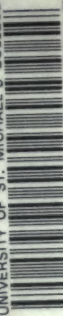


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The cover features a dark blue background with a central illustration of a small boat with a single mast and a dark, rectangular sail. A bright orange sun is positioned behind the mast. The boat and sun are reflected in the water below, which is depicted with wavy, orange-tinted lines. The title 'CAPITALS of the NORTHLANDS' is printed in a stylized, orange-brown font with a black outline, positioned over the lower part of the boat and its reflection. The author's name 'IAN C. HANNAH' is printed in a similar font at the bottom left.

CAPITALS
of the
NORTHLANDS

**IAN
C.
HANNAH**

141



CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS





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THREE DEGREES FROM THE ARCTIC CIRCLE
TRONDHJEM CATHEDRAL

[*Frontispiece*]

CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

TALES OF TEN CITIES

BY

IAN C. HANNAH, M.A.

AUTHOR OF "EASTERN ASIA: A HISTORY," "THE SUSSEX COAST,"
"THE BERWICK AND LOTHIAN COASTS," ETC.

ILLUSTRATED BY EDITH BRAND HANNAH



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TO
THE LOVED MEMORY
OF THE BEST OF MOTHERS
WITH WHOM I ONCE MADE A PILGRIMAGE
TO THE SHRINE OF ST. OLAF

PREFACE

MANY excellent things have been written about the cities of the South, but little, comparatively speaking, about the cities of the North. True, indeed, they have not moulded kingdoms and shaped the culture of a continent, but England, like Scandinavia, is not a country city-built; she was formed by the dwellers on the land. Yet the less prominent part that they have played does not make our cities less noteworthy than those of the South.

Few and peculiarly interesting are the cities of the North. And, with the exception, perhaps, of St. Petersburg, those spoken of in this book have all the charm that comes because they were built by country-loving folk, to whom deep woods and open fields were lovelier than monumental streets and squares.

I shall not have written in vain if the perusal of this small book leads any one to study larger works on the Northlands, and particularly the matchless sagas, many of them so skilfully Englished by the joint labour of an Englishman and an Icelander, William Morris and Eiríkr Magnússon. In them we may read of all these ten towns, save that Copenhagen and

St. Petersburg have risen in Saga Lands after the sagas were penned.

After accuracy I have striven hard, but if any reader should detect any error I should be grateful to have it pointed out for correction in a later edition.

I. C. H.

FERNROYD,
FOREST ROW.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THORSHAVN, CAPITAL OF THE FAROE ISLANDS	11
II. REYKJAVIK, CAPITAL OF ICELAND .	28
III. TRONDHJEM, OLD CAPITAL OF NORWAY	66
IV. CHRISTIANIA, CAPITAL OF NORWAY .	93
V. ROSKILDE, OLD CAPITAL OF DENMARK	111
VI. COPENHAGEN, CAPITAL OF DENMARK .	127
VII. VISBY, CAPITAL OF GOTHLAND . .	150
VIII. UPSALA, OLD CAPITAL OF SWEDEN .	176
IX. STOCKHOLM, CAPITAL OF SWEDEN .	199
X. ST. PETERSBURG, CAPITAL OF RUSSIA	226
INDEX	261

ILLUSTRATIONS

GOL STAVEKIRKE	<i>Title Page</i>
TRONDHJEM CATHEDRAL (EXTERIOR)	<i>Frontispiece</i>
THORSHAVN	<small>PAGE</small> II
REYKJAVIK HARBOUR	28
BOATS AT TRONDHJEM	66
STABBUR AT BYGDÖ, CHRISTIANIA	93
MARKET PLACE AT ROSKILDE	III
CANAL AT COPENHAGEN	127
EAST WELLS AT VISBY	150
CASTLE AND CATHEDRAL, UPSALA	176
HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT, STOCKHOLM	199
CATHEDRAL OF ST. ISAAC, ST. PETERSBURG	226
THORSHAVN FISHERMEN	<small>FACE PAGE</small> 22
HOT SPRINGS NEAR REYKJAVIK	60
CORONA OF TRONDHJEM CATHEDRAL (INTERIOR)	86
GAMLA UPSALA, CHURCH AND RUNIC STONE (PLAN)	99

	FACE PAGE
GREENSTED CHURCH	108
ROSKILDE CATHEDRAL (PLAN)	118
ROSKILDE CATHEDRAL	122
HOJBROPLADS, COPENHAGEN	134
TOWN OF VISBY, WITH DRAWING OF A SADDLE TOWER (PLAN)	158
INTERIOR OF ST. LARS, VISBY	166
CHURCHES OF VISBY (PLAN)	172
GAMLA UPSALA	180
GENERAL VIEW OF STOCKHOLM	206
TRONDHJEM CATHEDRAL (PLAN)	246
ST. ISAAC'S CATHEDRAL, ST. PETERSBURG (PLAN)	246
CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION, ST. PETERS- BURG	254



CHAPTER I

THORSHAVN

Loud in Harfur's echoing bay,
Heard ye the din of battle bray,
'Twi'xt Kiotvi rich, and Harald bold ?
Eastward sail the ships of war ;
The graven bucklers gleam afar,
And dragon heads adorn the prows of gold.

Glittering shields of purest white,
And swords, and Celtic falchions bright,
And Western chiefs the vessels bring :
Loudly roar the wolfish rout,
And maddening Champions wildly shout,
And long and loud the twisted hauberks ring.

Firm in fight they proudly vie
With him whose might will make them fly,
Of Eastmen kings the warlike head.
Forth his gallant fleet he drew,
Soon as the hope of battle grew,
But many a buckler brake ere Long-chin bled.

12 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

Fled the lusty Kiotvi then
Before the Shock-head king of men,
And bade the islands shield his flight.
Warriors wounded in the fray,
Beneath the thwarts all gasping lay,
Where head-long cast they mourned the loss of light.

So does an Icelandic skald describe the most important battle in the annals of the Norse.¹ Harald Shock-head had exalted himself, and said "I will be king" over the whole of Norway. He desired to wed the daughter of the kinglet of Hordaland. She was a maiden exceeding fair and withal somewhat high-minded.

To Harald's messengers she answered in this wise : "I will not waste my maidenhood for the taking to husband of a king who has no more realm to rule over than a few folks. Marvellous it seems to me that there is no king minded to make Norway his own, and be sole lord thereof in such wise as Gorm of Denmark or Eric of Upsala have done."

The messengers came back in wrath and told the king that Gyda (for so the maiden was called) was witless and overbold, but Harald answered that the maid had spoken nought of ill, and done nought worthy of evil reward. Rather he bade her much thank for her word ; "For she has brought to my mind that matter which it now seems to

¹ The skald was Thornbiorn Hornklofi ; the lay was quoted by Snorri Sturluson in the *Heimskringla* ; it was Englished by Henry Wheaton, *History of the Northmen* (1831).

me wondrous I have not had in my mind heretofore."

And, moreover, he said: "This oath I make fast, and swear before that god who made me and rules over all things, that never more will I cut my hair nor comb it, till I have gotten to me all Norway, with the scat thereof and the dues, and all rule thereover, or else will I die rather."

And so for ten winters his hair was neither cut nor combed, but during all those days the kinglets were being warred down, and at last, in 872, as monarch of all Norway, Harald took a bath and let his hair be combed. Jarl Rognvald sheared his locks and called him Harald Fairhair; the name by which he is known in history to-day.¹

Thus he wedded the fair Gydá, but unhappily he also took to wife more other maidens than one may count with ease. Their very numerous sons were soon waxen riotous men in the land and were not at one among themselves. The good work of their father they came near to undoing.

For good work to Norway it very truly was: national unity is a priceless thing. One king was better than a score of kinglets from the nation's point of view. But otherwise thought the jarls (or earls) and the

¹ One thing very much to his credit the *Heimskringla* lets us know: "Whensoever swift rage or anger fell on him, he held himself aback at first and let the wrath run off him, and looked at the matter unwrathfully."

14 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

stoutest opponents of Harald embarked on their ships and sailed away. Some turned their prows to the northward and settled in the Faroes or Iceland, or on the more distant American shore. These were, perhaps, the more peaceably disposed; they found lands waiting for settlement that became at once their own. Their descendants are Norsemen to-day, and among the most cultured of mankind. Others fared to the British Isles or the Continent of Europe or to the more distant Mediterranean Sea. These found lands that were richer, but to be gained only at the point of the sword. These set up powerful kingdoms, but none of them are Norse to-day.

The classic sagas of Iceland have disappointingly little to tell us about the Faroe Islands. There are plenty of references to them indeed, but they are exiguous and dull. The *Faereyinga Saga* is distinctly less vigorous and vivid than the elder sagas of heroic days. It was compiled in Iceland not long after the beginning of the thirteenth century, but older materials were used.

It commences with a somewhat scrappy description of the first settlement of the islands. "There was a man named Grim Camban. He first settled the Faroes in the days of Harald Fairhair. For before the king's overbearing many men fled in those days. Some settled in the Faroes and began to dwell there, and some sought to other waste lands."

Gladly would we have more details of the first settler in the islands with his Irish-sounding name, but they are lost in the abyss of years. With great probability, however, Professor York Powell, who Englished the *Faereyinga Saga*, supposes that the first place occupied was the present capital, the Harbour of Thor. There at any rate was the chief seat of the Thing or Moot for the Islands, certainly till the thirteenth century.

At Thorshavn, too, was played the first half of the delightfully simple 2-Act drama which changed the faith of the archipelago. The renowned King Olaf Tryggvison of Norway (p. 72) had treated Sigmund with high regard and caused him to trow in the faith of the White Christ.

“When the spring was coming in, the king fell on a day to talk with Sigmund, and said that he was minded to send him out to the Faroes to christen the folk that dwelt there. Sigmund said that he would rather not do that errand, but at last said he would do the king’s will. Then the king made him lord over all the islands, and gave him wise men to baptize the folk and teach them the needful lore. Sigmund sailed when he was bound, and sped well on his way. When he came to the Faroes he summoned the franklins to a Thing in Stromo,¹ and much folk came. And when the Thing was set, Sigmund stood up and set forth his

¹ Or Streamsey, the isle of streams, on which Thorshavn stands.

16 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

business at length, telling all that had happened since he had gone eastward to Norway to see King Olaf Tryggvison. Moreover, he said that the king had laid all the island under his lordship, and most of the franklins took this very well. Then Sigmund said on, 'I would likewise have you know that I have taken another faith, and am become a Christian man. I have also this errand and bidding from the king, to turn all folk in the island to the true faith.' Thronð answered this speech and said that it was right the franklins should talk over this hard matter among themselves. The franklins said this was well spoken. Then they went to the other side of the Thing-field, and Thronð told the franklins that the right thing clearly was to refuse to fulfil this command, and he brought things so far by his fair speeches that they were all of one mind thereon. But when Sigmund saw that all the folk had crowded over to Thronð's side, so that there was none stood by him save his own men who were christened, he said, 'Too much might have I given Thronð to-day.' And now men began to crowd back to where Sigmund was sitting; they bore their weapons aloft and carried themselves in no peaceful wise. Sigmund and his men sprang up to meet them. Then spake Thronð, 'Let men sit down and carry themselves more quietly. Now I have this to tell thee, kinsman Sigmund; we franklins are all of one mind on this errand thou hast done,

namely that we will by no means change our faith, and we will set on here in the Thing and slay thee, unless thou give it up and bind thyself fast never more to carry this bidding to the islands.' And when Sigmund saw that he could not then bring this matter of the faith about, and was not strong enough to deal with all the folk that was come together there by the strong hand, it ended in his bidding himself to what they wished with witnesses and hand-plight. And with that the Thing broke up.

"Sigmund sat at home that winter, and was right ill-pleased that the franklins had cowed him, although he did not let his mind be known.

"One day in the spring, what time the races ran faster and men thought no ship could live on the main or between the islands, Sigmund set out from home with thirty men and two ships, saying that he would run the risk and carry out the king's errand or else die. They ran for Osterö and made the island; they got there at nightfall without being seen, made a ring round the homestead at Gate, drove a trunk of wood at the door of the house where Thrand slept, and broke it down, then laid hands on Thrand and led him out. Then said Sigmund, 'It happens now, as it often does, Thrand, that things go by turns. Thou didst cow me last harvest-tide, and gave me two hard things to choose between; and now I will give thee two very unlike things to choose between: the one

18 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

is good—that thou take the true faith and let thyself be baptized, or else thou shalt be slain here on the spot ; and that is a bad choice for thee to make, for thereby thou shalt swiftly lose thy wealth and earthly bliss in this world, and get instead woe and the everlasting torments of hell in the other world.’ But Thronð said, ‘ I will not fail my old friends.’ Then Sigmund sent a man to kill Thronð, and put a great axe in his hand ; but as he went up to Thronð with his axe on high, Thronð looked at him and said, ‘ Strike me not so quickly. I have something to say first. Where is thy kinsman Sigmund ? ’ ‘ Here am I,’ said he. ‘ Thou alone shalt settle between me and thee, and I will take thy faith as thou wilt.’ Then said Thore, ‘ Hew at him, man.’ But Sigmund said, ‘ He shall not be cut down this time.’ ‘ It will be thy bane and thy friends’ as well if Thronð get off to-day,’ said Thore. But Sigmund said that he would risk that. Then Thronð was baptized of the priest and all his household. Sigmund made Thronð come with him when he was baptized. And then he went through all the Faroes and stayed not till the whole people was christened.”¹

King Olaf, called the Thick in life and the Holy in death—with whom we shall be much concerned later on—also sought to make his influence felt in the Faroe Islands. Thither he sent to look after the

¹ *Faereyinga Saga*, XXX.—XXXI.

royal interests Karl o' Mere, who had been a viking and the greatest of lifters, but "was a man of great kin, a man of mickle stir, a man of prowess and doughty in many matters." Him King Olaf took "into his peace, and thereafter into his good love, and let array his journey in the best wise. Nigh twenty men they were on board the ship. The king made word to his friends in the Faroes, and sent Karl for trust and troth to Leif, son of Ozur, and Gilli the Speaker-at-law, and to that end he sent his tokens. Karl fared forthwith when he was ready, and a fair wind they had, and came to Faroe, and hove into Thorshavn in Stream-isle. Then a Thing was summoned there, and folk came thronging thereto. Thither came Thrand o' Gate with a mickle flock, and thereto came Leif and Gilli, and had with them a multitude of people. Now when they set up their tilts and dight them their booths there, they went to see Karl o' Mere, and the greetings there were good."

It need hardly be said that one object the king had at heart was to collect his scat (or taxes) from the islands, and when the subject was mentioned to Thrand he amiably replied that "it was due and welcome that he should give that much furtherance to the king's errand."

When the time came round for the next Thing, Thrand duly fared to Thorshavn and, because he had pains in the eyes and other ailments besides, he



let hang the inner part of his tent with black cloth so that the daylight might be less dazzling. Here the purse containing the scat was duly delivered to Leif, who " bore it further out into the booth, where it was light, and poured the silver down upon his shield, and stirred it about with his hand, and said that Karl should look at the silver.

" They looked on it for awhile, and Karl asked Leif how the silver seemed to him. He answered : ' Methinks that every bad penny to be found in the North isles is here come together.' Thrand heard this and said : ' Seemeth the silver nought well to thee, Leif ? ' ' Even so,' says he. Said Thrand : ' Forsooth, those my kinsmen are no middling dastards, whereas one may trust them in nought. I sent them in the spring north into the islands to gather up the scat, because last spring I was good for nothing myself ; but they will have taken bribes of the bonders to take this false coin which is not deemed fit to pass. Thou hadst better, Leif, look at this silver wherewith my rents have been paid.'

" So Leif took back to him that silver, and took from him another purse, and bore it to Karl, and they ransacked it, and Karl asked what Leif thought of this money. He said he deemed it bad, but not so bad as that it might not be taken in payment for debts carelessly bespoken, ' but on behalf of the king I will have nought of this money.' "

At last Thrand "bade Leif hand him that silver back: 'And take thou here this purse which my tenants have fetched me home last spring, and dim of sight though I be, still, 'Self hand the safest hand.'"

"Leif took the purse and once more bore it to Karl, and they looked at the money, and Leif spoke: 'No need to look long at this silver; every penny here is better than the other, and this money will we have.'"

The payment of taxes has seldom proved the most soothing thing for doubtful tempers. While the money was being weighed there appeared on the scene a man "with a cudgel in his hand and a slouch-hat on his head, and a green cloak; barefoot, in linen breeches strait-laced to the bone." There followed a scrimmage, in the course of which Karl got an axe-hammer in his brain, nor was his the only death. "But it came never to pass that King Olaf might avenge this on Thrand or his kinsmen, because of the unpeace which now befell in Norway. . . . And hereby leaves the tale to tell of the tidings which sprung out of King Olaf's claiming scat of the Faroes. Yet later on strifes arose in the Faroes out of the slaying of Karl o' Mere, and the kinsmen of Thrand o' Gate and Leif, the son of Ozur, had to do herein, and great tales are told thereof."¹

¹ All these details are taken from the CLIII. Chapter of the *Saga*

22 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

The haven of Thor is a little rocky bay ; a small island, called Nolsö, protects its broad mouth. Streams trickle into it over the volcanic rocks, intersecting the town and justifying the name of the island upon whose shore it stands. One stream is fairly large, the rest are very small. The well-kept gardens are bright with flowers and stocked with currant bushes ; a few are shaded by plane trees of the most diminutive size. The wooden houses, mostly Stockholm-tarred, some painted different shades, rest on rude foundations of boulders ; some buildings are wholly of rough stone. Most of the roofs are covered with grass—amidst which wild flowers grow—so green that they are not to be distinguished from the hill-sides just behind, and the first impression is almost that of a ruined, roofless town.

A few houses are creeper-covered : almost all have fish hanging out to dry and the passer-by is more conscious of their presence than of that of the flowers. Through the grassy roofs rise chimneys which in many cases are of wood. The main streets are wide and breezy, the byways are but three feet broad ; the pavement for the most part is living rock. A mere fishing village indeed is Thorshavn, but there is much of the character of the capital of a little state.

of Olaf the Holy, being part of the *Heimskringla* of Snorri Sturluson (p. 54), done into English out of Icelandic by William Morris and Eiríkr Magnússon.



THORSHAVN

The culture of Scandinavia is displayed in the existence of a library, well used.

The Amtmand, or Governor, dwells in a quite imposing house of stone; school, church and Lagthinguus are merely framed of wood. Of the Mother of Parliaments Cowper once wrote, and some are making much the same remark to-day,

Where flails of oratory thresh the floor,
That yields them chaff and dust and nothing more.

But of the legislature that meets in the Lagthinguus no man can say anything so rude. However barren of other results the deliberations of the assembly may be, the community is at least benefited by the value of the hay that grows upon the roof. It may be the sluggard that lets the grass grow under his feet, but no stigma can attach to the man who lets it grow over his head. Besides possessing this venerable local Thing, the islanders send their own representatives to the Rigsdag, or Diet, at Copenhagen, for which qualified voters must have reached their thirtieth year. The Danish dominions have not yet followed Norway and Sweden in granting votes to women, but this will shortly come to pass.

The mediæval bishop for the Faroes had his stool at Kirkebö, on the same island as Thorshavn but a few miles further south. There was a house of Benedictine monks, the ruins of which still remain. In

24 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

the haven named from Thor the church¹ of the White Christ is conspicuous, though modern of date and unbeautiful of form. An ancient coffin-slab, however, is incised with an ornate and flowery cross, that shows a mediæval structure occupied the site. The tower vane bears the date 1788, pierced in the Scandinavian way. The effect within is rather quaint. On the altar two great candles stand; hanging from the roof are a large ship-model and some chandeliers of brass, one dated 1682, adorned with metal flowers; on the walls a picture of the Last Supper that was painted on wood in 1647, and several monuments in timber and stone to the dead who passed from earth two hundred years ago.

On a promontory overlooking the town and the rocks covered with shells and pink and dark green sea-weed, there frowns a picturesque old fort; more interesting to the antiquary than formidable to the oldier. What higher praise than that could any place of strength deserve? The two lines of defence are each formed of boulders and earth. Though Thors-havn in the past has known unpeace, many an empire has risen to high power or crumbled to decay since these grass-grown ramparts were stained with human gore.

The stony country round the town is partly enclosed

¹ All the places described in this work, except St. Petersburg, are Lutheran, but see p. 195.

by strange frail transparent dykes, which, though as in Scotland mortarless, display surprisingly wide openings between the stones. Hay grown on the rocky soil is much the commonest crop; ragged robin, white clover, and, in swampy parts, marsh marigolds, diversify the grass. Men capped and stockinged, women shawled, also tend the tiniest patches of oats and potatoes: here and there peat is cut. The older cottages are frequently half floored above, half open to the ridge, and most conspicuous still are the sooty rafters of which the sagas so often tell. Some faint breath from the atmosphere that filled such dwellings long ago is wafted to us by the complaint of Cetil to his son in the *Vatzdaela Saga*, that, when he was a boy, men yearned to do some daring deed, "But now young men have become stay-at-homes, sitting over the baking fires, and stuffing their bellies with mead and ale, and all manhood and hardihood is waning away." Gone to museums are the ancient looms weighted with stones from the beach, but old carved chests and solid furniture of wood worked in the northern way are still by no means rare.

Men of great mark, by no means few, have had the Faroe Isles for home. In this remote and quiet capital there was born in 1860 Dr. N. R. Finsen, one of the great benefactors of mankind, widely known in medical circles from his study of the laws of

26 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

light-rays, and the foundation of the Medical Light Institute at Copenhagen. A monument in the streets of the Danish metropolis bears his name, and it is possible that to the next generation he may be as well known as he would have been to his own, had he only invented some potent engine of destruction, instead of mere antidotes to wasting disease.

A little like the Scottish highlands here and there, with mountain tarn and trickling stream and rock hill-side and distant sea, a little, yet not very like, for the most striking feature of this delightful group of islands is its lack of resemblance to any other part of earth. Vast mountains rising from the very sea, and never destitute of whitest clouds, fold upon fold of country devoid of trees and yet so fertile and kept so moist by shower and mist that the grass grows over house-top as well as ground, the close proximity of fjord and hay-field and fish and flowers, give a combined impression so individual that the widest wanderer will but faintly be reminded of any other part of the world.

The surpassing stateliness of much of the coast declines to be expressed in ink or paint. Even the Naerofjord of Norway, most justly famed throughout the earth, is distanced in wild and rugged grandeur by some of the lonely channels among the north isles of the group, restricted in extent though they be. The largest steamer seems like a little toy between the

towering mountains that rise on either side, carved into cliffs here and there, worn into caves now and then. The mountain sides are marked by waterfalls, like little silver threads. Wherever there is grass on the steep volcanic rocks, appearing like insects, there climb about white sheep and black; such gave the archipelago its name—far, the Norse word for sheep.¹ Everywhere hang white mists, clinging to the summits of the hills or streaming away like pennons in sharpest contrast with the coal-black sea of the sagas.

¹ Other derivations have been suggested, but the traditional one appears by far the most satisfactory.



CHAPTER II

REYKJAVIK

Hail, Isle! with mist and snow-storms girt around,
Where fire and earthquake rend the shattered ground,—
Here once o'er furthest ocean's icy path
The Northmen fled a tyrant monarch's wrath:
Here, cheered by song and story, dwelt they free,
And held unscathed their laws and liberty.

ROBERT LOWE.

A FAINT idea of Icelandic scenery may perhaps be gained by taking a journey on the moon by the aid of a good telescope. Nowhere else is to be found the same weird impression of vastness and of magnificent desolation!

Not infrequently, particularly in a land of hills, do the works of man seem puny beside the works of

God, but as in Iceland nowhere else. Only rarely, here and there, are signs of cultivation, and that is on the tiniest scale. Wild stretches of jagged lava and volcanic rock spread into space like "the ruins of an elder world." The great rugged mountains, capped by snow, and the numerous hot springs suggest the eternal battle-ground of elements, and give to the landscape a weird, almost unearthly effect. As Gudbrand Thorlac (Bishop of Holar, quoted by Hakluyt) expresses it: "There be in this Iland mountaines lift up to the skies, whose tops being white with perpetuall snowe, their roots boile with everlasting fire." The prevailing colours, including every shade of brown and yellow, are relieved only where appears the deep blue-black of the sea; save that here and there a tiny waterfall by stunted trees and a carpet of wild flowers, such as heather or grass of Parnassus, rather faintly suggest the glories of more southern lands.

The Great Pyramid and the Chinese Wall themselves would be lost, St. Peter's would appear a mere pebble, amid those gigantic stretches of lonely mountain. And during the very darkest days of early mediæval times a small handful of men in these remote solitudes were to play a part in history that is perfectly unique, to endow humanity with something it could ill afford to put away.

Here, on the dark winter nights of a region only

80 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

just without the Arctic Circle, were written and enjoyed those sagas that are true history and very human, while nothing but dry chronicles were being composed in all Europe besides. Far less we should know of the early story of the British Isles and of North America had the Icelanders been dumb. Worthily appears the name of their Republic among those of other famous Commonwealths of earth in the hub of the universe, the State House at Boston, Massachusetts!

Interest in Iceland and her sagas has been greatly revived of recent years. In these days it seems strange to read what P. H. Mallet (p. 152) wrote about 1755: "Such was the constitution of a republic, which is at present quite forgotten in the North, and utterly unknown through the rest of Europe even to men of much reading, notwithstanding the great number of poets and historians which that republic produced."

The stories of the early settlers, as related in the sagas, slightly recall the conditions that even to-day exist in such places as Rhodesia and newly-opened districts of the Western States. The details are as different as they could well be, but there is something of the same overflowing youthful vitality, the same grim sort of humour and vigorous enjoyment of life. This tale, for instance, from the *Liosvetninga Saga*, shows a rather indirect and possibly somewhat modern

method of leading up to an extremely simple point : “ When the table was set there Ufey put his fist on the board, and spake, ‘ How big dost think that fist is, Gudmund ? ’ He spake, ‘ Very big ! ’ Ufey spake, ‘ Thou wouldst think that there would be strength in it. ’ Gudmund spake, ‘ Indeed I would. ’ Ufey answers, ‘ A heavy blow thou wouldst think it would give ? ’ Gudmund spake, ‘ Mighty heavy. ’ Ufey spake, ‘ What harm wouldst think it would do ? ’ Gudmund spake, ‘ Breaking of bones or death. ’ Ufey spake, ‘ How wouldst like that way of death ? ’ Gudmund spake, ‘ Very ill, and I should not wish it to happen to me. ’ Ufey spake, ‘ Then do not thou sit in my seat. ’ ”

The settlement of Iceland was part of the happy movement that first carried Norsemen to the Faroe Islands and far beyond. There was a man named Gard-here, a Swede, and he journeyed to Sodor, or the Southern Islands¹ on the very common quest of getting in the inheritance of his wife’s father, who had died. A gale broke his moorings. He was driven westward into the sea, and the eventual result was that he reached the island with which we are concerned. He praised the land much, and desired that it should be called by his own name.

But *he* did not discover the island. That glory belongs to dreamy mystics of the ancient Irish Church

¹ Of which the best known is Iona.

32 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

in the days when her rays lit up the whole of Western Europe, and her missionaries went out into all lands.¹ Where he heard no other sound than the thud of the storm waves on the lonely rocks, and the shrill cry of the sea-gulls, quite alone with his God, there the Celtic monk could best say his prayers. And the *Libellus Islandorum* expressly says of the first days of settlement: "There were then here Christian men, whom the Northmen call 'papa.' But soon they went away because they could not dwell with pagan hordes, and they left behind them Irish books and bells and crooks." A little cross of theirs is in the Museum at Reykjavik to-day.

Again there were certain men who needed to journey out of Norway to the Faroes, some say that Naddodh was of their number, and they also were driven to the same country, which they named Snowland. They walked up a high mountain in the East-friths, and looked far and wide to see if they could discover any smoke or other token of the presence of mankind, but they saw none. They went back to the Faroes at harvest-time and they praised the new country very much.

The third party of Norsemen that reached Iceland had decorously made a great sacrifice before setting forth, and three ravens had been hallowed. In the

¹ Dicuil, the Irish chronicler, was greatly impressed by the long Arctic days of summer.

Faroe Islands, Floki, their leader, got his daughter very satisfactorily married, and then he sailed out into the sea and let loose the three ravens. The first feebly flew to the bows of the vessel; the second with little more adventure soared into the air and then came back to the ship; but the third flew forth from the bows and led the way to the island. And when they sailed past Reek-ness, or Smoky Cape, and entered the great mountain-walled fjord, Faxe said, "This must be a big country which we have found; here are great rivers." And, though his surmise as to the rivers was mistaken, the inlet received his name; as Faxefjoth men know it to this day. The whole frith was full of fish, including seals and whales, and the party became so absorbed in catching them that they imprudently took no heed to make hay—with the result that they lost all their stock in the winter. As to the climate there were many different views, but Thorwolf said that butter dripped out of every blade of grass in the country that they had found. Wherefore he was called Thorwolf Butter.

It was nevertheless so cold that the party originated the unfortunate designation of Iceland, a name that has probably done more than anything else to spread through the world undoubtedly exaggerated notions as to the coldness of the island. Sometimes for weeks together Reykjavik has been warmer than London. The famous Icelandic explorer, Eric the

34 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

Red, seems to have realised that a mistake had been made, and with much discretion he gave another land “ a name, and called it Greenland, and said that men would be ready to go thither if the land had a good name.”¹

The Icelanders are as sensitive as the Canadians about the climate of their country, and as early as the sixteenth century we find the Bishop of Holar, already mentioned (p. 29), whose observations are quoted by Hakluyt, growling thus about one whose strictures on the island did not however stop with criticisms of the climate. “ There came to light about the yeare of Christ 1561, a very deformed impe, begotten by a certain Pedlar of Germany ; namely, a booke of German rimes, of al that ever were read the most filthy and most slanderous against the nation of Island. Neither did it suffice the base printer once to send abroad that base brat, but he must publish it also thrise or foure times over ; that he might thereby, what lay in him, more deeply disgrace our innocent nation among the Germans, and Danes, and other neighbour countries, with shamefull, and everlasting ignomine. So great was the malice of this printer, and his desire so greedy to get lucre, by a thing unlawfull. And this he did without controlment, even in that citie, which these many yeares hath trafficked with Island to the great gaine, and

¹ *Libellus Islandorum*, VI. 1.

commodity of the citizens. His name is Ioachimus Leo, a man worthy to become lion's foode."

As late as 1846 "Sylvanus" (p. 202) wrote, "Iceland, a dreary, storm-beaten isle, nearly deprived of all communication with its fatherland. It is the abode of all but ceaseless winter, in which the sun, rarely for more than a few months out of the twelve, is ever seen."

It is possible to suffer very much from heat in Iceland, but there seems to be good ground for believing that the climate has changed for the severer in the course of a thousand years. Forests are frequently mentioned in the earlier sagas—the *Libellus Islandorum* expressly says that in the first days of settlement the country "was grown with wood between fell and foreshore." But to-day there is nothing much bigger than a Japanese dwarf tree.

The first permanent settler was Ingwolf Arnerson (or Erneson) and he was told to go thither by an oracle while he sacrificed. And at that time Harald of the Fair-hair had for twelve years been king in Norway, and since the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ 874 winters had passed away. He sailed to Iceland with Heor-leif, his sworn brother and the husband of his sister; a man who refused to sacrifice. They kept company till they saw Iceland and then they parted. And as soon as Ingwolf noticed the land he pitched his porch-pillars overboard to get

36 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

an omen. For it was the pious custom of those days to let the site for a new settlement be fixed, not by the caprice of man, but by the decision of the gods, who made it known by causing the currents of ocean to cast up the porch-pillars on the shore where they would have the dwelling to be.

Before their emigration to Iceland Leif and Ingwolf had made a foray in Ireland. There they had gained riches and thralls, and Leif was called Heor, or Sword, from an encounter with an Irishman, from whom he gained such a weapon. Driven westward off the land, Leif and his men ran short of water, and the thralls, with the readiness that ever marks their race, took to the plan of kneading meal and butter together, and they declared that this was a thirst-slake. But as soon as it was ready there fell a great rain and water was caught in the awnings.

Eventually they reached land in safety, and there was only one ox, so the thralls had to drag the plow. And they plotted together to kill the ox, and to say that a bear had devoured it; then while Leif and his Norsemen were seeking to punish the non-existent bear, and were scattered through the shaw, the thralls should slay every one his man, and so should murder them all. And everything fell out just as the Irish had plotted.

The dead body of Heor-leif was found by Ingwolf's thralls, who had been sent to search for the porch-

pillars, and when they told their master he was very angry. And when he saw his brother dead he said, "It was a pitiful death for a brave man that thralls should slay him, but I see how it goes with those who will never perform sacrifice."

"Then Ingwolf went up to the headland and saw islands lying in the sea to the south-west. It came into his mind that the thralls must have run away thither, for the boat had disappeared. So he and his men went to seek the thralls, and found them there at a place called Eith (the Tarbet) in the islands. They were sitting at their meat when Ingwolf fell upon them. They became fearful, and every man of them ran off his own way. Ingwolf slew them all. The place is called Duf-thac's Scaur, where he lost his life. Many of them leaped over the rock, which was afterwards called by their name. The islands were afterwards called the West-men Isles whereon they were slain, for they were West-men" (or Irish).

Heimaey (or Home Isle), the largest of these Westmen Isles, consists of two great jagged masses of igneous rock, presenting wild cliffs to the ocean and a wild fretted outline to the sky. Between the two mountains is a rolling stretch of grass-land, and upon it stands the scattered little town of Kaupstadr. The cliffs are covered with sea-birds' nests, most of them filthy fulmars. And some of the other

38 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

islands of the group, among which modern cruising steamers thread their way, are sea-worn into caves and caverns by the much contorted rocks along the shore.

At last, in the third winter, Ingwolf's thralls, Weevil and Carle, found the porch-pillars, and at the spot where they came to land he made for himself a homestead. He dwelt in Reek-wick, and the *Landnama-bok*, or Icelandic *Domesday*, from which nearly all the above facts are taken,¹ says that the pillars are still to be seen in his fire-house, or temple.

In the *Eyrbyggja Saga* we read of the building of another temple that stood on the north side of Faxefjoth. Somewhat similar, no doubt, was the shrine that incorporated the porch-pillars at Reykjavik. "There he let build a temple, and a mighty house it was. There was a door in the side-wall, and nearer to one end thereof. Within the door stood the porch-pillars and nails were therein; they were called the Gods' nails. There within was a great frith-place. But of the inmost house was there another house, of the fashion whereof now is the quire of a church, and there stood a stall in the midst of the floor in the fashion of an altar, and thereon lay a ring without a join that weighed twenty ounces, and on that must

¹ It is printed in full in *Origines Islandicæ*, by Gudbrand Vigfusson and F. York Powell, an extremely useful work, to which I am greatly beholden.

men swear all oaths; and that ring must the chief have on his arm at all man-motes."

A gold ring that Olaf Tryggvison took from the Temple of Lade (p. 69), and presented to a lady whom he admired, turned out to be only plated copper, and much trouble resulted from that gift. The gods had in all probability never discovered the fraud, for, like the Chinese to-day, the pagan Norse had a most mean opinion of the intelligence of the objects of their worship (p. 106). Some of the temples of Iceland were of considerable dimensions: in the *Vatzdaela Saga* we read of one at Thordisholt a hundred feet in length.

Ingwolf, the founder of Reykjavik, was the most famous of all the fathers of Iceland, for he came to a desolate country, and was the first to build a house and to cultivate the ground. His son "was Thorstan, who let set the Thing at Keel-ness, before the Allthing was established. His son was Thor-kell Moon, the Law-speaker, who was one of the best conversation of any heathen men in Iceland, of those whom men have records of. He had himself carried out into the rays of the sun in his death-sickness, and commended himself to that God which had made the sun. Moreover, he had lived as cleanly as those Christian men who were of the best conversation or way of life." (*Landnama-bok.*)

A fair broad bay, an arm of the Faxefjoth, rocky

40 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

islands rising from the water and low hills all around, the heights of Esja straight in front of the ship that sails in, was the site chosen by the pagan gods. The city of Reykjavik stands on low hills at whose foot the porch-pillars were found. At the head of the little reeking bay is the white steam of the hot springs; away to the north, just visible across the choppy waves of Faxefjoth, towers, four thousand seven hundred feet above the sea, the huge volcanic mass of Snaefells Jökull.

Thus Reykjavik, the present capital of Iceland, bordered landward by a little lake, is more than a thousand years old, yet it does not look fifteen! No new settlement in the American West has a rawer or more recent appearance. The building materials are wood, brick, cement, felt and galvanized iron. There are a few fair gardens with very stunted trees, and in the rough grass square is a metal statue to Thorwaldsen (p. 138). For ugly commonplaceness the broad and dusty streets are hardly rivalled even on the North American continent, and that is saying a good deal. Yet the glorious views of wild mountain and ever-changing sea, with air as fresh and pure as in mid-ocean, make it attractive in spite of all.

The Norse settlement of the island, having prosperously begun on the grassy plains at the edge of which the city stands, soon spread all round the shore. At wide intervals were built, or dug, the half under-

ground turf-covered dwellings where men sat under their smoky rafters by the fire, drinking wine or mead, telling or hearing the saga tales. Old buildings that still remain, including a few in the vicinity of Reykjavik, give a fair idea of what these primitive dwellings were like ; sometimes they were partly excavated in the side of a hill. Their interiors are much more cosy and homelike than would be suspected from their desolate-looking outsides. Hangings round the walls must have greatly improved the appearance as a rule, though the *Laxdaela Saga* says that the hall which Thurid Olaf built in Herd-holt, whose sides and roof were lined with noble histories carved on wainscoting, looked better when the hangings were down. Each large householder was chief and priest, lord of all within sight of his dwelling.

The same (*Laxdaela*) saga describes one of them, in fact the husband of this same Olaf's daughter. "Garmund was generally a reserved man, and surly to most folks, and he was always dressed the same ; he used to wear a red-scarlet kirtle and a grey cloak over it, and a bear-skin hood on his head, a sword in his hand that was a great and good weapon with hilt of walrus-tooth, and there was no silver inlaid on it, but the blade was sharp and no rust to be found on it. This sword he called Leg-biter, and he never let it pass out of his hand." This man contrived to win Thurid, the daughter of Olaf, only

by "giving no small sum of money" to her mamma. As not infrequently happens in such cases, husband and wife "did not get on very well, and this was felt by both of them." So Garmund sailed away from Iceland, and, to the great displeasure of his wife and mother-in-law, he left no chattels behind him. However Olaf's daughter pursued and, finding her husband asleep in his vessel, she took away the sword Leg-biter and left the baby in its place! As soon as the disgusted father awoke from its crying and discovered the unwelcome exchange, he sent a boat in pursuit of wife and sword. Thurid had, however, foreseen that manœuvre and the boat, being riddled with holes, had in haste to put back to the ship. "Then Garmund called to Thurid and bade her turn back and give him the sword Leg-biter, and take the girl back, 'and as much money or chattels with her as thou wilt.' Thurid says, 'Dost think it better to get back the sword or not?' Garmund answered her, 'I would sooner lose great monies than lose the sword.' She spake, 'Then thou shalt never get it; thou hast in many ways treated me unjustly, and we will now part.'"

Even less careful of his personal appearance than Garmund must have been Anlaf of Black-fen, whose deeds are recorded in the *Havardz Saga* (II., 1). Men say that he had bear's warmth, for "there never was frost or cold so great that Anlaf would not go about

in no more clothes than his breeches and a shirt tucked into the breeches. And he never went abroad off the farm with more clothes on him than these." He was, however, a good man, and somewhat before midwinter he walked over the hill pasture and all over the fell seeking men's sheep, and he found many and drove them home, and brought every man his own, so that every one wished him well.

Iceland is perhaps the least mixed nation to be found on the surface of the globe. Among the fathers of her settlement there were indeed a few of other than Norse blood, particularly ubiquitous Irish, some of whom were men very well thought of, but all except a few individuals here and there were of pure Scandinavian stock. The *Landnama-bok* expressly tells us : "Men of knowledge say that the country was wholly settled and taken up in sixty winters, so that it hath never after been settled any more."

As the community grew older it became apparent that something more than local chiefs and Things were imperatively needed if any sort of peace was to be preserved and some kind of order to be established. And thus there was called into being in A.D. 930 the most famous parliament of the North—the Allthing, that assembled every year under the clear sky, by the banks of a little stream where the horizon was formed by the wild rocky hills of Thingvellir. From

44 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

all over the island men came for practically every purpose for which human beings can gainfully meet. Laws were made and declared, law cases were decided ; tales were recited and much was bought and sold. But the only official of the Republic was the Speaker of the Law, the jurisdiction was purely moral. Administrative machinery, civil service, navy or army there were none. He who refused to obey could but be outlawed.¹

No doubt this essentially Teutonic reform brought vast improvement on the lawless violence of earlier days, but the respect entertained for law still left very much to be desired. The famous *Saga of the Burnt Njal* gives a truly Homeric account of proceedings at the Allthing itself.

Flosi and certain others who were on trial for arson and manslaughter were on the point of getting off by the kind of legal quibble in which Dickens was interested so much. Gizur, one of the plaintiffs, said, "What counsel shall we now take, kinsman Asgrim ?" Then Asgrim said, "Now will we send a man to my son Thorhall, and know what counsel he will give us."

"Now the messenger comes to Thorhall, Asgrim's son, and tells him how things stood, and how Mord Volgard's son and his friends would all be made

¹ An excellent account of the constitution of the Republic is given in James Bryce's *Studies in History and Jurisprudence*, 1901.

outlaws, and the suits for manslaughter be brought to nought.

“ But when he heard that, he was so shocked at it that he could not utter a word. He jumped up then from his bed, and clutched with both hands his spear, Skarphedinn’s gift, and drove it through his foot. . . . Now he went out of the booth unhalting and walked so hard that the messenger could not keep up with him, and so he goes until he came to the Fifth Court. There he met Grim the Red, Flosi’s kinsman, and as soon as they were met, Thorhall thrust at him with the spear, and smote him on the shield and clove it in twain, but the spear passed right through him, so that the point came out between his shoulders. Then there was a mighty cry all over the host, and then they shouted their war-cries.

“ Flosi and his friends then turned against their foes, and both sides egged on their men fast.

“ Kari Solmund’s son turned now thither where Arni (Kol’s son) and Hallbjorn the Strong were in front, and as soon as ever Hallbjorn saw Kari, he made a blow at him, and aimed at his leg, but Kari leaped up into the air, and Hallbjorn missed him. Kari turned on Arni (Kol’s son) and cut at him, and smote him on the shoulder, and cut asunder the shoulder blade and collar bone, and the blow went right down into his breast, and Arni (Kol’s son) fell down dead at once to earth.



“After that he hewed at Hallbjorn and caught him on the shield, and the blow passed through the shield, and so down and cut off his great toe. Holmstein hurled a spear at Kari, but he caught it in the air, and sent it back, and it was a man’s death in Flosi’s band. . . .

“Then there was a little lull in the battle, and Snorri the priest came up with his band, and Skapti was there in his company, and they ran in between them, and so they could not get at one another to fight. . . . So a truce was set, and was to be kept throughout the Thing, and then the bodies were laid out and borne to the church, and the wounds of those men were bound up who were hurt.”

The day after men went to the Hill of Laws. A skald opportunely sang some verses with the result that now men burst out in great fits of laughter. And eventually “in this way the atonement came about, and then hands were shaken on it, and twelve men were to utter the award, and Snorri the priest was the chief man in this award, and others with him. Then the manslaughters were set off the one against the other, and those men who were over and above were paid for in fines. They also made an award in the suit about the Burning.”¹

The Allthing still meets, but no longer amid mountain wilds. A very substantial stone structure,

¹ *Njals Saga*, translated by Sir George Webbe Dasent, D.C.L.

two storeys and an attic high, faces the square at Reykjavik; it bears date 1881. Below is a library; above the chamber, from a gallery in the attic, the public may look on. It is impossible to visit this humble structure without emotion, for it is the seat of one of the ancientest moots upon the earth. Had it only a continuous history from its first institution it would be older by, at any rate, a century or two than the very Mother of Parliaments, for the French-named body that sits at St. Stephen's can hardly claim historic continuity with the Saxon Witanagemot. But the well-fitted Althinghuus is an unromantic substitute for the vast and desolate wildness of the Thingvellir. It is with a shock, too, that one notices on the walls great pictures of Egypt and of Greece. Are not Ellidaar and Hvita, salmon rivers of Iceland, to this assembly at any rate better than all the waters of Nile and Cephissus? ¹

The Cathedral of Reykjavik, next to the Althinghuus, is a small whitewashed structure with saddle roof tower, whose vane is dated 1847. It is entirely destitute of the slightest interest, save for the lovely font by Thorwaldsen (p. 138), a cube of white marble. Round the top is a garland of flowers to support the metal bowl; on the four sides are bas-reliefs

¹ The lower house is elected by Icelandic males, aged over twenty-five, paying 8kr. a year in direct taxes, who are their own masters—a rather restricted suffrage—the upper house is partly nominated, partly chosen by the lower.

48 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

representing the Baptism of Christ, a mother and her children, cherubs, and Christ blessing the children. The Bishop, or Lutheran superintendent, has charge of the whole island, which in the middle ages formed two dioceses.

The Christianising of Iceland was a less violent process than that of the other northern lands. The building of the earliest church was owing to the gentle influence of the great Scottish apostle of Ireland. "Aur-lyg was the name of a son of Hrapp, the son of Beorn Buna. He was in fosterage with Bishop Patrec, the saint in the Southreys. A yearning came upon him to go to Iceland, and prayed Bishop Patrec that he would give him an outfit. The bishop gave him timber for a church and asked him to take it with him, and a *plenarium*, and an iron church-bell, and a gold penny, and consecrated earth to lay under the corner-posts instead of hallowing the church, and prelates to dedicate the church to Colum-cella."¹ And the church was built at Esia-rock, looking out over the ocean. Close by in the sea-weed the iron bell had been found, for it was cast into the sea that, like the heathen porch-pillars, it might point out the exact site that was the best.

The passing from the old faith to the new was on the whole remarkably destitute of bigotry. One, Helge, for example, "put his trust in Christ, and

¹ *Landnama-bok*, VI. 1.

named his homestead after him, but yet would he pray to Thor on sea voyage and in hard stress, and in all those things that he deemed really of most account.”¹ While the *Landnama-bok* itself ends with the remark: “Some held their Christendom well till their death-day, but it did not often go on in the family, because that of their sons, some reared temples and sacrificed, and the land was heathen nearly a hundred and twenty winters.”

Then at a notable Allthing, about the year 1000, one Thor-gar spoke to the people at the Rock of the Laws. He told them a story about two kings who formerly ruled in Norway and Denmark respectively. “They had long kept up strife between them, till at last the people of both countries took the matter into their own hands, and made peace between them, although they themselves did not wish it; but this plan was so successful that the kings after a few winters’ space were sending gifts to each other, and their friendship endured as long as they both did live. ‘And this seems to me the best not to let them have their will that are most out and out on each side, but let us so umpire the matter between them that each side may gain somewhat of his case, but let us all have one law and one faith. For this saying shall be proved true, *If the Constitution be broken the peace will be broken.*’

¹ *ib.* XIV., 13.

50 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

“Thor-gar ended his speech in such a way that each side agreed to hold those laws which he should think best to declare.

“This was the declaration of Thor-gar, that all men in Iceland should be baptized and believe in one God, but as to the exposure of children, and the eating of horse-flesh, the old law should hold ; men might sacrifice in secret if they would, but should fall under the lesser outlawry if witnesses came forward against them. This heathendom was taken away some years later.”¹

The final establishment of the faith was chiefly owing to Bishop Gizor, who was, we are told, “better beloved by all the people of the land than any other man whom we know to have been on the land.”² Such, indeed, was the devotion men felt for him, so much did they appreciate his speeches, that the Icelanders voluntarily agreed to a complete valuation of all that they possessed in order that they might have the privilege of paying tithes ! Greater proof of love than that no people ever showed ! It would stagger humanity indeed were anything of the sort to be recorded to-day. Gizor it was who fixed the seat of the Bishopric at Skalholt, for before it was nowhere ; he, too, set up the northern Bishop’s stool at Holar, giving more than the fourth part of his income to endow it. This Gizor was surnamed the

¹ *Cristne Saga*, VIII. 8.

² *Liber Islandorum*, X., 3.

White, and he kept such peace in the land that there were no great feuds between the chiefs, and the carrying of arms was almost laid aside. And he sent his son Islaf to school in Saxland; he also became a Bishop and took to wife Dalla, the daughter of Thorwald.

So the faith in Iceland grew, not by bigotry but by conciliation, and men were apt to prefer prime-signing to baptism, for so could they have full intercourse with Christian men and with heathen too, and they could hold to the faith of their liking.¹ But good arguments had a very powerful effect, and "this made men very eager in church-building, which was promised by the clergy, that a man should have room in the Kingdom of Heaven for as many as could stand in the church that he had built."²

Things being thus comfortably and happily settled by the Icelanders, it was not to be expected that the sledge-hammer methods of the mainland would find much favour among them. St. Olaf (p. 79) sent a priest, one Thangbrand, to hasten the triumph of the faith in Iceland, but he soon made that cool country a great deal too hot to hold him. And, as the *Cristne Saga* puts it: "At that very time Thangbrand the priest came to the king from Iceland, and told him what enmity men had shown him there, and said there was no hope of Christendom being

¹ *Egil's Saga*, 50.

² *Eyrbyggja Saga*, 49.

received there. Then the king was so angry that he had many of the Icelanders taken prisoners and set in irons. Some he ordered to be slain, and some maimed, and some were plundered, for he said that he would pay them for the unworthy way their fathers had received his message in Iceland. But Sholto and Gizer spoke for them, saying that the king had promised that no man should have done such ill, but that he would give them his peace if they would be baptized. . . . Moreover Gizer said that he thought there was hope that Christendom would succeed in Iceland if it were wisely forwarded. ‘But Thangbrand hath carried himself there, as he did here, rather lawlessly in slaying certain men there, and men thought it hard to brook such behaviour in a stranger.’ ”

Longfellow (*The Saga of King Olaf*) sums up this troublesome missionary in the following verse :—

He was quarrelsome and loud,
 And impatient of control,
 Boisterous in the market crowd,
 Boisterous at the wassail-bowl,
 Everywhere
 Would drink and swear,
 Swaggering Thangbrand, Olaf’s Priest.

So firm a hold did Christianity take on the land that the sagas of early Christian days are largely concerned with bishops’ lives. The Church was as powerful as in Italy, and the two prelates were much honoured in the land. Thus we read in the book

called *Hungrvaca*, or *Hunger-Waker*, because many uninformed men, wise though they be, that have gone through it have wished to know much more concerning those notable persons of whom it speaks. "Bishop Cetil was now well seventy years of age; he went to the Allthing and commended himself to the prayers of all the clerks in the synod of priests. And then Bishop Magnus asked him to come home with him to Skalholt to keep the dedication feast of the church and a bridal that was to be there. The feast was so very splendid that it was a pattern after in Iceland; there was much mead mixed, and all other stores of the best that might be. But the Friday evening both bishops went to bathe at Bathridge after supper. And then it came to pass that Bishop Cetil died there, and men thought this great news (July 6, 1145). There was great grief at this feast among many of the guests till the bishop was buried and service done for him. But by the comforting speeches of Bishop Magnus and the noble drink that was provided, men got their sorrow the sooner out of mind than they would otherwise have done."

The bathing of the bishops was in Iceland by no means exceptional. While in the rest of Europe personal cleanliness was inconspicuous between the destruction of the buildings of Rome and comparatively recent days, in Iceland, even during the

tenth century, men could not get on without washing. One householder is specially distinguished in the *Landnama-bok* as Leot the Unwashed. Thus the *Eyrbyggja Saga* describes a bath: "Stir let build a hot bath at his house at Lava, and it was dug down in the ground, and there was a window over the furnace, so that it might be fed from without, and wondrous hot was that place." Many such are mentioned in the sagas, and one of the few mediæval ruins in Iceland is that of the bath-house of Snorri Sturluson, author of the *Heimskringla*, one who adorned history by his writings, but not by his actions; for the discreditable collapse of the Republic and the annexation of Iceland to Norway was largely owing to him. On his own estate and by his own son-in-law he was murdered in 1241.

Two Icelandic bishops were placed among the Saints. Bishop Thorlak of Skalholt "never spoke a word that did not tend to some good purpose when he was asked anything. He was so wary of his words that he never blamed the weather as many do, or any of those things that are not blameworthy, but which he perceived went according to God's will. He did not look forward to any day above the rest." And most deservedly he was called that precious friend of God, the Beam and Gem of Saints, both in Iceland and other lands.¹

¹ *Thorlaks Saga*, Epilogue and XI., 1. He was never recognised

A still greater reputation was, however, gained by the other Icelandic saint, the holy bishop, John of Holar, widely famed for the beauty of his voice. His peculiar holiness very early in his life attracted the attention of the devout. "When John was yet a child his father and mother broke up housekeeping and went abroad together. They came to Denmark and went to King Swein, and the king received them worshipfully, and Thorgerd (John's mother) was made to sit by the queen herself, the mother of King Swein. Thorgerd had her son, the holy John, at the table with her, and when many kinds of precious dainties with good drink came to the king's table, then it happened with the boy John, as is ever the way with children, that he stretched out his hands to the things he wished to have. But his mother would have chidden him, and smote his hands. But when Queen Estrith saw this, she spake to Thorgerd, 'Not so, not so, Thorgerd mine; do not strike those hands, for they are bishop's hands!'"¹

John not only survived this spoiling, but fulfilled the prophecy of the kindly queen. In due course, bearing a letter from Bishop Gizor, he sailed to Denmark for his consecration; "the Archbishop was at church at evensong, and when John, the holy bishop-

as a saint in Rome, but that did not in the least affect the reverence felt for him in Iceland.

¹ *Joans Saga*, II., 1.

elect, got to the church (presumably the Cathedral at Lund), evensong was well-nigh over. He took his place outside the quire, and began to sing evensong with his clerks. The Archbishop had forbidden all his clerks, old and young alike, to look out of the quire while the hours were being sung, and he set a penalty to be taken if his command were broken. But as soon as the Archbishop heard the chanting of the holy John, he looked out down the church, trying to see who the man was that had such a voice. But when evensong was over, the Archbishop's clerks said to him, 'How now, my lord bishop, have ye not yourself broken the rules ye made?' The Archbishop answered, 'I confess that it is true as ye say, but yet I have not done it for nought, for a voice was borne into my ears such as I have never heard before, and it may rather be likened to the voice of an angel than of a man.'"¹

The Primate perceived that his very dear brother had all the qualities desirable in a bishop, and so favourable was the impression made that the canonical difficulty to the consecration—that John had been twice married—was surmounted with little trouble.²

Well did the new bishop regulate the affairs of the

¹ *ib.* VII., 3.

² The saga distinctly says that the pope approved of the consecration; it would be interesting to know whether this can be corroborated. At that time, as is well known, the clergy were in fact very frequently married in Northern Europe, but it was always papal policy to prevent it.

church on his arrival at Holar, where he rebuilt the Cathedral, and at the bishopstead, west of the church door, set up a school. A master he chose from Gothland and he paid him a great wage, both to teach the priestlings and to give such support to holy Christendom along with the bishop himself as he could manage in his teachings and addresses. By this time the days of transition in Iceland were over, and John felt strong enough not only to destroy the material relics of paganism, but also to anticipate George Fox in objecting to pagan names for the days of the week. "He also forbade all omens, which the men of old had been wont to take from the coming of the moon and observance of days, and dedicating days to heathen men or gods—as it is when they are called Tew's day, Woden's day, or Thor's, and so of all the week-days; but he bade men to keep the reckoning which the holy fathers have set in the Scriptures, and call them the Second Day of the week, and the Third Day, and so on—and all other things beside, which he thought sprung from ill roots."¹ At last, in 1121, on April 23, he departed out of this world into everlasting bliss.

As might perhaps be expected, by far the most interesting object in Reykjavik is the National Museum, into which is gathered, Scandinavian fashion, much choice carved work from many an Icelandic

¹ *Joans Saga*, XI., 3.

church. For their inability to raise great fabrics like those of southern lands, the disciples of the White Christ in Iceland, much as in Ireland, resolved as far as possible to atone by wealth of detail. Here accordingly are quaint or beautiful works of art whose composition beguiled many a long winter night of old. Even Mallet (p. 151) most patronisingly remarks: "Nor is this sculpture so bad as might be expected." The sagas here and there refer to the use of timber from the Icelandic forests for purposes of building, but soft drift-wood is by far the commonest material used for carving figures of saints, many of which are extremely crude and some grotesque. The ornate "Kirkjustodir" are rather like the totem poles of North American Indians. Many things there are of post-Reformation date, as pulpits, bas-reliefs and fountains. Runic inscriptions survive into the eighteenth century. The finest feature is the magnificent retable in alabaster and wood, representing scenes from the Passion, that came from Holar Cathedral.¹ Carving of similar kind, though much earlier in date, for Skalholt Cathedral is described in the *Pols Saga*.² Margaret was the most cunning carver of all folk in Iceland, and she was surnamed the Skilful. "Bishop Paul had put in hand, and had her begin a tabula for the altar before

¹ Mr. St. John Hope, to whom I have shown a photograph of the alabaster retable, says it is certainly of English origin.

² *Joans Saga*, XIII., 3.

he died, and had meant to spend on it much money, both gold and silver, and Margaret carved it most nobly out of tusk-ivory, and this would have been the greatest jewel or masterpiece if, according to his plan, both Thorstan the shrine-maker and Margaret had wrought it out with their craft. But his death was a big black blow, and such things had to be put off for the sake of many other things that had to be done."

Some objects illustrate things other than ecclesiastical, but, comparatively speaking, they are few. Among them are old Icelandic chair-saddles with huge and unwieldy stirrups, and guns of wood with iron rings.

The country surrounding the city seems dreary enough until the intense fascination of the wildly desolate land and the extreme purity of the air grows more and more upon the mind. The jagged rock-hills all round are never quite free from snow, but they were thrown up by the earth fires too late to be planed down by ice. The well-known little ponies of Iceland in considerable numbers wander at will over the rough rolling pasture land, save that some are ridden by tourists from the south, and some by radiant Icelandic girls. These come jogging in from the country on their curious flat side-saddles, both feet resting on a wide hanging step. They wear their hair in four plaits, the ends of which are looped up

60 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

under a little flat cap of black cloth. From the centre of the cap there hangs through a little silver cylinder a long black tassel which reaches to the shoulder.

The ground is largely dug into hummocks so as to increase the area available for grass. A good road, fringed by telegraph poles each side and patronised by a fair number of cyclists, leads out of the town, and after a mile or two crosses the Ellidaar, which has cut a broad winding channel through the hard volcanic rock, and is famous for fishing.

Nearer the sea are the hot springs whose waters send up steam that is visible from far, and gave the capital its name. The ponies are kept from burning their noses by stretches of barbed wire. In water heated by the fires that burn far down, beyond the reach of man, the people of Reykjavik have long been wont to wash their linen and their clothes. A constant procession of women bear soiled things to the spring and clean things to the town.

Many Icelanders speak English, and they are often surprisingly well-informed, both concerning their own history and the affairs of foreign lands. Still read are the sagas in the land of their birth, and they were Englished largely by Icelandic minds. There are very good secondary schools in the towns, and a College at Reykjavik itself. Though no elementary schools exist, almost every one can read and write



HOT SPRINGS NEAR REYKJAVIK

[Face page 60

from the excellent teaching in the homes. Reykjavik, Akureyri and Isafjordr are fair-sized towns, the former has a population of about ten thousand souls, but the loneliness of life in many parts is evident from the fact that the rest of the nation, about fifty or sixty thousand in number, tending cattle and ponies, and fishing for whale and cod, is thinly sprinkled through some two hundred and eighty parishes.

Of the rocky islands in Reykjavik Harbour by far the most interesting is Videy, the resort to-day of ptarmigan and eider duck, in past years the seat of one of the chief religious houses of Iceland, a Priory of the Benedictine order. The founder and the first Prior (1226-35) was one Thorvald, son of a Speaker of the Law, who was fifth in descent from Gizor the White. He was succeeded by Styrmir, surnamed *hinn fródi* or the Wise, who was one of the editors of the *Landnama-bok*, and died in 1245. The chapel in which he worshipped still exists, a rude early thirteenth century structure, plain oblong with gables, built roughly of volcanic stone. The sole original features are the very plainest of windows under segmental arches. It is still used for service, and has plain eighteenth century fittings with tall screen, and pulpit rising behind the altar, all painted green and blue and red. Three bells are dated 1735, 1752 and 1785. In the loft under the roof is a collection of old spinning wheels. The absence of

62 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

surnames, which is still a characteristic of the unchanged Norse tradition of Iceland, appears on a gravestone of 1820, to Viefus Scheving and his wife, Aunnu Stephansdóttur.

This little chapel appears to have been almost the only stone church in mediæval Iceland; even the famous Cathedral at Skalholt, which was in every way glorious above any other building in Iceland, the finest and most precious in the island, was merely a structure of wood.

From the highest point of the island of Videy there is a really superb view over the plantless mountains and the steepleless city across a few miles of blue-black, white-crested sea. The island pastures support fifty head of cattle and slope right down to the shore, where the waves have carved arches and caverns in the yielding rocks. The farmhouse by the chapel is a long stone building, whose weathering by the storms of some two hundred winters is concealed by a coat of whitewash, while the rooms are comfortably panelled within. The outhouses seem in some cases to be on foundations that were laid by the monks, for the monastic buildings were evidently detached in the Celtic fashion; there was no attempt to reproduce the conventional plan of a monastery that is so unvaried in southern lands.

Iceland belongs geographically rather to America than to Europe, a much wider stretch of ocean

divides her from Norway than from Greenland. But so close are the lands in the Far North that a present-day steamer might sail with ease from London to New York, permitting her passengers to go ashore for some part of every day.¹

Five hundred years before Columbus crossed the Western Ocean Icelandic barks had plowed their way, first to Greenland, then to the American mainland. The latter their crews called Vinland from its vines and surnamed from its character "the Good." In the *Saga of Olaf Tryggvison* we read: "That same spring also King Olaf sent Leif Ericson to Greenland to bid christening there; so that same summer he went thither. He took up a ship's crew on the sea who had come to nought, and were lying on the wreck of the ship; and in that journey found he Vinland the Good, and came back in harvest-tide to Greenland." In the *Vinland Voyages*, commonly called the *Saga of Eric the Red*, the North American coast is described with great accuracy, but unfortunately still greater brevity, "The land seemed to them fair and thick wooded, and but a short space between the woods and the sea, and white sands. There were many islands and great shallows." Many Icelanders in these latter days have emigrated to the

¹ After leaving the Orkneys or Shetlands, the vessel would touch at one or more ports in the Faroes, Iceland, Greenland, Labrador, Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and New England.

United States or Canada, and the son of one of them is V. Stefansson, who, in the service of the American Museum of Natural History, discovered the blond Eskimo of Victoria Land known as Akuliakattamiut, just possibly descended from the ancient Norse settlers in Greenland. To-day (1913), in the service of the Government of Canada, he is exploring the polar ocean to the north of that wide land.

Sturdy independence and passionate attachment to their weirdly beautiful island have always marked the Icelanders, and though since the fall of the Republic more than six and a half centuries have worn away, the spirit of the nation has not decayed. Even by the great Margaret (p. 120) they would not consent to be taxed. In 1393 it is recorded¹: "The Stadholder brought forward the Queen's demand at the meeting, when all the chief men promised to give sixteen feet of vadmál (cloth used for barter) for Vigfus' sake—he was very much beloved in Iceland; but on this condition, that it should not be called a tax, and should not be demanded again. But the inhabitants of Eyafjördr refused to give anything."

And about the year 1000, while other Europeans were trembling for the end of the world or wondering why it had not come, Icelandic sailors, who knew not

¹ By an old chronicler quoted, but not named, by C. A. Vansittart Conybeare in his *Place of Iceland in the History of European Institutions*, 1877.

fear, were wandering admiringly through the woods of the North American Continent, were warring with the Scraelings or Indians, were eating the grapes of the New World, were planning settlements, possibly building churches,¹ in what became New England more than six centuries later. What boundless possibilities were before them had they only realised the value of that land! How different the history of mankind if any considerable number of their countrymen, sprinkled through all lands from the ice-fields of Greenland to the Russian steppes, and from the North Cape to Constantinople, had been summoned from their widely-scattered stations for the settlement of Vinland the Good!

¹ It is extremely interesting to find so eminent a French antiquary as C. Enlart seeking to revive the theory that the famous Round Tower at Newport, R.I., was a church erected by the Norse. See *Revue de l'Art Chrétien*, Sept.-Oct., 1910. I cannot help feeling, however, that the balance of probability leans heavily against this view.



CHAPTER III

TRONDHJEM

Wild the Runic faith,
And wild the realms where Scandinavian chiefs
And Skalds arose, and hence the Skald's strong verse
Partook the savage wildness. And methinks
Amid such scenes as these the Poet's soul
Might best attain full growth ; pine-cover'd rocks,
And mountain forests of eternal shade,
And glens and vales, on whose green quietness
The lingering eye reposes, and fair lakes
That image the light foliage of the beach.

SOUTHEY.

There would not be much to see in the Low Countries if they were deprived of their historical associations, their ancient buildings and their superb paintings. Most parts of Europe owe very much of their interest and their beauty to the long-continued presence of mankind.

But the delights of Norway are of another sort, and a yachting trip among her fjords and islands

would lose little of its attraction to many, had they as few associations as those of Alaska. The chief charm of this northern country must always be found in the fact that a large steamer may sail far into the heart of her lofty mountains through winding valleys, enclosed by towering rock sides, over which fall streams with courses so steep that they sometimes reach the surface of ocean only in the form of spray. In Norway one may proceed up a wild Highland glen with scenery grander than anything even in Scotland, without leaving the surface of the sea. Here and there such river gorges as that of the Hudson near West Point are somewhat recalled to one's mind, but on the whole the scenery of Norway is not at all like anything else. The overpowering vastness of it all is perfectly unique.¹

But, even if one has not realised the fact amid the romantic scenery of those fjords where the works of man are confined to tiny fields like handkerchiefs scantily stretched upon the mountain sides, and settlements of wooden huts which are lost among the towering mountains of God, in Trondhjem Fjord one can hardly ignore the fact that this northern land has a history and a mythology of no mean kind, and one that is her very own. Though they have

¹ I have never seen the Alaska sea-coast ; the deep bays and arms of Nova Scotia, lovely as they are, only mildly recall some of the tamest of Norwegian seascapes.



added less to the general sum of human action than have the thoughts of Greece and the achievements of Rome, the mythology of the North is more robust, its history is more virile, its literature is less voluptuous, its feelings more stern and deep. As the Swedish poet and bishop, Esaias Tegnér, expresses it: "Go to Greece for beauty of form, but to the North for depth of feeling and thought."

Doubtless the difference is largely geographical, as is well set forth in a thought-provoking passage of Sir Archibald Geikie's Romanes Lecture, delivered at Oxford in 1898. "Who can doubt that the legends and superstitions of ancient Greece took their form and colour in no small measure from the mingled climates, varied scenery and rocky structure of that mountainous land, or that the grim, litanic mythology of Scandinavia bears witness to its birth in a region of rugged snowy uplands under gloomy and tempestuous skies." And to those of English speech at least the history of the North should mean much more, because it was not merely our teachers and civilisers, but our very selves that first launched dragon-prowed vessels on these clear waters and first heard the eddas recited by the Skalds.

Just to the right of the spot where the broad river Nid pours its rather muddy waters into the Trondhjem Fjord, there rises a low hill, and there, commanding a glorious prospect far over the brown-green moun-

tains and the slate-blue waters of the sea, once stood a great Temple for the worship of the Gods whose names are hourly on our lips, whenever we need to distinguish the days. A mighty line of Earls once had their seat in Ladir or Lade—for such are the ancient and modern names of the village where the Temple stood—and widely their authority was known. The greatest of them ruled over all the Norse for a quarter of a century (970–995), but so proud was he of his ancestral stock that he preferred to be known as the Earl of Ladir rather than as King of Norway. Sixteen earls recognised his sway, and he trowed in the old Gods.

Thus the *Heimskringla* describes his sway. “Whiles Earl Hakon ruled in Norway was the year’s increase good in the land. And good peace there was betwixt man and man among the bonders.

“Well beloved of the bonders was the earl the more part of his life, but as his years wore, it was much noted of the earl that he was mannerless in dealing with women. . . . Whereof he won great hatred from the kin of such women, and the bonders fell a-murmuring sore against it, even as they of Thrandheim are wont to do when aught goeth against their pleasure.”

Now a mysterious person named Oli was at Dublin, at that time a great settlement of Norsemen. Concerning him the earl heard rumours that he found

exceedingly disquieting. He had a great friend called Thorir Klakka, "who was long whiles at viking work, but whiles would go cheaping voyages, and was of good knowledge of lands. Him Earl Hakon sent West-over-sea, bidding him go a cheaping voyage to Dublin, as many folk were wont, and look into it closely what this man Oli was ; and if he found that he verily was Olaf Tryggvison, or any other offspring of the kingly stem of the North, then was Thorir to entangle him with guile if he might bring it to pass."

Thorir had no difficulty in getting into conversation with Oli, and in reply to his questions about the conditions in Norway, he told how the earl was so mighty a man that none durst speak but as he would. Yet he admitted that many mighty men, yea, all the people, would be most fain and eager to have a king for the land come of the blood of Harald Fairhair.

"Now when they had oft talked in this wise, Olaf bringeth to light before Thorir his name and kin, and asked his rede, what he thought of it, if Olaf should fare to Norway, whether the bonders would take him for king. But Thorir egged him on full fast to the journey, and praised him much and his prowess. So Olaf fell a-longing sorely to fare to the land of his fathers : and he saileth from the west with five ships, first to the South-Isles, and Thorir was in company with him."

So Olaf got back eventually to the kingdom of his fathers, and "when he came north to Agdaness he heard that Earl Hakon was in the firth, and withal that he was at strife with the bonders. And when Thorir heard tell of these things, then were matters gone a far other way than he had been deeming; for after the battle with the Jomsburg vikings (notable pirates whose stronghold was in Pomerania) were all men of Norway utterly friendly to Earl Hakon for the victory he had gotten, and the deliverance of all the land from war; but now so ill had things turned out that here was the earl at strife with the bonders, and a great lord come into the land."

There was a man named Worm Lyrgia, a wealthy bonder, and he had to wife one who was known as the Sun of Lund, where her father dwelt; she was the fairest among women. Thralls came from the Earl of Ladir to carry her away by force, but Worm (despite his name) was a man of spirit and fire. He "let the war-arrow fare four ways through the countryside with this bidding withal, that all men should fall with weapons on Earl Hakon to slay him." This incident, which was far from being an isolated case, proved very unfortunate for the government of the earl; in fact, he soon became a fugitive with a single thrall, named Kark.

"Then he arose, and they went to the stead of

Rimul, and the earl sent Kark to Thora, bidding her come privily to him. So did she, and welcomed the earl kindly, and he prayed her to hide him for certain nights till the gathering of the bonders went to pieces. Said she: 'They will be seeking thee here about my stead both within and without; for many wot that I would fain help thee all I may, but one place there is about my stead where I deem that I would not think of seeking for such a man as thou, a certain swine-sty to wit.'

"So they went thither: and the earl said: 'Make we ready here; for we must take heed to our lives first of all.' Then dug the thrall a deep hole therein, and bore away the mould, and then laid wood over it. Thora told the earl the tidings how Olaf Tryggvison was come into the mouth of the firth, and had slain Erland his son.

"Then went the earl into the hole and Kark with him, and Thora did it over with wood, and strawed over it mould and muck and drave the swine there-over. And this swine-sty was under a certain big stone."

So the bonders and Olaf fell straightway into good friendship, and the son of Tryggvi ascended the throne of his fathers. He was one of the greatest of the kings of the Norse, superior in many respects to his namesake, who is distinguished as the saint. The chief secret of his power is opened to us by the

following passage from the *Faereyinga Saga*, for popularity in the viking age was gained by much the same qualities that secure it in an English Public School to-day. "Once in the spring King Olaf said to Sigmund. 'We will amuse ourselves to-day, and prove our feats of skill.' 'I am not the man for that, lord,' said Sigmund, 'but thou shalt have thy way in this as in all other things that are in my hands.' Then they tried their might in swimming and shooting and other feats of skill and strength, and men say that Sigmund came very nigh the king in many feats, albeit he came short of him in all, as did every other man that was then living in Norway."

To return to the swine-sty in the *Heimskringla*. Olaf came to seek the earl at Thora's stead as she had said he would. Then he "held a House-Thing out in the garth, and himself stood up on that same big stone that was beside the swine-sty.

"There spake Olaf to his men, and some deal of his speaking was that he would with wealth and worth further him who should bring Earl Hakon to harm.

"Now this talk heard the earl, and Kark, and they had a light there with them; and the earl said: 'Why art thou so pale, or whiles as black as earth? Is it not so that thou wilt bewray me?'

"'Nay,' said Kark.

"'We were born both on one and the same night, said the earl, 'nor shall we be far apart in our deaths.

“Then fared King Olaf away as the eve came on, but in the night the earl kept himself waking, but Kark slept and went on evilly in his sleep. Then the earl waked him and asked what he dreamed: and he said, ‘I was e’en now at Ladir and King Olaf laid a gold necklace on the neck of me.’

“The earl answered: ‘A blood-red necklace shall Olaf do about thy neck whenso ye meet. See thou to it; but from me shalt thou have but good even as hath been aforetime; so bewray me not.’

“So thereafter they both waked, as men waking one over the other.

“But against the daybreak the earl fell asleep, and speedily his sleep waxed troubled, till to such a pitch it came that he drew under him his heels and his head as if he would rise up, and cried out high and awfully.

“Then waxed Kark adrad and full of horror, and gripped a big knife from out his belt, and thrust it through the earl’s throat and sheared it right out. That was the bane of Earl Hakon.

“Then Kark cut the head from the earl, and ran away thence with it; and he came the next day to Ladir, and brought the earl’s head to King Olaf, and told him all these things that had befallen in the going of him and Earl Hakon, even as is here written.

“Then let King Olaf lead him away thence, and smite the head from him.”

At Ladir thereafter King Olaf made a feast and bade to it lords and other great bonders. "But when the feast was arrayed, and the guests were come, the first eve was the feast full fair and the cheer most glorious, and men were very drunk; and that night slept all men in peace there.

"But on the morrow morn when the king was clad he let sing mass before him, and when the mass was ended the king let blow for a House-Thing. And all his men went from the ships" (a "goodly host and great" of them were laid in the Nid) "therewith, and came to the Thing. But when the Thing was established the king stood up and spake in these words: 'A Thing we held up at Frosta, and thereat I bade the bonders be christened; and they bade me back again turn me to offering with them. . . . But look ye, if I turn me to offering with you, then will I make the greatest blood-offering that is, and will offer up men; yea, and neither will I choose hereto thralls and evil-doers; but rather will I choose gifts for the gods the noblest of men.'"

He proceeded to name some of the chief men present. This was a convincing argument, and when the bonders saw that they lacked might to meet the king, they professed their willingness to trow in the faith of the White Christ. And at Ladir, on the site of the Godhouse, the king let build a church. A Romanesque doorway about a century later than

76 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

his time still exists in the south wall of the chancel, under which is a crypt ; but the present church is a very plain plastered structure, dated 1694 ; a porch was added in 1767.

Close by, in the year 996, King Olaf Tryggvison raised a city on Nid bank. He chose a site at the very mouth, almost surrounded by the stream, and he desired that his town should be such as he had seen in Christian lands. He would that the Norse should resemble other Europeans, should trow in Christ and dwell in towns and grow rich by trade. The new settlement was known as Nidaros, because it was at the mouth of the Nid, or else as Kaupstad, because it was a merchants' town. But during the sixteenth century it was called as we know it to-day, taking its name from the district round. At first it did not prosper, for though Olaf Tryggvison gave men tofts whereon to build them houses, they did not want a town, nor aught but their farms and their ships.

But when the holy bones of another Olaf, martyr and king and saint, were there enshrined and over them sprang the tall vaulting of Scandinavia's fairest church, pilgrims and trade and prosperity resorted to the mouth of the Nid.

Little of the saint was in Olaf Haraldson during his earlier years. The first story of him in the sagas displays him as a mischievous boy. " On a time it

befell that King Sigurd would ride away from his house, and no man was home at the stead ; so he bade Olaf, his stepson, to saddle him a horse. Olaf went to the goat-house, and took there the biggest buck-goat and led it home, and laid thereon the saddle of the king, and then went and told him he had harnessed him the nag.”

A renowned viking he became, whose deeds men talked about in all the lands from Sweden to the British Isles. But as King of Norway he would have no peace but with believers in the White Christ. Perhaps his methods lacked charity and tact, and his temper lacked control, that he was wealth-grasping, the sagas distinctly say, but he was truly of a religious frame and in comparison with his faith he counted not anything dear.

At the time when he was establishing his power the city that Olaf Tryggvison had founded on Nidbank was already in decay. King Olaf the Saint, we read in the *Heimskringla* “ gat him gone at his speediest and held out to Nidoyce, where King Olaf Tryggvison had let set a cheaping-stead and reared a king’s-house ; but before that there was only one house in Nidness, as is writ before. But when King Eric became ruler of the land, he favoured Ladir, where his father had had his chief abode, but he left unheeded the houses which King Olaf had let build on the Nid ; and some were now tumbled down, while

othersome, though standing, were scarce meet for dwelling in. King Olaf steered his ships up into the Nid; and forthwith he let dight for dwelling the houses yet standing, and reared those up again which were fallen down, and had thereat a throng of men; and he let flit into the houses both the drink and the victuals, being minded to sit there Yule-tide over."

Thrandheim "he deemed was all the pith of the land" (and thither he fared at his speediest), "if he might there bring the folk down under him while the earl was away from the land. But when King Olaf came to Thrandheim, then was no uprising against him there, and there he was taken to king; and he set him down there in the harvest-tide at Nidoyce, and there dight him winter-quarters. He let house a king's garth, and reared Clement's Church there whereas it now standeth. He marked out tofts for garths, and gave them to goodmen, and chapmen, or to any others he would, and who were minded to house. He sat there with many men about him, for he trusted the Thrandheimer's good faith but little, if so be the earl should come back to the land."

A few chapters further on the court of the king is described. . . . "King Olaf let house a king's garth at Nidoyce. There was done a big court hall with a door at either end, but the high-seat of the king was in the midmost of the hall. Up from him

sat Grimkel, his court-bishop, and next to him again other clerks of his ; but down from the king sat his counsellors. In the other high-seat straight over against him sat his marshal, Biorn the Thick, and then the guests. If men of high degree came to King Olaf, they were well seated. . . . Withal he had thirty house-carles to work all needful service in the garth, and at whatso ingatherings were needful ; he had many thralls withal. In the garth also was a mickle hall, wherein slept the bodyguard, and there was withal a mickle chamber wherein the king held his court councils.”

His canonisation came to pass thus. His vigorous propaganda on behalf of the true faith was by no means universally approved in Norway, and he had to take refuge in Russia (p. 231). Thence he returned to recover his kingdom, but even in almost desperate straits he would be succoured by none other than Christian men. One Arnliot Gellini offered his services and the king asked at once of his faith. “ But he said this of his troth, that he trowed in his might and main. ‘ And that belief has served me full well hitherto ; but now I am minded to trow in thee, O King.’

“ The king answered : ‘ If thou wilt trow in me, then thou shalt believe in what I teach thee. Thou shalt believe this, that Jesus Christ has created heaven and earth and all men, and that to him shall

fare after death all those who are good, and who believe aright.'

"Arnliot answered: 'I have heard tell of the White Christ, but I am not well learned in his doings, nor where he ruleth; so I will now believe all that thou hast to tell me, and I will leave all my matter in thy hand.'

"Then Arnliot was christened, and the king taught him as much of the faith as he deemed was most needful, and arrayed him to the vanward battle-array, and before his own banner."

On the field of Sticklestead, a few miles from Trondhjem, Olaf fell in fight against foes who were supported by English gold, for Knut the Rich, though a Christian himself, was planning a vast Empire of the North, and his political zeal was stronger than his enthusiasm for the holy faith (p. 115). His viceroy in Norway was one Hakon, the last of the stout Earls of Ladir, to whom he gave a court-bishop named Sigurd, a Dane. "That Bishop was a man masterful, and pompous of speech; he gave King Knut all the word-propping he might, and was the most unfriend of King Olaf."

The Christian host went down before the troops whose faith was mixed, and after various adventures, the body of the king was buried at Nidaros, or Trondhjem, in Clement's Church, which he had built. "That winter uphove the word of many men there

in Throndheim¹ that King Olaf was a truly holy man, and that many tokens befell at his holy relic. And then many began to make vows to King Olaf about those matters whereon they had set their hearts. From such vows many folk got bettering." "Next summer there grew up mickle talk about the holiness of King Olaf, and all word-rumour about the king was changed."

When Grimkel the bishop caused the chest of the king to be opened there was glorious fragrance, and when the face was exposed the lips were as ruddy as if Olaf had just gone to sleep. And so by degrees, as miracles increased, and old sharp feelings wore away, Olaf became the patron saint of all the Norse; Churches were raised to him in many lands, including a fair sprinkling in English seaports from Exeter to York.

The Cathedral that rose to enshrine the relics of St. Olaf would be a striking feature of any city in the world, and it completely dominates this far northern, low-roofed town. Both from far off and near it is a Church of very English type, and it stands in a regular close amid fair trees and grass. The vegetation indeed seems more to suit the English south than a spot not far outside the Arctic Circle. It forms an impressive illustration of the influence that the warm currents of ocean exert upon west-

¹ The district of which Nidaros or Trondhjem is the centre.

82 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

ward looking shores. For the opposite point of America is north of Labrador.

It has been in the hands of restorers for about the same time that the temple was in the hands of builders, and very amply fulfilled is Du Chaillu's prophecy that it would lose the quaint old look so much esteemed by the lovers of antiquity (p. 223). Much as some cry out against the restorer in England, that country is far ahead of the Continent both in reverence for the work of the past and in making serious efforts rather to bind up what is broken down than merely to present facsimiles of it to posterity. Trondhjem Cathedral has been rebuilt rather than restored, though Mr. Christie, the architect, has strictly followed the ancient lines. Sarcastic people might say that he has given us a building which ranks high among modern churches!

Shortly before the earliest part of the Cathedral was built, Nidaros became the seat of an Archbishop whose metropolitan jurisdiction extended further than did that of any bishopric before. In 1151 Nicolas Breakspear, once it is said a beggar at St. Alban's, afterwards the only English pope,¹ came to set in order the affairs of the Northern Church. He arranged for the formation of a province that

¹ He was Pope Adrian IV., but the *Dictionary of National Biography* suggests a doubt as to his name having been Nicolas Breakspear at all.

should include all Christians of Norwegian stock. The other sees in Norway (Bergen, Stavanger, Oslo (p. 95) and Hamar) were placed under the supervision of the Primate of Nidaros. Far over the sea his authority was likewise known, by bishops midst the British Isles, of Kirkwall in Orkney and of Sodor (or the Southern Isles¹) and Man, by the Bishop of the Faroes, whose cathedral was at Kirkebö (p. 23), by the twin Bishops of Skalholt and Holar in Iceland and even by the first of American prelates, he who sat at Garth (or Garde) in Greenland² far away, knowing not that he lived in a different quarter of the world.

Trondhjem Cathedral is a great cruciform church about 325 feet long, whose nave and quire are aisled, and the western towers project north and south to widen the great façade: at the east end of the quire is an octagonal corona, and on the northern side, joined only by a passage, is the apsidal Church of St. Clement, recalling the position of the Lady Chapel at Ely. It is built of blue-grey saponite, a local stone

¹ See p. 31. The title of this diocese is still attached to that of the Isle of Man, but the southern islands are the same as the Isles attached to the Scottish Diocese of Argyll.

² A very interesting account of the foundation of this distant bishopric is given in *Graenlendinga Tháttr*, a work that gives us a peep of Greenland in the twelfth century after nothing has been heard of the colony for a hundred years. It is printed in *Origines Islandicæ*, Vol. II. See p. 38. The first bishop for Greenland was consecrated by Archbishop Auzur, of Lund.

easy to work, varied with marble from the island of Almenningen.

The oldest part is the transept which was raised by the great Archbishop Eystein. He was the foe of Sverre Sigurdsson, the knight-errant king, who in his youth had been ordained, still ignorant of his royal birth. In 1180 at a battle near Nidaros he contrived to establish his power and the archbishop fled to St. Edmundsbury in England, launching as a Scythian dart against the recreant priest a sentence of the excommunication of the Church. When no one seemed in the least impressed, and the king's power was waxing fast, the archbishop became more prudent. Making his peace with Sverre he returned to Nidaros and found less strenuous occupation in building his cathedral. He died in 1188, and the king gave his funeral address.

Each transept has the usual three storeys with corner turrets and a square chapel opening on the east. They are rich in shafts and arcading with plentiful zigzag moulding, and they are really striking examples of the style that the Normans brought to England. The upper parts display a certain restiveness to commence the development of later forms. The present tower arches are modern.

Not much later than the transepts is the little chapel of St. Clement, sometimes called the Lady Chapel and sometimes the Chapter House. Its nave

is vaulted in two bays and flanked by western turrets ; the roof of the apse is sustained by four clustered pillars bearing pointed arches.

The quire and nave and octagonal corona are fairly uniform in style but surprisingly otherwise in plan. They belong to that period of Gothic architecture when lancets were just giving place to traceried windows, and clustered shafts and foliage caps and deeply-moulded arches were more beautiful than after or before. The works were in progress through much of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and evidently dragged on long. A bad fire gave a serious set-back in 1328. It is doubtful whether the nave was ever done. It was begun as early as 1248 by Archbishop Sigurd, son of one of the brave birkebeiner or birchlegs, who had helped King Sverre to his throne.

The builders of each part seem to have been profoundly unconscious of what their colleagues elsewhere had been about. For they were working on the foundations of three little older churches. St. Clement's was built originally by St. Olaf himself, his son Magnus the Good raised a church over his later grave where now the corona stands, a stone church of St. Mary was erected by Harald Hardredy (p. 95) on the site of the quire.¹ Most awkwardly St.

¹ " That was a great minster, and wrought strongly of lime, so that it might scarce be got broken when Archbishop Eystein let

86 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

Clement's joins the rest of the church ; the beautiful aisle-encircled corona declines to meet the quire at any understandable angle, the walls and pillars of the quire itself trend apart on either side toward the east.¹ See plan opposite p. 246.

Over the great central tower, which long was cut off by a low metal roof, have been raised a tall spire

take it down" (*Heimskringla*, Vol. 3, Ch. XXXIX.). All my citations from the *Heimskringla* are from the translation by Morris and Magnússon, except the lay at the beginning of the first chapter.

¹ The corona is very rich. Clustered pillars, with arches divided by shafts and closed by stone screens, sustain the triforium, whose two-light openings have large carved caps and varied tracery, and the clearstorey with tall lancets. The dome-vault, which rises above, is steadied perhaps, but hardly supported, by very thin flying buttresses of rounded unconstructive form. The surrounding aisle has the richest of mural arcading and little chapels open from it to east and north and south.

Into the east end of the quire a large arch opens from the corona itself, and a small one each side from the aisle. The quire is almost all rebuilt, pillars clustered or octagonal deeply fluted, with huge carved caps, sustain triforium, clearstorey and vaulting of character not dissimilar to those of the corona. The general effect is extremely fine, and one is reminded a little of Holyrood Chapel at Edinburgh and again of Lincoln Angel Quire. The corona recalls the similar feature at Canterbury, but is very much more beautiful.

The most remarkable feature of the nave is the long and unbuttressed west front, 120 feet in extent. Two tiers of arches, dating from about the year 1300, still remain ; there is no division of nave or aisle or tower, but three of the lower arches are pierced by doors, the others are divided by shafts. The upper arches do not correspond with the lower ones, than which they are much smaller ; they are trefoil-headed and by corbels converted into niches. The general effect is a little like that of the west front of Wells, but not to any very striking extent.

The cathedral is entirely detached, but a short distance to the south, forming barracks and a military museum to-day, are some remains of the L-shaped Palace of the Archbishops, displaying Romanesque and early pointed windows.



NORTH-EAST CORNER OF QUIRE, LOOKING INTO
AISLE AND CORONA

[Face page 86



of wood and four pinnacles of stone. It is largely this lofty steeple in the centre that gives the Cathedral so English a look. The magnificence of this fair church is all the more striking when one realises that, with a few most unimportant exceptions, it is the furthest north of all the buildings of the middle ages. Yet its equal is not to be found in any part of Europe further south, till the latitude of Glasgow is reached.

The most striking feature of Trondhjem to-day is that so large and thriving a town should be almost wholly of wood, even in the business section and including the vast palace of the king. In 1872 the city seemed to Du Chaillu (p. 223) singularly cheerless from the large sections that had been burnt and not rebuilt, while grass grew in many of the streets. Things are very different to-day. The thoroughfares are broad and straight, most of them pleasantly fringed with trees, and there is all the character of a prosperous, substantial town. A few wooden buildings are two centuries old, for instance the vane of the Raadhus is dated 1710 and that of the Hospitals Kirken¹ 1704, but these do not in the very least affect the general character of the place, and the aspect of the streets as a whole is as modern as well could be. The Cathedral quarter by a river bend seems to exhale a quite different atmosphere from the whole of the

¹ Used for Anglican services.

88 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

rest of the town. It is almost as though an English close had invaded an American city.

Near the white square tower of the Frue Kirke (dated 1739) is a wide open space where on market-days stalls are erected and country and town deal directly with each other in those picturesque surroundings that are so largely the same all over the north of Europe. The harness of the horses looks primitive, and all the weight is on the shafts, but they race along like the wind, and when a destination is reached, the owner needs to do no more than to slip round the front foot of his beast a long strap attached to the carriage. Little of the Norwegian costume that is so attractive a feature of the fjord villages is to be seen in the city; the general life of towns is becoming distressingly the same all over the Western world. The atmosphere is, however, distinctly Norse by the quays, where the fish boats come in and large barrels of their catchings are rolled about, and also where high wooden warehouses, not entirely without picturesqueness, fringe the shores of the Nid and exhale a smell of fish and tar.

The days of Danish supremacy are recalled on a hill just east of the Cathedral on the other side of the river by the picturesque old Fortress of Christiansten, which dates from the seventeenth century, and displays rubble stone walls surmounted by grassy slopes and penetrated by brick-vaulted

passages and rooms. This period and this district of Norway were chosen by Victor Hugo when writing his first romance, *Han d'Islande*, which he published anonymously in 1823. The scene is, however, laid chiefly in Munkholm, a small rocky island which rises out of the waters of the fjord immediately opposite the town. In very earliest days of Christianity in Norway a Benedictine cloister was reared there, and for half a thousand years the monks remained, but little beyond the name survives to indicate their occupation to-day. Fortifications have long existed where the psalter was chanted in days of yore.

Victor Hugo himself explains the object of the work: "I wished to describe a girl who might realise the ideal of all fresh and poetic imagination, the girl of my dreams . . . you, Adèle, my beloved . . . And beside her I wanted to set a young man, not such as I am but such as I would wish to be." He has certainly succeeded so far that his characters are entirely French, and he seems rather to have made a mistake in placing the scene so far from France. The nightmare, gruesome character of the book is blood-curdling enough, but decidedly overdone, and though the work is very well worth reading as the early effort of one of the greatest of writers, it contributes little to his fame and still less, perhaps to the interest of a visit to Trondhjem. The local colour is extremely

poor, a fact that is hardly surprising when it is remembered that the author had never visited Norway.

The hills stand about Trondhjem, as indeed about all other Norway towns; some of them display, five hundred feet above the sea, marks of former beaches where waves lapped cliffs unnumbered years ago, before the movements of the globe had raised the land so high. And from places within an easy walk of the city, there is a magnificent panorama, westward over hills riven in all directions by the jagged edged sea, and eastward to the snowy mountains of the Kiolen range that form the frontier of Sweden. Superbly beautiful at all times is the prospect of wooded hill and inland sea, particularly when seen in softer outline as the long Arctic twilight gradually gives place to the paler illumination of the moon, and little lights begin to sparkle over land and sea. But even in such dreamy conditions the city, beautiful from its verdure and striking from its position, declines to look like a mediæval or even a historic town. Though for more than a thousand years the landscape below has been the scene of the varied activities of mankind, and from it has gone out power by which the life of half Europe has been quickened, even yet there is rather the restless atmosphere of new settlements in a country still only half subdued, than that of quiet peace and sense of satisfied repose, such as

broods over an ancient Italian seaport, where every corner has been transformed by untold generations of man and centuries ago even the rough hill-sides were terraced to enlarge his domain.

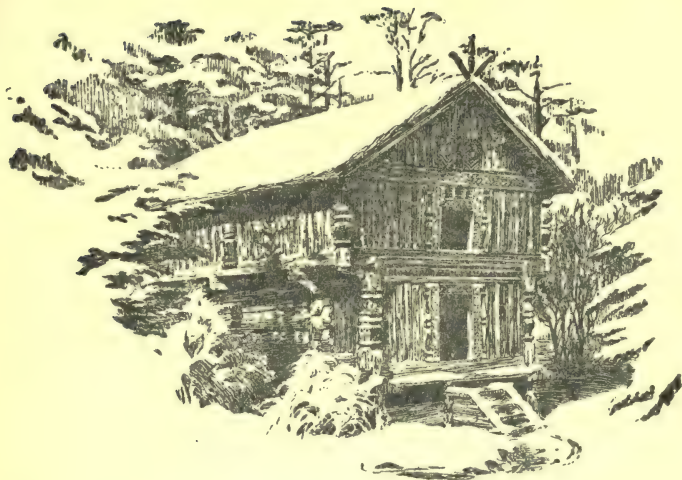
Some three miles from the city, amid pine forests of perpetual shade, the River Nid plunges over hard dark blue rocks to form the Lerfos Falls. Most Norwegian cascades are chiefly spray, and by their great resemblance to bridal veils are associated with the happiest events in the lives of most of us. But these are more business-like waterfalls, which are not left in peace by mankind. The Lower Fall, or Lille Lerfos, is a rather average sort of thing: in a broad open place where much naked rock is exposed the water of the stream plunges over a sort of stairway to descend abruptly for nearly eighty feet, and the effect is not improved by various works in cement. A path along the wooded river bank leads to the Upper Fall, or Store Lerfos, which is one of the most beautiful anywhere to be seen. The stream leaps down a hundred feet, and both high and low the surging mass of whitened waters is cleft by tree-bearing rocks, while mist-like foam spreads far and wide.

Europe has cathedrals statelier than that of Trondhjem and mediæval cities of greater intrinsic charm, but the interest of nearly everything is affected chiefly by its position, and it is startling indeed among the wildness of the northern fjords to

92 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

come upon this history-haunted spot, to see this fair cathedral rising from the trees and grass of so English-looking a close. And in the long-drawn aisles of the ancient Metropolitan Church it is strange to reflect that the saint who was here enshrined in one of the stateliest of Gothic fanes was the doughty Olaf the Thick, famed in life for his wild viking career, who knew the craft of the bow, and of all men was the best in shooting of hand-shot, who was but twelve winters old when he first stepped on a warship to begin the harrying and burning in which so much of his life was spent! And as the bright sunlight streams through the lancet windows to illuminate and shade chaste arcading and hanging foliage carved in stone, with the deep mouldings of arch and vault, it is difficult indeed to realise that one is hardly more than three degrees outside the Arctic Line.¹

¹ Trondhjem is connected with the interior by some of those superbly made roads for which Norway is so justly famed. They rest upon about four feet of stonework, the pieces diminishing upwards so far as size is concerned. The smaller streams are frequently spanned by arches of hard granite or other rock so neatly cut that no mortar need be used. Sometimes the road itself is cut in the living rock of the hills. The engine sheds are quite a feature of the city, and railways run southward to the new capital by the valleys of Gula and Glommen and past Hamar on its lake, also eastward into Sweden, among the mountains and the lakes. And at a place called Hell the latter line branches northward to Sunnan, near the head of Trondhjem Fjord.



CHAPTER IV

CHRISTIANIA

And now to all the brave ones here,
And to the maids that love us—
To men who never knew a fear,
Maids pure as saints above us.
The Norway maidens! fill on high—
The Norsemen, brave to do and die!
And shame to him who passes by
The pledge to Love and Freedom.

For Norge, translated by LADY WILDE.

CLEAVING the Skager Rak from the Cattegat the small peninsula of Jutland projects far into the large gulf by which the Scandinavian mountain mass is riven on the south. And at the head of the gulf a lovely island-dotted fjord penetrates far among the hills that encircle the long and narrow Norway Lakes.



The shores of the fjord are rocky, in places eaten into cliffs, pines cover all the slopes from which they are not cleared. Just here and there distant mountains of more jagged outline overtop the lower hills. For some miles the seaway is narrow, but it broadens out again before the end is reached. Less wild and rugged, less grand and awesome, than the high-walled fjords that cut into the western coast, but not less beautiful in some respects.

By many coves the sea runs in among the woods, and during saga days here lived sea-kings who never slept under sooty roof-tree, nor ever drank in hearth ingle. Into one of the arms of the branching fjord, the water then called Drafn and now known as Drammensfjord, hove Olaf the Thick, the Holy, with his host in 1028, for he had heard that Knut the Rich, England's all-wielder, was close upon his heels. Knut was planning a great Norse Empire; he had made himself master of Norway, and held Things in every folk-land that he reached. Olaf could not meet him in warfare, but he held him in Drafn water in safety till he heard that Knut was gone south into Denmark, and then he fared forth, only to find that for the time at least the land was beguiled from under him.

A few miles from the arm of the sea that had sheltered St. Olaf another saint was born, related to himself, Hallward, a worthy merchant of those

parts, who got his bane while trying to protect a woman who was being attacked by men. Him Harald Hardredy, the same who met his end at Stamford Bridge in 1066, chose to be the patron saint of the new southern town which he founded to rival the capital far north.

In the *Heimskringla* we read how "King Harald let rear a cheaping-stead east in Oslo, and sat there often ; whereas it was good there for the ingathering of victual, with wide countrysides all round about. There he sat well for the warding of the land against the Danes no less than for onsets at Denmark, which he was often wont to, though he might have no great host out." ¹

After his death we learn that "it was the talk of all men that King Harald had been beyond other men in wisdom and deft rede, no matter whether he should take swiftly, or do longsome, a rede for himself or others. . . . King Harald was a goodly man, and noble to behold ; bleak haired and bleak bearded, his lipbeard long ; one eyebrow somewhat higher than the other ; large hands and feet, yet either shapely waxen ; five ells was the tale of his stature. To his unfriends was he grim and vengeful for aught done against him." ²

To this appreciation we may add that Harald was

¹ *Heimskringla*, *Story of Harald the Hard-redy*. Ch. LX.

² *ib.* Ch. CIV.

no bad judge of the best site for a town ; for with the rocky forest-covered hills rising all round, and the lake-like sea with its many islands gently rippling in front, this capital has one of the best situations enjoyed by any European town. Nothing but huge advantages of site and greater nearness to the communications of the world could have reconciled Norway to her Government's abandoning the myriad associations of the far more historic city in the North.

During the reign of Sigurd Jerusalem-farer (1121-1130) to Oslo came from Ireland one Harald Gilli, who said he was a Norse king's son, but he did not claim the kingdom for himself. And Sigurd said that Harald should tread bars for his fatherhood, and that ordeal was deemed somewhat hard, but still Harald yeasaid it.

“ He fasted unto iron, and that ordeal was done, which is the greatest that ever has been done in Norway, whereas nine glowing ploughshares were laid down, and Harald walked them bare-foot, and was led by two bishops. Three days thereafter the ordeal was proven, and his feet were unburnt.

“ After that King Sigurd took kindly to the kinship of Harald, but Magnus his son had much ill-will to him, and many lords turned after him in the matter. King Sigurd trusted so much in his friendship with all the folk of the land, that he bade this, that all should swear that his son Magnus should be

king after him ; and he gat that oath sworn by all the land's-folk.

“ Harald Gilli was a tall man and slender of build, long-necked, somewhat long-faced, black-eyed, dark of hair, quick and swift of gait, and much wore the Irish raiment, being short-clad and light-clad. The northern tongue was stiff for him, and he fumbled much over the words, and many men had that for mockery. Harald sat on a time at the drink with another man, and told tales from the west of Ireland ; and this was in his speech that in Ireland there were men so swift-foot that no horse might catch them up at a gallop. Magnus, the king's son, overheard that and said : ‘ Now is he lying again, as is his wont.’

“ Harald answers : ‘ True is this, that,’ says he, ‘ those men may be found in Ireland whom no horse in Norway shall outrun.’

“ On this they had some words and both were drunk. Then said Magnus : ‘ Now here shalt thou wager thine head, if thou run not as hard as I ride my horse, but I will lay down against it my gold ring.’

“ Harald answers : ‘ I say not that I run so hard, but I shall find those men in Ireland who so will run, and on that may I wager.’

“ Magnus, the king's son, answers : ‘ I shall not be faring to Ireland, here shall we have the wager, and not there.’

“Harald then went to bed and would have nought more to do with him. This was in Oslo.

“But the next morning when matins were over, Magnus rode up unto the highway and sent word to Harald to come thither; and when he came he was so dight that he had on a shirt and breeches with footsole bands, a short cloak, an Irish hat on his head, and a spear-shaft in hand.

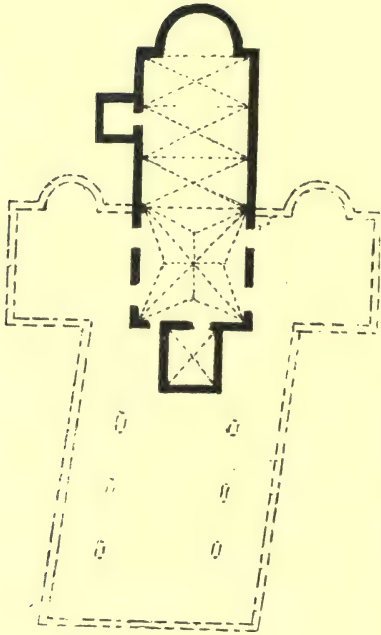
“Now Magnus marked out the run. Harald says: ‘Overlong art thou minded to have the run.’ Magnus forthwith marked it off much longer and said that even so it was over-short.

“There were many folk thereby. Then took they to the running, and Harald ever kept at the withers.

“But when they came to the end of the run, said Magnus: ‘Thou holdest by the girth, and the horse drew thee.’ Magnus had a Gautland horse full swift. They took again another run back, and then Harald ran all the course before the horse. And when they came to the end of the run, Harald asked: ‘Held I by the girth now?’ Magnus answers: ‘Thou didst take off first.’

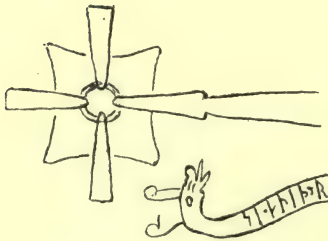
“Then Magnus let the horse breathe a while; and when he was ready, he smote the horse with his spurs, and he came swiftly to the gallop. Then Harald stood still, and Magnus looked back and called: ‘Run now,’ says he. Then Harald swiftly overran the horse, and far ahead, and so to the run’s end;





GAMLA UPSALA

Details of Runic Stone and Plan of old Cathedral



and came home so much the first, that he laid him down, and sprang up and hailed Magnus when he came.”¹

Oslo stood on the Akers Elv, and was chiefly on its eastern bank ; Oslo-havn still exists, by the mouth of the stream just eastward of the railway-circled cape on which frowns the castle Akershus. Less than a mile to the north, not far from the river's western shore, stands a small twelfth century Romanesque structure that belonged to a suburb of Oslo and is prosaically known to-day as Gamle Akers Kirke.²

Oslo was a great city, one of the chief centres of Norwegian trade, and a bishop's stool stood in the church where Hallward's bones were shrined. It also played an important part in history when the great king, Hakon IV., of the Birch legs party (p. 85), overcame his domestic enemies there at a great battle during 1240. He thus restored peace to Norway, torn by the factions of a hundred years, and so widely did his fame extend that St. Louis asked for his help against Saracens and the pope for assistance against

¹ *Heimskringla, Tale of Sigurd Jerusalem-farer.* Chs. XXXIV., XXXV.

² Unbuttressed massive walls of stone surround a five-bayed nave with aisles, and chancel with north chapel, both round-apsed. The chapel opens to chancel and aisle by doorways rather than arches. The low clearstorey is lighted only on the south, over the east bay of the nave rises a tower that forms a lantern. The nave arcades have thick round pillars with the simplest caps ; the chancel is vaulted at a much lower level than the wooden roof of the nave. The inside is very striking.



100 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

the emperor himself. But, feeling more interest in matters nearer home, Hakon preferred to direct his attention to joining Iceland to Norway (p. 54).

Old Oslo was, however, much damaged by fire and wasted by war when about 1624 the illustrious Dane-Norway king, Christian IV., rebuilt the city on a slightly more western site and called it by his own name. In addition to his other accomplishments, which, as we shall see (p. 132) were very great, this Christian was a brave soldier, and the song of Ewald (d. 1781), "King Christian stood by the lofty mast" has become a National Anthem of the Danes. He fully realised the great advantage of having the Capital of Norway as near Copenhagen as he could. Christiania was but a few days' sail, Trondhjem was almost in another world.

Of the new city's early days there still survive memorials in the present rather picturesque seventeenth century buildings of the peninsular castle of Akershus, in the old brick Raadhus with its archway and arcaded gables, and also in the Stor Torv, or great market-place, with its untented stalls round the statue of the Founder of the Town under the high spired clock tower of Vor Frelsers Kirke, which is dated 1696.

The general character of present-day Christiania was, however, given to it during the early years of the nineteenth century when the city was largely extended toward the west. Happily the early Gothic

revival had not reached Norway then, and the chief buildings are Classic, a style that is vastly to be preferred to any other for buildings that are not really among the best of their kind.

A decent, rather uninspiring town. Broad streets with trolley-trams. Straight streets with shrubs and trees. Houses of brick or cement. Numerous little open spaces are, without much imagination, devoted to the cultivation of such vegetables as grass, elm, birch, willow, lilac and poplar. Like Capetown, which in position it somewhat resembles, Christiania depends for its beauty entirely on mountainous surroundings, for there is little that is striking in the streets.

It is remarkable that in the capital of a country so extremely democratic, that has swept its nobility into the mass of the commons, by far the most conspicuous building should be the Palace of the King, and that in the chief town of a land of such strong national feeling, the main street should bear the name of one who gained the crown of Norway only at the point of the sword.

Few classic structures in the world are more magnificently placed than the palace: it stands high up, wide gardens stretch around, and through them the great portico looks down along the broad, straight, well-gardened, chief street of the town, called after Karl Johan. Neither the architecture of the building

102 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

nor the laying out of the gardens is at all worthy of the superb position, but the effect nevertheless is most striking. Were the Palace of Stockholm (p. 203) placed here and the park laid out on the same lines as the gardens of Versailles, the great central thoroughfare of the city being made a wide boulevard to match, there might have risen on this spot one of the most monumental and stately of all European cities. Unfortunately the Palace was only erected in 1825-48—when architecture was at its lowest ebb in every part of the western world—and neither material nor design is good. Karl Johans Gade, at whose other end is the Hoved Banegaard, or chief railway station, has gardens for a section of its length, but for the most part it is unfortunately bordered by houses of brick and stucco that rise straight from the pavements. Nevertheless the grandeur of the encircling mountains obliterates all minor defects. In front of the Palace, looking along the great street that bears his name, is a statue to Karl Johan, better known to the world perhaps as Bernadotte, Napoleon's marshal, who forgot his own country and his father's house, to champion the liberties of the North, Scandinavian in all but speech.

Where end the gardens by the street of Karl Johan rises the Storthings-Bygning, or the seat of a parliament, some of whose members reside within the Arctic Line.

Across the same noble thoroughfare, nearer the Palace, stand face to face the University, famed for many a distinguished name and also for the possession of viking ships, and the National Theatre, renowned for its connection with the great name of the dramatist whose appearance was tersely summed up by Björnson :—

Tense and lean, the colour of gypsum,
Behind a vast coal-black beard, Henrik Ibsen.

to whom a statue rises in the grounds. His charming play the *Doll's House* (1879) was one of the first of his works to gain a reputation through the world, while it started, or stirred, about woman and her place a discussion whose end is not in sight, and also did very much to naturalise all modern drama by abolishing such devices as soliloquies, and attempting to set upon the stage what really happens in the world.¹

Well worth attention would be those very boats that first explored the wild fjords of the storied North, that pushed their unwelcome dragon-prows into every bay and broad river of Europe from end to end, that caused even the great Charles to weep, that added a petition to the Litany of the Church, that

¹ It is difficult, in reading over the play, to understand by what mental process Nora's preposterous conduct in leaving husband and children on the very vaguest of quests can be justified or even palliated. Ibsen merely professed to point out the hardships endured by women treated as dolls, the remedy for such social evils he did not essay to prescribe. Some of his most charming works, such as *Dame Inger of Östraat*, deal with Norwegian history.

104 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

formed the navies on whose power were built kingdoms in Sicily and Russia, in Normandy and amidst the British Isles, that centuries before the days of Columbus sailed through ice-laden seas to the well-favoured American shore. Here they are! Put together with skill and preserved with care, they stand in sheds that form part of the University Museum. That ships will be required beyond the grave to sail on undiscovered seas is the simple opinion of many unsophisticated branches of mankind. The Chinese send vessels to the illustrious dead by burning them on earth. Probably with the same idea the ancient Norse buried them in their barrows or howes. The ship on which a viking had sailed in life became his coffin after death. Thus simply does the *Heimskringla* in the *Story of Hakon the Good* describe such burials. "So King Hakon let take all the ships of Eric's sons which had been beached, and let draw them up aland. There King Hakon let lay Egil Woosark in a ship, and all those of his folk with him who were fallen, and let heap over them stones and earth. Then King Hakon let set up yet more ships, and bear them to the field of battle; and one may see the mounds to-day."¹

Such a king's howe was heaped up long ago at Gogstad on Sandefjord, where to-day is a prosperous little watering-place, hard by the mouth of the

¹ Ch. XXVII.

sea-way by which Christiania is gained. Here in 1880 a well-preserved viking ship was brought to light and in due course it was reverently deposited in the Museum of the University at the Capital. Its lines are graceful and it is of very shallow draught. The size is quite considerable, just seventy-eight feet from end to end. It is framed with a heavy keel and rather light ribs; the planks are extremely neatly cut and carefully riveted together with iron nails and square washers. It must have possessed some suppleness, which was probably an advantage in a stormy sea. The two ends are very much alike, but by the stern is a steering-board, like a great oar, fixed loosely on the side that we still know as the starboard.

Through the third plank from the top are pierced rowlocks and along the gunwale are ranged the big-bossed shields by which the Northmen sought to ward off blows. They are round, not large, and painted yellow and black.

Compared with those of Chinese junks or Arab dhows, the lines of the viking vessel are strikingly modern in character: this is much less surprising than it otherwise would be when it is recollected that the Bronze Age sculptures on the Scandinavian rocks prove that boats of considerable dimensions had been used by the ancestors of the builders for something like a thousand years.

The dragon prow is no longer to be seen. Such



106 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

features were clearly detachable, for among the primitive laws and customs of Iceland it is written : " This was the beginning of the heathen laws, that men must not keep a ship at sea with a figure-head on ; but if they have, then they must take off the head before they come in sight of land, and not sail to land with gaping heads and yawning jaws to frighten the spirits or wights of the country." ¹ Thoughtful precaution !

Near the centre of the boat are remains of the pine mast that rose from a mortice in a log whose either end is fashioned after the pattern of a fish's tail. The square sail, perhaps of painted wool, was hoisted or lowered by a pulley. Aft of the mast in the centre is a log-built house, whose timbers, both at the ends and those that on the sides lean together to form the roof, fit into grooved beams, reminding one of the construction of the stavekirkes. This deckhouse in all probability was constructed to form the tomb.

A well-found boat, suited to the navigation of the fjords ! But what courage must have been required of those who sailed across the stormiest of oceans in so frail a craft ! Within the howe, but not within the boat, twelve horses, six dogs and one peacock were buried with their lord. ²

¹ *Origines Islandicæ*, Vol. I., p. 318.

² *Civilisation of Sweden in Heathen Times*, by Oscar Montelius.

The sun sets on the harbour over Bygdö, almost an island, yet not quite. The famous Oscarshall is on its eastern shore. In the deep shade of the woods there has been formed such an open air museum as all Norse love, and hither have been collected ancient wooden buildings from country villages and from isolated farms that give a good idea of some aspects of the Norway of bygone years.

One of the buildings is of the kind called a *stabbur*, a common adjunct to a prosperous farm. It formed a storehouse, which could likewise be used for extra sleeping-rooms whenever there was need. In the upper chamber, reached by a ladder, were preserved the initialled chests in which each member of the family preserved his valuables, or hers—clothes to a large extent. Thus each daughter had her trousseau packed, ready for removal to her husband's home. In this room, too, were kept blankets and tablecloths and things we store in linen closets now.

The room below, which is narrower, for the upper one projects to right and left, was used for such things as grain bins and stores of food, bacon or mutton or flour.¹ (For drawing see chapter-heading.)

¹ Close to Vossevangen is a building very similar to this one, but much more interesting, both from its still standing where its builders wished, and from its greater size; it also seems rather earlier in date than the *stabbur* re-erected at Bygdö, and was probably built about 1300. It is called the *Finneloft*, and is locally believed to be the oldest wooden building in Norway that was not a church. The basement is of slate stone, roughly walled, instead of, as at

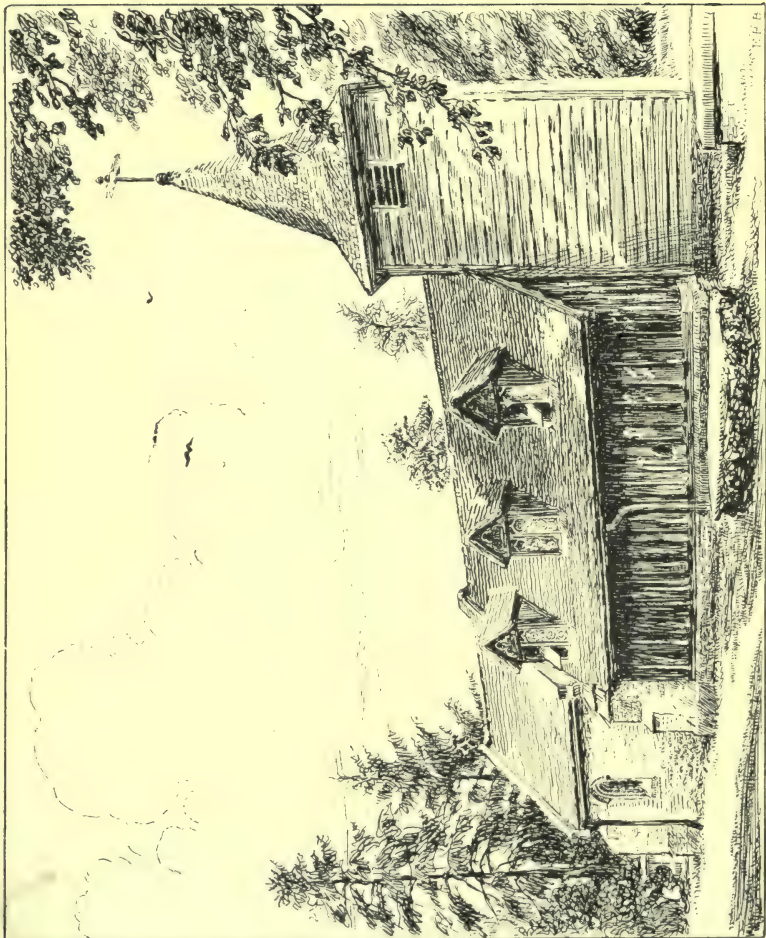
108 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

The stavekirke was moved from Gol, a small village in Hallingdal passed by the railway to Bergen.¹ It is an excellent example of a mysterious form of Christian architecture that is confined to Norway, nothing like it existing in any other part of Europe.

In a modern building surrounding a court is a small but very interesting folk museum, divided into domestic, commercial and ecclesiastical; it is dated 1898. A reredos carved in very high relief, which displays Christ at the Last Supper gesticulating and

Bygdö, timber-work resting on big stones. The first floor in both is framed of flattened horizontal beams, dovetailed to fit at the corners; but at the Finneloft there are little passages at the sides occupying the space which at Bygdö is merely covered by the overhanging of the upper storey. This stage in both cases is walled with thick boards, placed vertically and overlapping each other. The roofs are of flattish pitch and in the pleasant manner of the North simple patterns are carved on doorpost and lintel and beam. The little side passages and the manner in which the horizontal beams are often mortised into the vertical remind one very much of Chinese carpentry, an impression greatly strengthened by the far more obvious resemblance that Norwegian Stavekirkes bear to Chinese temples. (See title-page.)

¹ This remarkable little building, like several others of its class, consists of nave with aisle all round, aisled chancel with apse and an open cloister girdling the structure. The interior is lofty and dark, pillars, walls and roof all of timber. The three roofs, of cloister, aisle, and clearstorey, rising one above another, are increased to six by a turret-like structure that rises in three stages from the middle of the nave roof. The effect produced is singularly like that of a small Chinese temple, especially as queer objects like dragons project diagonally from the corners of the ridges. The cloister part seems far more suited to China than to Norway. In England there is a stavekirke at Greensted, near Ongar, supposed to have been erected in 1013 as a resting-place for the body of St. Edmund. The side walls are built of oak-trunks, but it is as plain as it could possibly be.



GREENSTED CHURCH

delivering an impassioned address to the Disciples, is at any rate unconventional in treatment. Most of the domestic furniture, such things as beds, chests, chairs and even jugs, is carved in soft wood. Many pieces are dated, usually in the eighteenth century, but the collection begins about the year 1500.

So close against the hills the city stands that a short electric railway lifts one in a few minutes from the streets to the heart of the spruce woods that cover the rock sides of Hollmenkollen. Among granite boulders and such wild flowers as Scotland knows, under the close shade of the pines—the woods untouched, save here and there, as if miles from a dwelling of man—one looks down on the streets of a city that lies among the mountains and yet borders upon the rippling sea. Still closer to the streets of Stockholm the forests come, but there the hills stand back. In being both girdled by mountains and splashed by the sea Christiania is almost alone among the capitals of the world.

Norway is almost always seen by visitors under summer skies, unless it chances that they come for winter sports; it is well somewhat to correct the impressions received by recalling Björnson's holding description of his own country: "There is something in Nature here which challenges whatever is extraordinary in us. Nature herself here goes beyond all ordinary measure. We have night nearly all the

110 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

winter ; we have day nearly all the summer, with the sun by day and by night above the horizon. You have seen it at night half-veiled by the mists from the sea ; it often looks three, even four times larger than usual. And then the play of colours on sky, sea and rock, from the most glowing red to the softest and most delicate yellow and white. And then the colours of the Northern Lights on the winter sky, with their more suppressed kind of wild pictures, yet full of unrest and for ever changing. Then the other wonders of Nature ! These millions of sea-birds, and the wandering processions of fish, stretching for miles ! These perpendicular cliffs that rise directly out of the sea ! They are not like other mountains, and the Atlantic roars round their feet. And the ideas of the people are correspondingly unmeasured. Listen to their legends and stories.”



CHAPTER V

ROSKILDE

Between fair fields the fjord
With winding waters, snake-like,
Creeps inward from the salt sea.
Where viking hordes have harried,
Fare peaceful folk to market.
High tower the tall twin spires.
Beneath, in silent splendour
Lie the dead kings of Dane-realm.

THIS pleasant, quiet country town is named from its springs, referred to in the last part of the word (p. 115). The uncertainty about the first syllable has apparently led to the invention of a founder named Roe, who seems to have so much in common with Port of Portsmouth and King Cole of Colchester—that he never existed except to account for a name.

112 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

The atmosphere of a small cathedral city such as Trollope describes is so peculiarly English that no one would expect to find it reproduced in a foreign land. The association of nearly all Continental cathedrals with houses and market-place makes the impression produced wholly different from that of the grey towers and long roofs that appear over the trees of an English Close.

But at least in the fact that the cathedral is almost the only object of great interest, the centre of the whole district, the ancient Danish capital resembles a small English city. The atmosphere of farming and of pleasant country life, the general sense of repose, the way in which the cathedral rises among gardens and flowers a short distance away from the market-place, all do something to recall that most typical cathedral city, the ancient capital of Sussex—while the beautiful fretted fjord, bordered by low, sloping meadows, and the port almost destitute of shipping save for the fishing boats, bear very considerable resemblance to Chichester Harbour and Dell Quay. Knut the Rich is associated with that English district too, his daughter is buried in Bosham Church. He must have been frequently reminded while there of the peaceful country round his Danish capital.

The story of Roskilde takes us pretty near the dawn of strictly Danish history, when the country was closely linked in politics with the British Isles.

At the present time, however, it is not so picturesque a city as Copenhagen ; there are but few old houses and only a single mediæval church, that of St. Mary, has survived, in addition to the great Cathedral of St. Lucius. Even the Raadhus, or Town Hall, in the very ample market place, was rebuilt not long ago.

The founder of the Danish monarchy was Gorm the Old (p. 12) ; he first united all the land. About 935 he was succeeded by Harald of the Blue Tooth (Blaatand). Him the Holy Roman Emperor was to some extent able to control and insisted on his becoming a Christian. Traditionally at any rate he was the founder of Roskilde Cathedral, erecting a church of staves where before no church had been. Men say, the *Heimskringla* informs us, that Keisar Otto II. was the gossip of his son, Svein Twibeard. So lightly, however, did Twibeard regard the solemn ceremony of his baptism that, heading the pagan party, he flung his father from the throne and began to reign himself about the year 985. More than once he changed his creed, but it seems that he happened to be trowing in the faith of the White Christ at the time of his unlamented death. He it was who fought against Olaf Tryggvison in the famous Long Worm at Svoldr, but he left when the fighting was of the sharpest and much folk fell. Nevertheless his Norwegian ally, Earl Eric, who had a beaked ship wondrous great, captured the Long Worm itself, when Olaf Tryggvison



114 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

leapt into the deep sea and was never heard of more.

While at war with Ethelred the Redeless in “ England it betid there that King Svein, the son of Harald, died suddenly anight in his bed ; and it is the say of Englishmen that Edmund the Holy did slay him after the manner in which the holy Mercury slew Julian the Apostate.”¹ He is buried according to tradition under the Castle Hills at Gainsborough on the Trent.

He had won a firm position on English soil, and notwithstanding the victory of Ethelred the Redeless and St. Olaf at London Bridge, his son, Knut the Rich, the Mighty, the Great—for so he is variously called—eventually established his power both in England and Denmark.

Many a man has been improved by adversity, many spoiled by great success. But, as Dr. Hodgkin points out,² two great characters in history, Cæsar Augustus and Knut the Rich, vastly improved their behaviour after realising their very highest flights of ambition. Each was in a sense the founder of an empire, one of them the mightiest and in influence the most enduring dominion that the earth has ever known, the other was of the flimsiest and most ephemeral. Indeed it began to crumble before the

¹ *Heimskringla, Saga of Olaf the Holy*, Ch. XI.

² In his first volume to the *Political History of England*, edited by Hunt and Poole.

founder died. English communications were in those early centuries mainly with the Scandinavian lands, by whose people many parts of the British Isles had been settled, and that Knut's dream of a great northern empire was never realised we have some cause for regret. Far more promising schemes, however, would have been destroyed by the two savages by whom he was succeeded. By Northmen speaking French, under the great William, descendant of Rolf Wend-afoot, whom no horse could bear, English foreign relations were suddenly changed in 1066. Hitherto it had seemed likely England might form the focus of a great dominion of the North, henceforth she was closely bound to the central lands of Europe.

Had the empire of Knut the Rich been maintained its capital would probably have been Roskilde from the convenience of its position, or if the wealth and importance of England had made it desirable that the chief city should be there, it would most likely have been drawn to some place much nearer to Denmark than Winchester.

Knut's own associations with Roskilde were by no means uniformly happy. Indeed it was there that he was guilty of one of the worst acts in his career. In 1017 "King Knut rode up to Roiswell the day before Michaelmas with a great following. Earl Wolf, his brother-in-law, had arrayed a banquet for him. The earl gave him entertainment full noble,

116 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

but the king was unjoyous and scowling. The earl wrought many ways to make him gleesome, but the king was short and few-spoken. The earl bade him play at the chess, and that he yeasaid, so they got them a chessboard and played. Earl Wolf was a man quick of word and unyielding in all things; he was the mightiest man in Denmark next after King Knut. . . . Now when they had been playing a while at the chess Earl Wolf checked the king's knight. The king put his move back and bade him play another. The earl got angry, cast down the table and went away. The king said: 'Runnest thou away now, Wolf the Craven?' The earl turned back in the door and said: 'Further would'st thou have run in the Holy River if thou mightest have brought it about; nor didst thou call me Wolf the Craven when I thrust in to the helping of thee when the Swedes were beating you like hounds.'

"Therewith the earl went out and went to sleep, and a little afterwards the king himself went to sleep.

"The next morning as the king clad himself he said to his foot-swain, 'Go thou to Earl Wolf,' says he, 'and slay him.' The swain went and was away a while and came back. The king said: 'Didst thou slay the earl?' 'I did not slay him, for he had gone to Lucius' church.'

"There was a man hight Ivar the White, a Norwegian of kin. The king said to Ivar: 'Go, and slay

the earl.' Ivar went to the church and up into the quire, and thrust a sword through the earl, and forthwith Earl Wolf lost his life. Then went Ivar to the king and had his bloody sword. Said the king: 'Slewest thou the earl?' 'I slew him,' says he. The king said: 'Then thou hast well done.'

"But after the murder of the earl the monks let lock the church; but the king sent men to the monks, bidding them to open the church and to sing the Hours there, and they did even as the king bade. And when the king came to the church he endowed it with great estates, so that they made a wide countryside, and thereafter this stead arose greatly."

The harbour was an almost ideal one in those days, and Knut remained there with a great host of ships all through harvest. He evidently felt that the land given to the Cathedral of St. Lucius had quite atoned for the crime. His life work was in one sense a failure. The fabric he had reared fell down but much remained. As his latest biographer has said: "The great movement that culminated in the subjection of Britain was of vast importance for the North; it opened up new fields for western influences; it brought the North into touch with Christian culture; it rebuilt Scandinavian civilisation."¹

Knut's nephew, called Svein Wolfson (or Estridsen),

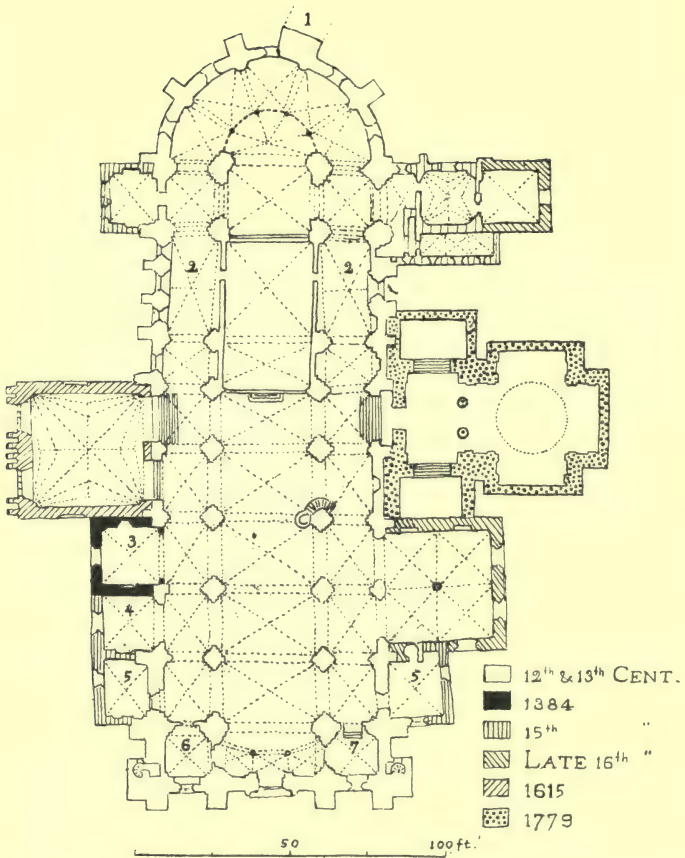
¹ L. M. Larson. *Canute the Great, and the Rise of Danish Imperialism during the Viking Age.* 1913.

118 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

the son of the murdered man, was King of Denmark from 1047 till 1076, and he did much for history writing in the north by his conversations with his friend, the famous chronicler, Canon Adam of Bremen.¹ His courtiers had once become very drunk in the palace hall at Roskilde, and without much delicacy they began discussing their master's want of bravery and lack of skill or success in war. Such conversations are always overheard, and in this case there was quite enough truth in the remarks to make them excessively disagreeable to the king. He relieved his mind by causing all the disputants to be killed while at church next day; then he went to service himself. But an English monk named William, whom he had made Bishop of Roskilde, like another Ambrose, sternly barred his way, nor was he allowed to enter and attend the Eucharist till he had humbly appeared in the garb of a penitent and craved the pardon of the Church. A few days later he imitated Knut by granting to the see a vast tract of land. It seems to have included the site of Copenhagen (p. 131).

During the eleventh century a stone church replaced Bluetooth's building of logs. Knut the Holy, King of Denmark (1080-86), gave what help he could. The

¹ It is doubtless largely for this reason that Adam sometimes writes rather from the Danish point of view. The Icelandic Sagas are as free from bias as any history works in the world.



CATHEDRAL OF ST. LUCIUS, ROSKILDE

- (1.) Passage to Episcopal Palace. (2.) Transept.
 (3.) Chapel of S. Lawrence. (4.) Chapel of S. Brita. (5.5.) Porches.
 (6.) North-west Tower, forming Chapel of S. Siegfrid.
 (7.) South-west Tower, forming the Bethlehem Chapel.

[Face page 118

fact that this structure was on the same site as the present cathedral may help to account for the extraordinary irregularities in setting out the extremely simple ground plan.

The church is almost wholly of brick, heavily buttressed and rather German in appearance; it must have been still more so originally when each bay of the aisles had a gable of its own. With its tall western spires and little central *flèche*, it reminds one of the Cathedral at Lübeck, but is a very much finer church. All the original parts were erected during the thirteenth century, the builders working east to west, delayed by fires in 1234 and 1284.¹

¹ The quire has but a single bay with a round apse, there are transepts, there is a nave of seven bays. At the west end this is flanked by towers and an aisle girdles the structure from one tower and back to the other, running all round the apse—for the transepts, which no longer project, are reduced very largely to sections of the aisles. In the sacristy may be seen remains of the arch between the south transept and the eastern chapel which extended it before it was cut back.

The interior is very striking from the unusual and pleasing combination of white and red. Bricks are exposed where are shafts and at the edges of the arches; white plaster covers walls and vaults. Many of the arches are round, but pointed ones are always used for the plain quadripartite vaulting. The windows are all single, some in groups of three, but they are numerous and wide enough to make the building extremely light. The blindstorey (*triforium*) is open to the church by arches about the same size as those that communicate with the aisles. Round the apse these two tiers of arches rest on shafts of granite, elsewhere stone is very sparingly used for capitals and a few other details. The blindstorey, itself vaulted above the vaulting of the aisles, forms a passage the whole way round the church, a groined gallery on two pillars carrying it from tower to tower, and wooden balconies across the transepts. (These look like sixteenth century work; can they have been erected when the

120 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

A magnificent monument in the quire fitly commemorates the greatest of all the honoured dead that rest within this simple and most impressive church. On an altar-tomb of great beauty and well restored is the canopied effigy of a lovely woman, who died in 1412. No student of history can tread here unmoved. We are in the presence of the most far-seeing of all the sovereigns of the North : the noble Margaret of whom the great *Chronicle of Lübeck* says, "When men saw the wisdom and strength that were in this royal lady, wonder and fear filled their hearts." She was a daughter of Waldemar Atterdag (p. 161), and had married the King of Norway. "Great marvel it is to think that a lady, who, when she began to govern for her son found a troubled kingdom, in which she owned not money or credit enough

transepts were cut back, perhaps at the Reformation ?) By means of a simple archway over a road the blindstorey also communicates with the old Bishop's Palace to the eastward. The clearstorey has no passage along its windows, but round the apse there is an extra arcade between it and the blindstorey, which greatly improves the effect.

The quire and apse with the central space and one bay of the nave are higher in floor-level than the rest of the church, and underneath is a crypt whose vaulting rests on a row of square columns, and whose small windows open to the aisles.

Some of the fittings are extremely beautiful Renaissance work, especially the reredos with folding wings. This, it is said, a Dutch skipper was trying to smuggle through the Sound ; on being detected he placed on it a ludicrously low value, hoping that the duty might thus be extremely light. Unfortunately, however, the Danish authorities preferred to purchase the work at the figure that its too clever owner had named. The worrying resourcefulness of customs house officials is no new thing.

to secure a meal without the aid of friends, had made herself so feared and loved in the short term of three months, that nothing in all the land was any longer withheld from her."

By the Union of Calmar in 1397, she arranged the eternal federation of the four Scandinavian realms on principles acceptable to all. One King should reign, but each land should maintain its proper laws. The Northlands realised the blessings of her rule, and all that she did was so good that even her wretchedly unworthy successors took a century and a quarter to undo her work.

Womanish, perhaps unworthy, yet by no means unprovoked, her mocking insults to the captured Swedish King, Albert the Elder of Mecklenburg. This carpet-bagger's German hirelings had been scattered by her troops, and she dressed him in the garments of a fool with a tail of nineteen yards in length depending from his cap. Natural but unnecessary return for his offensive gifts of an apron and a long gown and a whetstone to sharpen her needles!

To her memory (in part) are the beautiful miserere stalls on whose canopies are Scripture scenes, set up in 1420 by Bishop Jens Andersen. By her was fitted the Bethlehem Chapel under the south-west tower.

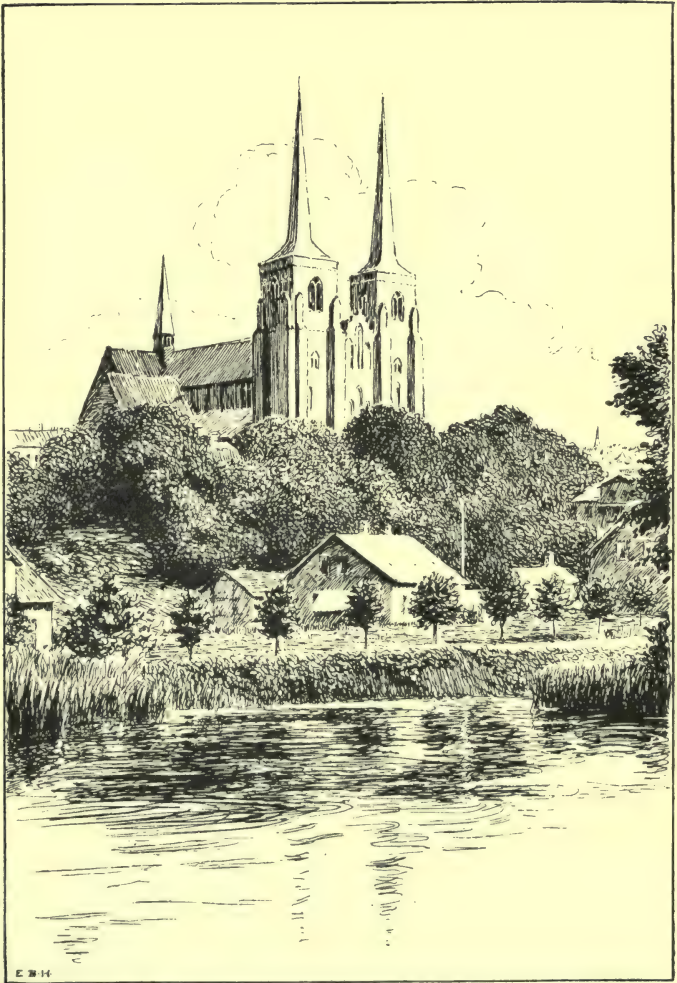
Strong, indeed, in life, but yet more strong in death, the appeal of the great queen! Even now the world

122 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

is a loser because the Scandinavian realms are torn. Very truly spake a Swedish writer whom Otté quotes, but does not name: "Death made an end of Queen Margaret's life, but it could not make an end of her fame, which will endure through all ages. Under her hands the three kingdoms enjoyed a degree of strength and order to which they had long been strangers before her time, and which neither of the three regained till long after her."

Other royal monuments are many here, but it need not be assumed that the fairest of them mark the lives of the noblest and most useful lives. Many of them are in the numerous chapels which have been added beyond the aisles of this church from the fourteenth century to the eighteenth. They alter the character of the building very much.¹ Combined

¹ The earliest that exists was built in 1384 by Bishop Ulfeld, who hallowed it to St. Laurence; the vaulting springs from little grotesque heads, and there are some beautiful wall paintings. In fact, many such have survived throughout the cathedral. Joining it on the west is another little square chapel, erected 1464, hallowed to St. Brita (p. 195). Here is some really beautiful old woodwork, and one of the wall paintings shows us a green devil writing. Westward it joins the north porch. Touching the south porch on the other side of the nave is the large chapel to the Three Holy Kings, erected 1459-64. A much older granite shaft with details of Byzantine character stands in the centre to support the vault which elsewhere rests on ancient corbels. Foliage and figure paintings cover vault and walls, and there are two sumptuous Classic Renaissance monuments to Christian III. (1533-59) and Frederic II. (1559-88). The former was chiefly responsible for the Danish Reformation, but neither king has so large a place in history as the columned canopies and numerous figures of their marble monuments might seem to imply. On the north side of the church Christian IV. (p. 132) built a



E 214

CATHEDRAL FROM NORTH-WEST

[Face page 122



with the absence of any transept projection they make the plan of the church look very confused.

Those who departed centuries ago are laid away with decency in vaults. But in later days a far less seemly custom has grown up; the coffins are merely ranged in rows upon the chapel floors. They seem to be at rest when they are of marble or stone, and so, too, perhaps when of solid metal, but most are only of oak, covered with black velvet. It is almost impossible to dismiss the idea that the victims of some disaster await the last solemn rites. There is something weirdly gruesome in this vast Valhalla of the unburied dead. Abraham desired decorously to bury his dead out of his sight, but the rulers of Denmark must for ever merely lie in state. In ancient

fair chapel with star vaulting (whose character is indicated on the plan), resembling that of one bay in the sacristy. It is an interesting specimen of Gothic, dated 1615, the iron grill screen 1620, and the light streams in through two large four-fold windows, whose tracery is formed by the mullions intersecting, a common form in English work of that day, which is found also in a few of the oldest churches of Virginia. These are the only windows in the cathedral that are not single lights except the double ones in the upper stages of the western towers, which are later than the lower parts. The tall taper spires, copper-sheathed and nearly round, were added by the same king; they are a distinct improvement on those of the cathedral at Lübeck, which they rather resemble, and an ornament to the whole countryside.

The great Chapel of Frederick V. (1746-66) is cross-shaped with a huge dome rising above; there are pilasters against the walls, and two columns (all with Ionic caps) separate it from the wide vestibule which joins the church. It is lighted from high up, and is a very fine thing in itself, though hopelessly out of keeping with the cathedral. (It was built after the death of the king whose name it bears, p. 135.)



124 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

Egypt an empty coffin was sometimes placed upon the table that the feasters might remember death. They who say their prayers in this cathedral in the very presence of the dead must surely learn that lesson with much more force. To kneel on the same floor where coffins lie must be far more impressive than merely to learn from storied urn and animated bust of those who sleep below.

Trondhjem Cathedral, the noblest of Scandinavian churches, is without mediæval monuments, at Upsala there are few ; this church is in very truth the most historical building of the North. Several of the monarchs that here rest bore rule over all the Norse. Saints of all three kingdoms have here some part. To St. Brita is hallowed a chapel on the north, to St. Siegfrid one under the northern tower. St. Olaf (Danish Oluf) and St. Knut are among those whose effigies are painted in the Chapel of Three Kings.

Few fences break up the wide fields that extend round the town to the sea. Cattle are invariably tethered, pasture is valuable, and none of it must be trampled down. Sprinkled about are white farm-houses covered with tiles or with thatch. Many small-holders have purchased their land with money borrowed from the State. Sir Rider Haggard¹ has recently described their condition, and pointed out what England may learn.

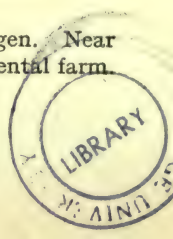
¹ *Rural Denmark and Its Lessons.* 1911.

Denmark is, or rather has been, so progressively indifferent to the past that but few old buildings still adorn her open fields. When it was considered necessary for a self-respecting Scandinavian nation to establish an open-air museum,¹ the needful old farm buildings had to be brought from parts of old Denmark that are now either Swedish or German. Nothing had escaped rebuilding on strictly Danish soil.

At first sight Danish farming looks rough, thistles may not seldom be seen growing luxuriantly among the oats. Danish landscapes indeed frequently look rather more American than European with something of that ungroomed appearance and absence of hedges that is so characteristic of a new country. In purely dairy farming, none the less, Danes practically lead the world, and that despite their poor soil and the need for sheltering stock from the rigours of a long winter. Though about a hundred and seventy-four of them live on each square mile, they manage to send away food that they do not need to the value of about twenty millions sterling every year.

Age-long the connection between this pleasant land and the British Isles. Roskilde and Winchester were twin capitals of the middle empire of which England formed a part, after the legions of Rome had

¹ This is at Lyngby, about seven miles from Copenhagen. Near the museum are the Agricultural College and an experimental farm.



126 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

departed, before the British had built a dominion in the world for themselves. Nor is the impression the Danes left on England by any means worn away. A Danish resident in Middlesbrough, taking a walk with an English friend over the Cleveland Moors, found himself able to understand the dialect of the folk of those wild hills, while their own countryman could not.

Political links with Denmark are to-day centred mainly in the relations of kings and queens. But the great smoky cities of the United Kingdom have their chief source of the necessaries of life in this quiet and green countryside.



CHAPTER VI

COPENHAGEN

Dumb was the sea, and if the beech-woods stirred,
'Twas with the nesting of the grey-winged bird
Midst its thick leaves. . . .

Great things he suffered, great delights he had,
Unto great kings he gave good deeds for bad ;
He ruled o'er kingdoms where his name no more
Is had in memory, and on many a shore
He left his sweat and blood to win a name
Passing the bounds of earthly creatures' fame.

Ogier the Dane, by WILLIAM MORRIS.

THOUGH the capital of an Empire which spreads from the Tropics to the near vicinity of the Northern Pole,¹ and by far the largest of Scandinavian cities, Copenhagen is yet so placed that many of her citizens

¹ The Danish West Indies are St. Thomas, St. John and Santa Cruz, just east of Porto Rico. No country in the Polar regions extends much further north than Greenland.

128 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

look from their own windows over foreign soil. The capital is almost at the very eastern point of the wide-flung yet restricted dominions of Denmark.

A flight of but a dozen miles would carry an aeroplane on to Swedish soil; only twice that distance off is the University city of Lund, so famous in the annals of the Northern Church and so long on Danish soil.

Copenhagen is a very pleasant town, and almost all its chief buildings exemplify the architectural ideals of the Renaissance. Street upon street of houses, white stucco or red brick, adorned with pilaster and pediment and cornice, covered with tall pantiled roofs; many bearing the dates of their birth-years two or three centuries ago; these give the capital an old-world, most attractive look, a picturesqueness that is sternly denied to most so modern towns. Steeples of character to match, frequently tower above the roofs, while very constant parks and squares, long avenues of broad-leafed trees and cool-looking fountains, some of them real works of art, do much to make this town a very delightful place.

Canals, somewhat numerous open-air markets and innumerable cafés, whose tables and chairs under trees or awnings encroach on the broad pavements, make the Danish metropolis a rather characteristic Continental town. In some ways, perhaps, it has

less individuality than the other capitals of the Northlands. Less romantically situated, much larger, far easier to reach from more southern parts, it has much of the bright boulevard atmosphere of Paris. Tivoli Park and the cafés, with many other like attractions, draw crowds of visitors, not only from every part of the small kingdom, but also from the very prosperous section of Sweden across the Sound, which was Danish till 1658, and has by no means lost its affection for the city that it knew as the capital of old.

Copenhagen is an epitome of Denmark herself, the prosperous metropolis of an extremely industrious and well-ordered community that likes to be amused. There is but little rotten in the state of Denmark to-day. Though fallen from possessing the widest empire of the north to the limits of a mere province, she yet thrills with vigorous life, an object lesson on many points that no land can afford to ignore. Copenhagen is not really very unlike a large German town, though the Danes are not pleased to be told so, and it lacks the numerous uniforms and those minute and detailed regulations for the welfare and good order of the population that so characterise the Fatherland itself. Magnificently equipped with boulevards, palaces and parks, cut through by fine waterways and roadways, the city rather strangely lacks any conspicuous central point. The Danes boast

130 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

that their large buildings are schools, while those of England are factories and those of Germany barracks, but the headquarters of one of the chief Universities of earth possess little architectural splendour. The view of the city from the deck of an approaching steamer is not particularly impressive; nothing except a few steeples rises above the general line of the houses.

Life is lived in the Danish capital. Some of the numerous bright restaurants do not close their doors till 3 a.m., and there is much of the all-night activity that is the unrestful pride of many of the cities of America. To-morrow blends with to-day; some citizens have not reached their beds while others are starting on the activities of next morning. But happily this unquiet atmosphere does not seem to penetrate individuals. The Copenhagener does not desire to be for ever talking about his hustling town.

While so much that is of the old world still survives in Copenhagen, it is on the whole an intensely modern town, rather dominated by its stretches of asphalt and trolley-trams and ever growing lines of flats. A really magnificent feature, by the chief square next the Tivoli Park, emblematic of the soaring ambition of the place, is the new Raadhus or City Hall. Built in 1894, it is a beautiful specimen of Renaissance architecture in brick, raising a tall spire toward heaven, enclosing a couple of courts, one of them an

open garden with a fountain in the centre, the other cloistered and roofed with glass. The adornments are very pleasing, appropriate to the style and use, tile mosaic of fish and bird, tree designs in relief or stencilling over the walls. The upper portions may be gained by a lift that never stops; on one side the cars are always going up and on the other down.

The site of the city, like its name, Copenhagen or merchants' harbour, is not romantic, though extremely convenient for travel and trade. It looks straight over the Sound to Sweden and the entrance to the Baltic; the arm of the sea that divides Zealand from the small island of Amager (p. 143) also penetrates the town and adds to the water-front available for wharves. It was on a little backwater of this channel that in the twelfth century Bishop Axel (Absalon) raised on Church lands a castle, which was called by his own name, to protect the merchants from the pirates infesting the Sound.¹ Little he suspected

¹ What remained of Axelhus was destroyed in 1740, when Christiansborg Palace was erected to gratify a whim of the German Queen, Sophia Magdalena of Kulmbach-Bayreuth. This structure was burned down in 1794 to be replaced by the palace burned in 1884, which was built in 1828 from designs by Hansen. The Rigsdag met there.

The present citadel, protected by water and grass banks, buried in trees which hang over the moats, and dominated by a windmill, is on the Sound at the other end of the Amager channel. Most of the grass-grown rampart walls (near which was Andersen's Warton Almshouse) that surrounded the town and connected with the citadel have been removed, as Copenhagen had spread far beyond them, and they had become entirely out of date.

132 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

that round it would grow up a town to supplant his cathedral city.

Copenhagen was made the capital in 1443 by Christopher, the Bavarian, just after he had been recognised as King in Sweden and Norway as well as in Denmark itself. He was not a popular monarch. The Swedes called him the stumpy little German, and he thought them a free-spoken folk. When men complained that pirates were ravaging the coasts and were probably supported by Eric, the king who had been deposed, Christopher answered that, having been deprived of three kingdoms, a man could hardly be blamed for stealing a dinner now and then. Perhaps if the dinners had been stolen from the palace and not from their own houses the people would more readily have seen the joke.

Thus, Copenhagen is a mediæval town, but it has no buildings earlier than the creations of that most accomplished sovereign, Christian IV., who could sail a ship and navigate the fjords and swim and leap and fence and fight and ride and drive and speak many languages and explain the course of the stars and drink enough wine and beer to astonish the court of his brother-in-law, James I. of England. If he really designed the buildings that he raised, as it seems he truly did, he was also an architect of no mean power.

The Bourse, which he erected about 1624, presents

a long low façade to one of the quays and its high roof is relieved by large gabled dormer windows. From the top of the tower in the centre four dragons look down and coil their tails heavenward together to form a spire about a hundred and fifty feet high.¹ Another of his works is the Round Tower,² originally used as the observatory. It is entirely filled by a brick slope up which one may walk with ease to the top, corkscrewing round a pillar. Over the metal parapet that bears the date 1643, there is a splendid view across wide miles of steep roofs covered with curving tiles, relieved by many a tree and the tall masts of many a ship. And the other spires and towers and domes of the city make a really splendid array, especially the quaint steeple of Vor Frelzers Kirke, round whose outside an open stairway winds to the gold ball at the top. Across the Sound loom up low Swedish hills, but the city is too vast to allow a view of Danish country of any decipherable sort. Over thirteen miles of choppy sea appears the small isle of Hveen, now famous for its hares, where in 1580 Tycho Brahe built his observatory and “wielded

¹ Fergusson is most unkind in his references to Danish Renaissance buildings, particularly this structure, “of which the inhabitants of Copenhagen pretend to be proud.”

² Trinity Church, of which this observatory is architecturally at any rate the tower, is a really noteworthy specimen of seventeenth century Gothic. Tall pointed windows pierce the walls along the sides and round the apse; octagonal pillars sustain the high-ribbed vault with painted bosses. There is no clearstorey, and the effect within is as striking as it is simple.

134 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

the sword, not to smite flesh and blood, but to strike out a clearer path up to the stars of heaven. For Holger Danske (p. 146) can come in many forms; so that through all the world one sees the might of Denmark.”¹

In this teeming womb of royal kings one expects to see palaces, and very numerous they are, now in many cases put to every kind of useful purpose, from the framing of laws to the display of things curious and rare. But the sneer of Samuel Laing in 1839 that Copenhagen has more palaces in her streets and squares than ships in her harbour has long ceased to be true. The haven of merchants again has a busy trade; canals and shipping and docks are met with on every hand.

Two palaces, Rosenborg and Fredericksborg, were erected (or begun) by the same fourth Christian king, and fine specimens of Danish Renaissance they are, far better in general effect than in detail. Walls mostly of brick, carved work of stone, tall metal-covered roofs and lofty open windowed spires. The palace of Rosenborg contains a beautiful array of furniture and weapons and china and jewels, the collection of several kings.

Other of the palaces are fine examples of the

¹ Hans Andersen. Brahe did not accept the Copernican system, though he first noticed the variations in the motions of the moon, and has hardly been excelled as a practical astronomer. He died in the service of the Emperor at Prague, 1601.



HÖJBROPLADS, COPENHAGEN

[Face page 134

severer Classic work of the eighteenth century erected when Europe had learned to call barbaric all that the Christian centuries had raised, so ceased merely to apply Classical details to Gothic designs, and could admire nothing but plain copies of the work of Greece and Rome. The Amalienborg (Winter Palace, etc.) surrounds a fine octagonal court with Ionic pilasters, balustrades and urns, over which rise high tiled roofs. In the centre of the court is a metal statue to King Frederick V., famed as the patron of science and art. It was erected by the Asiatic Trading Company which once made Denmark an Indian power, for the king's interest in the East was great, and he dispatched Niebuhr to Arabia in 1761.¹

Another eighteenth century palace, called Prindsens because the Crown Prince adorned it when in 1744 it was erected round its court, is now the National Museum. Even in the earliest age when "beasts were slaying men" Denmark was the abode of oyster-eating humanity which has left us the world-famed kitchen middens that make so fascinating to us the first beginnings of our race. This collection is of extraordinary interest as letting us trace in a general way the whole story of mankind from the time when

¹ Practically forming part of the same design as the Amalienborg, and admirably completing it, is the Frederiks Kirke, which raises a great dome behind a Corinthian portico to the height of over 260 feet. Its construction dragged on from 1749 to 1894. The view from the top passes that from the Round Tower.

136 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

he chipped flints into implements and built cromlechs of unshapen stones to the days when he learned to preach the message of peace from pulpits of Renaissance architecture and to shoot his fellows with long guns.

As is natural in Denmark the collection of prehistoric implements is extremely representative and large. We see man armed with rude axes of flint or variegated marble and women adorned with amber beads, during the long, long millenniums of the two ages of stone. We see the swords and knives and the tree-trunk coffins of those who had learned the secret of the metals and substituted for stone first blunt bronze and then sharp iron. We see the works of Egypt and Assyria, of Greece and Rome, and of all the cultured races of the South. We see the beginning of civilisation in the North and the spoils of the Viking Age, the gold and jewels brought to Denmark by foray or by trade. We see the North becoming Christian and building churches of stone or staves and the Scandinavian countries moulding themselves into what they are to-day.¹ For purely educational purposes and for stimulating the imagination few museums on earth have quite the same power as this one.²

¹ But while interest in the past, far more widespread than in most other countries, has done very much to bring objects of interest to the National Museum, England has been incomparably more happy than Denmark in preserving for generations yet to come the buildings of mediæval and Renaissance days (p. 125).

² English education, in some ways excellent, attaches far too little

Denmark is a country where education is a serious thing, and in few capitals may one learn so much as here. No amount of *merely* technical instruction would give the Danes the technical skill that they possess. If any doubt the real and practical usefulness of good general education, this small country can supply the object-lesson that he needs; if any do not know just what education means, the Danes have hit upon a definition that is of real value and much comfort too. "Education is that which survives when all that was learned has been forgotten."

Much of the spirit of the Norse fills the air of the Danish capital, but the town is too young to be mentioned in the sagas; to many of the heroes of the Danes there are monuments in streets and memorials in galleries, but they do not give their atmosphere to the town. The spirit of the city is rather that of solid achievement by a great people which no longer rests its pride on glory gotten in war. And if the nations of mankind were to be judged on the same principle that was applied to the holders of the Talents Denmark would be very near the top. The extreme richness of her small homeland is a still unexploded myth. If it were an American state it would be one

importance to stimulating the imagination. I once met a very intelligent Cornishman who had been through the schools of his native county with credit, and could speak interestingly on many subjects, but he had never even heard of King Arthur. That is anything but an isolated instance.

of the most thinly settled areas of the country, outside the actual mountains. Denmark's place in the modern world is due to education and to nothing else. The sole fertility of the land is in the brains of her children. If America were occupied by a sufficient population of Danes she might almost take a contract to supply the solar system with food.¹

Even in a city of so many associations and despite the noble army of Danish worthies who have written their names in broader or fainter type across its streets, it is still the great name of Thorwaldsen that more than any other dominates Copenhagen. "Sylvanus" tells the truth in his remark: "Men speak not, think not of the king; they ask you, 'Have you seen the Frue kirk?' or Church of our Lady, within whose walls are the twelve apostles of Thorwaldsen, with the grandest, most holy conception of the Saviour, the chisels of future ages may vainly essay to surpass. The figures, larger than life and thrown *into* life by the immortal Iclander, teem with varying expression and deep feeling."

The exterior of the church is severely plain; indeed, it is very ugly, with two ranges of windows and a tower

¹ Nor is it well to forget that the main reason for their great success is that the Danes are sufficiently educated to co-operate, instead of deeming every neighbour a necessary rival. Both town and country benefit alike. The capital is provided with pure milk at about half the London prices by the Copenhagen Milk Supply Company, from which the very poor may have milk for their babies without money and without price.

stuck through the sloping roof, a hexastyle Doric portico against it. This last feature in itself is, however, a thing of much beauty and its tympanum has sculptures by Thorwaldsen.¹

The inside is very truly one of the most impressive in Europe. Not that the actual architecture rises very far above the commonplace. The aisles open by round arches with heavy piers between; Doric colonnades above sustain the deeply panelled tunnel vault; there is an unlighted apse. Here, over the altar, stands the famous statue of Christ, one of the most striking in the world; the face radiates divine compassion, the hands are stretched out to all who come. In front an angel holds a font-shell, and against each pier is the figure of one of the Apostles. The supreme excellence of these glorious statues in white marble with their effective drapery and the absence of any other attempt at ornament renders the interior of this church striking in an extraordinary degree. There is an element of almost barbaric display in the huge number of works of art collected in many Gothic churches, and there is truth in the Japanese contention that not more than a single picture or figure should be displayed at the same

¹ The church was designed by Hansen, and erected about a century ago. The general appearance of the neighbourhood will be greatly improved by the tall spire in the style of Wren, which Dr. Carl Jacobsen is giving, but the portico will be still further crushed. No one ever yet designed a Greek temple that would look well surmounted by a tall Christian steeple.

time. If the statues were removed from the church one would hardly cross the street to see it, but were they erected in St. Paul's Cathedral they would lose more than half their effect.

The only criticism that one can possibly make on Thorwaldsen is that his long sojourn in Rome seems to have given him a little trace of the softness of the South, a certain absence of virility that, slight as it is, attracts instant attention in the North. Not a trace of this appears in the figure of St. Paul: determination on every line of the strong face, clinched by the position of the left hand on the sword.¹ There is a large collection of the Master's works in the mongrel-Egyptian Valhalla next Christiansborg Palace (p. 131), in the centre of whose court Thorwaldsen sleeps beneath ivy trailing on the ground. Grace, tenderness, youth, beauty, and gentle mirth—these were the inspirations that gave his hand power. Nothing fearful or terrible is among his works. No agony like the Niobe or the Laocoon, never even the crucifixion of the Saviour. Even in sepulchral monuments he strove to lessen the gloom of death by symbols of a deathless life.²

Even with Thorwaldsen fresh in mind, it is probably safe to say that the name of no Copenhagener,

¹ All the figures were designed by Thorwaldsen, but some were finished by pupils. There is a reproduction of that representing Christ in the Johns Hopkins Hospital at Baltimore.

² Lady Wilde, *Driftwood from Scandinavia*, 1884.

past or present, is so well-known in England and America as that of Hans Andersen, unrivalled as the teller of fairy tales. Few would maintain that he was the greatest of the Danes or the most illustrious alumnus of the University, but not very many are seriously interested in statuary, and in science still fewer, while all children love stories and there is an atmosphere about those of Hans Andersen of which most of us are conscious more or less from the cradle to the grave.

In the rather risky work of foretelling the future Andersen was at any rate as successful as any one else. "Yes, in years to come we shall fly on the wings of steam high in the air, over the mighty ocean. The young inhabitants of America will visit the old Continent of Europe. They will come to admire the ancient monuments and ruined cities, just as we make pilgrimages to the fallen glories of Southern Asia.

"In years to come they will certainly visit us . . .

"The airship comes : it is crowded with passengers, for the journey is quicker than by sea. . . . The passengers will tread the country of Shakespeare, as the intellectual ones of the party have it—the home of politics and machinery, as others say.

"Here they stay for a whole day : they are a busy race, but they can afford so much time for England and Scotland.



142 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

“ On they go, through the tunnel under the Channel to France.

“ One whole day is given to Germany and one to the North—the birthplace of Oerstedt and Linnaeus—to Norway, home of the ancient heroes and of the Normans. Iceland is taken on the return journey: the Geyser foams no longer, Hekla is extinguished; but an eternal stone table of the Saga still holds fast the island rock in the midst of the stormy seas.”

A delightful description of the writer himself is given us by Lady Wilde: “ Hans Andersen was described to me as a tall, white-haired old man, with the most gentle and lovable manners. The son of a poor tailor, with no inheritance from nature or fortune save his genius, he gained a distinguished position in society and was an immense favourite in Copenhagen. He read nothing but his own works, and always talked as if fresh from Fairyland. The children adored him, and he was never so happy as when he gathered a circle of them round him, while he enchained their attention with some magical story fresh woven from his brain, and made them laugh or weep as he chose, with the mirth or pathos of his strange fancies.”

Southward the city leaps a narrow arm of sea and spreads on to the kitchen-garden island of Amager or Amak. During the early sixteenth century King Christian II., brother-in-law to the Emperor Charles V.

famed for his noble work in organising schools in the cities and instituting a system of posts, but infamous for a stupendous crime that crushed the achievement of the great Margaret in the dust (p. 217), invited farmers and gardeners from the Low Countries to colonise Amak. Great was the benefit both to immigrants and Danes; the fertile island still retains much of old Flemish ways and imports the old costumes of Holland into the markets of the Danish capital.

Of Anglo-Danish relations during the Napoleonic wars, of Nelson's victory in 1801 and Wellesley's in 1807, silence is better than words. The conqueror at Trafalgar has immortal fame without the added laurels won in the Sound, the hero of Waterloo needs not to add to his victories the operations against this town. No Dane could be expected to look back on those miserable events but with indignation, few English but with very deep regret. Necessary, perhaps, those actions, but wretched all the same. We live in better days. The presence of the Church of St. Alban in the lovely gardens by the very citadel, a sanctuary to whose erection Danish Queen Alexandra contributed, is a witness for all time that the relations between Denmark and England to-day are of no ordinary kind. The tall Gothic spire is an ornament to the city and one of its landmarks from the harbour, but there might have been advantages in less purely

English architecture and perhaps dedication to some Danish saint.¹

The environs of the capital are made as delightful as those of Paris by the lovely beech-woods that cover so much of the land, and by the haunting beauty of the views across the Sound. A few miles north of the city is the famous Dyrehaven, or deer-park, a vast expanse of gently undulating woods or grass land with a large water-lily-covered pond, where deer roam about under a few old oaks and many beeches, often so close together that they have soared instead of being allowed to spread. Beech woods are very dear to the Danes, and in the Kunst Museum at Copenhagen there is a striking picture by Philipsen of which they form the subject.² On a low hill in the park is the Eremitagen, a hunting-lodge, in which the king can look out from his own house over soil that another rules.

Along the Sound front there peep out from the woods just one or two old thatched cottages with heavy logs along their ridges, but far more prominent are the modern villages, which are largely made up of restaurants and hotels. Very many too are the summer cottages of prosperous citizens; far toward the north they spread along the shore, the bungalow

¹ Knut the Holy (p. 118), dedicated to St. Alban his church at Odense.

² It is, of course, impossible that a work like the present should even refer to all the collections and interesting buildings in such a city as Copenhagen.

kind of thing that has long been frequent in America and is beginning to become naturalised in England too.

A tale is told of a Danish husband, not famous for the best of tempers, who proposed to his wife that they should celebrate their silver wedding, but rather weariedly she suggested that instead they might wait five years and then commemorate their 'Thirty Years' War. This must have been a most exceptional state of affairs, if one may judge from Danes one has the pleasure of knowing, or from what one may see of the race making holiday at these sea-side resorts. No European people seems to get more out of life and into life than the always cheerful inhabitants of this small land. It is the mark of true genius that, shut out from so much, they have made still more of what remains.

Less than thirty miles north of Copenhagen, where the Sound is straitest, stands the town that is next best known to the world of all on Danish earth. The call of the future dominates Copenhagen, but the romance of the past still broods over Elsinore, or Helsingör, where Kronborg Castle looks across the narrow sea. How it seems to Danish minds can hardly be better told than in Hans Andersen's simple and yet holding tale.

“Kronborg Castle stands in Denmark, close to the Oere Sound, through which tall ships sail by in hundreds, English, Russian, and Prussian. They

all greet the old fortress with their cannon, ' Boom ! ' And the castle answers, ' Boom ! ' That is the way the cannon say ' Good morning ' and ' Good evening. ' In the winter, when no ships sail by, and the Sound is covered with ice right up to the Swedish coast, it looks just like an inland street. Danish and Swedish flags are flying ; Danes and Swedes cry to each other, ' good morning, ' and ' good night, ' but not with cannon—no, with a kindly clasp of the hand. One brings to the other biscuits and white bread, for foreign fare is always the sweetest. But the most beautiful sight of all is the grand old castle, in whose deep inaccessible vaults sits Holger Danske. He is clad in mail armour ; his head rests on his strong arms ; his long beard has grown into the marble table, where he sits asleep. He dreams, and in his dream he sees all that happens in his native land. Every Christmas Eve an angel comes to him, and tells him that his dreams are true, but that he may sleep on undisturbed for a while longer. Denmark is not yet in danger, but if the danger ever comes Holger Danske will spring to his feet, the table will shiver to pieces as he draws away his beard, and the hero will lay about him, so that every land shall ring with the story.

“ An old grandfather sat one evening telling his little grandson all this tale of Holger Danske, and the child knew well that what his grandfather said was

true. As the old man spoke, he finished off a large wooden figure of Holger Danske which was to ornament the prow of a ship, for the grandfather was a carver in wood, and had carved many a figure-head from which a good ship was to take her name. Now he had just carved Holger Danske, standing proudly with his long beard ; in one hand he held his flashing sword ; in the other the Danish shield.

“ ‘ It is the finest national arms in the world,’ said the old man. ‘ Lions and hearts—emblems of strength and love !’ He looked at the topmost lion and thought of King Knut, who chained England fast to Denmark’s throne ; he looked at the second lion and thought of Waldemar, who gave peace to Denmark, and subdued the Vandal’s lands ; he looked at the third lion and thought of Margaret, who united into one Sweden, Norway and Denmark. But as he looked at the hearts they burned and brightened into flames ; each stirred in its place, and by its side stood a spirit.

“ But the little child in bed saw clearly the old Kronborg towering above the Oere Sound ; he saw the real Holger Danske, sitting alone in the deep vault, his beard grown fast to the marble table, dreaming of all that happened overhead. Holger Danske dreamed too of all that went on in the little room ; he heard every word, and nodded in his dreams.

“ ‘ Yes,’ he cried, ‘ keep me in your hearts and in

148 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

your memory, ye Danish folk. In the hour of danger, I shall be at hand.'

"And the clear daylight fell over Kronborg; the wind bore along the sound of the hunting horns from the country round; the ships sailed by with their greeting 'Boom, boom!' And Kronborg answered 'Boom! Boom!' But Holger Danske woke not, let them thunder as loud as they might, for they only meant 'good morning!' 'good evening!'"

In this castle too in 1589 James VI. (and afterwards I.) was married to his Danish bride. That was only by proxy so far as the Scot was concerned, but the next year Queen Anne brought her husband to sojourn at the well-loved spot.

By the sea is a long sandy beach and dark woods cover the flat lands behind. The superb castle was rising, or re-rising, from the ground during Shakespeare's younger years (1577-85); he first went to London the year after it was done. A grand sample of Renaissance work, it stands four-square to all the winds and protects a court within; details are carved in solid stone. And at each angle rises a tower, all different in design and height. A light for the shipping burns in one.¹ The architect was G. F. Stahlmann.

The world fame of Elsinore is owed very largely to

¹ The sound dues which the owners of the castle collected from all the ships that sailed by dated from Hanseatic days. For Sweden they were abrogated by treaty in 1645, for other nations they were commuted for money in 1857.

the immortal English bard who probably never was there. On the flat terrace between castle and sound Hamlet spoke with his father's ghost. The tale of Amlet or Hamlet seems to be derived from some old saga of a Jutish prince,¹ and the *Ambales Saga* gives an Icelandic form of the legend.

True, indeed, that Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, like his other plays, whose scene is laid abroad, lacks special local colour. But it is no weak link between Denmark and the world of English speech that the scene of one of the great masterpieces of Saxon literature, indeed of all the writings of the earth, is laid on Danish soil.

¹ E. C. Otté, *Scandinavian History*.



CHAPTER VII

VISBY

Thou wonnest, O warrior-wager,
Tribute from folk of Gothland,
And durst not men against thee
With brand to ward their island.
So ran the Isle-syslings' war-host ;
I heard that the wolf-kind's hunger
Thawed east-away.

OTTAR THE SWART, in praise of Olaf the Holy.

THERE was a time very long ago when a spectral island floated on the Baltic brine. Its mist-wrapped shores appeared at times to perplexed mariners, but when they tried to land there all was sea.

It appears the reason was that certain trolls had made that land their own, and sought to amuse themselves by playing idle tricks on man. But the powers of darkness can never last for aye and eventually it

chanced that a sailor from the North, called Thjelvar or the Diligent, more skilful or more fortunate than others, contrived to land on the enchanted isle. Knowing how to destroy the force of evil he at once kindled a fire by which the spell was burned away. The trolls were warned off. The land was added to the realms of man and yellow crops waved where grew dark woods of yore. But it was necessary that the career of the new people should be mainly on the water, and the island became known far and wide as the Eye of the Eastern Sea.

The Goths, who did so much to overturn the Empire of Rome and at the same time to rejuvenate the South of Europe, have left no other account of themselves in literature than the version of Holy Writ that was made in their language by Ulfilas, a missionary great and good, however deplorably incorrect his views about the Trinity may have been (p. 191). But to this beautiful island of limestone in the heart of their oldest homelands the Goths gave at any rate a name; and such is the charm and interest of her ancient capital that one might well suppose the term Gothic Architecture to have been given here in admiration instead of being a term of contempt and reproach bestowed by a generation that could see no beauty save in the horizontal lines of Greek temples.¹

¹ It does not seem certain that the term Gothic was applied to architecture in contempt of mediæval work. Evelyn in 1641 speaks

152 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

At an early date the men of Gothland had done in the Baltic what long before the Phœnicians had done in the Mediterranean. Their trading vessels were moored to London Bridge, they were anchored in the lonely gulf where St. Petersburg was eventually to rise. And their commercial activities extended to far remoter bounds. They fetched the furs of Russia and the gems of further east to shelter English men and to decorate English girls. No less than twenty thousand English coins, most of them inscribed with the unhonoured name of Ethelred the Redeless, have been found in their island of recent years. The further extent of Gothland trade is evidenced by the presence of coins not only from Scandinavia and Russia and the realms of the Holy Roman Empire, but also from the far south of Europe and towns on the Arabian sands.

In the *Saga of Olaf* we read of a merchant employed by that king to purchase robes in Garthrealm, or Russia,

of "one of the fairest churches of the Gotiq design I had seene," at a time when "Gothic" was used much as we employ "Teutonic" to-day. In 1713 Wren (*Parentalia*, a family biography by his son) says, "This we now call the Gothick manner of architecture so the Italians called what was not after the Roman style." The depreciatory use of the term seems first to occur in Dryden, 1695: "All that has not the ancient gust is called a barbarous or Gothique manner." So that it seems quite possible that Gothic architecture merely signified the style of the North of Europe as opposed to that of the South. Mallet (*Northern Antiquities*, translated from *Introduction à l'Histoire de Dannemarc*, 1770) refers to so many mediæval "edifices wherein we can find nothing to admire but the inexhaustible patience and infinite pains of those who built them!"

and Gothland is visited on the way, as was doubtless the almost universal custom of the time. "There was a man hight Gudleik the Garthrealmer, of Agdir kindred, a mariner, and a mickle chapman; wealthy withal, and one who went on chaffering journeys to sundry lands; he would often go east into Garthrealm, and for that cause was called Gudleik the Garthrealmer. Now this spring Gudleik dighted his ship, being minded to go in the summer east to Garthrealm. King Olaf sent him word that he would see him. So when Gudleik came to him the king told him he wished to be in fellowship with him, and prayed him to buy him dear havings hard to get in the land. Gudleik said it should be as the king would. Then let the king pay him such wealth as it seemed him good, and Gudleik went into the Eastways in the summer.

"They lay awhile off Gothland, and here it befell as oft, that they were not all of them too close of their words, and the islanders got wind of it that on board was a chaffering fellow of Olaf the Thick. Gudleik went into the Eastways in the summer all the way to Holmgarth (p. 227), and bought there the cloths full-choice which he was minded for the king for his robes of state, and therewith furs of great price and a glorious table-service."

Olaf himself on the way back from Russia to attempt to recover his kingdom, "hove with his

154 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

ships into Gothland where he learnt tidings both from Sweden and Denmark and all the way from Norway." A great centre of trade is ever a centre of news.

Upon the low limestone cliff that is partly enclosed within the walls of the city and is known as the Klint, there was of olden time a Vi, or place of sacrifice. Thus it seems was Visby (or Wisby) named ; " by " is a very common Scandinavian ending that forms a part of many an English name. Two tiny islets, very close to the shore, protected the ancient port ; most of it is dry land to-day and what remains wet, the inner harbour, is so small that an outer harbour has been formed by a long breakwater. Even this, however, will admit modern steamers only of the very smallest draught. From the cruising yachts landing is only possible in the smoothest weather, and cargo boats usually call at Slite, a better harboured place, connected by a narrow-gauged railway with the capital of the island.

To the person unacquainted with the story of the North, it will be no small surprise to land on this remote island and to see a mediæval city that is almost unrivalled for interest even in the South of Europe. Here was a chief cradle of the far-told Hansa League, whose name appears to be derived from an ancient Gothic word.¹ The confederation

¹ Helen Zimmern. *The Hansa Towns ; Story of the Nations.*

for long centuries controlled the shipping and the commerce of the North, from the Steelyard in London to Novgorod the Great on the Russian plains ; from Bergen of rockbound Norway to the remotest river-ports of vineyard-terraced Rhine.

The merchants needed to protect themselves whom no prince would shield. As with the East India Company in later years, an association of traffickers was driven into politics and compelled by circumstances to make war and peace, and to take up all the responsibility of a mighty sovereign state. Had London been further away and the English kings of feebler frame, the career of the Cinque Ports might have been very similar. But the sovereigns of England were deeply interested in all that concerned their Kent and Sussex harbours, and desired to utilise their ships. The Holy Roman Emperor at Aachen was not far off from the teeming Hansa towns ; but, German though he was, his eyes were fixed on the splendid cities of Italy and the glittering palaces by the Tiber rather than on the stalwart shipping of the cities of the North. Had the Emperor looked north and not south, had the Empire been German not Roman, the Hansa towns had not played a greater part in history than did the English Cinque Ports. Merchants would not have made treaties nor exercised the prerogatives of princes. But no German Empire was to arise during mediæval days ;

156 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

the towns went their own way and refused to do anything of mark for the Kaiser, who did almost nothing for them.

Rapidly waxed the fortunes of the old place of sacrifice, and during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the city had grown to be the Baltic's leading port. It had become a chief centre of the trade of Northern Europe and the remotest East, whose riches were such that an old ballad declares :

With twenty pound weights their gold they weigh,
With costliest jewels as toys they play ;
Their swine-troughs are silver, their distaffs are gold,
In Gothland luxurious in wealth untold.

Visby was declared a Free City by the Emperor Lothar, the Saxon (1125-37) ; in 1237, Henry III. granted its merchants free trade all over England. So important was British commerce with those parts that the Easterlings gave to English currency the name by which (slightly clipped as sterling) it is known to-day.

Fair churches still attest Visby's devotion, great walls its military strength. undefended towns, famed for their wealth, were almost as unsafe in the early middle ages as they would be to-day. Visby unwalled suffered much. In the *Saga of Olaf Tryggvison* we read how one of the Earls of Ladir (p. 69), driven forth by that king, " took such rede that he gat him a-shipboard and went a-warring to gather wealth for him and his men. First he made for Gothland,

and lay off there long in the summer season, waylaying ships of chapmen who sailed toward the land, or of the vikings else; and whiles he went aland and harried there wide about the borders of the sea." But at least our fathers had the advantage over us that in the intervals of all this fighting they did not need to be practising the oldest of the arts. They knew not our crushing burdens. The same hands held the account-book and the sword; the same ships plowed the sea for trading and for war.

Thus from the turbulence of neighbours the most peaceful of cities has left us some of the most impressive examples of military architecture that all Europe has to show. During the thirteenth century the burghers walled their town. The defences are of solid stone and make a bean-shaped circuit of two miles and a half. For 1,950 yards they run along the shore, where to-day is the Students' Walk between the lofty walls and a line of tall trees. The original height of the walls was fifteen to eighteen feet, according to the ground. Wide battlements, each second one pierced by a small embrasure, frowned along the top and just behind them was the customary parapet-path, sustained by a series of arches within—a very common way of economising materials from Roman to latest times. Much stronger were the walls from having two moats towards the land without, and on the north side there were three.



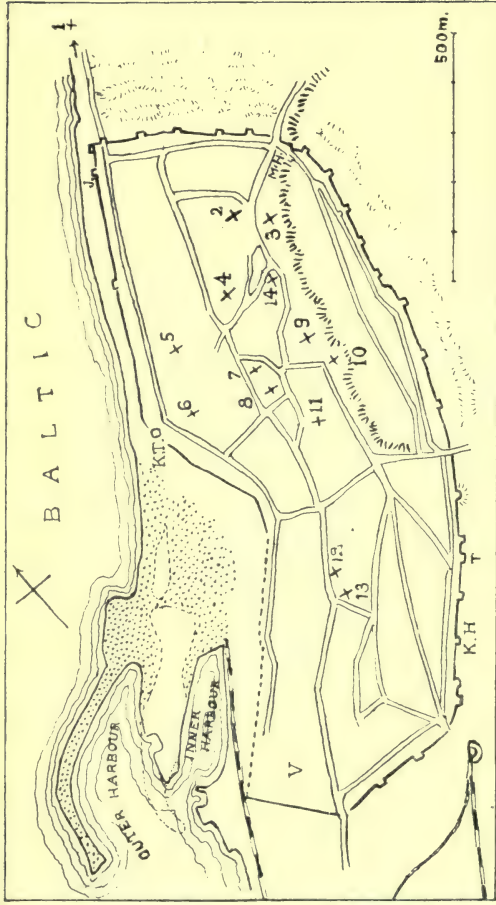
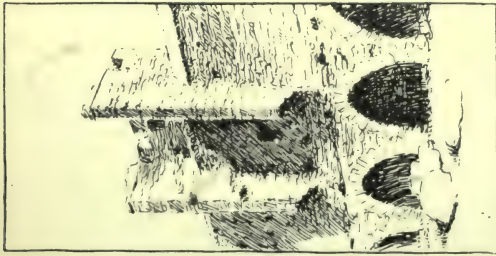
Three older structures—little towers—were built into the walls, and so remain to-day. The Krut Torn, or Powder Tower, clearly named in later days, looks over the sea ; the Tjärhof, or tar-house, and the Mynt Hus, look over the land. The tar-house is clearly known from a use to which it was degradingly put in latter days. There was a mint at Visby in the thirteenth century, and there seems to be no evidence whatever that it was not in this Mynt Hus. Six towers were also built to strengthen the wall, all toward the south ; one of them is round, established on a jutting rock. One is known as Kejsar Hus, or Cæsar's Tower, named evidently because connected in some way with the Holy Empire of Rome.¹ For Roman indeed was the Empire still when these proud walls rose. As we have already seen, the sovereign was for ever straining his eyes towards the ancient city of the Cæsars, there to receive the Imperial Crown, in Italy to exercise imperial sway.

A little later in the century, Horace Porter² thinks about the middle, more towers were added and, on the east, barbicans to enfilade the moats.

But all these excellent arrangements for the defence of the capital did not meet with the approval of the

¹ Only a few miles from Visby is the ruined monastery known as Roma Kloster.

² In a most interesting paper on the Walls of Visby read before the *Royal Institute of British Architects*, December 16, 1912, which I have found of much value.



ONE OF THE SADDLE TOWERS AND PLAN OF VISBY

- V. Site of Visborg Castle. Churches.—I. S. Göran. 6. (S. Jacob.) 11. S. Katarina.
 K.H. Kejsar Hus. 2. S. Nicolaus. 7. S. Lars. 12. (S. Per.)
 T. Tjårhof. 3. S. Gertrude. 8. S. Drotten. 13. S. Hans.
 M.H. Mynt Hus. 4. S. Clemens. 9. S. Maria. 14. Helgeands Kyr-
 J. Jungfrutornet. 5. S. Olof. 10. (Russian.) kan.
 K.T. Krut Torn.

Of the Churches whose names are in brackets there are now no remains. The spotted area represents made ground, the two long spaces whose outlines are dotted are the sites of the two islands by which the original harbour was protected. The railway appears in the lower left-hand corner.

dwellers in the country round. It would have been much more remarkable if they had. Those whom they do not protect can seldom see the point of fortifications. There is still extant a strong protest which the villagers of Norfolk made against the circumvallation of Norwich, England, in 1253. In 1288 the Gothland farmers formed a posse to lay low the walls of which they disapproved. This attack was unsuccessful, the peasants were beaten off, and an appeal was made to the king.

The island had long been Swedish, or rather for a regular payment it was protected by the Swedish King. Long, long before, in the ninth century it seems, the burghers had sent one Avajr Strabajn, or Longshanks, on a mission to Upsala to make a treaty with the king. But it is related that the monarch was sitting at meat in the lofty halls when the Gothic messenger arrived and, not being in the least pleased to see him, he kept Longshanks waiting on the threshold. At length the king unbent so far as to ask for news of the island, and was told that a mare had just had three foals. "And what," inquired the sovereign, "does the third one while the other two are sucking?" "Just as I am doing," the ambassador replied, "he stands by and looks on."

Tickled by this neat rebuke to his own execrable manners, the king invited Longshanks to sit with him at table, and eventually a treaty was agreed to.

160 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

The wealthy islanders supplied money and ships to the king, and the well-armed monarch promised to hold out a sword in protection of the commerce of Gothland.

On this occasion the King of Sweden was entirely of the same opinion as the peasants about the walls, but (looking at the matter rather from his own point of view than from theirs), he decided that the offence would best be expiated, not by their destruction, but by a doubled yearly subsidy, with a slight fine in addition for the presumption of building walls without the permission of the sovereign lord.

It was very probably during the actual fighting that those further additions were being made to the ramparts that cause them to look so impressive to-day. The walls were heightened and made thicker by building on the arch-supported walks, or even enclosing them in new masonry. About forty fresh towers were added, projecting toward the open country; some reach the height of seventy feet. Towers were likewise raised above the gates that were not so protected before.

Between the great bastions, upon the walls were perched in many cases bartizans or saddle towers, projecting on either side, resting on large corbels built in between the huge battlements of older date; their outer walls rest upon arches that spring from corbel to corbel. Within they are open to the city

like the great towers themselves. This is a curious feature of the work ; the floors were all of timber and to make up for the lost stone walks double timber galleries ran along the walls within, one above and one below. The holes for their joists may still be seen, and ledges in the towers for the floors. All this open woodwork created a huge danger of fire, especially in the great towers, and, compared with other mediæval defences, particularly in France, the ramparts of Visby give the impression of being the work of amateurs. Nevertheless, from some points of view, the combination of low hills and sparkling sea and lofty towers recalls the mighty walls of the City of Constantine, whose capture by the Turks in 1453 was the beginning of the last act in the long mediæval drama.

Little, however, did these brave defences effect against the forces of the Danes when in 1361 Visby was attacked and sacked by Waldemar IV., surnamed Atterdag, because, if once foiled, he was sure that his day of success would arrive. Close to the sea one of the city bastions is known as the Maiden Tower (Jungfrutornet).¹ There dwelt Nils the goldsmith, the liar, the loathsome traitor, the hideous thief. Such language his fellow-townsmen did well to use if in very truth on account of a petty slight

¹ Another sea-tower is known as *Silfverhättan* from the material with which it was roofed in the very wealthy days of old.

162 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

he suggested the sack of Visby to the robber Danish king. A young girl, it was fabled, gave Waldemar information which enabled him to capture the fair town, and not unfitly she was walled alive into this very tower, from which circumstance it has its name.

There can be little doubt that the only real foundation for these foolish tales was the fact that the merchants were somewhat ashamed of the very poor defence they made. Instead of defying the robber behind their strengthened walls, they abjectly permitted a breach to be torn when he refused to enter by a gate.

He had led his army to Gothland and made knights in that land and struck down many men, for the peasants were unarmed and unused to war. And he set his face toward Visby and the citizens came out and surrendered, for they saw that resistance was impossible. This we learn from a Franciscan chronicler of Lübeck, the chief headquarters of the Hanseatic League.

In the market-place of captured Visby were placed the three largest vats that in the city could be found, and these the Danish king insisted should be filled with glittering gold. The ransom received, the town was treacherously and pitilessly sacked and the Danish ships at length sailed off as encumbered with loot as no doubt the *Mayflower* was with furniture. But by far the greater portion—almost the whole—it

was fated should merely sparkle in the depths of the tossing sea, for the vessels were wrecked in a fearful storm and the king came very near being drowned. Fittingly his body might have lain amidst those ill-gotten spoils till the day of Holy Doom, but he was rescued by his men and continued to rule the Danes.

Not wholly a bad King of Denmark, for he governed with might and power and in some ways really sought to enlarge his country's weal. His insult to the Hansa League was too great even for merchants to endure, and in striking contrast with the unchivalrous action of the king, who smote a peaceful city without excuse, without declaring war, a herald bore to Waldemar a formal notice that the towns would fight. Copenhagen was captured and plundered in the May of 1362, but then the Danes gained a considerable victory and the beaten burgomaster of proud Lübeck paid for failure with life.

In 1367 the deputies of seventy-seven towns met at Köln, and in formal manner confirmed the League which even then was centuries old. Waldemar contemptuously likened the citizens to cackling geese, but ill-founded was his foolish mirth. After a few years of war, disastrous to the Danes and very profitable indeed to the traders, he was compelled to sign the humiliating Treaty of Stralsund, by which he virtually ceased to be an independent king. The

164 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

League took its place as a first-rate power and for generations dominated the North.

Visby was very fully avenged, but could never really recover from the staggering blow. The ancient port now fell on evil days. The city whose maritime code of laws was to Northern Europe very much what that of Rhodes was to the Mediterranean, slipped so low as to be made, helplessly, the headquarters of Baltic pirates and a pest to the shipping of that sea. The great Margaret (p. 120) cleared them out and annexed the island to Denmark,¹ but her worthless successor, Eric of Pomerania, erected at the southern end of the walls the Castle of Visborg,² to be a stronghold for himself. The city suffered further from his blighting presence and piracy sprang up again (p. 132). The saddest blow fell in the seventeenth century when the burghers of Lübeck, former sister city and close ally, plundered and sacked the sinning port and almost ended its being.

Gradually it shrank to the quiet little market town that it remains to-day, nestling amid gardens and

¹ It finally became Swedish again in 1645.

² There are still some slight remains, but the greater part was carried away by Charles XI. for the building of Karlskrona in the seventeenth century.

In the grounds of the Burgomaster's House are some remains of the Kalfskinshuset, which seems to have been built originally in the early fourteenth century, the land being secured by making a calf's skin cover a fair area by cutting it into strings, much as was done with an ox-skin at Carthage. The owner of the ground when making the arrangement imagined he was only parting with about one square yard.

roses and the lofty ruins of its past. But even yet there is not the sleep of some little English cathedral towns. The railway runs along the quays by the harbour, where is sometimes a busy scene. Southward the chimneys of a factory pour their smoke into the clear air. The vigorous life of an older day still stirs in the picturesque market-place by the ruined Friars' Church. From it wind about to every part of the city narrow streets between garden walls that tunnel here and there under the whitewashed houses.

Samuel Laing¹ became quite enthusiastic over the Visby churches. "These are the most interesting Gothic edifices in Europe. Wisby is the Rome of the modern architects who will deal in the Gothic." Possibly this is exaggerated (Laing's knowledge of architecture was small), but there is in it an element of truth. The way in which the church-builders of Gothland departed from stereotyped principles and planned as they were moved is refreshingly original. No series of churches in the world is more deserving of the closest study. This tendency to unusual ground plans and the Norwegian stavekirkes are the chief contributions to Gothic architecture that the northern lands made as the middle ages wore. It gives a most vivid idea of the unity of mediæval Christendom and of the frequency of communication that existed to realise the way in which architecture went through

¹ *Tour in Sweden*, 1838.

166 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

the same general course of evolution in all the lands from Portugal to Norway from the coronation of Charles the Great to the abdication of Charles V.

The oldest and most massive of the Visby churches is dedicated to St. Lars, or Lawrence ; it was evidently raised in the early years of the twelfth century, nine hundred years after its patron had suffered on the grid. Though with windows unglazed and bare of any fittings the structure is very tolerably perfect and, as one first enters, the effect is exceedingly impressive and also extremely oriental. Greek merchants raised it ; they had seen Byzantine churches in the East and desired in the cold North to reproduce their effect.¹

Only a narrow court separates this church from another, which a generation later men raised to the honour of St. Drotten or the Triune God. Some idle person once invented an absurd tale (reminding one of that concerning the twin steeples at Ormskirk)

¹ The main part is square, and the roughly vaulted roof is supported on four round arches that rest on square columns, placed close to the four corners. To the north and south and also to the west there project very shallow arms the same height as the rest. Over the western one and resting its corners on two of the large columns, rises a great square tower, three two-light windows aside in its upper stage. In the thickness of the walls there are stairs and galleries on three levels, whence varying views of the interior are gained. A comparatively low arch in the eastern wall opens to a small chancel, rib-vaulted and extended by a horseshoe apse. The details throughout are Romanesque of the plainest and the best, but the inspiration is clearly Byzantine. On a small scale the same sort of combination is attempted that La Farge has essayed in the great Cathedral of St. John at New York.



S. LARS

[Face page 166

that these sister churches were raised by two rich sisters who were such bad friends that they would not even kneel under the same roof to receive the Body and Blood of Christ. The actual plan is very similar to that of St. Lars, but it does not seem to have been so successful.¹

The Church of St. Olaf (Swedish Olof) appears to have been of very similar character ; there the Norway merchants used to pray.² The scantiest ruins survive in the Botanical Gardens. Thither the citizens resort in summer to eat their meals and listen to a band.

The same plan is reproduced in St. Clemens,³ whose

¹ The square nave and four pillars were preserved, but instead of being close to the corners the columns were so spaced that the nine compartments of the vaulting should be practically equal squares. The vaulting ribs or arches, three against each wall, now look into the roofless nave. Not quite in the centre of the middle one on the east a round arch opens into the roofless chancel with horseshoe apse. A two-bay chapel projects on the south, and westward is a huge oblong tower with stairways in the thickness of its north and southern walls.

² There is the same kind of oblong tower and the vaulting of the square nave rested on four octagonal pillars, which were placed near the corners of the walls. From a clustered respond in the chancel it is evident that there was a north chapel.

³ This is a late Romanesque building whose nave vault rested on four fairly equally spaced pillars, and the strong wide tower opened by arches both to nave floor and to the space above the vault. An arch just pointed, resting on clustered responds, opens to the roofless chancel which has a square east end ; buildings joined it north and south ; that on the latter side was evidently a transeptal chapel.

Another square four-pillared late Romanesque nave was apparently that of St. Hans (Johans = John), but hardly a thing remains except a large and lofty chapel of later date with beautifully moulded corbels, in the north-east corner.

These square churches are extraordinarily interesting to the

patron saint has an anchor for his badge and likes his churches to stand by the sea. The south porch evidently formed a *vapenhus*, or house in which weapons might be left: this was a common feature of the churches of the North, for thus it is written in the ancient Icelandic Law Ecclesiastic. "Men shall not bear weapons in church or oratory that is licensed for service to be held in, and they shall not set them against the church gable or the church walls. And these are reckoned weapons under this head—axe and sword and spear and cutlass and halberd."

Excavations within the walls of this now unroofed shrine, carried on by the learned Dr. Ekhoﬀ, have exposed foundations of three more ancient churches. The earliest of them dates back perhaps to about the year 900 or within a century of the traditional era of the foundation of the town. A story had grown up that to St. Olaf was due the first preaching of Christianity among the merchants of Gothland, but this is evidently a libel on the progressive thought of the ancient fathers of the town. The *Saga of Olaf* has several visits to Gothland to record, but it says nothing of his preaching the faith there, and has little of him to record that would be likely to make the Gothlanders student of architecture from the fact that they display Byzantine forms exercising an influence on the development of Gothic in the far north of Europe. Unfortunately the new idea does not seem to have spread beyond the island, but it is full of suggestion for small town churches at the present day, especially where the site is awkward and cramped.

trow in the same God as he. After the adventure of Stocksound (p. 211) we learn that "King Olaf sailed in autumn for Gothland, and arrayed him for harrying there. But there the Gothlanders had a gathering, and sent men to the king, and bade him tribute for the land. To this the king agreed, and took tribute of the land, and sat there the winter through." It was in reference to this event that the verse at the head of the chapter was composed. It was in Gothland too that Olaf let hew one Jokul, son of Bard, who had fought against him and was allotted to the steering of the *Bison*, which King Olaf himself had owned.

An old story, whether true or not God knows, tells how in the sixteenth century one digged in this spot for a more evidently tangible reward. A German cobbler, Salts Vedel, heard friars or monks in Italy gossip about the lands from which by the Reformation they were expelled. "There is buried," said one, "behind the altar of St. Clemens' Church in Visby a goose and twenty-four little goslings, and they are all of solid gold." The cobbler was interested, as well he might be, and he hastened to the spot. He found the treasure and it brought no curse. On the contrary he became powerful and rich, and as Burgomaster of Visby he died.

The local peculiarity of sustaining the nave vault on four pillars gained so much favour that it was used both in the upper and lower stage of the very remark-

170 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

able Hospital Church of the Holy Ghost (Helgeands Kyrkan). Though parts of the quire walling are evidently earlier, this most striking little sanctuary seems to date from the early part of the thirteenth century; the general character is Romanesque, but early pointed arches and mouldings are employed. The nave forms an octagonal tower, which formerly had a gable every side and a low spire rose above. A particularly pleasing double stair, open by shafted arcading in the thickness of the western wall, leads up from the lower to the higher level. The four pillars below are round, the four pillars above are octagonal, and in the space between an octagonal opening pierces through the vault. By two great arches¹ each opens to the common quire and perhaps women sang above and men below, so that the opening in the floor facilitated the blending of voices in the Christian hymn of praise. The quire itself has the peculiarity of being apsidal within and square without, and in the corners of the walls is squeezed a nest of tiny chambers, miniature stairs connecting those above and those below.

Apsidal within and square-ended without was likewise the little church of St. Gertrude the Abbess. There her countrymen, the merchants from the Lowlands of Europe, used to make their vows.²

¹ The lower one just pointed, the upper round.

² There are a few British instances of Romanesque churches,

Very shallow apses which do not appear without are to be seen at the ends of the aisles of the great church of St. Mary, formerly the seat of the Lübeck merchants and now the cathedral. There was no such church of old. Though devout men and great builders of churches, mediæval merchants were not admirers of bishops, or for that matter of any other kind of lords. In the Low Countries they contrived to have only four prelates, in the German commercial cities extremely few and in Gothland none. Only as the result of considerable pressure would the islanders recognise the oversight of the Bishop of Linköping (Sweden), and he must come with not more than ten attendants, nor must even so restricted a train expect to be entertained for more than three meals.

During the ages of faith there were preserved in this church, sometimes known as Sancta Maria Teutonicorum,¹ the relics of a hero giantess of earliest days.

square without and apsidal within. Such are the Oratory of St. Margaret in the Castle at Edinburgh, two chapels in Romsey Abbey, and one in the ruined Abbey at Shaftesbury. A Renaissance instance of the same thing exists in the Chapel of Clare College, Cambridge.

¹ It is a fine late Romanesque building, quite moderate in scale. For five bays extend nave and aisles, and the square chancel is flanked by small towers which become octagonal above the roof. (These are a characteristic German feature, and recall Trier or Mainz, but this Visby church has no resemblance to any existing building in Lübeck.) Pillars of some variety with figure- and leaf-carved caps sustain the triple vault, nor is the centre carried higher than the aisles. The great south door, six times recessed with shafts both round and square, is a magnificent example of what in England

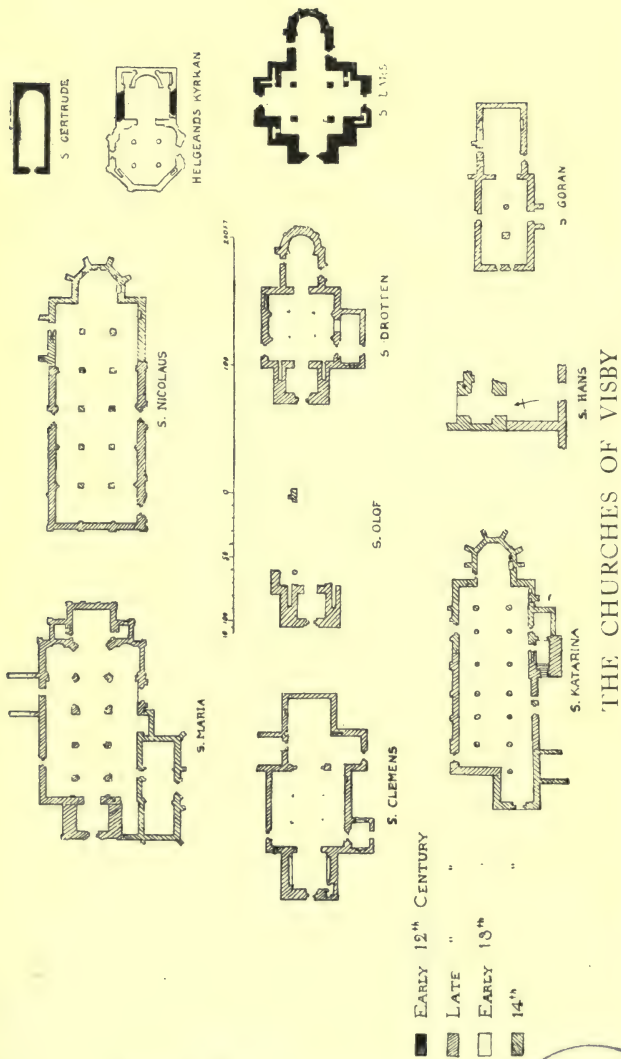
172 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

They were removed soon after 1741, when the great Linnæus unfeelingly records in his diary : " The Jatta bones preserved in the church I find, on inspection, to be those of a whale."

The two largest of the Visby churches belonged to Friars, and they alone are normal in ground plan. Both consist of nave and aisles all of the same height, with a short quire ending in a buttressed triple apse projecting from the east ; both were Romanesque altered to the so-called Decorated style.

is called Norman work. There are many such fine doorways in the town, but no other is as good as this. Rather later than the rest a great west tower was built, and on the northern side it has a gallery open by a rich arcade.

Extensive alterations and additions to the church were undertaken when men first began to build large traceried windows ; they probably went on for long, but it may safely be assumed they were in progress about the year 1300. Most beautiful windows with foliated circles in their heads, not all alike, were pierced through the elder walls. A fair chapel was added west of south, adorned with pinnacles and gargoyles and statues and recessed carved door ; clustered shafts hold up its vault. The climate doubtless caused it to open by a doorway, not arches, to the church. A tall addition was raised over the church with blindstorey arches and trefoil lancets in the clearstorey walls. It is a tempting hypothesis that it was intended to break through the central vault and to double the height of the nave, but C. Enlart is almost certainly right in saying : " These lofty halls above Scandinavian churches are sometimes habitable. The one which still rises over the nave of the church of St. Mary, now the cathedral, at Visby, had a chimney. It was the seat of the consulate of the Lübeck merchants, to whom the church belonged " (*Revue de l'Art Chretien*, Sept.-Oct., 1910). In the middle ages churches served for the most miscellaneous purposes, and meetings of all kinds were held in them. In much the same style two stages were added to each of the eastern towers. In later days Renaissance spires were added to all the three towers, the largest having a balcony all round. A canopied pulpit was set up in the church, which is dated 1684.



THE CHURCHES OF VISBY

These plans, made by Sir H. Dryden, Bart., are reproduced by kind permission of the Royal Institute of British Architects, in whose *Transactions* they appeared during 1886. It will be noticed that all except S. Nicolaus are eccentric in plan.



St. Katarina (Franciscan) stands a roofless ruin beside the busy market-place; tall octagonal pillars with moulded caps and bases still sustain arches running east and west and north and south across the nave and aisles, dividing the space into rectangles from which the vaulting has fallen, and wild roses, growing on the tops of the arches, shower their petals over the grass-grown floor.¹

The Dominican church of St. Nicolaus still retains its massive Romanesque walls in the four west bays, later openings here and there pierced through. The rest is of Decorated character, strikingly beautiful.² The great glory of this church was that in days gone by twin carbuncles glittered in the centres of the brick rose windows in the western wall. As was fitting in a church dedicated to the mariners' patron saint, far out at sea the sailors saw them even when there were no stars; they lit the night as the sun lights

¹ At first sight the remains of Romanesque work are by no means clear, but the spacing of the pillars through the seven bays is exceedingly irregular, and on the south by the ruined cloister is an older chapel, the vault below quadripartite, above a tunnel. This church was finally consecrated, it seems, only in 1412, and it is apparently the only important mediæval building which is subsequent in date to the raid of 1361. The tower stood at the west end till 1885, and then it had to be removed or it would have tumbled down.

² Square pillars, thirty feet in height, sustain the vaulting arches and fragments of the rough rubble vault. One of them has a shield inscribed "IACOB CHABBA A." At the east end two pillars are octagonal for a change; at the west old Romanesque responds are used. On the north remains a newel stair that led, it seems, to pulpit, rood and roof. Along the same side are still the remains of the vaulted cloister of the friars.

174 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

up the day, nor were their equals to be found in all the surface of the world. They were not seen within the church, for the roses do not pierce the wall. These jewels formed part of the booty of the robber king.

Without the walls a short distance to the north stands the roofless church of St. George. This was not the English chapel, but belonged to an institution for lepers.¹ Still further toward the pole the Klint is washed into steep cliffs by the eternal sea. On this elevated calvary three stone pillars stand, having formed the gallows of old. It was a very public place, commanding wide views over sea and land, too fair a spot for such a gruesome use.

Not every building of interest in Visby dates from the time of the city's power, nor even from mediæval days. The Burmeister House, erected as late as 1662, displays in its interior paintings covering walls and ceiling, illustrating Bible stories and depicting other scenes. It was a rich merchant's house, and the counter where his customers were served can still be seen. An interesting witness to the prosperity the town enjoyed in commerce even at so late a date; while the present mildness of the climate is made

¹ St. Göran is of late twelfth century date, and the low chancel still retains its vault, rising from corbels to a sort of dome at the top. From the keystone of the chancel arch started the vault-supporting arches that ran down the centre of the nave and rested on two pillars, round and square. Tall round-arched windows pierce the walls; there are twin west doors and three high gables mark the sky.

clear by the great luxuriance of the creepers that swaddle the whole of the southern end. In no English cathedral city is any ancient dwelling more completely buried by vegetation ; the windows look out through fully two feet of insect-sheltering leaves.

Superlatives are always dangerous. There are much finer buildings and there is far finer scenery in Europe than anything that Visby has to show. But the real feature of the place is very much its own. One meets the influences of many lands. One beholds an epitome of half the history of the North. One gets a hint of the architectural features of remote places of Christendom. Of no town of equal importance perhaps may the ruins be so pleasantly surveyed. Midst all the charms of low limestone hills and peaceful fields by the sea, midst all the delights of wide gardens fragrant with the scent of roses, midst all the picturesqueness of a delightful little country town, may be studied in crumbling ruin, yet lovingly preserved, the uniquely interesting churches and stoutly buttressed walls of a city that once dominated the Mediterranean of the North.



CHAPTER VIII

UPSALA

In Upsal's stately minster, before the altar, stands
The Swedish King, brave Eric, with high uplifted hands ;
His royal robes are round him, the crown upon his head,
And thus, before his people, right sovranly he said—

“ God ! whoso trusteth in Thee will never rue his trust :
If God the Lord be with us, our foes shall flee like dust.”
He spake : from priest and people rose up the answering cry—
“ If God the Lord be with us, all danger we defy ! ”

Scarce through the aisles is dying their mingled voices' din,
A pallid slave, disordered, comes rushing wildy in.
“ Now God us aid !—Skalater, the Dane, has come again,
Fast pouring down the mountains with seven hundred men ! ”

* * * * *

King Eric's glance grew prouder ; he grasped the golden Rood—
He held it high to heaven, as on Skalater strode :
Lo ! from each wound, the seven, pour forth a thousand rays,
And down to earth Skalater sinks, dazzled by the blaze.

They're prostrate on their foreheads, the seven hundred Danes,
Praying to God to spare them Who guards the Christian fanes ;
But Eric and his people lift up the joyful cry—
“ Our God, the Lord, has conquered ; all praise to Him on high ! ”

Swedish Ballad, translated by LADY WILDE.

OF all the relics of primitive man none are so permanent, few so impressive, as large earthworks. Such

to most of us at least convey no small part of the pleasure that we derive from the South Downs or so-called Salisbury Plain.

Where the delights of Nature are comparatively few, on a wide, flat plain, distantly walled by low-looking hills, there has stood since the very twilight of Swedish history the town of Upsala—Lofty Halls. Of its early days we learn from Snorri Sturluson in the opening chapters of his great history, called from its first word, the *Heimskringla*, “That is the Round World, whereas manfolk dwell, much sheared apart by bights so that great seas go from ocean’s river far into the land.”

Odin, or Woden, he to whom the fourth day of the week is hallowed, had led his people from Asgarth in Asia, and he settled in Sigtown or Sigtuna, on the lake between Upsala and Stockholm. Only a village holds the spot to-day with ruined mediæval towers. “Odin was a great warrior, and exceeding far-travelled, and had made many realms his own, and so victorious was he that in every battle he gained the day; whence it befell, that his men trowed of him that he should of his own nature ever have the victory in every battle. His wont it was, if he sent his men to the wars or on other journeys, before they went to lay his hands on the heads of them, and to give them blessing, and they trowed that they would fare well thereby.”¹

¹ *Heimskringla*; *Story of the Ynglings*, Ch. II.

178 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

“Odin died in his bed in Sweden ; but when he was come nigh to his death, he let mark him with a spear-point, and claimed as his own all men dead by weapon ; and he said that he would go his ways to Godhome and welcome his friends there. Now were the Swedes minded that he would be come to that Asgarth of old days, there to live his life for ever ; and then began anew the worship of Odin and the vowing of vows to him. Oft thought the Swedes that he showed himself to them in dreams before great battles should be ; and to some he gave victory there and then, and to others bidding to come to him ; and either lot they deemed good enow.” “Now this Sweden they called Manhome, but Sweden the Great called they Godhome ; and of Godhome are told many tales and many marvels.”¹

The founder of Upsala was Frey, one of Odin’s *Diar* or temple-priests, and his successor, next but one, as king. He “raised a great temple at Upsala, and there he had his chief abode, and endowed it with all his wealth, both land and chattels. Then began the weal of Upsala, which has endured ever since. . . . Now Frey fell sick, but when his sickness waxed on him men took counsel and let few folk come in to him ; and they built a great howe (or barrow) and made a door therein, and three windows ; and so when Frey was dead they bore him privily into the howe, and

¹ *Story of the Ynglings*, Chs. X. & IX.

told the Swedes that he was still alive, and there they guarded him for three winters, and poured all the scat (p. 19) into the mound: gold through the one window, silver through the second, and copper pennies through the third. And this while endured plenteous years and peace. . . . But when all the Swedes wotted that Frey was dead, and the plenteous years and good peace still endured, then they trowed that so it would be while he still abode in Sweden; neither would they burn him, but called him the God of the World, and sacrificed to him ever after, most of all for plenteous years and peace.”¹

In later chapters we learn that at Upsala was holden the Thing of all the Swedes. The earth platform on which they met may still be seen. The place was the chief town of all the Swede-realm and one of its monarchs built there a great Hall of the Seven Kings. “The Upsala kings were the master kings in Sweden, whereas there were many county-kings therein, from the time that Odin was lord in Sweden.”²

Again in the *Saga of Olaf the Holy* we read: “Tenthland (p. 185) is the best and most nobly peopled of Sweden. Thither louteth all the realm. Upsala is there, with the king’s-seat, and there is an archbishop’s chair, and thereby is named the wealth of Upsala. So call the Swedes the King’s-wealth, they call it Upsala-wealth. In each shire is its own Law-Thing, and

¹ *Story of the Ynglings*, Chs. XII. & XIII.

² *ib.*, Ch. XL.

180 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

its own laws in many matters. . . . But in all matters where the laws sunder, they must all yield to the Upsala-law, and all other lawmen shall be under-men of the lawman who is of Tenthland.”¹

Three great howes, each rising some fifty-eight feet above the earthen floor and spreading more than two hundred feet upon it, are seen from far across the well-tilled fenceless flats, over which the wind blows clouds of dust. Many smaller mounds form a rude crescent stretching across the open plain with the great hills in the centre. They are doubtless the last resting-places of many kings about whose “howing” we read in the sagas. Though of old the capital of all the land, Upsala is but a tiny village now, so unimportant that it is known as Gamla (old) Upsala, for the neighbouring city of Östra-aros (East mouth), whose cathedral spires are the most prominent features of the landscape, has usurped the proper name.

The Kungshögar or Hills of Kings, as the three great tumuli have immemorially been called, are distinguished as those of Odin, Thor and Frey, but these detail names date from much more recent years. They were opened, Odin’s in 1846, and Thor’s in 1874. They proved to be of the first part of the Later Iron Age, that is the period just before Viking days. Each appears to have been piled up over a cairn of

¹ *Story of the Ynglings*, Ch. LXXVI.



GAMLA UPSALA

stones covering the ashes of a funeral pyre—which is curious in the light of Snorri Sturluson's express statement :¹ “The first age is called the age of Burning, whereas the wont was to burn all dead men, and raise up standing stones to them ; but after that Frey was laid in barrow at Upsala, many great men fell to raising barrows to the memory of their kin, no less often than standing stones.”

Besides the charred bones of man and horse and dog, there were many objects for ornament or use, made of iron and bronze and glass and gold.² There was a small cameo of Roman work, carried to these northern wilds, far beyond the widest limit of imperial power, not in the wake of all-conquering troops, but by gainful commerce with barbarian hordes. Or possibly it was a part of the shameful tribute that the tottering masters of the world had to offer to triumphant Goths.

As to the point of burying so much treasure with the dead we get a useful hint in the *Vatzdaela Saga* ; a father is expostulating with his son about his lack of taste for war. “It was the way of mighty kings or jarls, our peers, that they used to lie out awarring, winning themselves riches and glory, and the riches they won thus were not reckoned in the inheritance

¹ *Preface to the Heimskringla*. Presumably there was a transition period.

² *The Civilisation of Sweden in Heathen Times*, by Oscar Montelius. Englished by Rev. F. H. Woods, 1888.

182 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

they left, nor could son take it after father, but it was laid in howe with themselves. So though their sons got their lands they could not keep up their estate, though they inherited the honour, unless they threw themselves and their men into jeopardy and warfare ; and by this means it was they won riches and renown one after another, each stepping in the footprints of his forefathers.”¹

No spot of earth *seems* to carry one’s mind back so far into the immemorial past as this. From the top of one of the great howes we may peer beyond the history of unnumbered years to the days when history was not. About the early dawn of man’s activity on earth we may read in any part of the world, but not in many places may we feel its spell as here. Close by was the most famous temple in all the North ; and not far off was Odin’s grove, whose trees were the sacredest on earth. And near the temple grew one tree whose sort might no man know whose branches were for ever green. The roadway from the south still approaches the ancient village through an avenue of rowan or mountain ash. These were planted recently indeed, but there is the right atmosphere about the mystic tree whence pagan priests cut sacred wands ; whose wood is still a potent charm

¹ There is a ghost story about the dead men in an Icelandic howe in the *Tale of Thorstan Oxfoot*. Printed in *Origines Islandicæ*. Vol. II., p. 585.

and a powerful protection against witchcraft. Just east of the three great howes we may stand on the flat-topped Tings-hög, where the ancient assemblies of Sweden were held and picture the weaponed warriors not always saying yea to their king. On this spot, too, we may well wonder why *we* have abandoned our excellent northern words, Scandinavian Thing and Saxon Moot, in favour of a French expression that only means place where men talk, or a Latin one that refers to no more than their coming together. Honey-tasting sparkling mead has here been brewed through the unnumbered centuries, and we may still drink from ancient horns what our fathers enjoyed when the North was first peopled by Aryan man.

Mead is still brewed indeed, but (happily) not in such noble quantity as was the case of old. "There was a great homestead," we read in the sagas, "and therein was there wrought a mighty vat many ells high, which stood on mighty big beams; now this stood down in a certain undercroft, and there was a loft above it, the floor whereof was open, that the liquor might be poured down thereby; but the vat was full of mingled mead, and the drink was wondrous strong." Unfortunately the king, a mighty man whose years were full of plenty and peace, was staying with the owner and went out amidst the night, when, being bewildered with sleep and dead-

184 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

drunk, he missed his footing, fell into the mead-vat and was lost there.¹

In the temple festivals were held at Yule and twice besides in every year. One was the thanksgiving for good crops that the New England Puritans unconsciously revived. And greater feasts took place as often as the ninth year came. Mighty sacrifices were offered to the Gods and the victims were human at times. As in Mexico and elsewhere, highest reverence was paid to these unhappy men between dedication and death. The worship on the whole was of the beastliest; the temple and the grove must frequently have resembled blood-reeking sham-bles and there was nothing to regret when the people began to trow in the faith of the White Christ. The beauty of building and stateliness of ritual that characterised the shrines of Buddhist India or of Egypt or of Greece were but faintly reflected in the rude and untaught North.

In the days of King Domald there fell on the Swedes great hunger and famine. So they offered oxen with no result; next year "they offered men, and the increase of the year was the same, or worse it might be, but the third autumn came the Swedes flockmeal to Upsala whenas the sacrifices should be. Then held the great men counsel together, and were of one accord that this scarcity was because of Domald

¹ *Story of the Ynglings*, Ch. XIV.

their king, and withal that they should sacrifice him for the plenty of the year ; yea, that they should set on him and slay him, and redden the seats of the Gods with the blood of him ; and even so they did.”¹ So successful was this service that there was good plenty and peace throughout the days of his son’s long reign, “ of him is nought more told save that he died in his bed at Upsala.”

A later king named Aun gained length of days by offering up his sons, for Odin had made him the promise that he should live on for ever, even so long as he gave Odin one of his sons every tenth year. “ So when he had offered up seven sons, then he lived ten winters yet in such case that he might not go afoot, but was borne about on a chair. Then he offered up yet again the eighth son of his, and lived ten winters yet, and then lay bedridden. Then he offered up his ninth son, and lived ten winters yet, and then must needs drink from a horn, even as a swaddling babe. Now had he one son yet left, and him also would he offer up, and give to Odin Upsala withal and the countryside thereabout, and let call it Tenthland (p. 179)² ; but the Swedes forbade it him, and there was no sacrifice.

¹ *Story of the Ynglings*, Ch. XVIII.

² This is certainly not the real derivation of the term. Morris and Magnússon suggest that it may be “ land of ten hundreds.” Snorri was wrong in his belief that it meant “ Tithe-land.”

186 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

So King Aun died, and was laid in howe at Upsala.”¹

The zeal of Iceland has indeed clothed these earthen mounds with vigorous life, this spot with vivid story. So much so that they are hardly to be called pre-historic, however the word may spring to our lips from the study of such earth monuments in other lands.

It is tradition—but probably untrue—that there still stand parts of the ancient temple which glittered with gold in every corner, where were figures of Thor, of Odin and of Frey, the God of Thunder, most honoured, in the midst; so Adam of Bremen says. Chains of gold clinked on the temple roof, as chains of baser metal hang on many a Russian church to-day. A square, stone pile, of massive work but rude, stands high above the plain: two gateways toward the north, two toward the south, and two toward the west, only toward the east but one. It seems more likely, notwithstanding, that this gable-roofed structure was always what it is to-day, the central tower of a cruciform church, round-arched in style, opening to transepts and nave by two arches, but to the quire by only one.²

¹ *Story of the Ynglings*, Ch. XXIX.

² However, Horace Marryat, *One Year in Sweden*, 1862, tells us that when in 1803 Hultersta Church was destroyed there were discovered “two pagan altars of sacrifice, fitted with chimney-pipes, still containing ashes and bones of animals, bricked up when the building was adapted to Christian worship.”

That the church which was built by King Sverker I. in 1138¹ has annexed both the site and the materials of the temple of the Three Gods we need not doubt, but the structure is a fairly ordinary Romanesque building exactly suiting the architecture of the age. The small chancel of three bays has a round apse and round-headed windows, and if the plan preserved in the vestry—here reproduced—be founded on fact, there were once apsidal transepts, and an aisled nave that was not in line, but swerved away to the north. Built into the south wall of the apse is a Runic stone—here sketched—put up to the memory of his father by Sigvid, who had fared to England and come safely back.² (See page 108.)

Eric IX. (p. 192) is traditionally connected with the building of the church. Perhaps to him are owed the plain ribbed vaults, indicated on the plan by dotted lines. In life he was known as Log-gifware, or Giver of Laws, and every one of his statutes were good; after death he was known as saint. With the first primate of Upsala, St. Henry, a man of English birth, Eric conquered the Finns, and, as this was an attack on one of the last centres of heathenism in Europe, it ranked as a crusade. The Swedish saint mourned to see so

¹ *Monumenta Hist. Vet. Upsaliæ*, 1709, by E. Benzelius.

² Within there are interesting fittings both of mediæval and Renaissance date; including a carved reredos of the thirteenth century. There are the graves of Fornelius, chaplain to Gustavus Adolphus and of another pastor, named Celsius, who died in 1679. His grandson, of thermometer fame, is commemorated by a tablet.

many pagans slain without a chance of Heaven, but the English saint was made of sterner stuff and he refused to weep. All heathen were vermin to him.

He met his end in a most un-English way. The mistress of a house had expressly refused to invite him to her board, but all the same he went. In that rude age the conventions of society had not yet been elaborated, and so, instead of welcoming him with their lips and fuming in their hearts, the owners of the house sent the unbidden guest into another world (see p. 213). Nevertheless in Finland he was highly honoured by the sword-established Church; the cathedral at the old capital of Abo bears his name and once enshrined his remains. But in later days (by Count Douglas, p. 238) they were carried in triumph to St. Petersburg.

Three miles of level plain, still fertile, for the soil is unexhausted by the tillage of two thousand years, separates Old Upsala from the town of Östra-aros, which usurped both the name and the archbishopric in 1276. From a distance its buildings seem to rise from the very forests in true Swedish style, but when the streets are gained one is somewhat reminded of Holland. For long rows of trees, largely lime and horse-chestnut, border the little (river) Fyrisa, which flows unhesitating to the northern end of Mälär, and on the banks are a few picturesque gabled houses with seventeenth century dates. Trees line many of the wide streets and partly hide the trolley trams. The

great brick cathedral in the distance too has a certain Flemish look. But all idea of Holland is expelled by the massive unbeautiful castle standing high on its wooded cliffs.

This city seems to have a character all its own, largely through mingling the features of many other towns. Here in the wooded Swedish plain an English close, a Dutch canal and an American campus seem somehow or other to have met. The interest of the place centres largely round the university, which has sheltered no small number of scholars that the whole world holds great.

In Upsala one is vaguely conscious of the existence of that intense charm, all-pervading yet undefinable, that in Oxford and Cambridge is so helped by the presence of buildings unrivalled on earth. Here no crumbling, creeper-covered walls surround garden quadrangles, nor do elm-shaded lawns slope to a placid river; here are none of the towers and spires of Isis, nor the deep red Tudor brickwork towers of Cam. The university was only founded in 1477 by the national leader, Sten Sture the Elder, who had been chosen administrator of Sweden at the Diet of Arboga six years before. It possesses no buildings that in themselves would claim attention for half an hour, though many are attractive from the well-treed lawns on which they stand. The oldest is called from the hero king who raised it, the Gustavianum; it is

190 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

a plain white structure over which rises a tower capped by a swelling dome that displays the influence of the East. The new building, finished in 1886, has a fine central corridor panelled in green marble, and over the door of the Aula is written (from Thorild) in letters of gold :

Great to think free,
But greater to think right.

One feels the same atmosphere of culture and of high ideal, of youthful enthusiasm and of joy that makes the two older universities of England so lovable, though it is produced with so much simpler scenes.

The ungowned, white-capped students,¹ some two thousand of them, delighting in music and serenades, are organised in thirteen "nations." These somewhat recall English colleges, for they have buildings of their own, and somewhat resemble American Greek letter fraternities, but such likenesses soon leave off and wide differences appear. The members of the nations are chosen by the accident of birth, for each includes the students from one or more of the Swedish "läns." Graduating ceremonies take place in the cathedral, for, as in Oxford and Cambridge, the university is connected with the church.

The university library is not in the least architecturally striking, but among its somewhat numerous treasures is the famous *Codex Argenteus*, written on

¹ There are women students as well as men.

purple parchment in uncial letters of silver and gold. It was captured at Prague in 1648 and, as it gives us the text of Ulfilas' Gothic Bible, no more appropriate home for it could have been found in the wide world.

In the chief square of Upsala is a statue (by Börjeson) of one of the most renowned of former professors, Eric Gustaf Geiger (1783-1847), the poet who with zeal and zest sought to restore respect for native traditions so long overlaid by fads from France during Gustavian times. This he took up so seriously that thus, during his very engagement, wrote his future wife to a friend. Geiger "has become a Goth; instead of loving me he is in love with Valkyries and shield-bearing maidens, drinks out of Viking horns, and carries out Viking expeditions—to the nearest tavern. He writes poems which must not be read in the dark, they are so full of murders and deeds of slaughter." This is putting it somewhat crudely, the movement on the whole was very good. It is far better that each nation should cultivate and develop the traditions of its own fathers—if any such there be—rather than seek to copy ready-made the conclusions of another folk. And Sweden has no need to learn from France.

Geiger's daughter married the Count Hamilton who was Governor of Upsala during the visit of Du Chaillu (p. 223) and entertained the explorer in the castle. The Swedish branch of this great Scottish house is

192 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

descended from two brothers who, like many other Britishers, offered their swords to Gustavus Adolphus in 1624. Of the mediæval castle extremely slight ruins are to be seen ; the present heavy and unfinished round-towered mansion was erected by Gustaf Vasa. In it took place the picturesque but humiliating ceremony of Christina's abdication of the throne, to shake the earth of Sweden from her feet and to amuse herself idly among peoples and courts further south. The best thing about the castle is the superb view from its windows over the forest town.

The Botanical Gardens were set out by Linnæus himself, rather for serious study than for display of flowers. The founder of modern botany, to whom there is a marble statue by Byström, became a professor at Upsala in 1741 and was laid to rest in one of the chapels of the cathedral during 1778.

Close to the banks of the river is the Erikskälla, marking the spot where Eric fell, national saint of Swedes (p. 187). He was canonised by the Swedish Church, not known at Rome, for the rival house of Sverker had gotten the ear of the pope. A spring has burst forth from the soil ; such a thing very frequently happens where a saint has breathed his last. The story of his life is portrayed by mural paintings in one of the apsidal chapels on the south of the cathedral, the only part of the building where the brick vaulting-ribs are left exposed. He was at service in the Bond-

kyrka, or peasants' church, of the Trinity,¹ when the Danes made a surprise attack. The devout king refused to leave till the service came to an end, but soon after, fighting bravely at the head of his men, he was cut down by victorious foes.

His silver-gilt shrine is still the chief treasure of the noble cathedral that rose between Trinity Church and St. Eric's Spring when the archbishopric was moved from the old Upsala to the new. This great church would dominate a much larger town, for its twin spires rise but little short of four hundred feet. It was designed by one of the builders of Notre Dame, Etienne de Bonneuil, who by a document written in Paris on September 8, 1287, was appointed master builder of Sweden's new metropolitan church. By students from Scandinavia at the French capital the cathedral rising by the Seine was so much admired that they got it arranged that a "tailleur de pierre" from its works should reproduce its glories among the forests of the North. It is thus no surprise to find the plan of Upsala Cathedral reproducing that of Notre Dame, though much simplified and on a scale considerably reduced.² The superficial resemblance is by no means

¹ The present building is a little later than his time, an interesting early pointed structure, partly of brick and partly of granite. Saddle roof tower, nave and aisles of five bays with transepts small and low. Brick arches and piers are partly cut into mouldings and clustered shafts, while angel paintings over the rib-vaulted roof have been restored with care.

² There is a nave of seven bays and a quire of four, each with aisles

194 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

close, for the materials available were only brick with stone for necessary detail work, which had to be sparingly used.

The great rose windows, west and north, the clustered piers and moulded arches, the plainly ribbed vaulting and indeed the general effect of the interior remind one of the fairest contemporary churches of France, but the blind storey (or triforium), pierced

and outer chapels, the western towers being the full width of both ; each transept is of two bays and aisleless, the apse is three-sided with ambulatory and five radiating chapels, themselves apsidal. The corresponding chapels of Notre Dame, no less than thirteen in number, are not apsidal except the central one (though they usually are in other great French Gothic churches), but they were not built at the time Upsala was erected. In the case of Notre Dame the nave has two more bays and the quire one more, while the chapels, which were additions, are beyond the outer aisles. The length of Notre Dame is 430 feet, that of Upsala 360 feet, while across the transepts the French cathedral measures 165 feet, the Swedish 135 feet. The building of Upsala Cathedral was not finished till the fifteenth century, and the traceried windows in aisles and clearstorey are rather poor. The arches of the nave chapels are without caps, those of the quire in the same position are rather elaborate, and there is some good carved work over doors and round the ambulatory, though hardly in the same class with that at Notre Dame. The church was largely rebuilt in 1885-93, when the tall metal spires replaced rather ugly eighteenth century turrets and the central flèche was built. Both inside and outside look very new. The former is largely covered with modern paintings, and nearly all the fittings are recent except the beautiful Renaissance canopied pulpit by Tessin (p. 203).

(I am unable to agree with Fergusson in thinking this " an extremely uninteresting church." T. Francis Bumpus, in his beautiful work, *The Cathedrals and Churches of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark*, 1908, comes to the conclusion that French influence in the design was small, and that it is to be attributed to a Swedish architect under very strong North German influence, but his reasons do not seem very conclusive.)

only by meaningless little circles, does nothing to recall the beautiful arcades that open to the galleries of Notre Dame, while the plain pinnacles and flying buttresses without are destitute of any substitutes for the world-famed devils that look down on the Paris streets.

The oldest monument is a brass memorial to Birger Persson, who was president of the Royal Commission which codified the laws of Upland in 1296. One of the children figured afterwards became the illustrious St. Birgitta, or Brita, who, after the death of her husband Ulf, visited Jerusalem, received revelations, founded an order for monks and nuns, and took a prominent part in Church affairs at Rome, trying to get the pope back from Avignon. Her revelations, or some of them, have been printed, but, if one may judge by the samples read by Bishop Wordsworth,¹ they are somewhat sorry stuff, not superior to the sermons of an average curate and not to be compared with the revelations of St. Julian of Norwich.

The rules of her order were revealed to her (so she

¹ *Hale Lectures, 1910*; *The National Church of Sweden*, by John Wordsworth, Bishop of Salisbury. They were delivered in St. James' Church, Chicago, and grew out of the proposals for the union of the Swedish Church with the Anglican Communion. When in 1593 the Swedish Church in council at Upsala accepted the Augsburg confession of faith, the succession of Bishops and the ancient order were zealously guarded. Nevertheless, clergy ordained by the superintendents or Bishops of the other Scandinavian Churches (who have no succession from the mediæval Church) are admitted to Swedish altars.

196 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

firmly believed) by Christ, and approved by the pope. There was a house in England (the priory of Syon), while the principal convent of the Order of the Holy Saviour, as it was called, stood on Lake Vettern at Vadstena ; its buildings to-day form a refuge for the mad. In the church the relics of the foundress are still reverently preserved, for Charles XII. refused to sell them to the pope. "First and foremost," he remarked, "no one can say for certain if they be her bones or not ; secondly, in no wise would I be a party to the encouragement of idle superstition ; and thirdly I am not a dealer in old bones."

In 1590 papal envoys had purchased the relics of another Swedish saint named David, who hung his gloves on sunbeams, and the church at Munketorp was built with the price they paid ; but the priest who effected the sale boasted at a synod that he had only given up the first skeleton that he found in the vaults of the church.

St. Brita has taken a strong hold on popular imagination in Sweden and figures largely in the folklore of the land. Her peculiar sanctity it is said enabled her to see the devil, until one day she failed to control her laughter when in church she saw him bump his head against a pillar. He was trying to stretch a goat's skin with his teeth, for as it was the vellum was far too small to hold the names of those that he noticed nodding as the sermon wore. The local

colour of this tale seems distinctly later than the fourteenth century, when St. Brita was alive.

In the Lady Chapel of the cathedral is a fine monument to Gustaf Vasa with effigies in English alabaster of the king and two wives. The walls are painted with some of the events of his adventurous life.¹

Restored to his birth-land in 1908 and deposited in this cathedral after original burial in England during 1772, are the bones of one of the strangest characters that Sweden ever produced, Emanuel Swedenborg. Son of a distinguished bishop, he early made a name as a scientist and his achievements were of no mean kind. He anticipated modern knowledge as to the planets of the solar system flying off from the mass of the sun and developing their own orbits and rotations. In England he knew Newton, Halley and Flamsteed, and on the Continent also he met the chief men of science of his day. Great practical assistance in the engineering line he was able to afford to Charles XII., including help in the construction of docks at Karlskrona (p. 164), and the transport of ships overland in the war against Norway in 1718. During the latter part of his life Swedenborg had visions and founded in London the *Society of the New Church signified by the New Jerusalem*, his ideas being much

¹ Among other monuments, which are not very remarkable, is one with a marble effigy to John III. (d. 1592), which was executed in Italy.

198 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

influenced by Gnosticism. How far he was qualified as a religious teacher is of course a matter of opinion. Emerson says that he is “disagreeably wise, and with all his accumulated gifts paralyses and repels.”

Few spots of Europe surpass in interest these simple and unornamented monuments of all the ages of the northern world : earth mounds told of in saga story, cathedral carrying the loveliest style of central Europe to the far North, castle where kings dwelt of old, university that has influenced the thought of all mankind. Though the capital is moved to the outlet of the lake, where there rises a yet fairer town, this plain is the true centre of Swedish story from earliest to latest days.

As Tegnér's *Drapa*, Englished by Longfellow expresses it :

So perish the old Gods !
But out of the sea of Time
Rises a new land of song
Fairer than the old.
Over its meadows green
Walk the young bards and sing.



CHAPTER IX

STOCKHOLM

Here the dark woods, with many a patriarch tree,
In gloomy melancholy gaze on thee ;
Here rocks on rocks up-piled upon the strand,
Seem the vast structure of some giant's hand ;
While high aloft the lucid meteors glow,
And veins of iron in the mountains grow.

TEGNER'S *Svea*, translated by OSCAR BAKER.

ONE must be feeling in a particularly happy frame of mind not to be conscious of a certain depression when approaching London from almost any side. Nearly all large cities have to a greater or less extent transformed and half spoilt their surroundings.

Stockholm has done nothing of the sort and there lies its unique charm. A vast city of more than a quarter of a million souls rises straight from the

200 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

primeval forest and clear blue water. The Swedish capital reposes on islands and spreads to the mainland north and south, surrounded by the woods and the lakes. Westward to the Cattegat is a shipway, hollowed partly by the spade of man and partly by the tooth of time ; northward stretches a natural waterway to the ancient capital of Lofty Halls. And the winding fjord that leads up from the open sea, through which the great lake drains, is of wonderful beauty. Low rocky shores, island and mainland, spruce woods close to the water, recall the loveliest scenery of the New England lakes, but there is the added charm of heather wherever the trees leave room.

Small steamers lie in little coves so near the rock-bound shore that it almost seems their rigging is likely to get tangled among boughs of oak, and their crews can pick wild strawberries the moment they step on land. For a mile or two the channel from the Baltic to Stockholm is most intricate and extremely narrow, then great lake-like expanses are traversed before the vessel enters another narrow gate. Little painted houses dot the woods, but they are few. The general effect of the constantly shifting shores is of almost fairylike beauty, especially with the peculiarly Scandinavian interlocking of the water and the land.

At length across a stretch of island-dotted lake the spires and roofs of the capital seem to rise right out of the woods. Eventually one lands in the very

middle of the town. The whole place is intensely modern, the metropolis of a most progressive folk. Large numbers of Stockholmers dwell in flats despite their love of flowers. One of the chief landmarks of the city is the tall network tower of iron bars that surmounts the telephone centre. This repose-disturbing, but extremely useful, invention has fascinated the Swedes. The charges are extremely low, and Stockholm actually boasts of having more telephone numbers than New York.

The first impression is that of a distinctly striking town ; the vast Royal Palace and the huge Northern Museum produce a very individual effect, though hardly perhaps one that can be called monumental. All the conspicuous buildings are in some variety of the Classic style, several erected during the last few years. The streets are broad, but geography forbids any great regularity, excepting to the north and south. All roads lead to the water, except a few that lead to the woods ; the chief ones pass through wide squares and parks. Immensely improved is the city since 1847, when an English traveller wrote : " The natural advantages of approach are not adequately appreciated, or rather done justice to by the Swedes. Their whole style of architecture is mean to a degree ; and their houses on each side of the Mälars quite unworthy that superb piece of water. With a few of the old palaces of Venice on each bank, and trees at intervals,

202 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

and a gondola or two afloat, the northern capital, from its more romantic environs, would far exceed the other.”¹

The site indeed is almost unexcelled. So far as natural beauty goes, the owners of these nine bridge-linked islands² need not envy the dwellers on the Seven Hills. From the narrows that the islands guard broad waters spread far on almost every side ; Lake Mälär ripples gently for nearly eighty miles toward the west, splashing towns and villages and rocks and woods, and pours its broad waters swiftly past the islands toward the sea. Ocean steamers are moored by the wide busy quays of the prosperous city : small steamboats supplement the trolley trams to provide communications for the town. Toward the interior four lines of railway thread their way among the farms and the woods. For the vast silent forests of the North touch the immediate outskirts of the town ; and trees are planted wherever the streets leave a small space unused.

By far the most conspicuous building, weirdly attractive by its complete incongruity with its surroundings, is the immense Royal Palace, a magnific

¹ *Rambles in Sweden and Gothland*, by "Sylvanus," published 1854.

² The names of the nine islands are these : Stadsholmen (on which was the original settlement), Kungsholmen, Riddarsholmen, Helgeandsholmen, Skeppsholmen, Kastellholmen, Stromsborg, Djurgården, Beckholmen. They are of extremely unequal size. The greater part of the city is on the mainland north and south, and the suburbs spread on to an indefinite number of other islands.

pile in the heaviest French Classic style, whose rectangular courtyard is enclosed by a block measuring no less than 408 by 381 feet, and rising in three storeys to a height of nearly a hundred feet. These ample dimensions are increased by wings of about half the elevation projecting eastward toward the water front, and by another on the west that greatly lengthens the north façade. This structure, whose simplicity and grandeur made an impression on Fergusson, occupies quite a considerable portion of the original island of Staden.

The architect was a Frenchman, Nicodemus de Tessin, and so much impressed with the designs was Louis XIV. that he specially congratulated his Swedish brother on the magnificent edifice he was proposing to erect. This king had planned to incorporate part of an older building on the site, but a fire which occurred while he was himself lying-in-state in the unfinished structure nearly cremated the body of the monarch and quite gave the architect complete liberty of design. The present building was begun by the renowned Charles XII. on his accession in 1697, and, much delayed by war and turmoil, its erection dragged on till 1760. For a wonder the later architects employed, including De Tessin's son, resisted the temptation to modify the plans.¹ Simplicity is by

¹ Many fine structures all over Sweden were erected by the same architect. Most of them were country seats for the nobility, who

204 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

far the chief merit of the palace, only in the centre of each side are pilasters introduced ; the top is finished with the plainest cornice and balustrade and the sky line is as horizontal as that of the sea.

The building made a great impression in Europe when it was erected, and several travellers speak of it in terms of rather exaggerated praise. Thus Laing,¹ himself a Scot, after a very appreciative description, exclaims, "What are our public buildings about Edinburgh, our churches, hospitals, squares, street-fronts, with all their pillars, porticos, pilasters, cornices and carved work, compared to the composition and effect of this chaste and grand building?—minced pies, pastry-cook work in freestone." The only really serious defect is that the design is not adapted to the site and the material is not adapted to the design. Such a structure requires a vast space all round and looks cramped on a small island ; it needs material of the most substantial, set off by avenues of trees and formal gardens on a lavish scale, but amid the rocks of Stockholm it is plastered and in the City of Flowers its immediate environs are comparatively destitute of vegetation.²

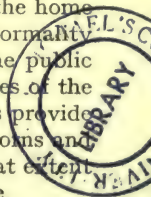
desired to house worthily the magnificent collections of art that had been the spoils of the Thirty Years' War, the only lasting monument for Sweden of the victories of her armies of old.

¹ *Tour in Sweden in 1838.*

² Within the effect is very splendid with many halls, a fine chapel and bewilderingly numerous suites of apartments. The great marble stair on the east with double columns in the three orders on the three

In the same general style as the palace and close to it are other public buildings, but unfortunately the topography of the islands forbids their forming parts of a single great design. The beautiful Riddarhus, or Hall of Knights, the headquarters of the Swedish nobles in the capital, is a seventeenth century structure of brick and stone, designed by Simon de la Vallée, adorned with Corinthian pilasters and floral bands between the storeys. The Riksdaghuset, or Houses of Parliament, recently erected, form a fine block of red granite buildings that rather crush the little island of the Holy Ghost, on which they stand. The two upper storeys have Corinthian columns or pilasters and the sky-line is broken by sculpture rising over the balustrade. Both chambers are octagonal, and their members, for whom women vote, reach them by a most striking stairway, excellently adorned with marble, mottled, white and green. (See chapter-heading.)

Close to the palace, looking over the harbour, is a very impressive statue of Gustavus III.; it was the levels is a magnificent feature. The inlaid floors and carved paneling, the really well-planned decorations, largely in white and gold, with ceiling paintings by Jacques Fouquet and others, all give the impression that the mansion has for generations been the home of people of culture and taste. The traditional absence of formality in the Swedish court is displayed by the way in which the public are admitted to the comfortable private rooms, where copies of the English *Graphic* lie about and unbound Tauchnitz editions provide an admirable selection of English literature. A forest of horns and other trophies of sport in the billiard room, in fact to a great extent the whole atmosphere, suggest a large English country house.

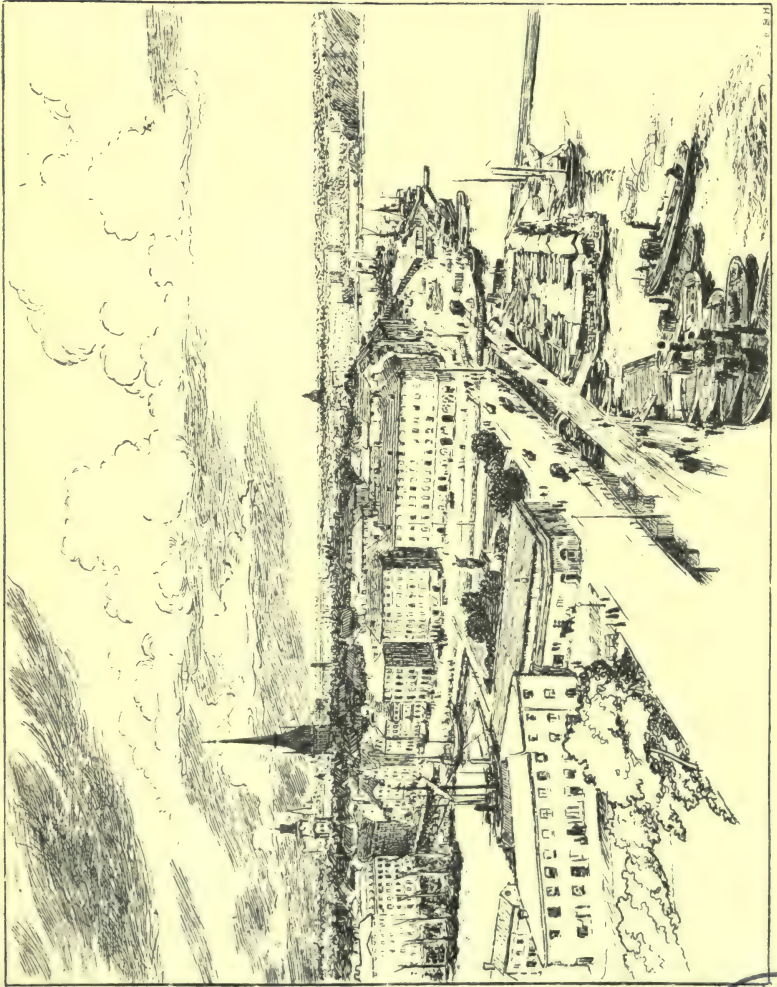


206 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

work of J. T. Sergel, second only to Thorwaldsen among the sculptors of the North. Brilliantly this charmer king, this monarch of the double face,¹ taught Sweden to sin, fatuously he sought to bring to the icy pine-woods of the North the tinsel trinkets of Versailles. The country did not prosper, the royal house was undermined, the king was murdered, and soon a brave French soldier came to restore vigour and virtue to the long-suffering land.

Still the reign that gave to Sweden Karl Mikael Bellman, the poet, and other illustrious men was by no means altogether barren of good results. The old French culture introduced is very far from being lost, and the Swedish Academy, which Gustavus founded in 1786, is one of a number of learned societies that have their homes in this city and have done much to make the Swedish capital pre-eminent for its devotion for letters. Another is the Academy of Sciences, in whose institution the great Linnæus had no small share. Many of their members have a reputation Europe-wide. Lost now is the position to which Sweden once attained, chief military power in the North, but higher her place in the world. The sword-won dominion of Gustavus Adolphus could not endure for very long—geography forbade—but a nobler Swedish empire was founded, or at any rate

¹ Miss M. E. Coleridge wrote a novel about him called *The King with Two Faces*.



consolidated, by the genius of Linnæus, and that shows no sign of decay. There will dawn a day when mere brute force will no longer be the test of a nation's weal, but in Europe it is hardly yet.

Across a monumental bridge, adorned with statues and lamps, on the island of Djurgarden, stands a recently finished structure of Renaissance character which looks like a great cruciform church, but is in fact the Northern, or the Folk, Museum. The great hall contains figures in armour, old coaches and such like to illustrate days that are past, but more interesting are the little chambers that show us in detail the life of Sweden in bygone years. Within an old cottage we see a duck-coop under the sofa and shut-up cupboards against the walls. Carved chests and spinning wheels and lace and little looms and fishing implements and traps for bears, saddles and flutes and harps and drums give the attentive student a very fair idea of how the peasants used to pass their days. No servile breed these men who crushed the armies of the Empire in the war of Thirty Years and first subdued the woods by the Delaware.

A story told by W. W. Thomas¹ is fairly characteristic of the stern and independent nature of the farmers who have made Sweden.

“ A Swedish peasant, clad in homespun and driving

¹ In his excellent work, *Sweden and the Swedes* (one of them his wife), 1893. He was U.S. Minister to Sweden and Norway.

208 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

a rough farm wagon, pulled up at a post station in the west of Sweden. There were but two horses left in the stable, and these he immediately ordered to be harnessed into his wagon. Just as they were being hitched up, there rattled into the courtyard in great style the grand equipage of the governor of the province, with coachman and footman in livery. Learning the state of affairs and wishing to avoid a long and weary delay, the coachman ordered these two horses to be taken from the peasant's cart and harnessed into the governor's carriage. But the peasant stoutly refused to allow this to be done.

“‘What,’ said the governor, ‘do you refuse to permit those horses to be harnessed into my carriage?’”

“‘Yes, I do,’ said the peasant.

“‘And do you know who I am?’ said the governor, somewhat in a rage. ‘I am the governor of this province, a knight of the Royal Order of the Northern Star, and one of the chamberlains of His Majesty the King.’”

“‘Oh, ho!’ said the peasant. ‘And do you, sir, know who I am?’”

“He said this in such a bold and defiant manner that the governor was somewhat taken aback. He began to think that the fellow might be some great personage after all—some prince, perhaps, travelling in disguise.

“ ‘No,’ he said, in an irresolute voice, ‘I do not know who you are. Who are you?’ ”

“ ‘Well,’ replied the peasant, walking up to his face and looking him firmly in the eye, ‘I’ll tell you who I am—I am the man that ordered those horses.’ ”

“After this there was nothing more to be said. The peasant quietly drove away on his journey, and the governor waited until such time as he could legally procure fresh means of locomotion.”

Along the “clearstorey” of the church-like museum are a series of little chambers fitted and furnished to illustrate the life of the middle classes from 1520 to the end of the nineteenth century. These are far less distinctively Swedish than the objects taken from cottages.¹

So modern is Stockholm, bustling capital of a great industrial nation, so entirely Classic its principal buildings, that it seems almost incongruous that it should be a town of great historic interest, whose story goes back to saga days. The site is heard of now and then in the very earliest annals of the North.

Once a king of Upsala is fabled here to have cele

¹ The National Museum, among many other things including a gallery of pictures old and new, possesses a collection of prehistoric antiquities rivalled only by that of Copenhagen. In the Humlegård (Botanic Garden) is a bronze statue of Linnæus in the centre of flower patterns; it also contains the Riks-Bibliotek, or National Library, among whose treasures are the Latin *Codex Aureus*, and the *Gigas Librorum*, one of whose illuminations is a huge coloured figure of the devil—spoils of the Thirty Years’ War.

210 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

brated his marriage and gotten his bane. Round his neck he wore a great gold chain that his sires had worn of yore. He desired to wed the lovely Skialf, whose father, a monarch further east, he had just conquered and slain in war. She only bargained that a funeral feast for her parent might decorously precede the marriage feast for herself. The king of Upsala and his warriors poured down the grave-ale right heartily so that they could not stand. The bride and her friends had only feigned to drink so that they were in better condition for action when the feast was done. They contrived to slip one end of a rope through the great gold chain and the other end over the bough of a large oak. Thus the monarch of Upsala was hung and the bride unwed sailed home.¹

Within the present limits of Stockholm too, Olaf the Holy as a precocious viking youth showed some of that astuteness that was with him all through life. He had been harrying in the neighbourhood of Sigtuna, much to the annoyance of the Swedes, and “when autumn set in Olaf Haraldson got to know that Olaf the Swede-king drew together a great host, and also that he had done chains athwart Stocksound, and set guard thereover. But the Swede-king was of mind that King Olaf would there bide the frosts, and

¹ According to one legend the women of Wärend gained their ancient privilege of inheriting on equal terms with men by similar service against the Danes. The privilege is now extended all over the country.

he held Olaf's host of little worth, for he had but a small company. So King Olaf went out to Stock-sound, and might not get through there, for a castle was on the west side of the sound and a host of men on the south. But when they heard that the Swede-king was gone aboard ship, and had a great host and a multitude of ships, King Olaf let dig a dyke through Agni's-thwaite into the sea. At this time great rains prevailed.

“Now from all Sweden every running water falls into the Low, and out to sea there is one oyce from the Low, so narrow that many rivers be wider. But when great rains or snow-thaws prevail, the waters fall with such a rush that through Stocksound the water runs in a force, and the Low goes so much upon the lands that wide-about be floods. Now when the dyke got to the sea, then leapt out the water and the stream. Then King Olaf let take inboard all the rudders of his ships, and hoist all sails topmast high. And there was a high wind at will blowing. They steered with the oars, and the ships went apace out over the shoal, and came all whole into the sea.

“Then the Swedes went to see Olaf the Swede-king, and told him that by then Olaf the Thick had got him away out into the sea. So the Swede-king rated soundly those who should have watched that Olaf gat not away.”

The fact that the sagas give the place (or neigh-

bourhood) the only distinctive part of the present name makes somewhat superfluous the legends that have grown up to account for the designation Stockholm. One of these declares that in the twelfth century by robber bands the ancient capital of Sigtuna had been destroyed. So placing their remaining valuables in a dug-out stock, the surviving citizens committed it to the waters of the lake and followed in their boats the drifting log. At the island where at last their stock came to shore the future capital rose.

But the true founder of Stockholm was stout Birger Jarl, of royal race, and father of kings, who ruled the land (as regent for his son) from 1251 till his death in 1266.¹ He desired to lock the Mälar with a fortress town, and the advantages of doing this were so great that we may safely reject the idle tale that he too cast a log into the lake and vowed to build the town wherever the waters cast it up. Many a legend has grown to account for a city's name, but men of the stamp of Birger Jarl know what they want too well to trust to the decision of the winds. The new town rapidly grew in importance and from its splendid position gradually became the capital of the country.

Gone are the winding lanes of mediæval days, gone are all traces of the city's youth except a couple of

¹ He was crusading in Finland when his son Valdemar, first of the Folkungar Line, was chosen king by the Council on the collapse of the House of Sverker.

churches. A son of Birger Jarl, Magnus Ladulaas, who reigned from 1279 till 1290, founded a Franciscan convent and placed it on Riddarsholm, the island of the Knights. His surname, which signifies the locker of barns, was gained by a most just law he made compelling nobles like common folk to pay for any corn or straw that they might require on travels. "No Roman Emperor," gratefully exclaims the old *Swedish Chronicle*, "could wish himself a nobler name than Ladu-laas, and very few could have laid claim to it, for the name of Ladu-brött (barn-breaker) would suit most rulers much better."¹

It is sad to know that this evil custom, the right to demand hospitality from unwilling hosts, was founded—largely at any rate—by an Englishman and a saint (p. 188). Other natives of the British Isles than he have bitterly complained of Continental inns. Henry had a practical remedy; he instituted the custom, that was sure to be abused, of making every peasant's house a free hostelry for travellers of note.²

The ancient church of the Franciscans (now known as the Riddarsholms-Kyrka) is a brick structure of the

¹ Quoted by Otté.

² A nobler English saint (who with St. Peter shares the dedication of the Anglican Church in Stockholm), was one of the earliest and best Apostles of the Faith in the Swede-realm. Coming once to the borders of a lake, St. Siegfrid (or Sigurd) saw a bright vision of glistening angels, and vowed to raise a church where the cathedral of Vexio now stands.

214 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

early fourteenth century, raised a few years after the convent was founded ; it is not greatly impressive. Nave of five bays, quire of three, triple apse to the east, clumsy-looking tower to the west. Round pillars hold up a heavy vault, whitewash daubed, and, as is so commonly the case in Scandinavia, unrelieved by any clearstorey. On to the tower has been hoisted a cast iron spire that rises 290 feet into the clear air and looks as awkward and unhappy as the similar feature over the cathedral at Rouen. The great interest of the church is that it has become the valhalla of warrior, sage and king ; the floor is laid in gravestones, the walls blaze with the painted arms of the Knights of the Seraphim Order, the air is thick with the banners that Swedes have won in war. In the quire is the effigy of the founder, but as space in the church was small classic chapels have been added both north and south to be the last resting-places of other of Sweden's honoured dead. On the sun-warmed side of the quire a chapel bears date 1633, and its rather indifferent architecture is forgotten from the fact that it contains, within a later sarcophagus of green marble, the ashes of Gustavus Adolphus, one of the noblest of mankind, the hero king who perished victorious on the field of Lützen (1632).

Opposite on the north is the Carolinian chapel, a domed Classic structure with detached columns outside where rest the renowned twelfth Charles

and other princes of the Vasa House. Another chapel bears the name of Bernadotte, founder of the ruling line.

It was before the altar of this church during the fourteenth century that the arrogant noble, Bo Jonsson, called Grip, because his arms were a griffin's head, who "ruled the land with a glance of his eye,"¹ uncontrolled by the helpless king, hewed in pieces his foe Karl Nilsson, and was never called to account on this side of the veil. Here, too, among the dead in later days, far into the night mused the third Gustavus, hoping to receive some omen from his fathers' graves.

It is rather misleading to call this comparatively humble shrine the Westminster Abbey of the land that holds the Cathedral of Upsala and so many other glorious fanes. Instead of one of the grandest minsters on the earth, echoing several times a day with Christian praise, it is a somewhat commonplace church whose silence is broken only by the chatter of tourists, save on the anniversary of some hero's death or when another monarch has entered upon his last sleep. Nevertheless there is a deep and haunting interest in this last earthly resting-place of so many who have helped to shape the world.

Close to this church is a fine statue by Fogelberg to Birger Jarl.

¹ Rhyiming Chronicle, quoted by Otté.

216 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

The Storkyrka, or great church of St. Nicholas, has been Classicised without. It is better so, for with the great palace forcing Classic standards on the city, Gothic must look out of place, however much better its general lines would have suited the untamed site and the ancient traditions of Stockholm. Pastor here 1543-52 was the famous Olavus Petri¹ who, with his brother, Laurentius, Archbishop of Upsala, did much to shape the Swedish Reformation. Messenius' *Rhyme-Chronicle* tells us :

On Master Olof's wedding day
Our Lutherdom had made such way
That mass in Swedish first was sung.
So all men followed their own tongue.
For so had Master Olof seen
How things at Wittenberg had been ;
There first at Carlstadt's marriage feast
Was German mass sung by a priest.

Chancellor of the kingdom he had been in earlier days (1532), but so much of an idealist was Olof that he desired public penance to be exacted from all who complained of the weather ! This did not suit the sternly practical king, Gustaf Vasa, who dismissed him with the observation that he was as fit to be chancellor as an ass to play the lute, or a kicking cow to spin silk.

In the Storkyrka² had been crowned in 1520 the

¹ There is a statue to him just east of the church.

² It is often called the cathedral, but incorrectly. Stockholm is extra-diocesan, forming a sort of "enclave" administered by the Pastor Primarius and his consistory ; necessary episcopal functions

last sovereign of united Scandinavia, Christian II., a Dane of the Oldenburg line. Not by any means a bad king on the whole (p. 143), he had nevertheless by some inscrutable mental process got it into his head that the destruction of the leading men of Sweden would benefit that country and help to consolidate his own power. So during the very festivities that followed the coronation, no other specific charge being handy, he availed himself of the one complaint that can never fail, and on a trumped-up charge connected with religion, he caused many of the nobles and most honoured men of Sweden to be executed in the market-place of the capital. But the effect of the fatal Blood Bath of Stockholm, on November 8, 1520, was far other than the monarch planned. A deliverer for the wronged nation rose up in the son of one of those who perished.

An outlaw fugitive, Gustaf Vasa had several very are performed by the Archbishop of Upsala. The church, originally about the same age as the Riddarsholmskyrka, was largely reconstructed about 1736, the chancel being removed, and the outer aisles apparently built. The square clock-tower has pilasters, the church has Classic buttresses, cornices, etc., but there are some mongrel-decorated windows. The interior is still largely mediæval, and most impressive from the wide dimensions—eight bays and five aisles all vaulted at the same level. The brick pillars are mostly clustered, the central vault has most ornate brick ribs, and the aisle roofs have remains of old paintings. There are really splendid Renaissance fittings, including a lovely Augsburg carved wooden reredos, stone font with Runic patterns dated 1514, two canopied thrones, carved pulpit and organ case, some fine tombs and tablets with several effigies and one canopy, besides a knight on horseback larger than life slaying a dragon.

218 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

narrow escapes from the machinations of Danish spies, but the peasants of Dalekarlia were sufficiently sympathetic to shield him, though at the risk of their lives. They had no very particular grievances and merely desired to live in peace; to his first patriotic harangue they listened in irritating silence. So, sick at heart and weary of body, the hero was plodding through the snow to seek a secure retreat for himself among the remote mountains of Norway. He heard himself hotly followed, but, looking round, was joyed to see not pursuing Danes, but penitent dalesmen. They had heard of the Blood Bath and of many other acts of cruelty and had come to agree with Gustaf. They now asked no more than to be led against the forces of the tyrant king. "For our country we will fight like men," they cried. "Come back, Gustaf, and be our chief."

And with them he returned to find one of the most brilliant lines of sovereigns that Europe ever knew. The Danes could make little stand before the enthusiastic fury of the rising Swedes; one of their own leaders declared that the devil himself could not subdue a people who lived by drinking water and eating bread baked from the bark of trees, and in 1523 Gustaf entered Stockholm as king, and knelt in thanksgiving before the same altar that had witnessed the coronation of the tyrant only three years before. His spirit broods over the city to-day, before the Hall

of Knights and in the Northern Museum his colossal statue stands.

But it was to a capital in ruin that he came, and only three hundred families were camping amidst its broken walls. So serious did conditions seem to the new king that he ordered every other town in Sweden to pay Stockholm a tax of ten stout burghers, compensation to be sought from neighbouring farms. The natural forces of these town-extending times have, in Sweden as elsewhere, made such legislation more than superfluous to-day. Though on the very edge of the forest modern Stockholm is in some districts over-crowded, underhoused.

Till far into the nineteenth century the Scandinavian countries had the bad distinction of being the most drunken in Europe: Linnæus as a scientist called attention to the national danger of drink. That Swedes and Norwegians are now the most abstemious of Europeans is a striking comment on the early Victorian maxim: "You can't make men sober by Act of Parliament."¹

¹ Canon Wieselgren, of Göteborg (Gotenburg), was the main leader in the triumphant temperance movement, aided by the great chymist, Berzelius, who has a statue in the little Stockholm park that bears his name. Gustavus III. in 1775 had made distilling and selling spirits a Government monopoly, yielding a chief item of revenue. When this was abolished and distilling became absolutely free to all the state of Sweden became much worse than before.

Eventually drinking was reduced to its present very moderate dimensions by confining the manufacture and sale of spirits to companies which may make what profit they can on everything else,

220 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

So heavenly are the environs of the city that they could not easily be spoiled ; the Swedes have made the very most of the lavish gifts of Nature to add to the delights of their capital. They are not infected with a mania for cutting trees and building mile-long lines of slate and brick, nor apparently is every land-owner consumed with a burning zeal to pile as many dwellings as he possibly can onto each square inch of ground. Parks are numerous and beautiful, largely because the woods are left alone.

Of the nine islands the largest except one and by far the most interesting is Djurgarden, so called because there was a deer-park in days gone by. A great part of its area is still left alone, forming a park almost unrivalled in the world. Wide stretches of primeval forest, miles of rock-bound coast lapped by the rippling waters of the lake. At Skansen, midst the woods on elevated ground, is a splendid museum in the open air. Among the trees one keeps discovering all sorts of interesting things. Log houses with old furniture in which Swedes dressed as their fathers dressed play on musical instruments used of

but are only allowed five per cent. on drinks, any surplus being handed over to the local authority for providing such things as lectures, sports, excursions and libraries. As in America, districts may vote to be entirely " dry " if they prefer. This arrangement, generally called the Gotenburg system, with local variations, is in force over most of Norway and Sweden. Göteborg adopted it in 1865, and Stockholm followed in 1877. Beer is outside the arrangement.

old. Other old cottages, moved from far, are boulder-built, turf-roofed, and hard mud-floored. Animals in cages, which are partly cut in rock, old Runic stones, old gravestones, old milestones are there too.

And in parts the aborigines are housed, just as if in their native wilds. A wonderful people are these Lapps. For more than a thousand years they have lived in close proximity to one of the most cultured of all races, with which they have had constant intercourse and trade; yet here they are, exactly as Tacitus describes the Fenni, untaught barbarians and a standing contradiction to Rousseau's theories about the noble savage. Modern anthropology smiles at Dr. Johnson's crude remark, "One set of savages is like another." Nevertheless the huts of the Lapps seem strangely to reproduce the general atmosphere of those of the South African Kafirs.¹ The way in which the Lapps have so long resisted the seductions of civilisation is all the more remarkable in contrast with their near cousins the Finns.

On the highest land, called Bredablick, rises a tall tower from which may be enjoyed a view that is one of the most individual upon earth. Miles and miles of rolling woodland, chiefly pine and birch, spread in almost endless folds and display almost every shade

¹ Judging from the Lapp huts outside museums and the ordinary Zulu kraal of Natal, the African natives are the cleaner of the two races.

222 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

of green. Arms of water stretch away in all directions till in many cases they become so narrow that they are lost among the trees ; the broad end of Mälars, myriad island lake, suggests itself on the western horizon, and, the very last thing one would naturally expect to see amid the silent woods, rises the great modern city with its towers and spires and domes and factory chimneys—the Venice of the North. Round the far horizon stand peaceful, peakless hills.¹

A few miles north of Stockholm, far enough away to be beyond the furthest suburb of the town, a beautiful park slopes down to where the now narrowing and now widening Edsvik runs into the land. The property was once owned by Prince Ulrik, son of Charles XI., and from him has its name, Ulriksdal. Some of the most characteristic features of the scenery of two continents seem to be epitomised in the district all around. By the eternal forest of northern trees, and the constant clearings in glacial boulder-earth for farms, with wooden house and barn, by electric trolley cars and muddy roads, New England is recalled. Wide heather-covered wastes and gnarled old firs, thatched buildings here and there, do much to suggest the delightful landscapes of old Scotland.

Presumably it is the best of the land that has been cleared for crops, though it is not always very easy to

¹ Not far from Skansen is the Hasselbacken Restaurant, whose cooking is unsurpassed in France.

declare why one acre is bearing artichokes¹ and the next one is left to the woods.

Approached through grand avenues of maple and lime and oak, surrounding three sides of a square, pierced by three tiers of windows, and surmounted by a black clock turret, smaller than many English country houses, is the Ulriksdal summer palace of the Swedish kings. It was erected in the seventeenth century by the renowned Field-Marshal Jacob de la Gardie, he who became the husband of Ebba Brahe, dearly loved by Gustavus Adolphus, to whom she was betrothed, though never wed. For the great king, whom half Europe in arms could not withstand, was unable to resist the pressure of his mother, intriguing queen, who would not have royal blood allied with common human clay. And by his German princess wife, whom he could never love, the king had no other child than the erratic Christina, brilliant and irresponsible as Mary Queen of Scots.

At this palace in 1871 the famous American explorer of Africa, Paul Du Chaillu, was received by King Charles XV. with Arcadian lack of ceremony that was rather disconcerting to the American conception of what royalty should do. The explorer could get

¹ Both thistle and globe artichokes are extensively cultivated for the markets of Stockholm. Tobacco is another crop very often to be seen ; its growth is no new industry, it is mentioned by Laing in 1838, and he says it is used largely for snuff. Mere frames of poles on wheels serve for the ingathering of harvest.

no attention at the front door, but eventually raised some underling by going within and shouting up the stair. This official looked over the balusters and asked the intruder what he wanted. The king, he averred, was not at home, but when he learned that an invited guest stood there, he admitted that the monarch of two kingdoms was within. His Majesty was found at last, working on a picture in his shirt-sleeves, for he was a landscape painter of repute. As soon as he saw Du Chaillu approaching he proceeded to put on his coat.

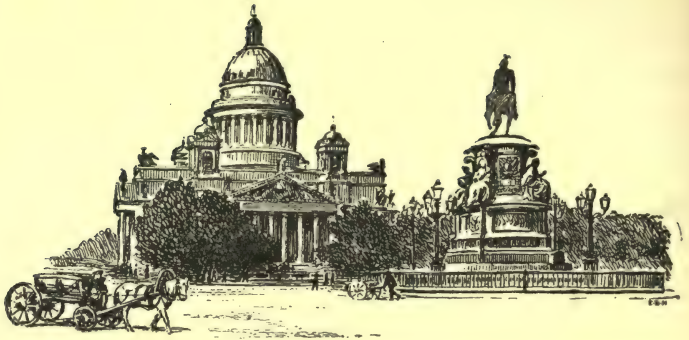
Wearing a broad-brimmed soft felt hat, the monarch led the explorer through the house from room to room.¹ The general effect is splendid, but not unhomelike. One chamber is lined with old Dutch tiles, another with stamped leather in colours of the softest and most restful, other apartments have fine old panelling, while the northern sunlight streams in through some beautiful pieces of painted glass, the oldest about 1504 in date. The richness of the effect is greatly enhanced by fine old inlaid cabinets, choice china and some very good pictures.

Some cities, such as Oxford and Rome, owe almost everything to the activities of man : few would linger long by the Isis or the Tiber if their magnificent old buildings were gone. Some cities owe nearly every-

¹ *The Land of the Midnight Sun*, by Paul Du Chaillu, 1881. The author was French by birth.

thing to splendour of site and to the lavish gifts of God. Such a one pre-eminently is Stockholm. Other towns have sites more stately, streets more monumental, buildings more magnificent, but none can be compared with Stockholm in the features of water and island and forest that are peculiarly its own. There is another city built on islands by flowing waters near the open sea, but New York has pushed the forest far away except for a space on the New Jersey side, and both islands and city are far too big to bear any resemblance to Stockholm.

Though no such impression could well be sustained in the streets of a great modern city, the first view of the Swedish capital suggests nothing so much as an enchanted town, the capital of fairyland in the middle of a wood that one dreamed about as a little child.



CHAPTER X

ST. PETERSBURG

What must the man have been who, born and bred in this atmosphere, conceived and by one tremendous wrench, almost by his own manual labour and his own sole gigantic strength, executed the prodigious idea of dragging the nation, against its will, into the light of Europe, and erecting a new capital and a new empire among the cities and kingdoms of the world.

St. Petersburg is indeed his most enduring monument. A spot up to that time without a single association, selected instead of the Holy City to which even now every Russian turns as to his mother ; a site which but a few years before had belonged to his most inveterate enemies, won from morass and forest, with difficulty defended, and perhaps even yet doomed to fall before the inundations of its own river.—DEAN STANLEY.

RUSSIA, or Garth-realm, was not outside the circuit of saga lands. The *Heimskringla* indeed has much to tell us concerning it in days when the country formed a most hospitable refuge for those in trouble at home. And at one time or other most prominent men of the viking age were in that uncomfortable position.

Of the Slavs themselves, indeed, we do not learn a great deal. The saga writers were not much interested in foreign countries except as they affected the Norse, but the regard for law in Russia evidently made an impression, as did also the respect entertained for woman there, at any rate as she was represented by the queen. The chief town of Russia in those days was called by the Norsemen Holmgarth, because it stood on an island, to the Slavs it was known as Novgorod, or new town, although about the oldest we wot of in the land. It became in rather later days the eastern outpost of Hansa trade (p. 155).

Russia herself, like Normandy, was originally a Scandinavian state, and there seems to be little doubt that the name Russ was originally applied to the Norse. Even to-day the Finns know the Swedes as Ruotsi.¹ Thus Ruric and his viking followers² gave a name to the Slavs of the North, even as Bulgars from Asia named a portion of the Slavs of the South and the German Franks gave a new designation to Gaul. In all three cases the conquerors who gave a

¹ The form Russia was not known till the end of the seventeenth century. In Great Blakenham Church, Suffolk, there is a monument of 1645 to a London merchant, named Swift

“Honoured abroad for wise and just,
Aske the Russe and Sweden theis.”

² The original authority for Ruric and his viking followers settling at Novgorod in 862 is the *Chronicle* of Nestor, a monk of Kiev, who died about 1114. There is a very good account of early Russian history in W. R. Morfill's *Russia in the Story of the Nations*.

228 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

new name to the conquered received from them language and nearly everything else. It is quite possible, however, that Scandinavian vigour was potent in giving to northern Slavland that political unity which neither Mongol domination, nor the long lapse of centuries nor a series of drunken and incapable monarchs ever succeeded in breaking up.

While the disastrous failure of the southern Slavs to unite is patent to the whole earth.

Closely in touch with the Northlands Garthrealm long remained ; it was clearly a district in which the Norse could feel themselves perfectly at home, however much at times they might feel the call of the rockbound fjords. Thus for several centuries, from the British Isles to the heart of Russia, all lands were Scandinavian pure, or under the influence of the ever conquering Norse. Had the race possessed a spark of Roman organising power, here had been established a dominion greater than any that the Southlands knew, for such an empire had hardly failed to girdle the world, expanding eastward through northern Asia, westward from Vinland the Good. Knut the Rich (p. 114) seems to have been about the only individual to whom any such ideas occurred, and the very keenness of all the Norse about local autonomy and parochial Things was a hopeless bar to such plans.

It is one of the chief characteristics of the Norse easily to be absorbed by other races, whether in

ancient viking times or in the American North-West to-day. On Ireland they left no further impression than a few traditions and a church dedication or two ; to Russia they gave a name, but little more. Norsemen failed to be absorbed by other races only in Iceland and Faroe, where no other races were.

Both Olaf, son of Tryggvi, and Olaf the Saint, were at different times resident in Russia, when Norway proved unkind. The former was nine winters old when he came into Garthrealm, and he abode with King Valdimar other nine winters.

One day the boy was standing idly in the gate of the city when he suddenly noticed the person who had slain his fosterer. "Olaf had a little axe in his hand, which same he drave into Klerkon's head, so that it stood right down in the brain of him ; then he fell to running home to the house, and told Sigurd his kinsman thereof." Such a spirited action would not have mattered much in Scandinavia, for in those days the Norse were very tolerant toward such effervescence of youthful spirits, but it was otherwise in Russia.

"Now in Holmgarth was the peace so hallowed, that, according to the law thereof, whoso slew a man undoomed should himself be slain. And now all the people made a rush together, according to their custom and law, and sought after the lad, where he were ; and it was told that he was in the queen's

230 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

garth, and that there was an host of men all armed.

“Hereof was the king told, and he went thereto with his folk, and would not that they fought, and so brought about truce and peace thereafter; and the king adjudged the weregild, and the queen paid the fine.

“Thereafter abode Olaf with the queen, and was right dear to her.”¹

Why the queen, to whom Sigurd had hastily entrusted the boy, was able to do so much is explained to us later on: “Now it was much the wont of mighty kings in those days, that the queen should have half the court, and sustain it at her own costs, and have thereto of the scat and dues what she needed. And thus it was at King Valdimar’s, and the queen had no less court than the king; and somewhat would they strive about men of fame, and either of them would have such for themselves.

“Now so it befell that the king trowed those redes aforesaid which folk spake before him, and became somewhat cold to Olaf, and rough. And when Olaf found that, he told the queen thereof, and said withal that he was minded to fare into the Northlands, where, said he, his kin had dominion aforetime, and where he deemed it like that he should have the most furtherance.

¹ *Heimskringla, Saga of Olaf Trygvíson, Ch. VII.*

“ So the queen biddeth him farewell, and sayeth that he shall be deemed a noble man whithersoever he cometh.”¹

The reasons for the king's suspicion are rather delicately explained: “ Yet it befell, as oft it doth when outland men have dominion, or win fame more abundant than they of the land, that many envied him the great love he had of the king, and of the queen no less. So men bade the king beware lest he make Olaf over-great: ‘ For there is the greatest risk of such a man, lest he lend himself to doing thee or the realm some hurt, he being so fulfilled of prowess and might and the love of men; nor forsooth wot we whereof he and the queen are evermore talking.’ ”

Olaf the Holy was in slightly later days to find a refuge in Russia and to be welcomed there by a Scandinavian queen, daughter of his old enemy and namesake, the King of Sweden. This was the manner of the royal marriage, and somewhat modern it sounds. “ The next spring there came to Sweden messengers from King Jarisleif east away from Holmgarth, and they fared to see to the matter of King Olaf's promise from the past summer to give Ingigerd his daughter to King Jarisleif. King Olaf put the matter before Ingigerd, and said it was his will that she should wed King Jarisleif.”

Driven from his kingdom and somewhat broken

¹ *ib.*, Ch. XXI.

232 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

in his fortunes, " King Olaf arrayed his journey and got him a ship. And he fared that summer, and letted not till he came east to Garth-realm to the meeting of King Jarisleif, him and his queen, Ingigerd. . . . King Jarisleif gave King Olaf a hearty welcome, and bade him abide there with him and have land as much as he needed for the costs of holding of his company. That King Olaf took with thanks, and tarried there. So it is said, that King Olaf was devout and prayerful unto God all the days of his life. But from the time that he found his reign was waning, and his enemies were waxing mightier, then he laid all his heart to the serving of God ; he was then hindered herefrom no more by other cares, or the toil which aforetime he had had on hand." ¹

" Sithence King Olaf came to Garth-realm he had great imaginings, and turned it over in his mind what rede he had best take. King Jarisleif and Queen Ingigerd bade King Olaf dwell with them, and take over the dominion called *Vulgaria*, and that is one part of Garth-realm ; and there in that land the folk was heathen. King Olaf bethought him in his mind of this offer ; but when he laid it before his men, they all were loth to take up their abode there, and egged the king on to betake himself north to Norway to his own kingdom. The king would be still further thinking of this, to lay down his kingdom, and fare out into

¹ *Saga of Olaf the Holy*, Cb. CXCI.

the world unto Jerusalem, or into some other holy places, and there to go under the Rule.”¹

Not infrequently the Norse passed through Russia to the great metropolis of the eastern world (whence Russia had received her faith), New Rome, or Constantinople itself. So much were they impressed by that splendid city that they knew it as Micklegarth. The stalwart arms of the Norsemen, organised in the Vaeringian Guard, propped the Byzantine Empire against its Asian foes and gained for the Scandinavians much wealth. Among others the founder of Oslo (p. 95) had in that realm gotten enormous riches. “But when Harald came to Holmgarth, King Jarisleif gave him a wondrous good welcome, and there he tarried the winter over, and took into his own keeping all the gold which he had sent afore thither from Micklegarth, and many kinds of dear-goods. That was so mickle wealth, that no man in northern lands had seen such in one man’s owning. Harald had three times come into palace-spoil whiles he was in Micklegarth. For that is law, that whenever the king of the Greeks dies the Vaerings shall have palace-spoil; they shall then go over all the king’s palaces where are his wealth hoards, and there each one shall freely have for his own whatso he may lay hands on.”²

¹ *ib.*, Ch. CXCVIII.

² *Heimskringla, Saga of Harald the Hard-vedy*, Ch. XVI.

234 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

Strangely similar, both in weakness and in strength, were Alexander and Peter, both of them most justly surnamed Great. Each was born to a kingdom, each had marvellous foresight and each had imperial ideas. Semi-barbarous sceptres they both inherited, and they realised how much might be done by importing the civilisation of sea-powers further west; each was a worker with his own hands, each cared much for the science and art of his generation, but neither was superior to amusements of the grossest and pastimes of the beastliest. Both drank themselves into the other world at an untimely age, leaving their work half done.

Each is commemorated by a city placed on the sea with the express purpose of attracting foreign influence, beyond the ancient limits of the country whose capital it became. More attractive in some ways the career of the Ptolemaic successors of Alexander at Alexandria than that of the immediate Romanoff descendants of Peter at Petersburg, but the story of an ancient nation ruled from a corner of its territory by a half foreign court is in both cases very much the same.

Many of the capitals of Europe know at least traditional founders, but on none is impressed the stamp of an individual to such an extent as here. No city on earth of anything like equal importance is so entirely the creation of a single mind, nor so truly

a monument to individual force of character. No capital except Tokyo is to such an extent the symbol of a new era in a nation's life.

Peter heard the call of Europe and saw that it had something to offer that Asia could not give. Asiatics have felt a strange attraction toward European lands in all the ages of the world. Persian, Hun, Saracen and Turk have each in turn sought a footing on European soil. Despite administrative inconvenience the successive rulers of the House of Othman early desired to have as their capital some city famous in the story of the West. Peter's people were not Asiatics; their early organisation had come from the purest European stock, the conquering Norse themselves, their civilisation and religion had come straight from Rome. Not indeed old Rome on the Tiber, but during the tenth century the daughter city by the Bosphorus was probably the more cultured of the two.

On the border-land of the continents the Russians had for centuries looked east and not west, the very year of Peter's accession to power (1689) they had fixed their first frontier with China. He desired that Russia should be definitely European, and in order to consolidate his reforms a westward-looking window was essential. Its communications must be by sea, Poland shut out direct intercourse with Europe overland. Southward was the better climate, but a Black Sea port would have increased relations with a purely

236 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

Oriental Empire. At the farthest end of the icy Baltic, where the Neva flows into the Gulf of Finland, as near to ancient Novgorod as a seaside town could be, there eventually he decided the new capital of Russia should stand.

From a glance at the map it is difficult to realise why no town had risen in so convenient a spot long before, but it is at once explained by a glance at the ground. Swampy forest, liable to floods and dangerous to health, extended over all the land where the City of Peter was to rise. The island that became the nucleus of the settlement had received a name from its hares. A few Finnish fishers, alone among mankind, broke the silence of its woods. The noble river communicates with little except timber forests, and wood is to-day brought down to Petersburg in temporary boats remarkable for their size, their frailty, and their graceful appearance.

The difficulties in the way of founding a city in such a spot were such as might well have appalled any ordinary mind. The site had but a few years before belonged to the Swedes, who maintained a small fort on the edge of Ladoga, the lake which the Neva drains. They were constantly making attacks; Charles XII. remarked that Peter was founding cities only that he might capture them. Petersburg might well have anticipated the fate of Port Arthur.

The wretched conditions in which operations had

to be carried on brought about an appalling mortality among the workmen employed in building the new town, however much exaggerated may have been the foreign reports that two hundred thousand died. The mechanical appliances available were so extraordinarily poor that earth had to be carried by each workman as best he could ; there was no one about who could construct a wheelbarrow ! Brigands made communications with Russia unsafe and sometimes did as they pleased in the city itself, while sentries on duty or citizens going about their business were occasionally carried off by the wolves. Provisions had to be fetched from an enormous distance, the cost of living was extremely high. Though the woods were all around, fuel was so scarce that even the nobles (who most unwillingly had been compelled to live here for part of the year) were not allowed to have hot baths excepting once a week.

To add to all this no one except Peter could see the slightest need for any other capital than Moscow, still less the point of building a city on this forbidding and man-forsaken spot. But to the Tsar the rising town was a Paradise, so well loved that he had soon decided to make it not merely the chief sea-port of his Empire, but the capital as well.

The objection which the sagas tell us the eleventh century Russians showed to outland men having dominion was fully shared by eighteenth century

238 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

Russians, and the huge number of them employed about St. Petersburg helped still more to increase the general loathing for the new capital. Hardly a nation of Europe failed to supply Peter with friends and fellow-workers. He honoured them above his own subjects. Nor did it matter in the least in what circumstances he happened to encounter them. One day as he was inspecting the operations he chanced to notice working with the other convicts a scion of the fightingest family of Scotland, who, born in Sweden, combined with the surname of Douglas the designation of Gustaf Otto. Captured at Pultowa he entered the Russian service; having slain a general in wrath, he entered a Russian jail. But to Peter his failings did not appear at all seriously to cry to heaven for vengeance. He could well make allowance for the spirit of a Douglas when provoked, so restored him to all his honours. In 1719 the now Russified Swede-Scot seized the ancient capital of Finland, and bore in triumph from the cathedral of Abo the bones of Henry the English saint (p. 188).¹

The only antiquities of St. Petersburg are the structures connected with the life of the strenuous

¹ My friend, A. Rothay Reynolds, author of *My Russian Year*, has very kindly elicited for me the information that these relics no longer exist. Although the sagas give no hint of any difference of religious views between Russians and Norse (p. 233), the bones of St. Henry were evidently insulted at St. Petersburg, where they might with more appropriateness have been shrined.

founder. Peter's cottage, which was erected soon after the works began in 1703, is a large four-roomed, shingle-roof, log-hut; and the living-room which still contains the simple wooden furniture that he used enables one to some extent to picture the backwoods life of the imperial pioneer. The whole is enclosed in a larger structure of brick, and a miracle-eikon is the central feature of the shrine that now occupies the chamber where the great Tsar slept.

Never perhaps was Peter so happy as when he was living here. He hated lofty rooms and luxurious furniture and costly food. He liked to wear his oldest clothes and enjoyed working with his own hands. As a great concession to his wife he consented at Catherine's coronation to wear a gold-embroidered coat, but could think of nothing except the fact that its cost would have paid for several soldiers. In Paris he found the luxury of the Louvre absolutely insupportable. After looking impatiently at the sumptuous feast set out, he dined off radishes and bread which he washed down with two glasses of beer. After a contemptuous survey of the superbly fitted French bedrooms, he rested for the night on a camp-bed set up in a closet.

Close by the cottage was the small wooden church of the Trinity with two towers and onion domes which Peter built, but which was burned down early in 1913.

A picturesque appearance is given to the Neva's northern bank by the old fort with its needle spire of gold that stands on a little island of its own, close to the cottage and Trinity church. Peter's old earth bastions were faced with granite in later days and the east gate is dated 1740. For defending anything whatever the fortress is no more use than the Tower of London, but within are pleasant avenues of trees, and over the roofs of the barracks and other buildings rises the famous Cathedral of SS. Peter and Paul, where rest the city's founder and the later Tsars.¹ A soldiers' city from the very first St. Petersburg has been, and such it is to-day. Troops constantly pass along the streets; sentries with bayonets fixed are to be seen on every hand. The thoroughfares are patrolled by policemen, each armed with baton, revolver and sword.

Peter planned to build rather a canal town of Holland than a boulevard city of France. Many of the canals have been filled up, but beside one of those that remain, in the corner of the beautiful Summer

¹ The present building was erected about 1733 from designs by Tressini, an Italian architect. It is a rather commonplace Classic church whose details are extremely poor, though the interior has a certain impressiveness from the tall pillars supporting the roof, for the usual galleries are not there. Over the windows are cherubs. Over the eastern octagon rises a little onion dome. The tower that surmounts the western front is crowned by the gilded needle spire which soars, out of all proportion to the church, no less than 364 feet into the air, sometimes most impressively catching the light of the setting sun while all is in shadow around.

Gardens, stands the delightful two-storey house with plaster bas-reliefs and metal roof that Dutch workmen built for Peter ; it is known as his palace to-day. The rooms inside, doored and shuttered with panelled oak and partly lined with blue Dutch tiles, have a most cheerful and pleasant character ; they contain some rather good carved work that was tooled by the great Tsar ; a mirror-case with stag, foliage, birds and other things is signed and dated " Peter. 1710." ¹

In this same year he founded a Battle Abbey in thanksgiving for his victories, although he fully realised the need for reducing the extremely large number of monks that Russia contained. This convent helps one to realise how well Peter came to understand the people that he ruled. If the new city was really to be the capital of this pious land, something of old Russia, of Holy Russia, must be brought into its midst. Most fortunately for Peter's plans it chanced that as early as 1241 a Russian general had gotten the surname of Nevski from a victory he gained over a Swedish army on the banks of the Neva ; he had also become one of the most venerated of Russian saints. Thus the enshrining of his relics in the cloister church brought to St.

¹ This house contains the very distorting panes of glass that were the earliest to be made in Russia. The only large buildings in the city that Peter ever saw are part of the University and an adjacent palace of Menshikóf, now a school of cadets. Both are stucco and uninteresting ; one bears the date 1710.

Petersburg one of the holiest things in all the land. Venerable associations that meant much to the devout were secured to the brand new town.

The very ornate silver shrine stands at present in the south transept of the church or cathedral which was erected for Catherine II. by a Russian architect named Staroff.¹ The peace that broods over this quiet cloister rather reminds one of the south of Europe. The picturesque convent buildings of yellow and bluish-white plaster are seen among gardens and trees, while over them appear the towers and dome of the cathedral and the steeples of the smaller chapels, in one of which Suworof is at rest. Across a placid canal is the burial ground of the monks. Even in Russia these men are famous for the beauty with

¹ So that it is rather curious that this building should be on the whole the most perfect reproduction of an Italian church in St. Petersburg. There is nothing Russian about it; just an ordinary cruciform domed Renaissance building, 255 feet long.

The other large monastery in St. Petersburg, Smolni, by the bend in the river, has buildings surrounding two huge courts which are made very pleasant by trees. The first, which is much the larger, has a covered cloister all round and a high dome in each corner. The centre of the western side is left open to expose to the street the chief façade of the church, which, like the Chantry at Winchester, stands detached in the centre of the court. It is a simple and impressive Italian Renaissance building, 245 feet long, with pilasters on two levels and in the centre a lofty tower, open to the top within. The interior is all white, some marble shafts giving relief to the eternal plaster. Designed by Rastrelli in 1734, the structure follows the type of his native country, except that five great onion domes mark as Russian the top of the tower. The faults of the building are glaring enough, but Fergusson seems rather severe in his remark: "It would be difficult to find in Europe anything so really bad as this."

which they sing the daily offices of the church, unaccompanied by any kind of instrument—for such is never allowed in buildings of the Communion of the East.

A roadway cut straight through the forest between this convent and the Admiralty formed the beginning of the chief street of the present day city, the well-known Nevski Prospect. The Admiralty stands on the Neva side where Peter built his first boat on the Baltic; it forms the chief centre of the city, to which many of the streets converge. The building in some ways is one of the best in the city, erected in the Renaissance style by a Russian architect named Zucharoff. A ship in full sail forms a vane on the needle spire that rises from a square tower lined with Ionic columns, while the vast building, measuring over 1,300 by 500 feet, is well managed, the long façade being relieved from serious monotony by an imposing gateway in the centre and by the pilastered wings rising much higher than the plainer middle part.

Close by is the splendid Winter Palace, another Renaissance building, designed in 1754 by Rastrelli but considerably modified after a fire in 1837.¹ One

¹ Its dimensions are 731 by 584 feet. There are three stories with pilasters on two levels, but the architrave bends over each of the upper windows, and the consequent loss of the horizontal line that is of the very essence of Classic architecture, is absolutely fatal to the effect. Several halls and other chambers within are extremely magnificent, but the most glorious columns of marble support gilded capitals of plaster, and there is a good deal to justify

244 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

side faces the river, the other looks on to the square in which rises the tall monolith column that commemorates Alexander I.—the site of the terrible scenes of January, 1905. By an archway over the street the palace is joined to the Hermitage, which houses one of the finest collections on the earth.¹

While St. Petersburg has been greatly influenced by the street architecture of Italy and France, its broadways have a distinct character of their own and resemble the thoroughfares of no other city. Over streets roughly paved with sharp-edged stones, or the

Fergusson's observation about a man of taste recoiling in horror from such a piece of barbaric magnificence. The chapel is frankly Russian with the customary onion dome. The figures of the eikonastasis stand out detached, though the Eastern Church as a rule holds anything more than very slight relief as a breach of the Second Commandment. This little building contains some priceless relics, hands of the Baptist and of the Virgin, a fragment of the body of St. George, a piece of the true cross, a picture painted by St. Luke ! There are relics nearer our own day in the chamber where the second Alexander died in 1881, after being wounded by the bomb (p. 253). His empty study chair, the books as he left them on the table, the few coins in his pocket when he went out for the last time, his unfinished cigarette, his coat thrown over the back of a chair, the couch on which he passed away.

¹ This structure is more Greek in design, the architect was Baron Leo von Klenze, of Munich, and it was erected about the middle of the nineteenth century. There are two large courts, but one of them is divided by the great staircase which rises between two rows of magnificent grey marble columns that support the plaster ceiling ; other portions have a very rich effect from the profusion of coloured marbles and the beautiful inlaid wood flowers which almost give the impression of mosaic. The lower storey forms a very complete museum, beginning with ancient Egypt and including many interesting things from different parts of the Russian Empire. The upper storey, which is higher and much better lighted, houses the famous collection of pictures.

upturned ends of logs, rattle droskeys, whose shafts and traces both start from the axle-trees. The horses wear high hames and the drivers long beards, for Peter's commands that all must shave are now no longer enforced.¹ The pace at which the horses move is a great contrast to the leisurely dignity that characterises the citizens.

Over the windows of most of the shops are painted pictures of what men sell within, for many of the customers are unable to read and appreciate this guide. Huge gargoyles shoot waterfalls from rain or melting snow on to the pavements below them, so that much caution must be used in walking about in wet weather. Something of the café life of the Continent is to be seen under the creepers and trees of the pleasant courtyards of hotels. The way in which men kiss each other both here and in the public streets is at first sight rather startling to races trained to keep emotions more suppressed, but there is nothing insincere, and—coupled with many qualities one would fain see changed—there is a certain gentle and affectionate disposition about the Russians that becomes more and more attractive as one gets to know them better.²

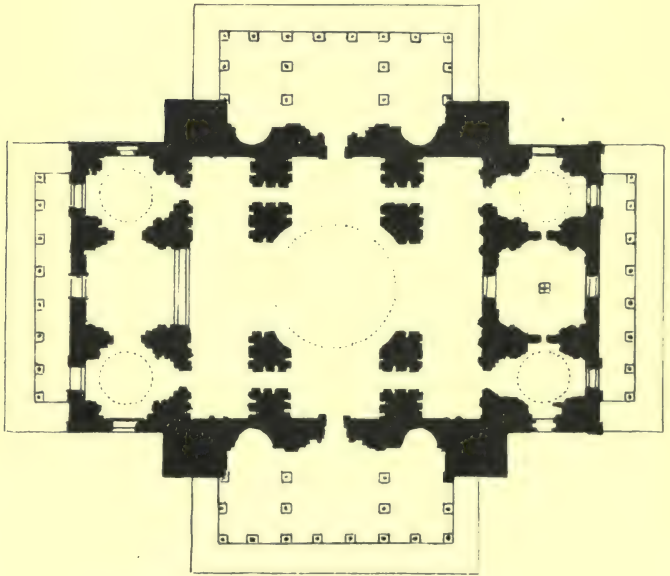
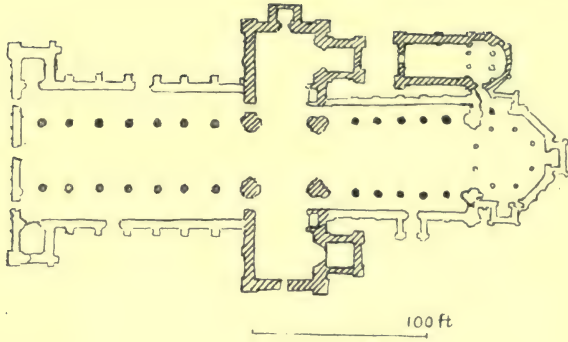
¹ The reason was that he wanted his people to look more European, but the Russians held a good deal of the oriental view of the sacredness of beards, and some preserved their cut-off hairs to be buried with them and enjoyed in the next world.

² This characteristic seems even more apparent among Russians in the Far East than in their own capital.

246 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

The most prominent, and in some ways the most interesting, building in the city is the Metropolitan Church of Russia, the great Cathedral of St. Isaac of Dalmatia, on whose festival Peter was born. Other statesmen have chosen new capitals but have been satisfied to leave the ecclesiastical centre in the older town. No half measures for Peter. Even the holy Patriarchate of Moscow, sacred to the whole of Eastern Christendom in a sense from making up again the number of five after the western one had lapsed into heresy (from the eastern point of view), he insisted upon sweeping away.¹ It was one of the duties of the Tsar to lead the donkey upon which the Patriarch rode on Palm Sunday, and that seemed to Peter to be putting the relations between Church and State on to a footing wholly wrong. A patriarch once found fault with the shabby-looking European dress of the emperor, who had discarded the flowing robes of the East, and Peter had retorted that he would have expected the head of the Church to be otherwise engaged than in minding the business of tailors. So when the patriarch died he did not name another, and at last when the priests begged that some one might sit in the throne, he is said to have sat there himself with the remark that he would be patriarch. The Holy Synod was organised instead and the Church

¹ The original Patriarchates were those of Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople and Rome. That of Moscow dated from the sixteenth century.



-  ROMANESQUE
-  LATER GOTHIC
-  MODERN

Cathedrals of Trondhjem (p. 81) and S. Isaac, St. Petersburg (p. 246), illustrating the very different character of the Gothic and Classic styles. (Later Gothic refers only to Trondhjem).

[Face page 246

lost almost entirely its old comparative independence of the State. The synod building is close to the cathedral and the highest dignitary of the Russian Church is now the Metropolitan of St. Petersburg.

The existing Cathedral of St. Isaac was forty years in building and was finished in 1858, the architect being a Frenchman, the Chevalier de Montferrand. In magnificence of material it surpasses almost all, and in excellence of position it excels very many of the great churches of Christendom. Its chief merit is that it is the one building in the capital that really suggests durability and permanence. There is just a faint suggestion—very slight indeed, but still impossible entirely to shake off—of temporary exhibition buildings about the acres and acres of plaster in which the other great monuments of the capital are sheathed. But this cathedral is of solid marble or stone, and in its proportions the most massive large church in Christendom, a very considerable part indeed of its area being occupied by walls and piers.

On the four sides of the church stand the four noblest porticoes that have been erected since Roman days. With the proneness of the Eastern Church to symbolism these glorious portals might have been made to suggest the City of God, but the opportunity was hopelessly lost; on the east there is no entrance at all, and the design cannot for one moment be compared with that of St. Sophia, St. Peter's or St.

248 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

Paul's. Indeed, what was intended for stately simplicity has degenerated into the most hopeless commonplace.¹

¹ Each portico has eight huge monolithic columns of red Finland granite, 56 feet high (bases and Corinthian caps of bronze), to support the sculptured tympanum, whose figures are in high relief, and is approached by a stately flight of steps. Except on the east there are splendid portals with grape patterns in stone and beautiful relief bronze doors. The side porticoes are deeper than the others and flanked by turrets for bells. The plan of the church is a simple oblong, 305 by 166 feet. Only four great windows admit light to the interior (except for a single one behind the altar opening into the eastern portico and those of the lantern dome), one on each side of the lateral porticoes. These naturally dwarf the design very much. A rather poorly planned circular colonnade and iron dome rise through the roof, resting on four huge piers in the church. The arrangement of the vaulting is made to suggest the ordinary cruciform plan, with a dome in each corner. The general effect is extremely rich from the magnificent shafts of malachite and lapis lazuli, and the lavish decorations of inlaid marble and mosaic, but nothing can redeem the poverty and commonplace character of the design. Fergusson calls the building a cold and unsatisfactory failure, and says there is not a week's thought in the whole design from pavement to dome cross. This it is not easy to deny, but there is much to redeem the failure, particularly in the splendour of the material.

The other Renaissance buildings of the city are very numerous, and in many cases very large, but for variety they cannot be said to be remarkable. Of the foreign architects successively employed, not one was really good, and decidedly the best buildings on the whole are those designed by Russians who had mastered the principles of the foreign style. One of the most successful, by Varonikin, was erected at the worst possible period—the early nineteenth century. It is the Cathedral of Our Lady of Kazan, an Italian building, 257 feet long. Inviting colonnades extend from the north transept to the street, forming a vast semi-circle and suggesting the piazza of St. Peter's. The portico of the transept appears in the centre with the dome rising above, and, material apart, this is one of the most successful things of its kind ever built. Nave and south transept also have porticoes. The columns throughout the building are in pairs, and within the effect is most striking from the granite columns that uphold the great entablature, the lofty flat roofs of the

Between St. Isaac's and the river are really beautiful gardens in which stands the famous equestrian statue of Peter (by the French sculptor, Falconet), that Catherine II. erected in 1782, on a huge block of granite.¹ The composition is extremely spirited and it certainly ranks very high among monuments of a similar kind over the whole world. The general effect of this wide open space with fine Renaissance structures all round, including those on the far side of the river, is exceedingly stately, especially when seen for the first time.

National character is always mirrored in national architecture, but seldom quite as here. The plan of the city is European and the conception is of the stateliest; the flat and rather featureless site on both sides of a noble river is just such as to give the very utmost opportunity for splendid architectural display. The style chosen for the buildings, the Classic Renaissance as it was developed in France and Italy, is perhaps more suited than any other for the objects which successive emperors had in view. The magnificence of the great broad streets and boulevards, aisles, and the way in which the lantern rises from arches which terminate the tunnel vaults of the four arms. Much of the eikonastasis is of silver, and the floor is marble inlaid.

¹ The centre of gravity of the rearing horse is successfully preserved in the right place by making the metal almost solid at the back and quite thin in front. In November, 1770, Rev. J. C. King wrote to Lord Macartney: "I mean the great stone on which Falconet's statue is to be placed. . . . It is . . . arrived at St. Petersburg: the Empress had earrings made of it for herself."

250 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

the ample squares and frequent monuments all give the impression in very truth of one of the grandest of European capitals.

The effect that should be produced by the lavish expenditure of money and the splendour of much of the material are somewhat neutralised, however, by the fact that the great palaces and churches (with the exception of St. Isaac's) profess to be what they are not, and expose to the air no other material than stucco. The very elements rebel against so much imposture and bring down great patches of plaster, while western rulers have been utterly powerless to prevent the appearance of extremely eastern features in every corner of the town.

But in spite of all defects of detail these uniform Classic buildings, well grouped and set off by wide spaces and trees, produce a really magnificent effect, and as often as the black peaty earth is exposed by taking up the streets for drains one realises more fully the miracle of all these sumptuous structures founded in security upon a quaking bog.¹ Here is a city, one feels, that was raised by a people of iron will, a nation that was only invigorated by the centuries of Mongol domination ; a people who seek to be western Europeans, but as a nation are not, though many individuals among them are leaders in European thought and science too. In some respects St.

¹ In some parts of the city the soil is of a stiff blue clay.

Petersburg gives one the impression of being the capital of a vast dominion more than any other city on the globe. Even in the British Empire there is nothing that appeals to the imagination quite in the same way as the fact that from the Russian capital one may travel entirely on Russian territory to the frontier of Austria, to the frontier of Japan or to a point within thirty-six miles of American soil.

Nevertheless, whether for evil or good, the spirit of the West is not here. The leaders of Asia think, but the leaders of Europe act. Tolstoy and Kropotkin, household words in countless English homes, have done as much as almost any others to sustain the present conditions in Russia by the very elaborateness of their programmes. When England yearned as Russia yearns she found a Cromwell, not a Tolstoy. He grasped a sword and the scabbard was thrown away. He had little to say to the world, but plenty to say to the king. The gentler Russian masses idolise a man who held an open book for all the world to read, yet did little to change the constitution of his own times—so far as on the surface shows. And for all practical purposes the great Russian Empire still retains the constitution that Ruric gave his conquering hordes. Law is the word of the prince.

With the House of Commons (ten years after it had put a new sovereign on the throne) Peter seems to have been less favourably impressed than with any

252 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

other English institution. On seeing the lawyers in Westminster Hall he is recorded to have remarked that there were only two such people in all Russia and he was going to hang them on his return. Peter did not see that, however much they may be sneered at, Parliaments and Law Courts are of the very essence of western civilisation. Japanese guns at Port Arthur greatly helped to set up indeed a *duma* in the city of Peter, but the very place where it meets indicates the extent of its power. The Taurida Palace stands far east of the imposing mass of really important Government buildings and is in a somewhat squalid quarter of the town.

European indeed is this city at first glance, wholly western in style, in fact one of the most striking groups of European buildings anywhere on earth to be seen. But step into a side street. Behold the life of the East! Behold Asiatic bazaars! Goods displayed on quaint little open stalls whose owners sit among their wares and make their calculations on the *abacus* just as one may see in China. And the smells of Asia are there, and the leisurely pigeons of the East. The unhastening manner in which everything goes on likewise does much to intensify the underlying oriental atmosphere of the city. Look up to where the church towers are crowned by the onion domes of Tatar against a European sky. Europe in the square, Asia in the lane! Vast Government buildings reflect the

spirit of the West, but toward the painted screens of the churches moves the changeless mind of the East. The concealed spear of the Tatar pierces the garment of the European. There is no need to scratch.

It is a very real relief that one important building openly reverts to the ancient native style, and brings to the new capital a breath of Russian mediævalism. It need hardly be said that it is a church; it commemorates Alexander II. (p. 244) and is appropriately dedicated to the Resurrection, raised over the spot where he fell.¹ The outlines of the national story may be read in those of the church. The style is an attempt at Byzantine, and that reminds us of the fact that it was to Constantinople and the Eastern Church that Russia eventually went when in search of a new faith long centuries ago. The effort to produce the kind of effect of which St. Sophia is the noblest example is, however, extremely crude; Slavs could never really fathom the subtlety of the mind of Greece. The nine cupolas² are surmounted (and the

¹ The bomb-splintered brougham in which he took his last drive is preserved unrepaired among the Imperial carriages.

² Surmounting the central octagon and its four corner turrets, the west tower, and the three eastern apses. Some are covered with extraordinary raised glazed tiles, the central one greatly resembling a turban. The interior is both simpler and better than the outside; four columns with round arches sustain the central lantern, and round arches open to apses and tower. The floor is of marble inlaid; walls, piers and vaults are covered with the most beautiful mosaics in prevailing colours of blue and gold, saints in four tiers



254 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

character of the building is greatly influenced) by onion domes so common in the turbaned East, imposed upon Russia with much else during the long centuries of Mongol rule. The presence of this feature gives to all truly Russian churches something of the look of Indian and Central Asian mosques. But this point is concealed by the Russian priests, who, with their natural proneness to symbolism, will explain that these onion domes are in reality modelled on rosebuds, thus typifying the embryo Church on earth, destined to blossom hereafter in Heaven. Each cupola supports a cross with chains (p. 186) which surmounts a crescent to symbolise the triumph of Christianity over Islam and the long series of eastern wars in which Russia has been engaged. The interior with its glorious and most striking Italian mosaics evidences the western influences that have spread over Russia in latter years.

The first ship to enter the port of St. Petersburg (in November, 1703) was Dutch, and it brought a cargo of wine and salt. Peter himself acted as pilot without telling the Hollanders who he was, but he

varied by landscapes and lilies. The old church furniture displayed in the Museum of Alexander III. seems to show Byzantine forms getting more and more modified by increasing Tatar influences. In the same place are some very interesting paintings by Russian artists. Verestchagin has the place of honour, and is represented by some excellent pictures of battle scenes, some displaying the French at Moscow. The picture of Abram and Isaac done by Reutern with his left hand has faces that could hardly be better.



CHURCH OF THE RESURRECTION

[Face page 254



afterwards gave great rewards both to skipper and crew, renamed the boat after the town, and freed it for ever from Russian dues. An English vessel arrived the same year.

Much earlier the Muscovy Company had originated from the English efforts to discover the north-east passage to Cathay, and during the reign of Mary and Philip, Sebastian Cabot became its first Governor. British trade has been prominent in St. Petersburg ever since the town, began, and not far below the Admiralty is the old English Quay. Saints carved in stone mark the sky line of a large Classic building that looks over the quay to the river, and forming a long upper chamber is the pilastered Anglican Church.¹

Suburbs of singular beauty are provided for St. Petersburg by the lovely islands among which the Neva winds, its different branches crossed by rough bridges of wood. In places reeds and swamps still border the woods, giving some idea of the original nature of the hopeless-looking spot on which Peter decided to build. Here are large private houses with avenues and flower beds in the style of France, and

¹ The Honourable Russia Company is still patron of four of the English churches in Russia. "A faint legal trace of the ancient privileges of the Muscovy Company survives in the extra-territorial character belonging for marriage purposes to the churches and chapels formerly attached to their factories in Russia."—Sir Courtenay Ilbert.

256 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

many of them have such large grounds that the general impression in places is very much like that of the Bois de Boulogne.

Even to-day the city of Peter is very largely isolated from the world, approached by road or rail through long miles of forest and swamp. Only on a small scale is agriculture or market gardening to be seen. Nevertheless two country palaces that the founder erected in the vicinity are centres of some population, Tsarske Selo among the woods on the way to Moscow and Peterhof on the southern shore of the gulf. The new Tatar-Byzantine church of the latter is a conspicuous landmark from the decks of vessels steaming along the Morskoi canal through the shallow waters between the heavily fortified island of Cronstadt and the timber port of the city itself.

Of early days at this place we get a rather graphic description in a letter written by the Hanoverian Resident named Weber in 1718: "When at last we arrived at Cronslot, the Tsar invited us to his villa at Peterhof. We went with a fair wind, and at dinner warmed ourselves to such a degree with old Hungarian wine, although His Majesty spared himself, that on rising from the table we could scarcely keep on our legs, and when we had been obliged to drain quite a quart apiece from the hands of the Tsaritsa we lost all our senses, and in that condition they carried us out to different places, some to the garden,

some to the woods, while the rest lay on the ground here and there. At four o'clock they woke us up and again invited us to the summer-house, where the Tsar gave us each an axe and bade us follow him. He led us into a young wood where he pointed out trees which it was necessary to fell in order to make an alley straight to the sea, about a hundred paces long, and told us to cut down the trees. He himself began work on the spot (there were seven of us besides the Tsar), and although this unaccustomed work, especially in our far from sober condition, was not at all to our liking, we nevertheless cut boldly and diligently, so that in about three hours the alley was ready and the fumes of wine had entirely evaporated. None of us did himself any harm except Minister X, who unconsciously cut one tree and was knocked down by another, badly scratched. After verbal thanks we received our real recompense after supper in a second drink, which was so strong that we were taken to our beds unconscious."¹

Peter's old villa still exists, a compromise between the styles of building that prevailed two centuries ago in Holland and France, but on the top of the wooded slope a long and beautiful palace has been erected in the style of the Renaissance.² The

¹ Quoted by Eugene Schuyler, *Peter the Great, Emperor of Russia*, 1884.

² One room has pictures of several hundred Russian maids dwelling in different parts of the Empire, another has living plants trained

258 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

chapel alone is Russian under five gilded onion domes.

The French-looking grounds are famous for their many fountains, whose water is brought from a lake miles away. A large number of jets play in front of the palace itself, and also beside the straight water-course that runs down from it to the sea. The effect looking up through the trees from the road at the bottom is one of the most fairy-like things on the earth. Walking through the woods one comes upon all sorts of fountains where they would be expected least. Water runs downstairs or slips along a marble way under ferns, or sprinkles a statue or an artificial tree or plays among the columns of an Ionic temple in ruin, or forms a sort of birthday cake by jets rising higher and higher toward the centre. The effect of all these fountains among the trees is really most impressive, no other land has the like. But just as one is beginning to feel that it is the most magnificent thing upon earth one remembers that a cold bath in a St. Petersburg hotel costs two shillings and reflects on the water supply of the capital.

By an artificial tree are hidden jets to throw water all over an ordinary-looking seat. Such was the idea of a joke entertained by former Tsars, who also liked to

up the walls as part of its permanent decoration, ornate chandeliers hang from ceilings, pictures and tapestry cover the walls, and, as at Solomon's Court, everything is splashed with gold.

ride in carriages containing musical boxes under the seats that used to play as they were drawn¹ along by horses harnessed in red and gold. One may incidentally pick up many interesting facts about the dead rulers of Russia that are not inscribed on the page of history.

Judged by results Peter was great indeed if mortal ever was. We are not asked to call him morally good. Alexandria has a magnificent position on the shores of the busiest of seas. Constantinople has few rivals in situation among all the cities of the world. But both are eclipsed in importance by this whimsical city that Peter insisted upon building among remote and frozen swamps.

To turn a great people round and force them to look west not east, to compel them to expect a golden future who before looked to a golden past—this is as near to an impossibility as ever was attempted in the history of man. Yet to an amazing extent this Peter actually did.

One's astonishment that he achieved so much is yet further increased when it is realised that his life was devoted very largely to frivolity and amusement, that in serious and earnest endeavour he was far surpassed by many who contrived to accomplish far less.

¹ Several such may be seen among the Imperial carriages in St. Petersburg.

260 CAPITALS OF THE NORTHLANDS

Of no individual that ever lived perhaps can it be said that he consciously and deliberately influenced the history of the world to the same extent as the high-thinking, hard-working, hard-drinking, founder of Petersburg.

INDEX

- AACHEN, 155
 Abo, 188, 238
 Absalon, Bp., 131
 Adam of Bremen, 118, 186
 Adrian IV., Pope, 82
 Agdaness, 71
 Agni's thwaite (position uncertain),
 211
 Akers Elv, 94
 Akuliakattamiut, 64
 Akureyri, 61
 Alaska, 67
 Albert of Mecklenburg, 121
 Alexander the Great, 234
 Alexander Nevski, St., 241-242
 Alexander II. (Russia), 244, 253
 Allthing, 39, 43-46, 49, 53
 Almenningen, 84
 Amager, 131, 143-143
Ambales Saga, 149
 America, 14, 40, 62, 63, 65, 104,
 125, 130, 137, 141, 145, 220, 251
 Anderson, Hans, 131, 134, 141-142,
 145-148
 Anlaf of Black-fen, 42
 Arabia, 152
 Arboga, Diet of, 189
 Arnliot Gellini, 79
 Asgarth, 177
 Aun, 185
- BALTIMORE, 140
 Bathridge, 53
 Bellman, 206
 Bergen, 83, 108, 155
 Bernadotte, 102, 215
 Berzelius, 219
 Birchlegs, 85, 99
 Birger, Jarl, 212, 215
 Birger, Persson, 195
 Björnson, 103, 109
 Blood Bath of Stockholm, 217-218
 Bo Jonsson, 215
 Boston, 29
 Brahe, Ebba, 223
- Brahe, Tycho, 133-134
 Bredablick, 221
 Brita, St., 122, 124, 195-196
 Bryce, James, 44
Burnt Njal, Saga of the, 44
 Bygdö, 107
 Byström, 192
- CALMAR, Union of, 121
 Catherine II. (Russia), 242, 249
 Charles XI. (Sweden), 164
 Charles XII. (Sweden), 196, 197,
 203, 214, 236
 Charles XV. (Sweden), 223-224
 Celsius, 187
 Cetil, Bp., 53
 China, 108
 Christian II. (Scandinavia), 142,
 217
 Christian IV. (Denmark), 100, 123,
 132
 Christiania, 100-109
 Christianity, Spread of, 15-18, 32,
 48-58, 75, 79-80
 Christiansten, 88
 Christie, 82
 Christina, 192, 223
 Christopher the Bavarian (Den-
 mark), 132
 Cinque Ports, 155
Codex Argenteus, 190
 Columbus, 63
 Constantinople, 161, 233, 253
 Copenhagen, 26, 113, 127-145
 Cowper, 23
Cristne Saga, 50, 51
 Cronstadt, 256
- DAVID, St., 196
 Dicuil, 32
 Djurgarden, 220
 Doñald, 184-185
 Douglas, Count, 188, 238
 Drammensfjord, 94
 Dublin, 69-70

- Du Chaillu, 82, 87, 191, 223-224
 Duf-thac's Scaur, 37
 Dyrehaven, 144
- EDSVIK, 222
Egil's Saga, 51
 Eith, 37
 Ekhoft, Dr., 167
 Ellidaar, 60
 Elsinore, 145-146
 Enlart, C., 65, 172
 Eric IX. (Sweden) St., 187, 192
 Eric of Pomerania, 132, 164
 Eric the Red, 33, 63
 Esia-rock, 48
 Esja, 40
 Ethelred the Redeless, 114, 152
 Etienne de Bonneuil, 193
 Ewald, 100
 Eyafjodr, 64
Eyrbyggja Saga, 38, 51, 54
 Eystein, Abp., 84, 85
- Faereyinga Saga*, 14-18, 73
 Faroos, 14-27, 31, 32-33, 83
 Faxefjoth, 33, 38, 39
 Fergusson, 133, 203, 242, 244, 248
 Finland, Finns, 187, 212, 236
 Finsen, N. R., 25-26
 Floki, 23
 Flosi, 44-46
 Fogelberg, 215
 Frederick V. (Denmark), 123, 135
 Fredericksborg, 134
 Frey, 178, 180
 Fyrisa, 188
- GAINSBOROUGH, 114
 Gard-here, 31
 Gardie, de la, 223
 Garthrealm, 152-153, 226-233
 Gate, 17
 Geiger, 191
 Geikie, 68
 Gilli, 19
 Gizor, Bp., 50-52, 55, 61
 Gogstad, 104
 Gol, 108
 Gorm the Old, 12, 113
 Gotenburg system, 219
 Gothland, 57, 150-175
 Goths, 151
 Greenland, 34, 63, 83, 127
 Grim Camban, 14
 Grimkel, Bp., 79
 Gudleik, 153
- Gustaf Vasa, 192, 197, 217-219
 Gustavus Adolphus, 187, 189, 192,
 214
 Gustavus III. (Sweden), 205
 Gyda, 12
- HAGGARD, RIDER, 124
 Hakluyt, 29
 Hakon, Earl, 69-74
 Hakon the Good, 104
 Hakon IV. (Norway), 99-100
 Hallward, St., 94, 99
 Hamar, 83, 92
 Hamilton, 191
 Hanseatic League, 154, 162, 163,
 227
 Hansen, 131, 139
 Harald Blaatand, 113
 Harald Fairhair (Shockhead), 11-14
 Harald Gilli, 96
 Harald Hardredy, 85, 95, 233
Havardz Saga, 42
 Heimaey, 37
Heimskringla, 12, 13, 22, 54, 69, 73,
 77, 86, 95, 99, 104, 113, 177,
 181, 226, 233
 Hell, 92
 Henry, St., 187-188, 213, 238
 Heor-leif, 35
 Herd-holt, 41
 Hill of Laws, 46, 49
 Hodgkin, Dr., 114
 Holar, 29, 34, 50, 55, 57, 58, 83
 Holger Danske, 134, 146-148
 Hollmenkollen, 109
 Holmgarth, 153, 227, 233
 Holy Roman Empire, 113, 155, 158
 Hordaland, 12
 Hudson, R., 67
 Hugo, Victor, 89
 Hultersta, 186
Hungrvaca, 53
 Hveen, 133
- IBSEN, 103
 Ingigerd, 231-232
 Ingwolf Arnerson, 35-39
 Iona, 31
 Ireland, Irish, 31-32, 36, 37, 43
 96-99, 229
 Isaac, St., 246-248
 Isafjodr, 61
- JACOBSEN, Carl, 139
 Jarisleif, 231-233
Joans Saga, 55, 57

John, St., of Holar, 55-57
 Jomsburg Vikings, 71
 Jutland, 94

KALFSKINSHUSET, 164

Kark, 71-74
 Karl Nilsson, 215
 Karl o'Mere, 19
 Kaupstadr, 37
 Keel-ness, 39
 Kirkebø, 23, 83
 Kirkwall, 83
 Klenze, von, 244
 Klint, 154, 174
 Knut the Holy, 118, 124
 Knut the Rich, 80, 94, 114-117
 Koln, 163
 Kronborg Castle, 145-146
 Kungshögar, 180

LADÉ OR LADIR, 68-76, 77, 80

Ladoga, 236
 Laing, Samuel, 134, 165, 204, 223
Landnama-bok, 38, 39, 43, 48, 49,
 54, 61
 Lapps, 221
 Larson, L. M., 117
 Lava, 54
Laxdaela Saga, 41
 Leif Ericson, 63
 Leif, son of Ozur, 19-21
 Lerfos Falls, 91
Libellus Islandorum, 32, 34, 35, 50
Linnaeus, 142, 172, 192, 206, 209,
 219

Liosvetninga Saga, 30

London Bridge, 114, 152
 Longfellow, 52, 198
 Longshanks mission, 159
 Lowe, R., 28
 Lübeck, 119, 163, 164
 Lucius, St., 116-117
 Lund, 56, 71, 83, 128
 Lyngby, 125

MAGNUS, Bp., 53

Magnus the Good, 85
 Magnus Ladulaas, 213
 Magnússon, 22
 Mälars Lake, 188, 201, 202, 212, 222
 Mallet, P. H., 30, 58, 152
 Man, 83
 Margaret, Queen, 120-122, 143, 164
 Marryat, Horace, 186
 Micklegarth, 233
 Montelius, 106, 181

Montferrand, Chevalier de, 247
 Morris, William, 22, 127
 Munketorp, 196

NADDODH, 32

Naerofjord, 26
 Nelson, 143
 Nestor, 227
 Neva, 236, 241, 243, 249
 Newport, R.I., 65
 New York, 225
 Nid, R., 68, 75, 76, 91
 Niebuhr, 135
 Nils the goldsmith, 161
 Nolsö, 22
 Nova Scotia, 67
 Novgorod the Great, 155, 227

ODIN (WODEN), 57, 177-178, 180,
 185

Olaf, St., 18, 21, 76-81, 85, 94, 124,
 153-154, 168-169, 210-211,
 231-233

*Olaf, St., Saga of (part of Heims-
 kringla)*, 152, 168, 179

Olaf Tryggvison, 15, 16, 70-76,
 113, 229-231

*Olaf Tryggvison, Saga of (part of
 Heimskringla)*, 63, 230

Olavus Petri, 216

Origines Islandicæ, 38, 83, 106, 182

Oslo, 83, 95-99

Ostero, 17

Otté, 122, 215

Otto, 113

PARIS, 193, 239

Patrec, St., 48

Peter the Great, 234-260

Peterhof, 256-258

Pols Saga, 58

Powell, York, 15, 38

RASTRELLI, 242, 243

Reek-ness, 33

Republic of Iceland, 44

Reykjavik, 32, 33, 38, 40-41, 46-
 47, 58-61

Riddarsholm, 213

Rognvald, Jarl, 13

Rosenborg, 134

Roskilde (Roiswell), 111-126

Ruric, 227

ST. EDMUNDSBURY, 84

St. Petersburg, 152, 226, 234-260

- Salts Vedel, 169
 Schuyler, 257
 Scotland, 25, 26, 67, 222
 Sergel, 206
 Shakespeare, 149
 Siegfrið, St., 124, 213
 Sigmund, 15, 18, 73
 Sigtuna, 177, 210, 212
 Sigurd, Bp., 80
 Sigurd Jerusalem-farer, 96
 Skalholt, 50, 53, 54, 58, 83
 Skansen, 220
 Slite, 154
 Smolni, 242
 Snaefells Jökull, 40
 Snorri Sturluson, 12, 54, 177, 181
 Snowland, 32
 Sodor (South Isles), 31, 70, 83
 Southey, 66
 Staroff, 242
 Stavanger, 83
 Steelyard, 155
 Sten Sture, 189
 Sticklestead, 80
 Stockholm, 199-225
 Stralsund, Treaty of, 163
 Stromo or Streamsey, 15, 19
 Styrmir hinn fróði, 61
 Suworof, 242
 Svein Twibeard, 113
 Svein Wolfson, 117
 Sverker house (Sweden), 187, 192
 Sverre Sigurdsson, 84, 85
 Svoldr, 113
 Swedenborg, 197
 Sylvanus, 35, 138
- TEGNÉR, 68, 198, 199
 Tessin, de, 194, 203
 Thangbrand, 51-52
 Thingvellir, 43
 Thjelvar, 151
 Thomas, W. W., 207
 Thor, 49, 57, 180
 Thore, 18
 Thor-gar, 49-50
 Thorild, 190
 Thorir Klakka, 70-71
 Thor-kell Moon, 39
- Thorlac, Gudbrand, 29
 Thorlak, St., 54
Thorlacs Saga, 54
 Thorshavn, 15, 19, 22-25
 Thorwaldsen, 47, 138-140
 Thorwolf Butter, 33
 Thrand o'Gate, 19-21
 Thronð, 16-18
 Tokyo, 235
 Tolstoy, 251
 Tressini, 240
 Trondhjem, 76-90, 124
- ULFILAS, Bp., 151, 191
 Ulriksdal, 222
 Upsala, 124, 159, 176-197, 210
- VADSTENA, 196
 Vaeringian Guard, 233
 Varonikin, 248
Vatzdaela Saga, 25, 39, 181
 Verestchagin, 254
 Videy, 61-62
 Vigfusson, Gudbrand, 38
 Viking ships, 103-106
 Vinland the Good, 63
 Virginia, 123
 Visborg Castle, 164
 Visby, 154-175
 Vossevangen, 107
 Vulgaria, 232
- WALDEMAR IV. (Atterdag), 130,
 161-163
 Weber, 256
 Wellesley, 143
 Westmen Isles, 37
 Wheaton, 12
 Wilde, Lady, 93, 140, 142, 176
 William the Conqueror, 115
 Winchester, 115
 Wolf, Earl, 115-117
 Worm Lyrgia, 71
- Ynglings, Saga of* (part of *Heims-
 kringla*), 117, seq., 184
- ZIMMERN, HELEN, 154
 Zucharoff, 243







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