be biogit. Blanda maks puir mell." A biog is a defect in the colour of wool, causing ugly marks across any article into which it is knitted. Blanda is oats and barley sown together and ground into a coarse sort of meal. When children of parents belonging to two distinct, and not too reputable stocks turned out ill, the above remark was made by some wise-woman whose opinion carried weight.

Somebody fell ill, and folk asked themselves how it had come about. Then one would recall that a neighbour had died "afore da year wiz oot," and the "reek o da leek-straw"¹ had blown on the sick man's house. It was the custom when the funeral left the house, and had got a bit on the road, that the straw of the dead one's bed should be carried out and burned at once. This cleansing-fire process prevented any attempt which the ghost (if it had not gone to rest peaceably) might make to haunt its former abode. If the reek (smoke) was wafted to another house it signified that someone would fall ill there. Doubtless this part of the superstition took its rise in the fact that when a person had died of an infectious disease, and the straw was carried out, some germs were wafted to a neighbouring house, or the malady had possibly spread to other dwellings before it had been recognized.

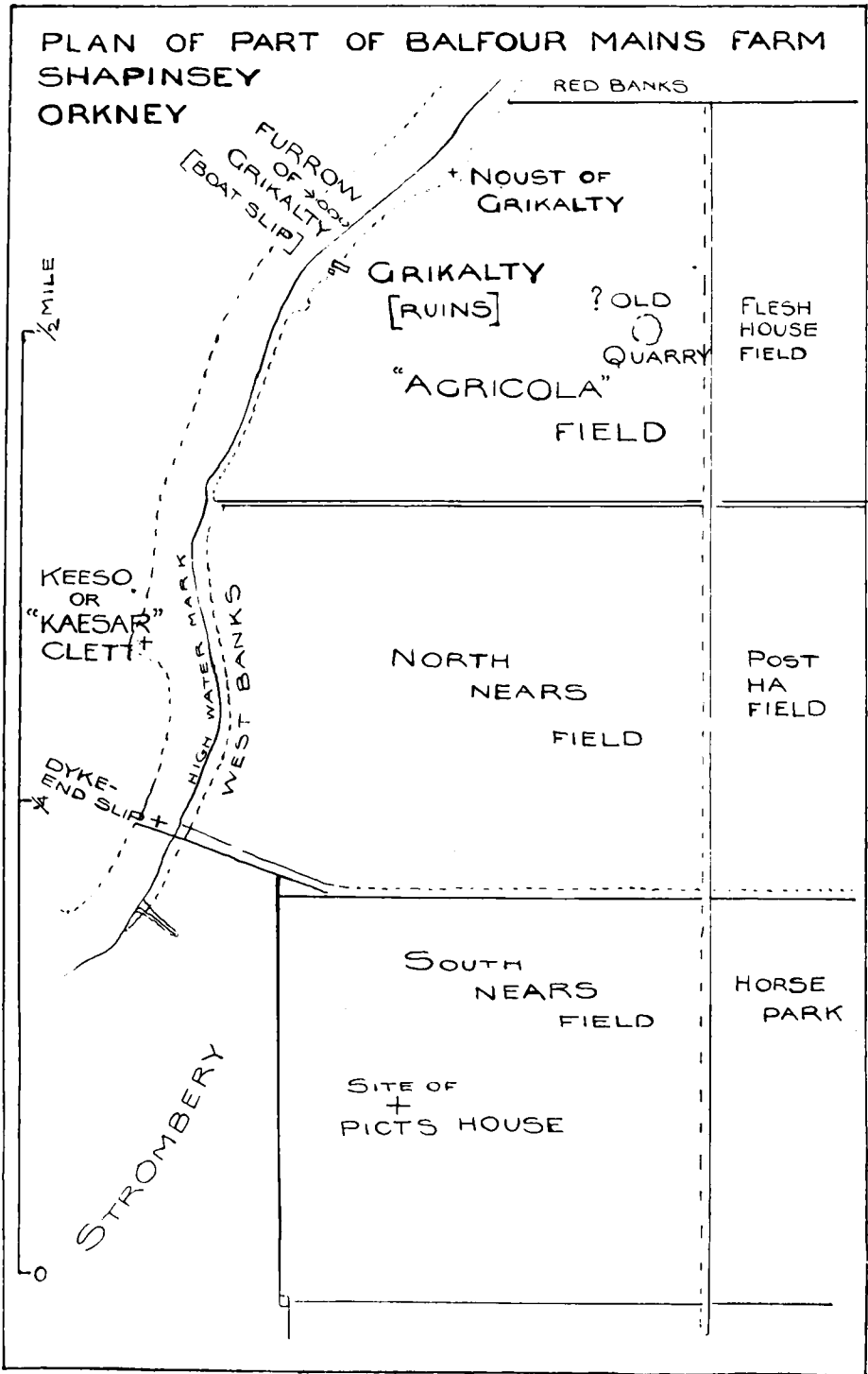
The "leek" (in Scotland it is the "leet") is a curious term. All the men within a certain radius were expected, nay, bound, to attend a funeral and help carry. No invitation was issued. If anyone within the leek absented himself it was taken as a mortal offence. No person outside the leek would attend without a special invitation, which was called the "moinboo." When the person bearing the message arrived he didn't present compli-

¹ O.N., *lik*, a corpse. Cf. English *lychgate*, *lykewake*.—A.W.J.

ments, or ask any question. He merely alluded to the fact that "Da puir man o Dale wiz awa'," and that "Der pitten hit by" (putting it, the corpse, aside) on such and such a day, at such and such an hour. The name of the deceased was never mentioned by the relatives. "Him at belonged ta me." "Her at we tint" (lost). "Dem at's awa'." "The bairn that I wanted." That is how the Shetlander still speaks of the dead.

JESSIE M. E. SAXBY.

(To be continued.)



THE ROMANS IN ORKNEY AND SHETLAND.

THE following particulars regarding the Romans in Orkney have been collected as a reply to the querist in Miscellany p. 205.

The accompanying plan which has been compiled from information gathered by Mr. James Johnston, shows the position of the places mentioned in the query. To the North of Grikalty on the same coast occur the following place-names:— The Galt (a tongue of land), Galt Ness (the point of The Galt), Galt Skerry and Little Galt Skerry. The Skerry of Vasa mentioned by Dr. Barry is about half a mile to the north of Grikalty.

Tacitus in his *Life of Agricola* (c. 28. Oxford Translation, revised. Vol. II. p. 370, the Editor's footnotes are placed in brackets thus []) states that when Agricola was in Scotland (A.D. 83)—

A cohort of Usipii, which had been levied in Germany, and sent over into Britain, performed an extremely daring and memorable action. After murdering a centurion and some soldiers who had been incorporated with them for the purpose of instructing them in military discipline, they seized upon three light vessels, and compelled the masters to go on board with them. One of these, however, escaping to shore, they killed the other two upon suspicion; and before the affair was publicly known, they sailed away, as it were by miracle. They were presently driven at the mercy of the waves, and had frequent conflicts with various success with the Britons, defending their property from plunder. [Mr. Pennant had a present made him in Skye of a brass sword and a denarius found in that island; might they not have been lost by some of these people in one of their landings?] At length they were reduced to such extremity of distress as to be obliged to feed upon each other, the weakest being first sacrificed, and then such as were taken by lot. In this manner, having sailed round the island, they lost their ships through want of skill; and being regarded as pirates, were intercepted, first by the Suevi, then by the Frisii. Some of them, after being sold for slaves, by the change of masters were brought to the Roman side of the river [the Rhine] and became notorious from the relation of their extraordinary adventures. [This extraordinary expedition, according

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to Dio, set out from the western side of the island. They therefore must have coasted all that part of Scotland, must have passed the intricate navigation through the Hebrides, and the dangerous strait of Pentland Firth, and after coming round to the eastern side must have been driven to the mouth of the Baltic Sea. Here they lost their ships, and in their attempt to proceed homeward by land were seized as pirates, part by the Suevi, and the rest by the Frisii.]

Agricola during his Scottish Campaign, (c. 29. p. 371. A.D. 84),

Having sent forward his fleet to spread its ravages through various parts of the coast, in order to excite an extensive and dubious alarm, he marched with an army . . . and arrived at the Grampian Hills. (Having defeated the enemy) he ordered the commander of the fleet to sail round the island, for which expedition he was furnished with sufficient force, and preceded with the terror of the Roman name. He himself then led back the cavalry and infantry, marching slowly, that he might impress a deeper awe on the newly-conquered nations, and at length distributed his troops into their winter-quarters. The fleet about the same time, with prosperous gales and renown, entered the Trutulensian harbour, whence, coasting all the hither shore of Britain, it returned entire to its former station. [This circumnavigation was in a contrary direction to that of the Usipian deserters, the fleet setting out from the Firth of Tay on the eastern coast, and sailing round the northern, western, and southern coasts, till it arrived at the port of Sandwich in Kent,; after staying here some time to refit, it went to its former station, in the Firth of Forth or Tay.]

In a general account of the situation and inhabitants of Britain, Tacitus (c. 10) states that "its northern extremity has no opposite land, but is washed by a wide and open sea." He goes on to relate that during Agricola's government—

The Roman fleet, at this period first sailing round this remotest coast, gave certain proof that Britain was an island; and at the same time discovered and subdued the Orcades, islands till then unknown. Thule was also distinctly seen, which winter and eternal snow had hitherto concealed. The sea is reported to be sluggish and laborious to the rower; and even to be scarcely agitated by winds. The cause of this stagnation I imagine to be the deficiency of land and mountains where tempests are generated; and the difficulty with which such a mighty mass of waters, in an uninterrupted main, is put in motion. . . . The dominion of the sea is nowhere more extensive . . . it carries many currents in this direction and in that.

[The Orkney Islands. These, although now first thoroughly known

to the Romans, had before been heard of and mentioned by authors. Thus Mela, iii. 6: "There are thirty of the Orcades, separated from each other by narrow straits." And Pliny, iv. 16: "The Orcades are forty in number, at a small distance from each other." In the reign of Claudius, the report concerning these islands was particularly current, and adulation converted it into the news of a victory. Hence Hieronymus in his *Chronicon* says, "Claudius triumphed over the Britons, and added the Orcades to the Roman Empire."]

In a note to *Thule* the Editor says:—

Camden supposes the Shetland Islands to be meant here by Thule; others imagine it to have been one of the Hebrides. Pliny, iv. 16, mentions Thule as the most remote of all known islands; and, by placing it but one day's sail from the Frozen Ocean, renders it probable that Iceland was intended. Procopius (*Bell. Goth.* ii. 15) speaks of another Thule, which must have been Norway, which many of the ancients thought to be an island. Mr. Pennant supposes that the Thule here meant was Foula, a very lofty isle, one of the most westerly of the Shetlands, which might easily be descried by the fleet.

It seems probable that the Orcades mentioned by Tacitus included Shetland and possibly the Faroes, and that Iceland must be the Thule which was seen.

Wallace in his *Description of Orkney* in 1693 (Reprint 1883 p. 87) gives the following account of Agricola's circumnavigation of Britain:—

After they had coasted many dayes towards the north, they came at last in sight of Orkney, . . . but fearing to pass through Pightland Firth for fear of shallows, they seised some of the husband men, that lived in the next Islelands constraining them to go aboard and pilot them through the Firth; but they suspecting that the Romans had a hostile design on their country, not careing for their own lives, they entered the strait at such an inconvenient time, that the ships were born with the violence of the stream against the rocks and shelves in such a manner that they were all almost torn, broke, and lost, without recovery only some few of the navy, that were not so hasty to follow, perceiving the sad loss of their fellows, returned by the same way they came and reported these lamentable tidings to Agricola: and indeed there is a place in Shapinsha, over against which are impetuous tides and dangerous shallows, at this day called Agricola, but whither it got that name from this accident, I am not able to determine.

From what source did Wallace get the above account? Is it a garbled mixture of Tacitus' accounts of the

Usipian deserters' and Agricola's expeditions, possibly compiled from second-hand narratives?

Mr. George Low (Tour through Orkney and Shetland, p. xl.) wrote in 1773:—

I never hear with any certainty of any Roman coins, or even Danish dug up here. I have been told a gentleman found several Roman coins at a place in Shapinsha called Grugalty, said to be so called from the loss of one of Agricola's ships there; however, I something doubt the truth of the relation, having never met with anyone that saw any of them.

p. xlvii. 1774, on his return from Shetland Mr. Low wrote:—

I have pick't up a number of matters, several stone weapons, and antiquities of brass; met with a single Roman coin in good preservation, with many others of different nations, tho' but few very ancient.

Dr. Barry in his account of Shapinsay in 1796 (Old Statistical Account, vol. xvii., p. 235) writes:—

On the west shore, opposite nearly to the rock or skerry of Vasa, where the tides are rapid and the sea shallow, we meet with a place known by the name of Grucula or *Agricola*. Thither, tradition reports, one of Agricola's ships, in his celebrated voyage around the island of Britain, was driven by violence of weather, and stranded, and what seems to evince that the tradition is founded on truth is, that Roman coins are said to have been found here, by the late Mr. Fea, of Clestron.

The Rev. John Barry, son of the above, in the New Statistical Account of Orkney p. 81, repeats part of the above narrative. Dr. Barry in his *History of Orkney* however, does not mention this tradition. The only evidence he brings forward in support of *Tacitus'* statement regarding the Roman expedition to Orkney is:—

Major Moodie, of Melsetter, Orkney, has a brazen sword, of a particular composition, short, calculated to cut and thrust, and every way similar to those used by the Romans, which was found below a moss in one of the Shetland Islands. From this it would seem that the Romans had explored the Shetland as well as the Orkney Islands, though they do not seem to have retained a permanent possession of either.

Mr. J. G. Moodie Heddle writes that the whereabouts of the above sword is unknown to him.

Hibbert: Description of Shetland, 1822:—

p. 101 Dunrossness. About forty years ago a copper medal of Vespasian [A.D. 69-79], the reverse *Judæa Victa*, is recorded to have been turned up by the plough. I have examined several of the coins that are said to have been found in different parts of Shetland, which were those of Galba [A.D. 68], *Ælius Cæsar* [A.D. 161-180], and Trajan [A.D. 98-117]. In one district, Northmavine, a pugio [short dagger without a sheath] was reported to have been discovered.

p. 127. Note to p. 101. Mr. Ross (late of Lerwick). . . . In his possession I have seen . . . a copper medal, bearing the inscription of *Ser. Galba Imp.*, *Caes. Aug.*; another of Vespasian, and a silver coin of Trajan. Mr. Pennant, in his *Arctic Zoology*, has stated on the authority of the late Rev. George Low, that a medal of Vespasian had been formerly found at Dunrossness. I possess a note to the same effect in Mr. Low's handwriting. "In Dunrossness parish was some time ago found a copper medal of Vespasian, the reverse *Judæa Victa*. It was turned up in plowing the ground."

In the plate of antiquities given in the appendix, marked fig. 2: a copper medal, found in Shetland, bears on one side the name of *L. Ælius Cæsar*, and on the reverse "*Pannoniæ, Curia A E L*"; in which *Ælius* is figured as receiving from a native of Pannonia a cornucopia and a household-god. Below are the letters *S.C.* (*senatus consulto*).

Dr. Joseph Anderson of the National Museum of Antiquities, Edinburgh, writes that Roman coins of Vespasian, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, and Crispina, were found in the Broch of Lingrow, Scapa, near Kirkwall, ranging in possible date from A.D. 69-177. But only one of them, that of Vespasian who reigned from A.D. 69-79, could have been in circulation at the time of Agricola's invasion.

The three ships of the Usipian deserters' expedition were all wrecked at the mouth of the Baltic, and Tacitus says that Agricola's fleet returned entire to its former station. There is therefore no record that any Roman ship was wrecked in the north.

The finding of Roman coins in Orkney and Shetland only proves that they must have come there at any time

between their date and the time at which they were found. Their presence cannot be accepted even as a tittle of circumstantial evidence that they were brought there by Romans. Dr. Anderson points out that Roman coins were found in Ireland and Norway, where the Romans never set foot.

The finding of Roman coins, in Shapinsey, the historical fact of the Roman invasion, and the suggestive place-names Grikalty, Grugalty, or Grucula, and Keesocleat, probably accounts for the origin of the so-called tradition, the glossed names Agricola and Kaesarcllett, and the transmogrification of a tumulus or quarry-heap into a Roman camp. Mr. James Johnston has been unable to find any local traditions on the subject.

With regard to the transmission of traditions we should remember that in the case of Norse mythology—the living religion of the North nine hundred years ago, and probably much later—it would be idle to suppose “that any living Icelandic tradition of the old heathen days had survived the middle ages.”¹ If it had not been for the discovery, three hundred years ago, of the MSS. of the two Eddas we should have had little or no traditions or knowledge of the Norse Gods at all. When we consider this almost total extinction of all traditions of our old religion in some two hundred years, how can we credit the possibility of the existence of a tradition of a Roman shipwreck in Pictish times, eighteen hundred years ago!

A. W. JOHNSTON.

¹ Vigfusson's *Corpus Poeticum Boreale*, vol. 1., p. xcvi.

SOME OLD-TIME SHETLANDIC WRECKS.

V.

ON the 11th March, 1730, the "St. Helena," of Hamburg, 150 tons, a Greenland whaler, outward-bound for the whale-fishing, was wrecked in the Wick of Skaw, Unst. Out of the crew of 30 men 25 perished. The vessel (supposed to be a brig, or a small barque) was dashed to pieces, and the salvage was small, but there was a great legal struggle over it.

The main facts appear to be that the first Vice-Admiral, advised of the wreck, authorized an Admiralty Court, which, as of wont, was held on the spot, and then adjourned to the nearest convenient house.

Before the adjourned Court met, a second Vice-Admiral had been advised of the disaster, and he also sent off a Commission and instructions. The first Admiral craved that both parties concur in a tripartite division of what had been salved, viz., one-third each, to the Admiral, to the proprietor of the ground, and to the salvors, and that the salved goods be put to immediate roup because of the barbarous situation of the wreck. The second Admiral at once raised an objection, and refused the alleged practice, holding that such a tripartite division only obtained in the matter of whales, and not in shipwrecks, in which the owner retained his right, subject to reasonable salvage, if the claim should be made good within "year and day," failing which the subjects salved fell to the King, *i.e.*, the Admiral.

It is not known how the struggle ended, but as the second Admiral was the substitute of the Earl of Morton, he was able to hang up the final decision for his Lordship, who no doubt found that the custom of the country was that he had right to the wreck.¹

¹ Midbrake Papers.

With regard to the Swedish East Indiaman wrecked *circa*. 1738, probably at Hamar Voe or Mangasetter Voe, Northmaven, Gifford, in his "History of Zetland," says :

. . . "When the Earl of Morton visited Busta, Mr. Gifford told the Earl that his fishers, among other articles got from the ship, found on the coast a very large log of lead, which his servants used as a stool in the kitchen. This his Lordship viewed, and, scraping a part of it with a knife, informed him it was silver, and was the most valuable piece of furniture in the house ! It was afterwards taken care of, and sold for the benefit of the owner, after paying salvage. . . ."

In the month of September, 1744, the "Stockholm," a Swedish full-rigged East India ship, outward-bound from Stockholm, was wrecked near Braefield, Dunrossness. The exact spot where the vessel went ashore was on the rocky coast, at a small landing-place called Pund Brüci, where the Bruces of Sumburgh used to have their peats put on board boats, the fuel being carried by ponies from the peat-hill near at hand.

The "Stockholm" ran ashore during the early hours of a harvest morning, just before daybreak. It is probable that it was foggy at the time, since the sea was quite smooth, and the crew, 24 in number, had no difficulty in landing, and were hospitably received at the "toon" of Clumlie, where they were housed for about three weeks.

All the moveables were safely brought on shore, and some small amount of cargo was salvaged, but the ship remained fast, and was broken up by the winter storms.

A good deal of plundering went on, and a number of casks of wine and spirits were obtained from the wreck.

The story goes that the purser or supercargo of the ship was murdered by one of the crew during the time that the men were housed at Dunrossness.¹

The "Sveriges Drottning," a Swedish East Indiaman, was wrecked in December, 1744, at Twagios, South Ness,

¹ Midbrake Papers, &c.

Lerwick. This vessel belonged to the "Royal Swedish Asiatick Company," and was outward-bound. The crew were saved. The people on shore plundered the ship of many casks of spirits.

Mr. William Elliott, the chief supercargo, presented the ship's bell to the Kirk Session of Lerwick on 12th January, 1745.¹

On 9th September, 1746 (O.S.), "Die Frau Rebecca Elizabet van Apenzade," a Danish ship, commanded by Peter Jesen Koth, was wrecked on Papa Stour. She was laden with balks of timber, 10 to 36 feet in length, and about a foot square, of which some 300 drove ashore; a few being cast up by the tide some 15 to 20 miles from the scene of the wreck. Her two cables, very much chafed on the rocks, and her anchors were salvaged, but little or nothing in the way of masts, sails, yards or rigging. Nothing is stated as to the crew, but it is supposed that they were saved.

The ship anchored during a gale in an exposed position, the anchors "came home," and the "Frau Rebecca" drove ashore and was smashed to pieces.²

1748, September 30th, the "William and Robert," a topsail schooner, owned by Robert Hunter of Lunna, wrecked in Donald's Gio, Saltness, west side of the island of Whalsay.

Towards the end of September the schooner was laden with "dry salted fish" (belonging to Robert Hunter and Laurence Bruce, Whalsay), for Hamburg, and sailed from Symbister Voe, under command of James Calder, with a fair wind from W.N.W. The schooner had not got farther than two leagues from the land, when a gale sprang up from the S.E.; whereupon the master laid the ship about, and stood back for Symbister Voe. Calder endeavoured to beat the schooner as far into the Voe as possible, in order to get more shelter, "but having

¹ Statistical Account: Midbrake Papers, &c.

² Midbrake Papers, &c.

made several tacks—the night coming on,” he was compelled to “come to an anchor” in the opening of the Voe, where the schooner rode out the night, the wind continuing to blow from the S.E. In the morning the wind varied from S. to S.W., and then to W.S.W., “with a most violent hurricane,” which “beat in the deadlights in the stern of the ship,” so that she was almost half-full of water; indeed, so quickly did she fill that the master and crew could get no shelter below, and being in great fear that the vessel would founder at her anchors, the master having consulted with the crew, “protested at the main mast against the wind and storm,” and then cut the ship’s cables, “whereupon, the wind and sea getting worse,” the vessel drove before the gale, in a helpless condition, until she struck in Donald’s Gio. The cargo was “utterly damnified and lost,” and it was with the greatest difficulty that the crew managed to get ashore in safety. The wreck was exposed for sale at Lerwick, in the house of Margaret Ross, widow of James Craigie, of Stebbiegrind, and was purchased by Andrew Horrie, Bailie in Lerwick, for the sum of £19 sterling, of which the salvors received £17, the balance of £2 being paid to Robert Hunter of Lunna, as owner of the vessel!

Laurence Smith of Marrister (in Whalsay) had a commission to watch over the ship and cargo, and Robert Mitchell, shipmaster, and Peter Green, carpenter, examined the vessel with a view to seeing if she could be repaired. They, however, found that she was not worth repairing, and Laurence Smith then gave up an inventory, which runs as follows:—

One foresail, all spent in the water.
 One mainsail, two-thirds wore.
 One new foretopsail.
 One new studdingsail.
 Chain and fore standing rigging.
 Old parcel of running rigging—all cut.
 Six or seven fathom of each cable.

Two lower masts—both broke—with yards whole.

Mainboom and gaff.

Boltsprit standing in the wreck.

Three old water casks.

An iron grate, and a pot.

The remainder of the wreck standing at Saltness in Whalsay.

The cargo of the "William and Robert" consisted of 2,492 ling and 385 cod, the whole weighing 156 quintals. The Admiral took the "best anchor and cable."

It is of interest to note that the "William and Robert" was taken by the French in 1747, but was afterwards ransomed.¹

R. STUART BRUCE.

¹Symbister Papers.

OBITUARY.

MISS KATHERINE IRVINE.—Died September 12th, 1907, in Edinburgh, where she had gone for medical treatment. Eldest daughter of the late William Irvine, of Messrs. Hay and Co., Lerwick. Her literary work consisted of translations of Wilhelm Jensen's "Fair Isle," published by Messrs. Peace and Son, Kirkwall, and Reinhold Fuch's "Helga," published in Lerwick. She also made other translations, and wrote original pieces for private circulation. The funeral took place from Lerwick Parish Church.

SIR JAMES DAVID MARWICK, Kt., LL.D., F.R.S.E., D.L., Glasgow, J.P., Lanarkshire and Glasgow.—Original Subscriber to "Old-lore," and Honorary Member of the Viking Club since its foundation in 1892. Born in Leith, July 15th, 1826, died in Glasgow, March 24th, 1908, in his 82nd year. Eldest son of the late William Marwick, Kirkwall, and Margaret, daughter of James Garioch, there. Married Jane, daughter of James B. Watt, solicitor, Edinburgh, 1855. Educated at Kirkwall Grammar School; Edinburgh University. Passed as Procurator in Dundee, 1852; admitted member of the S.S.C. Society, 1858. Practised as a solicitor in Edinburgh. In 1858 returned as a Member of the Town Council of Edinburgh. Appointed Town Clerk of that city in 1861 until 1873, when he became Town Clerk of Glasgow, until he retired in 1903. *Publications*: History of the High Constables of Edinburgh, 1865; Editor, Scottish Burgh Record Society Publications, 1868-97; Editor, Records of the Convention of the Royal Burghs of Scotland, 1866-90; History of the Collegiate Church and Hospital of the Holy Trinity, Edinburgh, 1891; Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh, 1869-92; Charters and other Documents of the City of Edinburgh, 1871; Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Glasgow, 1876-81; Charters and other Documents of the City of

Glasgow, 1894; Historical Preface to these Glasgow publications, 1897; Report on Markets and Fairs in Scotland, prepared for the Royal Commission on Markets and Fairs, 1890; the River Clyde and the Harbour of Glasgow, 1898; Glasgow, the Water Supply of the City, 1901; Observations on the Law and Practice of Municipal Corporations in Scotland, 1879. Sir James was knighted by Queen Victoria in 1888, and received the degree of the LL.D. from Glasgow University in 1878. His recreation was photography. Historic research had ever a fascination for Sir James, and he was more or less thus engaged until a few days before his death. He had been engaged, amongst other things, in completing the revision of the proof sheets of his History of the Clyde and its Development. Sir James is survived by his widow, Lady Marwick, and five daughters and two sons. His eldest daughter, Kate, is married to the Rev. Dugald Butler, D.D., minister of Galashiels, author of *Life of Archbishop Leighton*, *History of Abernethy*, *History of the Tron Church, Edinburgh*, etc. His fourth daughter, Jean, is married to John J. Burnet, A.R.S.A., F.R.I.B.A., Glasgow, the architect for the extension of the British Museum, the Western Infirmary, Glasgow, and Clyde Trust, Glasgow. His eldest son, David William Marwick, M.A., LL.B., W.S., Edinburgh, married Louise Kenmure Maitland Peterkin, fourth daughter of the late W. A. Peterkin, Chief Superintendent of the Board of Supervision, and grand-daughter of the Very Rev. Principal Barclay, D.D., of Glasgow University. Mr. Marwick is a member of the firm of Messrs. Simpson and Marwick, W.S., Edinburgh, who are the agents for the Free Church of Scotland, and conducted the litigation which obtained for their clients the famous decision of the House of Lords in August, 1904, which, or rather the agitation following on which, induced by the powerful number of the United Free Church, led to the passing of *The Churches (Scotland)*

Act. His second son, James Marwick, is a Chartered Accountant in New York, senior partner of the firm of Marwick, Mitchell and Co., Chartered Accountants, New York, Minneapolis, Chicago, Philadelphia, Pittsburg, and Winnipeg. Sir James was predeceased by one daughter, Maud, who died in 1903.

THOMAS PETERSON OLLASON.—Born in Lerwick August 24th, 1865, died there February 24th, 1908, aged 42. The younger son of the late James Ollason. *Publications* (mostly in Shetland dialect): Mareel, Mansie's Uphelly A' Veedit to Lerwick, Spindrift.

PETER PETERSON FRASER, J.P.—Original subscriber. Born in Shetland, died at Forbes, New South Wales, after a short illness. Eldest son of the late Rev. Laurence Fraser, Walls, Shetland. He went to Victoria in the early seventies and settled in the Wimmera District, and latterly resided at Forbes, N.S.W. He took an active interest in municipal affairs, and was instrumental in forming the Shire of Dimboola in 1885, of which he was elected the first President. He was appointed by the Government to make an enquiry and report on irrigation, in connection with which he visited Egypt, Italy, France, Holland, and the United States. His recommendation that experimental farms should be established was carried into effect, with highly beneficial results.—From the *Nihil Free Press*, April 14th, 1908.

WILLIAM HENDERSON, of Petister.—Original subscriber. Born at the North Ha, North Roe, August 28th, 1827, died at Brough House, Burravoe, Yell, May 24th, 1908, in his 81st year. Eldest and only surviving son of the late George Henderson, of Petister and Brough, and Barbara, daughter of Henry Ross, solicitor, Lerwick. He was seventh in lineal descent of the House of Petister, founded in 1673 by John Henderson, third son of Magnus Henderson, of Bunes.—From *The Shetland Times*, June 6th, 1908.

NOTES ON BOOKS.

The Annals of Scottish Natural History. A Quarterly Magazine. Edited by J. A. Harvie-Brown, F.R.S.E., F.Z.S., Professor James W. H. Traill, M.A., M.D., F.R.S., F.L.S., and W. E. Clarke, F.R.S.E., F.L.S., Keeper of the Natural History Department, Royal Scottish Museum. Edinburgh: David Douglas. Annual subscription, 7s. 6d., or 2s. 6d. each quarterly number.

The April number of *The Annals* contains much of interest to the Orkney and Shetland naturalist. Mr. R. C. Haldane gives an account of "Whaling in Scotland for 1907." The season of 1907 has been a very productive one, and the whales show no sign of diminution. There are interesting notes on migration and on the various species killed. Mr. W. E. Clarke contributes an article on the "The Birds of Fair Isle.—III. Report on Observations made during the year 1907." The movements of 117 species were recorded. The new birds added to the fauna were 17, making the total ascertained Ornithology of Fair Isle at the close of the year to be 160 species. Foremost among the new birds in point of interest, and, it may be added, not less so in rarity, is the Siberian Chiff-Chaff. This species is a summer visitor to the extreme N.E. of Europe and to N.W. Asia, and is only known to have reached our shores on one previous occasion. Several occurred in Fair Isle in October, which suggests the possibility that it is not a mere accidental visitor. A list is given of the species observed. There is a continuation of the "Plants of Sutherland and Caithness," by G. C. Druce. Mr. W. H. Beeby, "On the Flora of Shetland," gives a Revision of the *Hieracia*, known to occur in Shetland. Mr. Beeby's collection, amassed during the past twenty years, is now a large one. It appears that the Faeroes possess twenty-three forms, of which two are varieties, while in Shetland there are eighteen, of which four are varieties. A table

is given of their relative distribution. Shetland, with its greater diversity of rock formation, possesses five forms less than the Faeroes, while seven groups and sub-groups are represented in Shetland, against five in the Faeroes. The Alpestrina are the dominant group in Shetland. The Cerinthoidea, the dominant group in the Faeroes, an essentially Atlantic type, while wanting in Shetland are sparingly represented in Orkney. Under *Botanical Notes* are some particulars of the study of peat mosses being made by Mr. F. J. Lewis in several districts of Scotland from the south to Shetland and the Hebrides, being contributions to the Royal Society, Edinburgh. Under *Current Literature* are noted "On Some Bird Remains from the Beach of Ayre, Orkney," by N. F. Ticehurst, in *British Birds*, March, 1908. The remains found were those of the Gannet, Cormorant, Shag, Great Northern Diver, Whooper, Gall sp., Sharwater sp., and the Great Auk. "White-Ringed Plover," by J. Whitaker, *Zoologist*, 1907. One was shot at Westray, Orkney. "Eighteen New European Voles," by G. S. Miller *Ann. and Mag. Nat. Hist.*, Feb., 1908, in which *Microtus sandayensis* *westræ*, subsp. n., from Westray, North Orkney, is described.

The *Annals* are rich in interesting matter for the Orkney and Shetland naturalist. The names of the editors alone are a guarantee of the value of its contents, while the work is delightfully done, like everything else that is issued by Mr. David Douglas.—A. W. JOHNSTON.

The Orkney and Shetland Society of London. Annual Report, 1907. London, March 25th, 1908. Secretary, M. S. Lennie, "Boncroft," Windsor Road, Church End, Finchley, London, N. Annual subscription, 6s.

This Society, which was founded in 1819, for the relief of natives of Orkney and Shetland, their wives or children resident in London, in circumstances of difficulty

or distress, has issued its Report for 1907. The income for the year was £46 14s., from some eighty members and donors. The Society does good work, with the small funds in hand, in relieving those in distress, and should receive much better support from natives in London and others interested. The invested funds amount to £150, 2½ per cent. Consols. The Annual Meeting took place on March 24th, 1908, in the Cannon Street Hotel, which was followed by a concert and dance. The President is Mr. J. Cathcart Wason, M.P. for the Counties.

The Orkney and Zetland Association, Annual Report, 1907. Edinburgh, 1908. Secretary, John Davie, 84, Braid Road, Edinburgh. Annual subscription for Ordinary Members, 5s.; Honorary Members, 10s. Life subscription, 3 guineas. Lady Honorary Contributors, single payment of 1 guinea.

This Association for the advancement of education in Orkney and Shetland, by the distribution of prizes and bursaries, has issued its 38th Annual Report. There are 291 members on the roll. The income for 1907 was £114 18s. 6d. The funds now amount to £1,963 8s. 1d. The Association's Annual Examination was held in the islands on April 27th, at which there were 193 candidates. The Report contains much useful information regarding education and bursaries for the benefit of Orkney and Shetland students.

The President is the Right Hon. Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal, G.C.M.G.

Everyone interested in the welfare of the education of Orkney and Shetland students should join the Association or contribute to its funds.

Medeltidsminnen Från Östergötland. Edited by Otto Janse. With 100 illustrations, 180 pp., 6½in. × 10in. Stockholm, 1907. Justus Cederquists Förlag. 4s.

This work gives 100 full-page illustrations, with descriptions, of mediæval ecclesiastical art work from

East Gotland in Sweden. Rune inscribed Coffin, Woodwork, Elaborate Iron Door-hinges, Church Furniture, Sculpture, Plate, Paintings, Vestments, Altar Hangings, Missals, etc. This sumptuous work should be of the greatest interest and use to the Ecclesiologist and Architect.

Minnesskrift på 250 Årsdagen af Freden i Roskilde
Carl X. Gustaf På Sjælland 1658. By Carl Hallendorff. 23 full-page illustrations, 35 pp., 11in. × 8in.
Stockholm, 1908. Justus Cederquists Förlag. 4s.

This work is a Memorial of the 250th Anniversary of the Peace of Roskilde, by which the Danes gave up to King Charles X. of Sweden, Scania, Halland, Blekinge, etc. The illustrations include portraits, facsimiles of documents, medals, armour, etc., etc.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

All communications must bear the name and address of sender, and should reach the Editor at least one month before date of publication.

Each note, query or reply must be written on one side only of a separate slip of paper, with the writer's name and address, or initials, as desired to be printed.

Editorial communications, advertisements, orders for back numbers, etc., must be addressed to A. W. JOHNSTON, 59, Oakley Street, Chelsea, London S.W.

Subscriptions must be sent to the Honorary Treasurer, A. SHAW MELLOR, 14, Westbourne Street, Hyde Park, London, W.



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NOTES.

OLD-LORE SUBSCRIPTION.—The Annual Subscription for the third year of the series is now due and should be sent at once to the Honorary Treasurer (see p. iii. of advertisements), as the list of subscribers will be printed in January.

ORKNEY AND SHETLAND RESEARCH FUND.—All who are interested in the collection and elucidation of the place-names of the islands should support this fund, particulars of which they will find on p. iv., of the advertisements in this number.

RECORDS.—Shetland Sasines will be printed in January and July, and the series of documents appearing in this number, which are mainly about Orkney, will be continued in April and October.

ORKNEY AND SHETLAND PORTRAITS.—The Editors will be glad to have photographs of old portraits in oil, miniatures, silhouettes, etc., of Orkney and Shetland people, together with short biographical notices, for the series which is now coming out. Information is also wanted as to the whereabouts of any such old portraits, as they frequently flit about to all parts of the world. This is also true of old manuscripts.

New Subscribers.

Edmund Gosse, LL.D., 17, Hanover Terrace, Regents Park, London, N.W.

J. A. Panton, C.M.G., "Carranya," Alexander Street, East St. Kilda, Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

P. Fraser, 64, King Edward Road, Hackney, London, N.E. (rights of original subscription transferred from the late G. M. Atkinson).

The rights of original subscription have been transferred from the Rev. Thos. Mathewson to the following new Subscribers:—

Andrew Moar, Mathew's Quay, Aberdeen.

James Omond, Kirbister School, Orphir, Kirkwall.

J. C. M. Ogilvie Forbes, Boyndlie House, Fraserburgh.

The Rev. John Henderson, St. Pancras Rectory, Chichester, Sussex.

AN ORKNEY CRADLE SONG—

- 1 "We'll aff tae the wids," says *Tosie Mosie*
 "We'll aff tae the wids," says *Johnnie Red-hosie*,
 "We'll aff tae the wids," says *Wise Willie*
 "We'll aff tae the wids," say the brethren three.

[*The first line is repeated four times, with the refrains as above*].

- 2 "Whit tae dū there?" etc.
- 3 "Tae shut the wirran" (wren), etc.
- 4 "Hoo will we tak him hame?" etc.
- 5 "In a cairt or a waggon," etc.
- 6 "Whit will we boil him in?" etc.
- 7 "In pot and in pan," etc.
- 8 "Whit will we dū wi' his bones?" etc.
- 9 "Bury them in the land," etc.

- 10 "They'll brak men's pleughs," etc.
- 11 "Cast them in the sea," etc.
- 12 "They'll grow into great rocks," etc.
- 13 "They'll wrack ships and boats," etc.
- 14 "We'll burn them in fire," etc.

With regard to the music to which it was sung, I have a distinct recollection of the air as crooned by my grandmother 60 years ago. In after years I recognised it in the first half of the tune set to "The Campbells are coming." It has often puzzled me how this air came to be sung by old people in Orkney who had certainly never heard of the song, "The Campbells are coming"; but I have since ascertained that the music was an old air sung as far back at least as 1567, and not adapted to the words of this song till 1715.—JOHN FIRTH.

ORKNEY JOTTINGS.

From Orphir unless where otherwise stated.

BONFIRES.—The late Mr. Joshua Hay, of Winbrek, told me that he remembered Johnsmas' bonfires being lit in every township in Orphir. In the town of Orphir it was lit behind the manse on the shoulder of the hill. Can this be the "Heildibrae, a place where bonefires used to be kindled," referred to by the Rev. Francis Liddell in the *Old Statistical Account*, vol. xix., p. 411.

At the Beltane bonfires the person who jumped most through the fire at its hottest was considered the best man.

OMENS.—When the end of a rainbow came near a house there would be a death there.

LUCK.—Luckier to bathe in the sea with the flood than with the ebb tide [and safer !].

Unlucky to kill a lark : the three black spots on its tongue would come on that of the killer.

COUNTING OUT RHYMES.—

Onerie twoerie tickerie tivn,
 Halaba crak tenabie levn,
 Pin pan muskie dan,
 Tweedleum twadleum twenty-one. *(From Stromness.)*

When I cam by the pier o' Leith,
 The pier o' Leith cam by me teeth,
 White puddin, black troot,
 I joise (choose) thee oot.

EEL-LORE.—

Eelie eelie o!
 Cast a knot upon thee tail
 And I'll let thee go.

SPIDER-LORE.—

Kreesie kreesie kringla,
 Lang-legged laverock,
 Gie me a drink o' water
 And I'll let thee go.

Variant— Kreestie kreestie kringlik,
 Lang-legged laverock,
 Gie me a kep o' water,
 And I'll let 'ee go.

Kreestie Krinklik was the name given to the long-legged spider. The spider was held while the rhyme was being recited, after which the operator added, "If thū doesn't, I'll tak a leg frae thee." When the spider is held it usually lets a drop of water fall. The short-legged spider of the spider-web was called an *etterkap*. In Harra the spider is called "long-legged laro" (laverock).

NICKNAMES.—There were nicknames for towns as well as parishes. The Clestrain folk were called cats; Ireland folk, skittery kags.

RHYMES.—

Cald, cald, Costi, [Costa in Evie]
 And cald Evie kail, [E pronounced as ā]
 The withered blades o' Withick, [Woodwick]
 So weel as they can stale.

FESTIVALS.—Brose Day (Fastern's E'en) was called Milk Gruel Night in Harra, where also the baa (football) was played on Aphelliday.

Hallow E'en Customs :—A live coal was taken out of the fire, put into water, and then placed under a fail (a piece of turf). Next morning the fail was broken in two, and if there was a hair found, the colour of it would be that of your future spouse.

Go blind-fold into the kailyard and pull a kail runt (root), the form of the root may foretell some peculiarity of your future spouse, then place it above the door, and the first who enters will be your future spouse, or one of the same name.—A. W. JOHNSTON.

QUERIES.

GOODLAD, GARRIOCK, AND POTTINGER.—We are very much indebted to Mr. Black for his valuable answers to queries regarding the above names. It seems highly probably that his conclusions regarding the origins of these names are all quite correct. There is no doubt the names Garriock and Pottinger came into Shetland from Orkney. That the former name came into Orkney from Scotland in the 16th century, there now seems little reason to doubt. The Pottingers probably originated in England, as the name obtains there and not in Scotland. Some person of the name must have drifted to the far North, although instances of people other than Scotch settling in Orkney during the 16th and 17th centuries are I should judge exceedingly rare. Goodlad has evidently reached Shetland without using Orkney as a stepping stone, and there exists in Shetland no tradition as to its origin. Probably for this reason, as well as the fact that it has taken on a local pronunciation differing considerably from its common written form, and also because it appears to be rare in Scotland (at least not being met with among those Scotchmen with whom Shetlanders come most in contact) it has come to be looked upon as

peculiarly a Shetland name, and consequently a Norse derivation would naturally be sought for it. However, it always seemed to me improbable that the 'k' in a name like Gudleik for instance would change into 't' or 'd' as it appears in Goodlet or Goodlad. Perhaps someone may tell us whether this interchange is possible. The derivation of the name Pottinger seems to be quite evident. Can Mr. Black give us any light as to the meaning of the place-name Garioch in Aberdeenshire, and also the meaning of the name Goodlet?—MAGNUS.

SCLATER, LINKLATER.—A correspondent in Canada wishes to know the meaning of the person-names Sclater and Linklater. He states that Sclater appears to be an old name in Orkney, and that there is no doubt that the Sclaters and Linklaters in Shetland originally came from Orkney. Sclater was always spelled with a *c* or *k* and so pronounced until quite recently. Of late years the majority of the people of this name in Shetland have adopted the spelling of Slater and Slatter, whereas he believes the majority of Orkneyingers of this name still retain the older spelling of Sclater. The name Sclater appears to have been confined to the West of Shetland, and Linklater to Tingwall and Bressay.

Regarding the name *Slater*, R. Ferguson, in his *English surnames*, p. 337, in dealing with those derived from office or occupation writes:—

Another very common name is Slater—too common I think to be derived altogether from a trade which is by no means among the most ancient. The Old Friesic has *Slater*, a maker, repairer, or cleaner of ditches, from which I think our name is in some cases derived. Hence the same as Ditcher and Ditchman—perhaps also Dicker and Dickman, Ang. Sax. *dic*, a ditch. This would also account for Slatter and Slaughter, which correspond with two varieties, the New Friesic and the Saterlandic. Or Slaughter might be Dan. *Slagter*, a butcher.

Linklater as a person-name appears to be derived from the place-name. We have Linklater (in 1500, Lynkclet) in North Sandwick, Linklet in North Ronaldsey, and (1500) Linclet (1595) Linklet, now Linklater in South

Ronaldsey, Orkney. In 1653, ten of the fifteen land-owners of this name lived in Sandwick. In Shetland we have Lungklett in Aithsting. In the Rental of 1716 I can only find people of this name in Tingwall—Jarem Linklater in Balista, George in South Coldclift, Malcolm in Got—and in Whiteness—Magnus Linklater in Skiron. Dr. Jakobsen has shown that Lungklett is the Old Norse *Lyngklettr*, *klettr*, isolated rock among *lyng*, heather. *Lyng* forms part of other names, e.g., Lingabringa, *bringa*, a breast or slope; Lingerø, O.N. *Lyng-rjóðr*, *rjóðr*, a green patch in the middle of *lyng*, heath; Linga, O.N. Lingey, heather island; Lungnes, heather point; Linksetter, the setr in the heath. In Shetland, Lungklet is associated with the name of a burn in Aithsting. It would be interesting to know whether there was ever a farm or house of this name. If there were not, it would possibly account partly for there being no person-names derived from it in Shetland. But we must remember that patronymics were in use until recently in Shetland, and most native names are now stereotyped forms of patronymics. In the complaint by the Orkneyingers, in 1426, against David Menyes, we find mentioned, Cristi Ælingeklæt. Roland St. Clair in his *Saint-Clairs of the Isles*, p. 427, mentions Andro Linclett one of the Council of Lawmen in 1515. John Linklater in 1595. Andro Linklatter of that ilk in 1621. Three of the name are appointed baillies in 1640, viz., James for Harra, Henri for Rendal, and Alexander Linklatter of Linklatter for Sandwick.

The *c* or *k* may have been added to Slater in the same way as it has been added in Scotland to slate, and in Shetland to slétta, O.N. level land, in the place-name Skletten, Skletti-dellins, etc.—A. W. JOHNSTON.

REPLIES.

BARNISDALE (*Ante* 250).—Whatever the Editor of *Folklore* has to say must be received with respect, but why not give the proper reference to the "Paston Letters."

It is 16th April, 1473. Not a conjectural date, but on the letter as reprinted by Mr. James Gardiner, and issued by Prof. Arber, in his edition Vol. III., p. 89. 1875. The reading differs slightly from that in *Orkney and Shetland Old-lore*.

Inglewood Forest, a royal forest, at the time of the Conquest, stretched from Penrith to Carlisle, Cumberland.—S. L. PETTY.

JO. BEN.—Hitherto the “*Descriptio insularum Orcharum, Anno 1529 per me Jo. Ben. ibidem colentem*” has been accepted as an account of Orkney, written in the year 1529 by one “Jo. Ben.” In attempting to find out who the author was little or no attention appears to have been paid to internal evidence. So far as I have been able to check the dates of events as given by Ben, they are all wrong. His Description also includes events which occurred and persons who lived years after the date at which his “Description” purports to have been written. Unfortunately the whereabouts of the original manuscript is not now known. We have three independent transcripts, one by Sir James Balfour (born 1600, died 1657), another by Sir Robert Sibbald (born 1641, died 1712)—(Sir Arthur Mitchell thinks the MS. was not known to him till after 1683), and a third by Dr. George Barry, printed in the Appendix to his History of Orkney, 1805.

Ben states that the Earl of Caithness, who was slain at the battle of Summerdale (1529), was *avus* (grandfather or ancestor) of the Earl ruling at the time Ben wrote. Now, the Earl who was slain was succeeded by his son, and he, in 1582, by his grandson, the first Earl of whom the slain Earl could have been described as *avus*.

Ben’s description must therefore have been written between 1582 and 1657, the year when his first transcriber, Sir James Balfour, died. 1529 may be a slip for 1592 or 1629.

Compare the following dates given by Ben in "1529" with those supplied by Records:—

Battle of Summerdale, Ben—1527; Records—1529.

Suicide of James Sinclair, Ben—on or before 1529; Records—1536-7. He was alive in 1535 when the King gave him a grant of the islands of Sandey and Stronsey.

English Invasion of Orkney:—

Ben—1502, August 13th.

Records—1558, August 13th.

Ben—The English leader, Sir John Elder, drowned.

Records—The English Admiral, Sir John Clere, drowned.

Elder is an evident misreading of Clair or Clere.

Hitherto Ben's statements have been accepted as correct and quoted right and left.

Can any readers explain the following statements by Ben, and give any information from records on the subject?

In 1506, John Steuart, *Donensis et Tartensis in aquilone appulit ad Orchardum* and worked a gold mine in Deerness.

The parish of Rendal had been subject to *Domino Tilliallane* whose house bore witness to the fact.

All the transcripts agree as to the dates 1529, etc. If the original date was written *j^{mo}. vi^c. xxix* (1629), the *vi^c* may have been written as *vi* omitting *c*, and the *i* read as *c* viz. 1529. Or, again, *j^{mo}. v^c. xcix* (1599) may have been read as *j^{mo}. v^c. xxix* (1529), an *x* for a *c*. It seems curious that a document written at the earliest in 1582 could have become indistinct by the time Sir James Balfour made his copy, say 1620-57. As the original MS. is not now available, we must therefore arrive at some conclusion as to the date from internal evidence.

In the next number of *Old-lore* I will call attention to Ben's folk-lore. As to the uncommon name *Jo. Ben.* it

has never been suggested that it may be a pen-name, probably a contraction. John Bellenden, the translator of "Boece" died in 1550, so that he could not have been the author.—A. W. JOHNSTON.

JO. BEN.—May not the surname represent BANE, BELL, BEN[STONE] or MEN[TEITH]. Ben as an abbreviation of Bellenden is too improbable. From internal evidence the "Description" cannot be by John Bellenden, Canon of Ross, who died at Rome in 1550, because under "Stenhouse" it is narrated that the Earl of Caithness, who was slain in 1529, was grandfather of the earl at the time of writing the description. Now the slain earl was succeeded by his son who, dying in 1582, was succeeded by his grandson. Assuming that the writer meant great-grandson, then must the MS. have been written after 1582, most probably in 1592, the figures having got transposed to 1529. The article was certainly written after 1536, because under "St. Andrew's" it refers to the death of Sir James Sinclair of Sanday, who died between 25 August, 1535 and 9th September, 1536 (Exch. Rolls). There is reference under St. Ola to a defeat of English raiders led by Sir John Elder, the leader of the Orcadians being Edward Sinclair and the date 13 August, 1502. There is no Edward Sinclair then on record, and I take the notice to be a confusion of the repulse of Sir John Clare on 31st August, 1538, at which time Edward Sinclair of Strome, was the chief man in the Isles. Edward was brother to Sir James and son of Sir Wm. Sinclair of Warsetter. From Edward derive the Sinclairs of Brugh (Hjaltland) and Campston, Ness, Damsay, Flottay and Gyre in Orkney.

The only other person noticed in the "Description" is a John Stewart in Deerness in 1506. Had the Description been written soon after the battle of Summerdale, the writer could hardly have dated that event 1527 instead of 1529, and would doubtless have referred to

other persons prominent in connection with the battle.
—ROLAND S:T CLAIR.

NOTE.—The above was received after my reply had been printed. Mr. St. Clair pointed out to me some years ago, the error in the date of Ben's MS., from the statement that the slain Earl was *avus* of the one then ruling. It should be pointed out that the correct date of the English invasion is August 13th (not 31st) 1558 (not 1538). In the Appendix to Wallace's Account (Reprint p. 244) a reference is given to Duff's History as giving the date "1538, the last of August." But on referring to this work I find it is "1558 last of August." In the Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, 1557, July, giving the number and names of the ships and captains serving at the seas we find "nine under the command of Sir John Clere." The following account of the invasion is given in *The Royal Navy*, by W. L. Clowes, London, 1897, vol. I., p. 473. "1558, Vice-Admiral (England) Sir John Clere of Ormsby sent with 12 sail to annoy Scots and to protect the home-coming Iceland fleet of fishing vessels. Descent made on mainland of Orkney, August 12th. On following day overwhelming force of Scots fell upon landing party, killed 3 captains, took all Clere's artillery and drove survivors to their ships. Clere's boat, as he was being pulled off, was upset, and he was drowned." The authorities quoted are Leslie De Reb. Scot. X; Strype III, 429; Buchanan XVI.—A. W. JOHNSTON.

GENDER IN ORKNEY DIALECT.—Dr. George T. Flom, Professor of Scandinavian Languages and Literature, in the University of Iowa, in a review of *Old-lore* in the June number of *Modern Language Notes* (Baltimore, MD.), in reference to the statement (p. 23, *ante*,) that as late as fifty years ago few Orcadians in ordinary conversation used the neuter gender, everything being masculine or feminine, writes:—"This would seem to be a special development in the language of the Orkneys, for such was not the practice in Iceland, nor is it to-day in dialect speech in Western Norway, whence the colonists of Orkney came. It may, however, be said that the prevalence of the feminine pronoun is a characteristic of English folk-speech. Further investigation would probably show that it is the feminine pronoun that predominates also in Orkney English. Relative to the use of the masculine pronoun in referring to the weather I may, however, say that the use of the masculine pronoun, here is to-day characteristic of most of the

dialects of Norway, as (translating the original phrases) 'he's cold to-day' for 'it is cold to-day,' or 'he's snowing' for 'it is snowing.' The rule is therefor that natural phenomena are thought of as masculine, and when referred to by substitutory pronouns, the masculine is always used."

Professor Flom remarks with regard to the *Old-lore Series*: "This very great work, which has been so creditably inaugurated, deserves the support of all lovers of British history and 'Old-lore.' That it will be conducted on a high plan of scholarship the name of the Viking Club and Society for Northern Research alone is a sufficient guarantee."

NOTES ON SOME ORCADIAN FAMILIES.

MOODIE.—In the Scottish Rolls there is a notice of a safe-conduct, dated 20th May, 1365, for William Mudy, merchant, to visit England with four companions, and another 26th January, 1367-8, for Wm. Mudy, *armiger*, with two horsemen.

CRAIGY.—In Robertson's Index to Missing Charters there is a notice of one dated 12th August, 1367, to John de Cragy of the land of Merchamstoun, Edinburgh.

VARIOUS.—In Robertson's Index will also be found notices of other families:—Benyne, Bydonne, Dischington, Harkars, Mowat, Sinclair, Spens, &c.

LOUTTIT.—This family, usually considered of local origin, is in reality Norman-French. Luvetot is the name of one or two places in Normandy. In the history of Nottingham County (Victorian Series) there is the following reference:—

“It is rather surprising that there is no evidence directly to connect the great family of ‘Luvetot,’ the lords of Sheffield and of Worksop and many other manors in this shire, with any Domesday under-tenant in our county. But before 1120 William de Luvetot had founded Worksop Priory, and granted to it ‘all the churches of his demesne’ of the honour of Blyth, that is, the churches of Gringley, Misterton, Walkeringham, Normanton (upon Trent), Car Colston, Willoughby-on-the-Wolds, Wysall, and his part of the church of Treswell. These lands had been held by Roger de Busli, in Domesday, a most important landowner, who died towards the close of the reign of William Rufus, and as Roger his son predeceased him his lands were

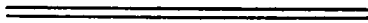
escheated to the crown. He may be the Roger de Luvetot who is addressed in several writs belonging to the early years of Henry I. and relating to South Yorkshire."

In 1141 Richard de Luvetot imprisoned William Comyn the Archbishop at Durham, and is stated to have cruelly illtreated him.

The next references to the name are to be found in "*Liber Insula Missarum.*" In the time of Earl Robert of Stratherne (fl. 1223-1244), Sir Roger of Luuetoft is witness to two charters, and Nigellus de Lutoft is referred to in another. In the time of Earl Malise (fl. 1244-72) William de Louetoft is witness to a charter. In the Complaint of the Orcadian Commons in 1426 there is reference to Piris Lwtfut (= Piers Louftot), and in 1456 Maurice Lowtefute has to do with the fermes of Stratherne. In the Orkney Rentals, c. 1500, there is a notice of Louttits, and thereafter the name is to be found in continuous connection with Lyking in Sandwick.

Gilbert, Earl of Stratherne, who died in 1223, married Matilda, daughter of the Earl of Albemarle, and his grandson Malise, Earl of Stratherne, married before 1250 Marjory of Muschamp. She died before 1255 and he married again, before 1257, Matilda, daughter of Earl Gilbride of Orkney. The Luvetots, apparently, went to Stratherne with the Stratherne-Albemarle marriage, and attaching themselves to the House of Stratherne, when that family acquired Orkney, they accompanied them thither.

ROLAND S:T CLAIR.



SHEEP-CA'ING IN ORKNEY.

BEFORE the division of the Orkney commonties, which were separated from the infield by a strong feal dyke to protect the crops and pasture lands during the summer months from the incursions of the native sheep or "bussie broos" which roamed at large over hill and dale, every householder was a sheep-owner. Even old women living in "chaulmers," or cots, were the owners of eight or ten sheep each, and each owner had his or her own mark registered with the bailie or "bailya" of the parish. The sheep of each township were called a clowgang, and always kept by themselves in moving from one piece of pasture to another. During the winter months they were allowed to graze on the infield, as there were then no turnip fields or sown grasses to be protected from their marauding expeditions. They also visited the sea-shore to feed on sea-weed. About the first of April they were hounded outside the dykes, all breaches in which were filled up and the "slaps" repaired and hung. In each township the owners of a clowgang had what was called a "beulding pin"—a piece of hard-wood about eight inches long, one and a half broad and half an inch thick, with a hole in one end in which a cord or string was fastened. This beulding pin was sent from house to house as a reminder that the inmates were responsible for the beulding on the evening of the day on which it was handed over to them. About the first of June the bailie gave notice to the church beadle to "cry" at the church door when and where the "rooing" of the sheep was to take place. On the day set apart for rooing all the lads and lasses took to the hills with bare feet scouring hill and dale for the fleecy flocks, and driving them down to the bughts where the old sheep were rooed and the lambs marked. After all the work of rooing and marking was over the whole human assemblage sat down to drink healths from cogs of home-brewed ale.

"While cheese and bread frae women's laps
Were dealt about in lunches."

JOHN FIRTH.

SOME OLD-TIME SHETLANDIC WRECKS.

VI.

THE "Belsher," a Scottish vessel with a cargo of Zetland goods, was wrecked on September 30th, 1748, in the north entrance to Bressay Sound.¹ The master, John Bourmeister by name, and the crew were saved. I have but few particulars of this wreck. In this case, we have another instance of the manner in which Shetlandic place-names undergo change. The point on which the "Belsher" went ashore was from early times (according to the "old men" of Bressay) called "Tara" or "Tarra" Taing, meaning, I suppose, "Weedy" or "Seaweed" Point; but after this wreck, the place has been known by the very uninteresting name of "Belsher's Point." I think that it is worthy of note that Captain Bourmeister was "pressed" into the Royal Navy, in which service he afterwards rose to be one of the four Shetland Admirals, the names of the others being Henderson Bain, Alexander Fraser and his son Thomas Fraser.

The People of Lunnasting tell the story of an English vessel wrecked on the "Baa Skerry," Lee of Dury, Dury Voe, circa 1750. It seems that the crew were saved, and were taken to the house of Laurence Tarrel, the laird of Laxö, where they stayed for a considerable time and were treated well; but the laird, in return for this kindness, caused the seamen to build a dry stone dyke enclosing a piece of ground, still known as the "Englishman's Pund." Laurence must have been an excellent person at driving a bargain!

A vessel, nationality unknown, was wrecked on the "Ship Stack," Norwick, Unst, circa 1757. Her crew

¹ Midbrake Papers, etc.

flew a kite ashore with a cord attached, and the people who were standing on the Valtoes or neck of the Ship Stack, got hold of the cord, and a line being bent to the end, the crew managed to gain communication with the shore, and in this way some of the men were saved. There are various stories about this ship: some people say she was a war vessel or a privateer, others that she was a Greenland whaler. The rock on which this vessel struck has been ever afterwards known as the "Ship" Stack, and a fishing "meethe" in the vicinity has this stack for a landmark or "shore," the meethe itself being called the "Cannons."

In September or October, 1761, a fine ship, the "Nieuwe Hoop," of Hamburg, Jacob Theunis Smidt, master, went ashore at Hamnavoe, South Yell. Unfortunately, the deed, from which the following meagre particulars are taken, gives no details as to how the ship came to strand, but she had probably been caught in a southerly or easterly gale, and becoming leaky from straining in the seaway the master would be compelled to beach his vessel in order to save the lives of all on board. Be that as it may, the crew were saved and the cargo (nature not mentioned) salvaged. The "Nieuwe Hoop" was homeward-bound to Hamburg. John Bruce Stewart of Symbister, and James Craigie, merchant in Lerwick, contracted to unload the ship, to store the cargo in warehouses, and bring her into Burravoe, provided the expenses did not exceed two hundred dollars, Hamburg currency; and Captain Smidt agreed on his part to pay the sum of three thousand "rix dollars" for their services. After a good deal of trouble the vessel was got off the shore, and was taken to Burravoe, where she was "heaved-down" (a very common and rather difficult practice in olden times), and repaired sufficiently well to enable her to put to sea¹.

R. STUART BRUCE.

¹ Symbister Papers.

ORKNEY AND SHETLAND PORTRAITS.

MOODIES OF MELSETTER.

Captain Benjamin Moodie, eighth laird of Melsetter, J.P., D.L., third but only surviving son and heir of Captain James Moodie, R.N., and Christian Crawford, widow of William Ballenden of Stenness, born at Aikerness in Evie, Feb. 17th, 1723. He married about 1755-6 Henrietta, daughter of Donald Sinclair of Olrigg and Bilbster, by his wife Fenella, daughter and heiress of Charles Sinclair of Bilbster and had issue:—(1) James, younger of Melsetter, his heir, (2) Donald, (3) John Bladen, (4) Charles, (5) Joseph, (6) Robert Benjamin, (7) Samuel, (8) a daughter, (9) Christian, (10) Henrietta, (11) Kathrine, (12) Barbara, and (13) Benjamin. Captain Moodie died shortly before Sept. 19th, 1769.

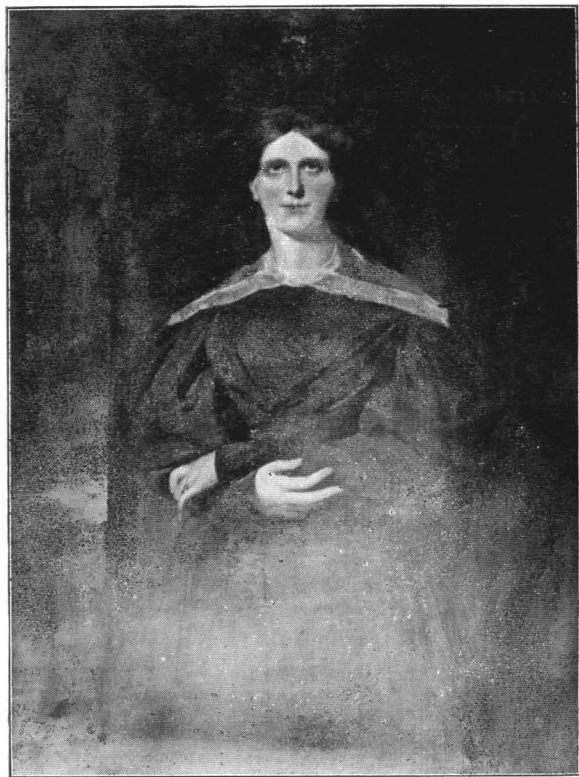
Major James Moodie, ninth of Melsetter, J.P., eldest son and heir of the preceding, born Feb. 12th, 1757. Captain and Major of the 1st Battalion 8th Orkney Fencibles from 1793 to 1798. He married Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Captain Thomas Dunbar of Grange Hill, by his wife Janet, daughter of Sir William Dunbar of Hempriggs, Bt., and only child of her mother, Elizabeth, sister and heir of Lovodick Dunbar of Westfield, last Heritable Sheriff of Moray, by whom he had issue:—(1) Benjamin, younger of Melsetter, his successor, (2) Thomas, (2) Donald, descendants in Natal, (4) John Wedderburn Dunbar, descendants in Canada, (5) Jessie, and (6) Henrietta (see below). Major Moodie died June 28th, 1820.

Captain Benjamin Moodie, tenth laird of Melsetter, born Jan. 1st, 1789 or 1790, had to sell Melsetter. Married first Margaret Malcolmson of Walls, by whom



MAJOR JAMES MOODIE, NINTH LAIRD OF MELSETTER.

From a painting in the possession of J. G. Moodie Heddle.



MRS. ROBERT HEDDLE, OF MELSETTER, *née* MOODIE.

*From a painting by Sir John Watson Gordon, P.R.S.A., 1833,
in the possession of J. G. Moodie Heddle.*



CAPTAIN BENJAMIN MOODIE, EIGHTH LAIRD OF MELSETTER.

From a miniature in possession of Miss Moodie Heddle.



CAPTAIN BENJAMIN MOODIE, TENTH LAIRD OF MELSETTER.

From a photograph.

he had issue :—(1) James, (2) Thomas, (3) Donald, (4) Malcolm, (5) Henrietta, (6) Isabella, (7) Margery, and (8) Janet.

Captain Moodie married secondly in 1841 Susan Barnett. He died at Groot Vaders Bosch, Swellendam, April 2nd, 1856.

Henrietta Moodie, daughter of Major James Moodie, ninth of Melsetter (above), married as first wife, 1818, Robert Heddle, of Cletts and afterwards of Melsetter. She died July 2nd, 1833, aged 39, leaving issue. Her grandson is the present John George Moodie Heddle, of Cletts and lately of Melsetter, J.P.

The portraits and the above notices are taken from the *Moodie Book* by permission of the author, the Marquis of Ruvigny.

SHETLAND PHRASE AND IDIOM.

III.

To ask a straight question and get a straight answer is not in the nature of a Shetlander. So when the "sporin" had to be done—that is, when the man had to ask her guardian for the lass—it was not done by words. The wooer went to her house on Saturday evening, carrying in his pocket a bottle of whisky. If he was welcome—and be sure he didn't go unless she had let him understand that his "Yes" was ready, he was asked to "Sit in, boy," when the tea was ready. Then was his important moment. As all took their places he furtively drew the bottle from his pocket and handed it to the head of the house, who, with some happy joke, set it on the table in front of him, and the "sporin" was all said on both sides without a word on the subject, though the lass's red cheeks proclaimed that she was chiefly interested in that bottle's advent.

"Shu's aye pleepin aboot something"—She is always complaining and whining over some trouble.

Some poor wastrel is likened to a "raaga-tree," wreck, or driftwood. The miser is said to be an "ill-vandit pysert," a badly-constructed sponge that sucks up everything. You declared yourself to be "raumished" when you had slept ill and looked it. And you were "krubbit" when you were inconveniently crowded. The bairns were "plootsin an' japplin idda burn" when they were enjoying themselves after a fashion dear to all children when they have access to water.

I always had respect and affection for the quarter-wives, and quarter-men, poor old things. They lived in days before there were any poorhouses in our isles, or

any poor tax demanded in coin. When a person became unfit for work, the kirk poor-box gave them a pittance, and for the rest they were quartered on their own district. They were housed in turn by everybody. Often they were not so infirm as to be altogether "by wi' it." They could rock the cradle, or mend a fishing rod, or hear a bairn its "questions," or bring in "twa pates ta da fire." They tried to be helpful, and in some small way make a return for their bit and bed. Thus all self-respect was not torn from those paupers, and they still felt themselves a part of the humanity around them. I remember once hearing of a new minister visiting a family and finding a strange old woman sitting in the "neuk o da shimmy." "And who is this?" said his reverence to the house-mother. "Hits wir quarter-wife," was the answer, spoken in the kindest tones. "Indeed, ah, I hope you are well," he remarked, not knowing what to make of it. But in the next house he visited he said, "They seem to have got a nice boarder next door. I suppose some well-to-do relative." The good mother's tone had been so free from anything that might wound the feelings of her "guest," that the minister had been quite misled, and was considerably surprised when he learned that a quarter-wife was only a pauper.

"Am naething bit a puir heckabirnie noo, bit dis oy is me heck"—("I am nothing but a poor cripple, helpless creature, now, but this grandchild is my crutch.") There is said to be a Norse word "hækja," meaning crutch, or, as we have it, "heck," and one can see how "heckabirnie" comes from the same root.¹ "Henk" is allied to it; also henkie, a person who limps. The trows were said to hop instead of walk, and to henk when they danced. Their mode of dancing was peculiar, they squatted till their knees were doubled up in front, and then they hopped about like pinioned fowls. They tell of a trow wife who looked on at a dance till she could

¹ Compare O.N. hækil-bjúgr, bowed, crouching.—A.W.J.

contain herself no longer, and suddenly skipped into the middle of the room, but her appearance was so frightsome no man sought the honour of being her partner. Then she whirled about and screeched, so that everybody heard—

“Hey” quo’ Kutty, an “Hoe” quo’ Kutty,
 “Noo whau’ll come reel wi me,” quo’ Kutty?
 “Sad sicht be seen upo der crupeens!—
 I’ll henk it awa mesel,” quo’ Kutty.

And henk it Kutty did, to the consternation of some and the amusement of others. When she had danced enough she vanished, leaving the never-to-be-forgotten memory behind her, which has been perpetuated in the lilt just given.

“Ise gie de sister’s share.” When property went under Udal law all the sons shared alike, while a sister got half what her brother got—the lesser portion. There seems to have been a custom in our North Isles,—a custom probably dating from a time before the Norse settlement,—which gave the father’s house, the “head-bul,” to the youngest son. I am told that a like custom was in vogue among the ancient Welsh and Irish, and may be of Keltic origin. When Norwegian law became written law we find that the Udal succession approximated in this respect to that of Feudalism, and the eldest son inherited the “head-bul.” The survival of an unwritten law like this in the face of new rule and new race, though a striking instance of how men clung to their old, old ways, yet leads one to ask,—were the later settlers more closely allied to the former inhabitants than is supposed? Common sense and good feeling ruled among northern nations as they did not among the Latins whose usages England hastened to adopt. This accounts for the survival of much that is puzzling. In Unst and probably elsewhere, for a long time this particular old usage held good, and the youngest son was allowed to keep the father’s house, “Because,” as my father

explained to me, "he was one of the family least able to fend for himself, and was also likely to be the mother's darling who would keep the 'bul' for her." Naturally the old and new customs would begin to clash woefully as the land became of more value, and life less easy to maintain, and thus arose such sarcastic phrases as "Yau, yau, mak de bul, bit du'll no keen whau'll had him." ("Yes, yes, you make your home but you can never be sure who will hold it in security after you.") "Du'll get de bul if he's little wirt." ("You will get your right if it is of not much value to another.") This also seems to hint at the same thing. "Dey gie me da ootwilins." This is the complaint of one who has received nothing better than the refuse of an inheritance—what was left when all worth having had been picked out.

An "ooteral," "ootlier," "ootlaunder," are just an outlander, and we had the word all along, while England had quite lately adopted it from the Boers!

"He's no een o da auld gentry. He's just a sklaty-skrae." When a person began to get a bit above his neighbours, one of the first signs of his rise was the putting of a slate (sklate) roof on his house, in imitation of the better class. A sklater is the repulsive crawling insect known as a wood louse (*oniseus murarius*), their habitat being usually old roofs and dry stones. A skrae is a swarm of vermin, an ignoble crowd of snobs, overrunning everything. I don't think this very bitter and contemptuous idiom originated with the people at all. I believe it is the invention of some well-born "upperly," whose vice and laziness had taken him "to lee," and he was seeing his humble, hard-working neighbours climb the ladder of fortune before him.

The last time I shared in "da pairten veesig" was nigh on thirty years ago. As the custom was a very ancient and pretty one I mention this incident. A bairn, the child of old servants, was to be christened, and I made it the pretext for gathering together a number of

my isle's folk dwelling by the waters of Babylon—the "peerie Shetland" of Leith. When the gathering was about to break up a Norwick man suggested that we should "hae da pairtin veesig." So we made a circle, holding each other by the hand. Then we moved slowly round to the measure of an old Norse tune, to which one chanted an improvised ballad. Allusion was made to each member of the party—the bonnie lass, the stettly man, the mate-midder, the skipper, and so on. The personal touch, humorous or complimentary, which was introduced into each stanza showed that the veesig was made on the spot. Indeed, I believe the word implies that the ballad is impromptu. I asked the minstrel to repeat it, so that I might preserve it, but he said that was impossible, for "hit just cam as it laekit upo da tongue, and gaed da sam gait" (it came on the tongue as it chose and went the same way).

I have not been able to follow any system in noting down these few idioms and phrases. I have just taken them from the crowded shelves of memory, where they have lain under the dust and tears of a lifetime. I do not affirm that I have given correct renderings of many of them. I have merely tried to take the simple meanings which seemed to lie open before one. I shall be glad to accept the teaching on this theme of any more scholarly person.

JESSIE M. E. SAXBY.

ORKNEY DIALECT.¹

TROU da hairst dat wanjoy Secretary o' wirs—Tamson —speered me gin I wadna gae a paper i' wir ain dialect. I telt 'im at aince 'at I hed been sae lang awa fae hame 'at feinty bit o' me minded on ony o'd, an' even gin I deud I hed tent da wey o' makin' a dacent discoorse. Da common galloos wadna leed tae me, bit jeust pat me doon for id. Tae mak a lang story short, he sent a lang screed back tae me sayan i' high English "Thu're a leer." Noo, bairns, I pit id tae yersels, waas dat right? I wad hae taen da laa api 'im for takin' awa me guid name i' dat wey gin id warna 'at a' body kens laaweers ar' sic scoondrels dey wad hae jeust ruined is baith, sae I made ap me mind hid wad be better tae geong aboot wi' a little wirt name nor loss da twa tree babees I hae, like whit anither ald Orknaman afore me day maistlins deud. Twa feuly ald Orkna billies tullzied aboot a peerie uddie bit o' a plantacreu an' hed a laa plea ower 'id i' the Coort o' Session. The ane 'at waas soomoned gaed bae mistak till the tither's laaweer. Da scoondrel waas ower ceeval an' telt da man 'at he waas wirkan for da tither, bit wad gae 'im a letter intradeusan 'im tae anither honest (?) laaweer 'at wad be blide tae tak ap 'is case. Da man set awa wi' da letter, bit on 'is wey he tou't he wad hae a leuk at her jeust for a' the warl as gin he'd been a ald wife. The letter waasna lang bit sheu waas tae the point, for sheu jeust said: "Twa Orkna fat geese; pluck thu the ane an' I'se pluck the ither." Bae me singan certy dat billy got siccan a gluff dat he gaed straight tae the tither ane an' dey settled da ploy atween themsels baith an' hed a foy ower id.

¹ Read before the Glasgow Orkney and Shetland Literary and Scientific Association, 6th January, 1906.

I telt Tamson teu 'at siccan a discoorse is he waas tinkan o' wadna deu ava, 'cis a' the isles dudna spak the sam, for whit's mithertong i' ane's high English i' anither. Tae that da muckle gappis wadna leed, sae am here afore ye, an' I'se deu me best an' I cinna deu better nor dat. Beesweel deunna lippen ower muckle, an' gin I faal, ye minna blame me, ye buist blame that Shetlan' gluffas—Tamson—for pitten me doon withoot me leave. Gin ye stairt ganan at the riff an' gantan as gin I'd been a minister at me seeventeenthly, I hoop wir Chairman 'ill putt api' me an' I'se stow withoot takan the trilcya.

Ye'll a' ken dat sax an' twenty year sin', a neufangled ting ca'ad "The Celtic Chair" waas begood i' the College aff sooth i' ald Reekie. Hid waas said tae be tae keep da Gaelic fae deean. Am seur miny a better ting's de'ed 'at could be waar wanted. Fine deu I mind da time, for 'id waas da year afore I cam aff sooth tae bide, an' dat peerie trowie pisslin taed—Rosebery—waas Lord Rector. His waas the first Rectorial discoorse I waas ever at, an' bae me saul, hid waas weel wirt gan tae, hid waas far better nor a Free Kirk swaree. Hid waas kent afore han' dat 'is discoorse waas tae be aboot "patriotism." Weel, da students got a bit o' twine twart da ha' fae ae laft tae the tither an' fae the middle o'd, ma'be aboot tree yerds afore Rosebery's neb, dey hang a ald widden steul, wi' a caird aboot fower feet lang tied till her legs, wi' the wirds "The Celtic Chair." Da atgans waar far waar nor a meetin' o' the Glesgow Toon Cooncil wi' Scott Gibson at 'is best. Hid maks me tink a hape o' lang whin I tink o'd. The students skreekid an' bogled an' dadded deir feet wi' a' their bir api' the fleur like feuls every noo an' dan whin Rosebery said onything 'at kittled dem whasacco they waar unco patriotic, bit da ald steul fairly bate dem i' patriotism, for sheu waas made tae geong wappan aboot like a jumpan jeck bae pooan the string. Da puir bodies sittan annunder her hid tae fitch tae save their harnpans for sheu lundered dem sair. Weel, as I

waas sayan, a Chair waas foonded i' the Sooth tae tak' care o' the Gaelic, an' Guid kens foo muckle siller waas begged, burrood or staled tae pay for her wi'. Noo a' that waas seurlly deun tae mak freens wi' da Ald Chiel, for hid's weel kent 'at Gaelic's the lingo dat's taaked i' da bad piece, an' hid's a lingo ye maun tak' siccan mooth-foos o' as wad ding da yackles oot o' a yearald golt. I'se wirran ye've a' hard o' the minister 'at waas spakan aince api' a time i' the Hielans, an' i' 'is discoorse telt da folk 'at 'id waas a gey ald language, sae ald dat he hadna muckle doot 'id waas the lingo Adam an' Ave coorted in. Peety me patience, bairns, jeust tae tink o' dat twa waistan deir time coortan, hid's aneuch tae scunner a scoottie allan whin hid's weel kent ane couldna help taken the tither, for deir waasna anither tae be haen, bit jeust like a' the lasses 'at's ever gaen efter the lads sin her time, sheu wanted tae be tized. I'se wirran sheu waas trang aneuch for 'im bit made adeu 'at she dudna mind a preen, the ald hedal 'at sheu waas. Efter da kirk hed skailed ae ald man leukid stootly doon i' the mooth, an' whin spiered whit he tou't o' the discoorse said 'e dudna like id ava, an' whin spiered gin 'e waarna prood tae tink da Gaelic waas sae ald, said "Na, cis if Atam an' Eve spoke ta Gaelic, ta teevil maun be a Hielant man," which nae doot's treu seean hid's been proovan 'at Pontius Pilate waas born i' a piece ca'ad Glenlyon i' Pert! Da Ald Chiel an' Pontius warn a jeust yamals bit dey waar seek cronies an' as tick as horse heds,¹ 'at 'id cinna be dooted ane waas a oe or eerie oe o' the tither, an' buist haa spoken da sam.' Noo, whin sae muckle's been deun for a dialec o' seek dootfil origin an' wi siccan pecuieer wirds 'at na or'nar bothy can forsta, whit soo'dna be deun for wir ain bony saft-soondin' hamely dialec' 'at even the peerie cheelders can spak.' Treu, muckle od's been forgotten bit lit's tak' care o' whit we hae an' ken o'd. A General Election's comin'

¹ As tick as horse heds—a phrase meaning very friendly or inseparable.

an' feinty candidate soo'd be voted for wha doesna mak' a solemn voo 'at 'e winna tak' rest annunder 'im till wir dialect's at laste ta't i' the skeuls gin no i' the Colleges. We's no be greedy, gin we cinna get a steul, we's pit ap wi' a peerie creepie—half a cuith's better nor nae fish. Tamson soo'd be telt tae write the morn neest tae wir M. Pay aboot 'id. Hid's amas tae gae 'im sonting o' eus tae deu. He gabs aneuch aboot a road tae Rackwick 'at lies somewhaar nar the ald Man o' Hoy, 'at wadna be o' ony eus till onybody, an' laste o' a' tae da ald man himsel' cis ee's gotten bit ae leg noo an' hasna been seen gan aboot dis lang while. Wir M. Pay jeust daves folk teu wi' 'is clatters aboot da trallers 'at am sheur never deud 'im ony herm, an' aboot ither poleetical faldaralls, fairilies an' lalls am dootin' he deusna ken ower muckle aboot. He maybe kens a peerie air aboot crampy grises an' kye includan eum bulls, owzen, an whyoos an' dippan sheep for scab an' kebs, bit sae far as da wants o' wir isles geong he's a stoopid amiter. For Guid sake gae 'im sonting eusfil tae deu or he'll geong intil a decline. Tell 'im gin 'e winna voo tae hae wir dialect ta't i' the skeuls, there's naither a stirlin', auk, gruely belkie, selkie, scarf, crab, lempid, hobbler, yirning, wilk, sheep, mare or bluidy puddin'¹ 'll vote for 'im. Sae might I trive dat wad gae the muckle ferrylouper a gluff gin onyting wad fleg 'im. Bit efter a', he's no a ill ting ava, an' 'e means weel, an' 'e's been a guid freen tae me, sae to' am whit dey ca' a rank Tory, hame aboot, I buist say he's da best we're haen for miny's the day, sae I'se be blide gin da crater wins in again.

Hid's said 'at every lass gin sheu lives lang aneuch gets at laste ae offer o' the lang fee, sae da wirds i' which a lad may spier 'er is a maiter wirt kennan. A Heelan-man wad say "Am pos thu mi 'm eudail?" meanan i' English "Will thu' mairly me, me dear." Da lass's answer wad jeust be as ootlandish accordan tae foo

¹ These are parish nicknames.

sheu teuk id. Gin sheu said "Posaidh," sheu wad be sayan "A'll tak thee." "Cha phos!" wad be "A'll no hae thee," bit gin sheu said "Ha cabhag ort!" he wad hae tae coort a mont or twa langer for dan sheu wad be sayan "This is so sudden." Noo, whit lass wi' ony respec' for hersel wad say "Posaidh" till siccan oncan wirds, am gey an sheur Orkna lasses onywey wad tell da chap tae lave her alane an' geong tae whar dey wadna fa' oot about the quality o' the Kirkwa' borewater. Am telt da newest English wey is for da lad tae fa' doon api' 'is murro banes, tak' a had o' the lass's han an' stimmer oot like an alarm knock rinnan doon "I cinna had me tong ony langer. Me caddie lam, I like dee, seure's daith ever sin I met dee at Filtymires muckle supper, I hae liked dee. Sin dat e'enin' whin I teuk me first luk intill dee bony een thu're aye been i' me hert an' me tou'ts, an' withoot dee, withoot de love, withoot the light o' dee laich the ceulkie wad be dark an' life wadna be wirt livan. Am no tae blame for likan thee, foo could I help 'id, thu're the ae lass i' the wirld wha I like, thu're me peerie doo. Tak me an' I'se be thee slave a' me days. Heevan hidsel cinna be brighter nor whin du're aside me, bit I wad as seun be i' the boddam o' the bad piece nor hae thee no tae tak' me. Gin thu'll tak' me hid'll be heevan tae me, bit gin thu'll no hae me, A'll mak awa wi' mesel," an' a hale lock mair o' sic nonsence aneuch tae mak' a gibbie speu, bit 'e jeust meant da sam as the Heelanman, only teuk langer tae say id, fyled da knees o' 'is bits o' guid Sunday pants, telt a lock o' lees an' deudna gae the lass a chance o' haddan ap 'er mooth like a peerie laveric leukan for a swinky fae hid's minny as lasses ar' sometimes said tae deu i' the sooth bae wey o' sayan "hm hm." Sheu cinna fa' gracefully intill 'is skurt as ithers deu or sheu wad ding 'im ower, an' dan gin sheu waas a muckle ane sheu might smoor 'im or mittle 'im for life. A'body kens hid's da best position gin sheu's gan tae gae 'im the keek. Feinty lass wad

say na till an Orknaman's proposal gaen i' da treu Nort Ronalsha wey "Am come tae see thee, tae seek thee, tae hae thee, tae hae me, be it Guid's will an' thine 'at thu're tae be mine an' am tae be thine. I's gae thee ale at ale toime an' kail at kail toime, an' male a' the year roond, I'se gae thee a pair o' rivlins meed oot o' whoite horse hoide wi' rade tape tae toi them wi." Whit could a lass say bit jeust spier foo seun da buikan wad be. Of coorse afore the buikan da bottle buist be drunk an' dis teu shaws the beuty o' wir dialect'. His ald filloos 'ats waded da water kens whit 'id is tae geong an' spake tae wir guidfaither tae be, as buist be deune here i' the Sooth, bit hame aboot id's naething. Ye jeust get a guid sap o' the "Ald Man o' Hoy" or "Heelan Park" or "Scapey" an' geong tae the lass's hoose an' spier da ald man gin he'll tak' a drink wi' ye. Gin 'e says "ay" guid an weel, sheu's yeurs, gin "Na" ye'd as weel tae scoot afore ye get a' da ill deuan's o' yer forebears haved at yer head as gin ye waar the caas o' oreeginal sin an' a' the ither sins 'at waas deun afore da fleud. Whin I waas a cutty rinnan chiel, an' dat waasna da streen, I kent a pair whar the bottle drinkan waas reversed. Jock o' the Geo waas a trowie coorly ting, sae Betty o' da Bout, pittan on da breeks 'at sheu never cust aff a' 'er days, gaed tae 'is faither, weel kent bae da eetname "Ald Cull" an' wi' nae ither preliminary bit a "haa, haa, haa" telt 'im strait "Am come tae seek Jock"—anither guid sample o' da beuty o' wir dialect' an' da pluck o' wir lasses. Sheu got 'im, ay fegs deud sheu.

Hid's whin we come tae da hame life, beesweel, 'at we see the rale beuty o' wir dialect' i' takan pairt i' the cares an' sorroos, pleasures an' enjoyments o' ane anither. Geong intae a peerie hoose wi' jeust a but an' a ben, an hear da wey ye're fairly tane tae deir bosims—"Eh, na, noo, am blide tae see dee, come dee waas ben, or geong dee waas ben." Hoo id seems tae craal ap aboot yer hert like a bit o' neu scourin' booty aboot yer lugs,

instead o' da wey dey deu i' the Sooth, whar ye're shawn intae whit dey ca the draawan room bae a servant lass wi' a white caape api' 'er hade, an' a' peeny preened afore 'er, an' sheu spiers whit nam'll sheu gae, jeust is cauld like is gin ye waar collectan for a Yule gift o' gertans tae the Yacs. Or again a sister sendan a seutable present till a deean brither i' da Sooth wad say tae her servant lass "Carry this parcel along to Mr. Nobody with my compliments, and enquire for his health." Noo, i' compeerison, tink o' a case 'at I mind o' i' Orkna twa'r tree year sin. Sibbie o' da Why waas a ald maid, bit for a' dat sheu waas ower guid, an' id waas rale bony tae see an' leed till her singan dat beutifil hime.

"Jeruslam is a bony piece
Nae mouch or mooswab thare
Hid's streets ar' laid wi' baten goud,
Oh, kin I waas thare."

Sibbie gaed till a neebor seekan da len' o' a corkscrew. Sheu got 'id bit tae be neeborly, Sibbie waas spiered whit sheu waas gan tae deu wi'd. Aweel, said sheu, du sees buddie me brither Willick's stootly trowie an' awfully toutless. He's hed a sair misanter an' cinna loot for hostan, an' he's dat croam he cinna spak abeun 'is braith. Du sees buddie, he gaed i' aval i' the Holes o' Cuppsermung is he waas gan fae Truilagae tae Gillietrang an' am fared hid'll set doon i' 'is hass an' be a crewal. Thu sees, buddie, am dootan he's no haen 'is deenan dis lang while noo sae I boucht a bit o' mate an' a drap o' the crater fae the van da streen an' am gan ower wi'd tae 'im the morn, an' as he'll ma' be no hae onyting tae dra id wi', I'se asweel pu the cork afore I geong, seustoo buddie. Dat waas on Fooursday an' Willick's hoose waas seevan mile awa, sae da neebar deudna see Sibbie fill Tiesday whin sheu couldna bit spier gin Willick was coweran. Dis neebar an' Willick ye buist ken war year's bairns an' hid been brou't ap i' a twabiggin'. "Oh, lass," co Sibbie, "I deuna ken." "Bit," co the neebar, "I tou't

du war awa seean 'im." "Oh, yea," waas the answer, "I waas gan tae see 'im bit du sees 'e bides ower far awa an' me leg's swalled fae me ceut tae me houch an' I hae the rumateese i' me thiee, sae I jeust made a sap o' broth aboot da mate an' glaepid id mesel, an' I pat da air o' Ald Kirk i' me mooth an' bed hame an' petee-tioned for Willick." Dat's whit ye can ca' britherly loove, nane o' yer complements sent bae a servant lass—gin sheu couldna win hersel sheu bed hame an' said 'er bony wirds, an' ma' be id jeust deud is muckle guid is a veesit wad deun. Puir Sibbie after bidan minnys da day her leevan lane, de'ed i' da voar i' a madhoos whar dere waas nane tae straik, kist or booray 'er bit oncan folk, oh whan! awhan!

Dan, see hoo tou'tfil we ar' wi' releegion. I'se wirran some o' ye's hard o' Peggie Hacroo an' 'er son, weel kent as "Peggie's Tam" or "Tam Peggie." Weel, ye see, Peggie deudna hae a man o' 'er ain, sae whin sheu gaed till hae Tam chrisened da minister refeused tae deu'id, bit Peggie waasna gan tae lit her peerie ane geong trou dis cald warl wi'oot a name, sae da neest chrisnan Sunday sheu merched ap till da elder's why wi' peerie Tam anunder her oxter, an takan ap is muckle water oot o' da bowl is sheu could had i' 'er live, haved id atween da peerie bairn's een, an' slewan roond tae the folk baaled oot "Da bairn's name's Tammas Bellya Hacroo" an' gaed oot o' da kirk is prood is a dog wi twa taals, wi peerie Tam i' 'er skurt. Tam greu ap an' at da lang an' da lent whin he waas a ora boy he wanted tae join da kirk. Noo, ye a' ken at dat time a'boddy hed tae whit dey ca'ad "converse wi' da minister" afore dey war alloood tae join, sae gossips say 'at Tam gaed teu. Da first question pittan tae 'im waas "hoo miny commanments dere waar." He said he tou't twinty waas aneuch. Efter siccan a answer da minister couldna weel lit Tam trou, sae he gaed awa hame rightly doon i' da mooth. On 'is wey he met a chap he kent fine. "Hurro, Tam,

whar du been, boy?" spiered da freen. "Awa tae join da kirk, bit ald Rade wadna lit me trou," waas da answer. "Whit for no," waas a very netral queery, as Tam waas kent tae be a weel deuan lad. "Och, he spiered me foo miny comman'ments thar waas an' I coudna tell 'im," co Tam. "Foo miny deud du say," spiered da freen. "Weel," co Tam again, "I telt him I tou't twinty waas plenty." "Och, toots, toots, Tam dere's bit ten, min, bit A'll tell dee, am jeust on me wey tae converse wi ald Rade mesel, sae thu'll come back wi' me an' I'se sit ahint dee an' whiss whin du deusna ken." Beesweel dey baith gaed tae da manse. "Well, Thomas," says Rade, "have you learned your Catechism already?" "Na, sir, ye see, sir, I only forgot foo miny comman'ments thar waas." "Well, how many are there, Thomas?" "Ten, sir." "Quite right, Thomas. And now, can you tell me 'What is God?'" Nae kent Tam, sae 'is freen waas tae whiss da hale answer an' begood "a speerit infeenit," bit puir Tam waas stootly dull o' hearan' an' i' da aptak, sae 'e answered "A fiddler i' Greenick." Dat waas jeust ower muckle for ald Rade, sae Tam waas telt he hed tae geong tae the Sabbath Skeul, an' aff hame he set, hingan a lip like a mitherless foal. On Sunday Tam gaed tae da skeul an' da shorter catéchism bean ower far advanced for 'im he waas pittan intae the mither's caridge, an' waas spiered whit he waas made o'. Niver a kent he, bit a peerie bit o' a boy sittan ahint 'im whissed "dust and ashes," an' again puir Tam deudna hear ower weel an' taken id ap wrang answered "dirt an' reshes."

Dan, leuk hoo bony we can be wi' wir boorials an' da hameliness o' wir dialect whin sic maitters comes wir wey. Dere waas ald Jeanie Knarston. Sheu bed wi' 'er sister Pegs i' a peerie hoose takid wi' heathry simmins an' biggid maistlins o' cleepoos an' fails. Dey bed i' ae end an' the coo an' yow i' the ither, wi' da fools api' da twart-backs, an' a footh o' rattans playan digeedoo aboot da couplelegs i' the aisins, an' ma'be a ald gizzened ceular

whimmled ower a deuk ahint da back tae keep 'er fae layan awa. Whin Jeanie waas a lass i' her teens sheu tou't sheu waas gan tae dee, sae sheu sat 'er wis doon an' made half a dizzen dead sarks for 'ersel whin am sheur ane's tou't aneuch for maist folk, an' sheu pat extra gussets i' dem for strent. Hid's as sheur as daith sheu deud id an' led dem by i' 'er kist fill dey wad be needed. Ay, bit, efter a while puir times cam apin 'er an' sheu couldna affeurd tae buy neu sarks for every day eus, sae sheu pat tooks api' da dead sarks an' weur dem. Pegs waas a'fill mad aboot id an' flet wi' 'er an' telt 'er sheu soodna deu id', an' gaed sae far i' 'er maddrum dat sheu haved a flat o' sooans at 'er an' hat 'er wi' da kirn staff. "Och," co Jeanie, "dey's no be muckle wirn whar dey're gan, an dey're guid claith, sae hid's is guid tae tak' a air o' wear oot o' dem noo." Aye, troth, sheu deud id, bit alis, alis, whin daith ca'ad api' 'er, her dead sarks war a' deun an' da puir's booard hed tae gae 'er da ane 'at wadna be muckle wirn.

Dan, leuk at da wey folk i' the Sooth bid till deir boorials bae letter, wi' deir "sirs," an' deir "compliments," an' "respectful requests," an' deir "I am, sir, your obedient servants." Jeust a lock o' hypocrisy an' blaw. Foo hamely an' touching waas da ald Orkna man's biddin' tae 'is wife's boorial bae wurd o' mooth—"Boys, wad ye come an' gae's a lift ower da sand wi' the ald wife da morn at twal o'clock.

Dan, again, whin wir dialec's bean ta't, Orcadian guid mainers soodna be misglimed, an' foo bony id's tae leed tae wir politeness i' wir ain wirds. A sportie meetan a ald Rousa màre ca'd Jeemo o' da Bu i' the ebb, spiered 'im whit waas da name o' a peerie bit o' bird he saa rinnan aboot da noust. Hid waas a sinlic bit Jeemo kent fine hoo tae spake till 'is betters sae said "Weel, sir, hereaboot sar, ye see, sar, we jeust ca' id a sandy laveroo, sar, bit am dootan, sar, hid's fancy nem'll be Alexander lark, sar." Anither time Jeemo hid da honour o' bean boatman till

ane o' wir late Sheriffs whin 'e waas oot dere tryan tae sheut wild deuks or tammynorries an' ither seeklike fools. A' trow da day whiniver the Sheriff spak till Jeemo, Jeemo answered, "Yes, me lord" or "No, me lord"—hid jeust waas a case o' "me lord" a' day tae everything. I' the grimlins whin id waas aboot time tae geong hame da Sheriff teuk oot a bony siller flask fu' o' the best "Heelan Park" an' handan 'id tae Jeemo telt 'im tae help 'imsel. Seek condescension fairly teuk Jeemo's braith awa, an' for a peerie meenit deudna weel ken whit tae say tae seut da occasion, bit 'is guid mainers cam' till 'is mind an' instead o' sittan api' da thaft wi' a mooth like a pate casie an' gannan at the Sheriff like a stoopid nowte, he made 'is boo an' haddan ap da flask tae da Sheriff afore tastan id said, "Here's yer vero guid health, me God."

Noo, am tinkan am said aneuch tae preuv tae ye a' dat wir dialect's weel wirt keepan ap, sae ye's ma'be mind on whit am telt ye an' vote for nane 'at'll no voo tae preserve id. Am deun noo.

J. T. SMITH LEASK.

GLOSSARY.

*Words marked thus * will be found in the English Dialect Dictionary.*

Aisins, Sco. *Easings, the eaves of a house. In Stenness applied to the open space inside the house between the top of the wall and the underside of the slates in an open-timbered roof.

Amiter, Sco. *Amitan, a foolish person. O.N. amatligr, adj. loathsome.

Atgangs, ongoings. O.N. atgangr, fighting.

Aval, to fall backwards. Sco. *awald. O.N. af-velta, cast, used of sheep that have fallen on their backs and unable to rise.

**Billie*, an old man.

**Buist*, must.

**Birr*, force, energy, vigour. O.N. byrr, a fair wind.

Bud, *buddie*, terms of endearment, resembling bird, birdie.

**Caridge*, *mither's caridge*, catechism; corruption of French, catéchèse.

Ceulkie, the circle bounded by the horizon.

Ceular, *cooler, a tub without lugs. A *say was a tub with two lugs through which the *say-tree was passed, by which it was carried on the shoulders of two persons.

Cout, ankle; *coot.

Cleepoos, marl stone. In Sandey the word means cowdung dried ready for burning as fuel.

Crampy grices, young pigs affected with stiffness in the knee joints.

Digeedoo, a game of tig, called pickoo in Stenness, played after harvest round the stacks; called dikiedoo in Orphir, "dikiedoo around the screw."

Eerie-oe, great-grandson; *Eerie-eerie-oe*, great-great-grandson.

Eum, mad; *Eum bulls*, mad bulls. [Also used in Orphir in connection with bulls only and popularly explained as representing the sound made by a mad bull. A.W.J.] *Uim.

Fairilies, uncommon or strange articles.

**Feinty*, feint a, fiend or devil a.

Galloos, a rascal, generally in a jocular sense. *Gallows.

**Ganan*, staring with open mouth. O.N. góna, to stare sillily.

**Gantan*, yawning.

**Gibbie*, cat.

Grimlins, twilight.

**Harnpans*, skulls.

Hedal, light-headed, giddy.

Lalls, toys.

Live, palm of the hand, O.N. lófi. *Loof.

**Misanter*, misfortune.

Misglimed, overlooked, neglected. *Glime.

**Mittle*, Mutilate, injure. O.N. mjatla, to cut.

**Mooswab*, cobweb.

**Mouch*, moth.

Murro-banes, *marrow bones, the knees.

Pisslin, this word has several meanings, but when joined with peerie, means slow in movement.

**Ploy*, dispute.

Putt, nudge.

Scourin booty, a woman's head cloth, like a small shawl, made of a piece of blanket.

**Scunner*, disgust, sicken.

Seustoo, do you see.

Sinlic, sandlark.

Swinky, long earth worm.

Trang, busy, *throng.

Trilcya, huff.

Tullzied, disputed, *tuilyied.

Uddie, small; *peerie uddie*, very small.

**Wanjoy*, troublesome.

Whasacco, pretending. See Jamieson, quha-say, a pretence.

Why, quoy. Elders' Why, the enclosed pew or "quoy" where the elders sit at communion.

Wirren, warrant. *Awarrant, to vouch for, used always with future tense.

**Yackles*, molar teeth.

**Yamals*, of the same age. O.N. jafn-aldri.

OBITUARY.

We regret to announce the death of the following subscribers and others.

FRANCIS G. GIFFORD.—Original Subscriber, died in Lerwick, July 8th, 1908, aged 53 years. A son of Mr. William Gifford, Brae, Bressay. He went to sea in his early days and afterwards went to the seal and whale fishing. A good many years ago he entered the service of the North of Scotland Company, and was till the end of last summer Chief Officer of the "St. Rognvald." Mr. Gifford leaves a widow, four sons and two daughters.—Extracted from the *Shetland News*.

We also regret to announce the death of Mr. G. M. Atkinson, original subscriber, and Miss S. C. Rücker, annual subscriber, both Vice-Presidents of the Viking Club, of whom obituary notices will appear in a future number.

ANDREW HUGHSON, the oldest settler in the Colville Valley, and of Stevens County, Washington, died at his home, two miles south of Colville, June 6th, 1908. He was born in Walls, Shetland, 1830, came to Canada as an employee of the Hudson Bay Company, 1850, passing through to Fraser River, B.C., and thence down to Fort Colville in 1851. The only white men in that part of the country then were the officer in charge of Fort Colville, two other employees of the Company there, and himself. After the Hudson Bay Company withdrew from that part of the country he took up a ranch. He had been a constant resident of the Colville Valley for the long period of 57 years. By his will he left 500 dollars to the High School at Colville, the same amount to the school of his native place, and about 10,000 dollars to be divided among some twenty relatives in Shetland. He also left a valuable real estate. Deceased never married and his nephew Robert Hughson, Colville, Wash., took care of him during his illness.

NOTES ON BOOKS.

Epic and Romance, Essays on Medieval Literature by
Professor W. P. Ker. Macmillan & Co., London,
1908, 398 pp., 4s. net.

Since this book was first published in 1896, it has done more than any other work to spread the knowledge of Old Icelandic literature in Europe and America, to place it in its due seat of honour in European literature. The leading scholars in various countries, Prof. A. Heusler in Germany, A. Olrik in Denmark, York Powell in England, Björn Ólsen in Iceland, have been unanimous in their praise of it. It is "now reprinted without addition or change, except in a few small details."

The author has succeeded where none of his predecessors succeeded, namely in making the art of narrative in the Sagas intelligible to the modern reader, that art which had to be rediscovered by the great novelists. We cannot refrain from quoting some lines which may be applied with equal justice to the author himself as to the authors of the Sagas, kindred spirits as they are. "The self-repression in the Sagas is bracing. It gives greater clearness, greater resonance; it does not cut out or renounce anything that is really worth keeping the greatest charm of the Sagas is their economy of phrasing in the critical passages, the brevity with which the incidents and speeches are conveyed. Single phrases in the great scenes of the Sagas are full-charged with meaning to a degree hardly surpassed in any literature. Half a dozen words will carry all the force of the tragedy of the Sagas, or render all the suspense and terror of their adventurous moments, with an effect that is like nothing so much as the effect of some of the short repressed phrases of Shakespeare in *Hamlet* or *King Lear*."

This is as true as it is eloquent, and this self-repression and economy of phrasing are characteristic of the author himself. He might have been a contemporary and

fellow-countryman of Sturla the historian, so thoroughly is he imbued with his spirit. Fortunately for us, however, he is among us to give us such a vivid parallel as that between Sturla and Joinville, or to write of the death of Kjartan. We exhort all those who have not read this book—epoch-making as it is in regard to the Sagas in modern times—to read it at once. A rare intellectual treat is in store for them.—JÓN STEFÁNSSON.

Saga-Book of the Viking Club. Vol. V., Part II., pp. 197-421, April 1908. Annual Subscription, 21s. the first year, including the previous year's Saga-Book, thereafter 10s. a year.

This year's Saga-Book contains much of special interest to Orkneyingers and Shetlanders. Stone Cist found in South Ronaldsey (why should we not give up the horribly corrupt spelling *Ronaldshay*), by Rev. A. Goodfellow. Rune-inscribed stone found at Stenness, by Magnus Spence. A newly discovered inscription in crypt-runes from the Brodgar Circle, Stenness, by Magnus Olsen, illustrated. A Shetland Legend from *Fljótsdæla* Saga, translated by Professor W. G. Collingwood, already printed in *Old-lore*.

Skotlands Rímur. Icelandic Ballads on the Gowrie Conspiracy. Edited by W. A. Craigie. 144 pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. London, Henry Frowde, 1908. 3s. 6d. net.

These six ballads are taken from the Arna-Magnæan Collection in the University Library, Copenhagen. A brief account of them appeared in the Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland for 1894-5. The author was an Icelandic priest, Síra Einar Guðmundsson at Stað on Reykjaness in the first half of the seventeenth century. It is supposed that he derived his knowledge of the Gowrie Conspiracy from the Danish translation of the official account which was published in Copenhagen in 1601, a copy of which is printed as an appendix to this work.

Mr. Craigie explains that "from the latter part of the fourteenth century down to the present day *rímur* have been the favourite popular poetry of Iceland. . . . To a great extent they are based on pre-existing narratives in prose, the mythical or purely fictitious Sagas being those most frequently selected for conversion into this metrical form." They differ from ballads of other Scandinavian countries and Great Britain, in the greater exactness of the metre (alliteration being strictly observed, and combined with rimes often very complex), in the use of *kenning's* after the style of the old Skaldic verse. Each *ríma* begins with some introductory lines, which formerly always had reference to women and love, and hence called *mansöngur* or "maid-song." In later times the original idea often disappears, though traces remain in some mention of a lady for whose entertainment the *rímur* are supposed to be composed.

The substance of Skotlands *rímur*, and of their introductory verses are given in the Introduction, together with a life of the author by Sighvatur Grímsson. At the end is given the poetic terms and kennings employed in the *rímur*. Mr. Craigie's book should prove useful to students of Icelandic poetry, especially as only a very small portion of the great mass of *rímur* has been printed.

Islandica. An Annual relating to Iceland and the Fiske Icelandic Collection in Cornell University Library. Edited by George William Harris, Librarian. Vol. I. Bibliography of the Icelandic Sagas, and minor tales. By Halldór Hermannsson, 126 pp. Issued by Cornell University Library, Ithaca, New York, 1908. One dollar.

Willard Fiske, the first Librarian of Cornell University, resigned his post in 1883, after fifteen years of service, and took up his residence in Italy where he devoted his leisure to bibliographical studies, and collecting books. At his death in 1904, he bequeathed to Cornell University

his Icelandic and other collections, and his residuary estate as a fund for general library purposes. The formation of his Icelandic collection was the work of a lifetime, its beginning being made when Mr. Fiske was a student at Upsala more than fifty years ago. Some idea of the completeness of the collection may be gained from his privately printed "Bibliographical Notices" which contain supplements to the British Museum Catalogue of Books printed in Iceland, and from the Bibliography of the Icelandic Sagas now printed. Mr. Fiske left provision for the publication of an Annual Volume relating to Iceland and his Icelandic collection, of which the above work is the first volume—a bibliography of the Sagas relating to Iceland prepared by Mr. Halldór Hermannsson, who is in charge of the Fiske Icelandic Collection in Cornell University Library.

Voluspá, done into English from the Icelandic. By Dr. A. K. Coomáraswámy.

The Essex House Press, Campden, Glos., contemplate publishing the above translation, of which 40 copies were privately printed at the Kandy Industrial School in 1905. Dr. Coomáraswámy is a member of the Viking Club, and has recently returned from Ceylon where he acted as Director of the Mineral Survey. The following works by the same author will also be issued shortly by the same Press: *Mediæval Sinhalese Art* and *The Aims of Indian Art*, both of which will be illustrated.

Report on the Excavations at Wick Barrow, Stogursey, Somersetshire. By Harold St. George Gray. With Appendices by (1) Rev. H. H. Winwood, F.G.S., and Albany F. Major; (2) Rev. W. H. P. Greswell, F.R.G.S.; (3) H. St. George Gray and W. L. Winterbotham, M.B.; and (4) Rev. C. W. Whistler, M.R.C.S. Published at Taunton Castle. 8vo, 1908. 4s. 6d.

In April and September last Mr. Harold St. George Gray superintended the excavation of Wick Barrow,

under the joint auspices of the Viking Club and the Somersetshire Archæological and Natural History Society, of whose Museum at Taunton Castle he is Curator. This pamphlet of 78 pages contains the Report of the excavations, illustrated by a map showing the position of the Barrow with reference to the surrounding country, a contoured plan and section of the Barrow itself, and ten plates from photographs by the author, besides occasional drawings in the text. The mound, situated on a slight ridge at a height of nearly 50 feet above sea-level, overlooking an alluvial moor on the margin of Bridgewater Bay, was about 84 feet in diameter and 11 feet in greatest vertical height. On the top was a depression which was taken to indicate that at some former period it had been dug into, and on one side there had also been partial excavations resulting in the unearthing of human remains. From its position and traditional reputation it was surmised to be a Viking or an Anglo-Saxon burial-mound. The excavation gave a conclusive negative to this supposition, to the disappointment of those who had favoured it, but largely to the gain of scientific archæology.

The operations so carefully and scientifically carried out by Mr. Gray, resulted in the discovery of three different burials by inhumation in the rough material of the Barrow, at depths of 2 feet, 3 feet, and $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet from the surface. There were no cists; the skeletons lay in the usual contracted position, but each was accompanied by a broken urn of beaker, or drinking-cup form. With the second skeleton there was also found a lanceolate flint dagger, $5\frac{3}{8}$ inches in length, and a flake-knife, and with the third skeleton a flake-knife, four scrapers of flint, and a small burnisher of sandstone. No trace of bronze or other definite indications of the Bronze Age were found, and the skeletons show in the shape of the skulls "decided characters of the Neolithic people." The three beakers it is true are of types found also in Bronze Age burials, but the flint implements are of Neolithic

types, and beakers are not necessarily of the Bronze Age only. Nevertheless, Mr. Gray gives it as his opinion that the tumulus has now been "proved to be of the Early Bronze Age dating probably from about 1800 years B.C., according to the Chronology of the British Bronze Age, generally accepted by English antiquaries." Readers accustomed to rely upon dates may hardly feel much confidence in a chronology which hedges its dates with "probably" and "about," and gives only slump sums of years. Knowing that there is no possible way of ascertaining the definite duration of unrecorded time between points that are assumed to correspond with different stages of advancement in culture, or of expressing that duration in terms of years or centuries, except by guessing, they may be startled at the general acceptance by English antiquaries of a system which makes guesses at these unknown lapses of time, and states its guesses, not as guesses, but in definite numbers of years B.C. Archæologists who are familiar with it know that it is only a convention which really does not mean what it seems to say; but it is very misleading to the public who take it seriously. Its futility is demonstrated by its application to the definition of the date of this tumulus which Mr. Gray places at about B.C. 1800, whereas according to the chronology of the British Bronze Age propounded by Dr. Montelius, it should be about 2250 B.C.

The lower part of the barrow, which consisted chiefly of stones, was found to have a well-built retaining wall nearly $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet in height, and 18 inches thick, encircling an extent of the central portion of about 30 feet in diameter. The wall was faced only to the outside, and the face had a considerable inward batter, the maximum slope being $2\frac{1}{4}$ feet out of the vertical. No primary interment was found. But towards the centre of the enclosed space at a depth of 5 feet under the surface of the depression on the top of the barrow, 27 inches below the average level of the top of the retaining

wall, and about 12 inches above the old surface line, a broken portion ($3\frac{1}{4}$ inches in length) of the rim of a Roman pottery vessel known as a mortarium was found; and at a lower level, within a inch or two of the old land surface, a coin of Constantine the Great, struck about A.D. 335-337, was discovered. This topsy-turvydom of late neolithic burials in the upper part of the mound, and a shard of Roman pottery and a 4th century coin in the lower part has tempted the author to say that "no more complete proof of the fact that the Romans had excavated this barrow was needed." But it is obvious that the occurrence of these two Roman objects in the refilling of the excavated mound, is, by itself, no proof that either the excavation or the refilling was done by Romans; and no other evidence is adduced. At least it only amounts to a suggestion of likelihood, which is very far from proof. The Romans have not hitherto been credited with the "breaking of howes," like the Saxons and Scandinavians. Mr. Gray says, that they left this piece of pottery and coin "as evidence that they had rifled this part of the barrow." But even if these things were left by Romans, where is the evidence that they left them with this, or any other intention? The two things were not found together; and the only relevant evidence they afford is that the refilling of the excavated barrow could not have taken place before the date of the coin. No information is to be extracted from them either as to the time of the excavation, or whether it was done by Romans or Britons, Saxons or Scandinavians. But after all, Mr. Gray may have guessed the truth, which the available evidence had failed to reveal; although it is not impossible that the circumstances observed may be accounted for in other ways. Secondary interments of the time of the Roman occupation made in the upper parts of prehistoric barrows are not uncommon; and if there had been such a burial in the upper part of this barrow (of which there is no evidence), relics associated with it might easily have been

mingled with the refilling of an excavation made long after the Roman time. But in barrow exploration there are often presented to the explorer circumstances which he is unable to explain, and while it is desirable that these should be faithfully recorded, it is not within the province of the scientific investigator to go beyond the evidence in search of an explanation. Discounting the obvious straining of the evidence to reach conclusions (which are after all of secondary importance), the results obtained, and described with so much scientific knowledge, are sufficiently interesting and valuable to make the Report a document of paramount importance among the existing materials for the Archæology of Southern Britain.

NOTE.—The Rev. C. W. Whistler, in an interesting collection of Folklore about the mound, states that "Two most persistent and thoroughly believed statements were made about the Barrow, which are almost certainly traditions of actual occurrences, and not at all to be classed as superstitions. One was that 'if the mound were to be removed by day, it would be set back again at night.' The other was that 'harm would inevitably happen to anyone who broke into the mound.' . . . That we should discover that the mound had actually been broken into by the Romans, and that their excavation had been carefully filled in, was a remarkable evidence of the persistence of tradition." It would be surprising if these two *persistent traditions* are not equally attached to every similar mound in the kingdom; they are quite common in Orkney and Shetland. The Report, which should prove useful to those needing guidance in the scientific exploration of tumuli, shows the danger of theorising in what ought to be a purely scientific record, as in this case we find that the supposition that the Romans had broken into the mound has been forthwith treated as an historical fact. Mr. A. F. Major (Editor of the *SAGA-Book*) gives an ingenious picture of the surrounding country and coastline, as it probably appeared, at the time the mound was thrown up.—EDITOR.

Etymologisk Ordbog over det Norrøne Sprog på Shetland.

By Jakob Jakobsen. Part I. Copenhagen, Vilhelm Prior, 1908. Demy 8vo., pp. 240, x. Price 5 kroner (5s. 7d.)

It was with great surprise and pleasure that we opened this book; surprise, which perhaps the native-born Shetlander would not have shared, at the richness of the

remains still existing and traceable of the ancient Norse tongue, and pleasure at the thorough and scholarly way in which the dialect words are set out, illustrated, and traced to their sources. There is no "padding"; indeed Dr. Jakobsen's entries are so full of condensed matter and abbreviated explanation as to be stiff reading; and yet in 240 pages, double column, he takes us no further through the alphabet than "gopn." When the dictionary is complete it will be a monumental work, invaluable not only to the Shetlander, but also to every student of the Scandinavian origin of more than one British dialect; for Shetland, though by far the richest in Norse words, is not the only district where the speech of the people still retains the stamp of their Viking ancestry. It is not, of course, Dr. Jakobsen's aim in this work to give full comparison of Shetland words with these akin to them in other parts, though he has used the English Dialect Dictionary to advantage, and notes Suffolk and Yorkshire analogies. But many interesting points might be made, and some light possibly thrown on difficulties, by a freer use of the Cumberland dialect. For instance, Cumberland "angs," and "er" are even a little closer to Old Norse *agnar* and *örr* than the Shetland "anns" and "ar"; while Cumberland retains the form "arval" from the stem represented in Shetland by "arff" and "arvhus." Such words as "ark," "at" (for "to" with the infinitive) and "eterkap" with its by-meanings, are common to both. In Lancashire "ask" is used of dry but not sunny weather, apparently connected with the Shetland word, though slightly different in use. "Aslin," which Dr. Jakobsen cannot explain, may possibly be parallel to the Cumberland phrase "as asley" (not "as easily") meaning "indifferently, as soon one way as another"; and "atl," a little portion of food, from *ætla*, "to allot," is matched in Cumberland by the verb "ettle," to deal out sparingly. Space forbids our going further than A, but these examples are sufficient to show

the curious similarity of dialects in places far apart and connected only by common origin nearly a thousand years ago. Another series of words which will be of general interest is the sea-language; in many cases preserving ancient Norse forms, perhaps "kennings" used in skaldic poetry, in most cases giving earlier words than those currently in use. Something of this kind is found in Cumberland and Yorkshire, in the use of ancient numerals for counting sheep, but not for other purposes; we should like to know whether any taboo-language is traceable among the shepherds as well as among the fishers of the North. Perhaps the sincerest expression of gratitude is to ask for more; and we await the completion of Dr. Jakobsen's dictionary with the greatest interest and eagerness.

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ERRATA.

- p. 241, l. 3 from foot, for *James* read *John*.
 p. 296, Eel-lore, for *Eealie* read *Eelie*.
 p. 329, l. 3, delete *original subscriber*.
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