

THE STORY OF KING MAGNUS,
SON OF ERLING.

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CHAPTER I. THE BEGINNINGS OF KING MAGNUS ERLINGSON.

SITHENCE Erling was ware of this, what was the rede-making of Hakon and his, he sent bidding to all lords of whom he wotted that they had been trusty friends of King Ingi, and also to those of the bodyguards and liegemen of the king who had got away, and to the house-carles of Gregory, and made a meeting appointed. And when they met and had their talk, they forthwith took the rede to hold together their flock, and this they bound with fast words betwixt them. Sithence they talked hereof, whom they should take to king. And Erling Askew spake, and sought if it were the rede of lords and other rich men to take to king the son of Simon Sheath, the daughter's son of King Harald Gilli, and if Jon Hallkelson would be at the head of the flock. But Jon begged off. Then they tried Nicolas Skialdvorson, a sister's son of King Magnus Barefoot, if he would become lord of the flock. He answered on this wise, that that was his rede, that he should be taken to king who

was come of kingly kin, and he for the ruling of the flock in whom wits might be looked for, and said that that would be better for the hosting. Then they tried Arni, King's Stepfather, if he would let take to king any of his sons, brothers to King Ingi. He answered that the son of Kristin, the daughter's son of King Sigurd, was best born of kin for the kingdom of Norway. "And there is," said he, "a man to be found to lead his counsels, who is in duty bound to look after his affairs and the realm, where Erling his father is, a wise man, hard-redy and much tried in battle, and a man good at ruling in the land ; he will not lack for furtherance of this rede, if good luck be with it." Many took well to this rede. Erling answers : "So hear I herein, as if most who have been sought to on this matter had rather beg off of the trouble. Now it seems to me even as sure, though I should take to this matter, whatever happens, that the honour shall be fast to him who ruleth the flock, as that things may fare the other way, even as it hath now fared with mickle many, who have taken up such big matters, that for that they have tyned all their own, and life withal. But if this affair should speed well, it may be that there be some who then would like to have chosen this task for themselves ; and he will need this, who goes into this trouble, to set strong stays thereto, that he sit not under the withstanding and enmity of them who now are bound to this rede."

All yeasaid it to make that fellowship with full troth. Then Erling spake : "That is to say of me, that I deem it next to my bane to go to serve Hakon ; and though methinketh this most perilous,

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yet I will rather risk it, to let you to look thereto ; and I shall take upon me the command of the flock, if that be the rede and desire of all of you, and ye are all willing to bind this with sworn oaths."

They all yeasaid it ; and at this meeting it was settled that they should take Magnus, the son of Erling, to king. After this they held a Thing in the town, and at that Thing Magnus was taken to king over the whole land, being then five winters old. Sithence went all men under his hand who were there, and had been King Ingi's liegemen before, and they had, each one, the same nameboot that they had had erst with King Ingi.

CHAPTER II. KING MAGNUS' JOURNEY TO DENMARK.

ERLING ASKEW arrayed his faring and betook him aboard ship, and took with him King Magnus and all the liegemen that were there at the time. In that journey were Arni, King's Stepfather, and Ingrid, the mother of King Ingi, and two of her sons, and Jon Kutiza, the son of Sigurd Stork, and the house-carles of Erling, and also those who had been the house-carles of Gregory, and they had ten ships altogether. They fared south to Denmark to meet King Waldimar, and Buriz, son of Henry, the brother of King Ingi. King Waldimar was a nigh kinsman of King Magnus. They were sisters, daughters of King Harald from the Garths in the East—he being the son of Waldimar, the son of Jarisleif—these to wit: Ingibiorg, the

mother of King Waldimar, and Malmfrid, the mother of Kristin, the mother of King Magnus.

King Waldimar gave them a good welcome ; and Erling and he were long in meetings and counseling, and that came up from their talk, that King Waldimar should grant King Magnus all the aid from his realm which he might need for to make Norway his own, and sithence to hold it ; but Waldimar was to have that dominion in Norway which his former kin had had, Harald Gormson and Svein Twibeard, to wit, the whole of the Wick north to Rygiarbit. And this counsel was bound with oaths and treaties. Sithence Erling and his arrayed their faring from Denmark, and sailed out from Vendilskagi.

CHAPTER III. BATTLE IN TUNSBURG.

FARED King Hakon in the spring, straightway after Easter, north to Thrandheim ; he had then all the ships which King Ingi had had afore. Hakon had a Thing in the town of Cheaping, and there was he taken to king over all the land. Then gave he earldom to Sigurd of Reyr, and there was he taken to earl. Sithence fared Hakon and his back south, and all the way east to Wick, and the king went to Tunsborg, and sent Earl Sigurd east to King's Rock to ward the land with some of his host, should Erling come from the south.

Erling and his came to Agdir, and forthwith took the way north to Biorgvin ; there they slew Arni Fickleskull, King Hakon's bailiff, and went

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thence again eastward to meet King Hakon. But Earl Sigurd had not been made ware of Erling's journey from the south, and was still east at the Elf, but King Hakon was still in Tunsberg. Erling laid by Horseness, and lay there for certain nights.

And King Hakon made ready in the town. Erling made for the town, took a certain hulk and laded it with wood and haulm, and set fire to it, but the wind blew into the town, and the hulk drave up town-ward. He let bear two cables on the hulk, and tied thereto two cutters, which he let row in such wise after the hulk, as the wind drove it before them. Now when the fire was come much anigh the town, they aboard the cutters held to the cables, so that the town should not burn. Then the smoke drave so thick into the town, that nought might be seen from the bridges whereas the king's array stood. Then laid Erling with all his host in from without on the windward of the fire, and they (Erling and his host) shot at them. But when the townfolk saw that the fire was nearing their houses and many got wounded from shot, they took their rede and sent Priest Roald Longtalk out to find Erling, and to take truce for them and their town from Erling; and they broke up the king's array when Roald told them the truce was granted by Erling. And when the host of the townfolk was gone, then thinned the host on the bridges, yet some of Hakon's men egged on to withstanding, but Onund, the son of Simon, who had most to say in the rule of the host, spoke out thus: "Nowise

shall I fight for the dominion of Earl Sigurd and he nowhere near." Thereupon fled Onund, and then all the host that was with the king, and they up inland; and there fell much folk of Hakon's host. So was sung then :

Quoth Onund never would he
Strive in the brunt of battle
Till from the south Earl Sigurd
Should sail with all his house-carles.
Much folk of worthy warriors
Of Magnus up the street fare,
But hard away from thenceward
The Hawks of Hakon hied them.

Thorbiorn Skald-askew says so :

Thou loath'st not, lord, to redden
The teeth of the steed of troll-wife ;
I heard that in wide Tunsberg
Lightly good luck went with thee.
The townsmen feared to meet there
The rushing of the bright points ;
Adrad were the stems of steel-din
Of flame and swayèd elm-bow.

King Hakon fared overland ways north into Thrandheim. But when Earl Sigurd heard it, then fared he with all the ships he could get northward by the outer way to meet King Hakon.

CHAPTER IV. OF ERLING AND HAKON.

ERLING ASKEW took all those ships in Tunsberg which King Hakon had owned. There he got the Beechboard which King Ingi had owned. Erling went afterwards and laid

all the Wick under King Magnus' sway, and likewise all the land on his way to the north, and that winter he sat in Biorgvin. In those days Erling let slay Ingibiorn Sipil, a landed-man of King Hakon, north in the Firths. King Hakon sat in Thrandheim through the winter, but the next spring he called out an host, and arrayed him to fare south to have meeting with Erling. With him there were Earl Sigurd, Jon, son of Svein, Eindrid the Young, Onund, the son of Simon, Philippus, the son of Peter, Philippus, the son of Gyrd, Rognvald Kunta, Sigurd Cape, Sigurd Caul, Frirek Cock-boat, Asbiorn of Forland, Thorbiorn, the son of Gunnar Rentmaster and Stradbiarni.

CHAPTER V. OF THE HOST OF ERLING.

ERLING was in Biorgvin, and had a great host; he took the rede of forbidding the faring of all such cheaping-ships as were bound north for Cheaping, whereas he thought that over-swift would news come to Hakon if ships fared between them; yet he gave out that the cause therefor was, that the men of Biorgvin were worthier to have the goods aboard the ships, though they were bought undearer of the men of the burden ships than they might think due, "rather than it should be flitted to the hands of our foes and unfriends for their furtherance."

Now gathered ships to the town, whereas came many every day, and none fared away. Then Erling let set up ships that were the lightest, and

let the rumour fare that he would abide there, and there make a stand backed up by his kinsmen and friends. But one day Erling let blow to a meeting of his shipmasters, and gave leave to all skippers of cheaping-ships to fare whithersoever they pleased. And when men had got the leave of Erling Askew, those who were masters of the ships of burden and already lay alboun to fare with their ladings, some for chaffer, some on other errands, and the wind also was handy for sailing north along the land, they had all sailed before nones of that day those who were boun; each one sought to his faring most eagerly who had the swiftest ship, and they raced each with other. But when this gathered fleet came north to Mere, the host of King Hakon was there before them, and he himself was ingathering men and arraying them, and summoned to him landed-men and the men bound to hosting, and had heard no tidings from Biorgvin a long while. But now they got this one news from all the ships that fared from the south, that Erling Askew had beached his ships in Biorgvin, and that they would have to come to him there, and that he had a mickle host.

Thence Hakon sailed for Ve-isle, and sent from him men into Raumsdale, Sigurd the earl, to wit, and Onund, the son of Simon, to fetch him men and ships; he also sent out men into either Mere. But when King Hakon had tarried a few nights in the cheaping-stead, he put off and went somewhat further south, and thought he would thereby dight his faring the swiftlier, and that folk would the swiftlier come to him.

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Erling Askew had given the cheaping-ships leave to depart from Biorgvin on Sunday, but on Tuesday, when done were the fore-masses, the king's trumpet was blown, and he summons to him his host as well as the townsfolk and let run out the ships which afore had been beached. Erling held a husting with his host and host-bound men, and told them his mind, named men for captains, and let read out the list of those who were set down for the king's ship. So closed the husting, that Erling bade each one to get ready in his room whereto he was set down, and gave out that he should lose life or limb who should tarry behind in the town when he put off on board the Beech-board. Worm King's-brother put off in his ship forthwith that night, and most of the ships which had been afloat heretofore.

CHAPTER VI. OF ERLING ASKEW.

ON Wednesday, ere masses were sung in the town, Erling put off from the town with all his host, and they had one-and-twenty ships. There was a humming wind for faring from the south along the land. Erling had with him Magnus his son. Many landed-men were there, and they had the goodliest host. When Erling sailed north past the Firths, he sent in a cutter out of the way to the house of Jon, the son of Hallkel, and let take Nicolas, the son of Simon Sheath and of Maria, the daughter of Harald Gilli, and they had him with them out to the host, and he fared aboard the king's ship.

On the Friday, so soon as it dawned, they sailed into Stone-bight.

King Hakon lay then in that haven which hight,¹ and had fourteen ships. Himself, with his men, was up on the island a-playing, but his landed-men sat on a certain howe. They saw how a boat rowed from the south towards the island; two men were there in it, and let themselves fall forward down to the keel of the boat, and pulled their oars no less wildly. And when they came aland they made not the boat fast, but ran both of them. That saw the mighty men, and spake between themselves that these men would to tell tidings, and stood up and went to meet them. And so soon as they met, Onund, the son of Simon, said: "Know ye aught to tell of Erling Askew, that ye fare so wildly?" He answered who might first bring out word for weariness: "Here saileth Erling from the south upon you with twenty ships, or nigh thereto, and many of them mightily big, and speedily will ye see their sails." Then answered Eindrid the Young: "Over-nigh to the nose, quoth the carle, when he was shot in the eye." And speedily they went thereto where was the play, and next then spake the horn, and the war-blast was blown, for the whole host to wend to the ships most eagerly, and this was at the time of day when meat was much dight. All the folk made for the ships, and each one leapt aboard that ship which was nighest to him, and the ships were manned unevenly. Thereupon they take to their oars, while some reared the masts and turn the

¹ Lacuna in the MSS.

ships northward, and make for Ve-isle, because they looked there for much help from the town-folk.

CHAPTER VII. THE FALL OF KING HAKON.

NEXT to this they see the sails of Erling and his, and so each the other. Eindrid the Young had the ship which was called Dragpay, a great longship-buss, which had become under-manned, as they who were on board her before had run aboard other ships, and this was the hindmost of Hakon's ships. But when Eindrid came over against the isle of Sack, then came Beechboard after them, which Erling Askew steered, and Erling lashed the ships together. By then Hakon was wellnigh come into Ve-isle, when they heard the trumpets going, for those ships that were nearest turned back and would give help to Eindrid, and then either side thrust into battle as they might bring it about; many sails came down athwartship, and none were grappled, but they lay board to board. This battle was nought long ere the crew aboard King Hakon's ship broke up; some fell, some leapt overboard. Hakon cast over him a grey cape and leapt into another ship; but when he had been there for but a little while, he deemed he wotted that he was come there among unfriends. And when he be-thought him, he saw none of his men nor his ships right near, so he went on board Beech-board, and forward amongst the fore-castle-men and

craved quarter, and the forecastle-men took him to them and gave him quarter.

In this brunt there had been mickle manfall, yet more of the men of Hakon. On Beechboard was fallen Nicolas, the son of Simon Sheath, and the slaying of him was laid to Erling's own men.

After this there was a lull in the battle, and the ships on either side got clear of each other. Then it was told to Erling that King Hakon was there aboard the ship, and that his forecastle-men had taken him to them and behight to ward him. Erling sent a man forward and bade tell the fore-castle-men so to guard Hakon that he should not get away, and said that he would not speak against it that the king should have life, if that were the rede of the chief men, and that thereupon peace should be settled. All the fore-castle-men bade him speak hailest of lords. Then let Erling blow up fiercely, and bade men this, that they should lay-to those ships which were yet unridded, and said they would never get a better chance for avenging of King Ingi. Then they all whooped the war-whoop, and each egged on the other, and fell to their oars for the onset.

In this turmoil King Hakon was hurt deadly. But after his fall, and whereas his men became ware of it, they rowed hard on, and cast away their shields, and hewed two-handed, and heeded their life no longer. This over-boldness soon turned to them to mickle scathe, whereas Erling's men saw the bare hewing-steads on them; and fell a mickle deal of Hakon's host, and that went most thereto, that the odds were great, and Hakon's

men spared themselves but little, but none needed to name truce of Hakon's men, save such alone as mighty men took into their power, and hand-selled ransom for. These men fell of the host of Hakon: Sigurd Cape, Sigurd Caul, Rognvald Kunta. But some ships got away and men rowed into the Firths, and saved their lives thereby.

The body of King Hakon was brought into Raumsdale, and was buried there. King Sverrir, his brother, let flit the corpse of King Hakon north to Cheaping, and laid it in the stone-wall in Christchurch on the south side of the choir.

CHAPTER VIII. THE FLIGHT OF THE CAPTAINS OF KING HAKON.

SIGURD and Eindrid the Young, Onund, son of Simon, Frirek Cock-boat, and yet more chiefs held the flock together; they left the ships in Raumsdale, and fared thence to the Uplands. Erling Askew and King Magnus fared with their host north to Cheaping, and laid all the land under them wheresoever they fared. Sithence let Erling summon the Thing of Eres, and there Magnus was taken to king over all the land. But Erling did not tarry there long, for he deemed the Thrandheimers were not trusty to him and his son. And now Magnus was called king of all the land.

King Hakon was a man somewhat fair of look, well grown, tall and slender; he was much broad of shoulder, wherefore his men called him Hakon Shoulder-broad. But whereas he was young

of years, other chiefs had hand in his counsels with him; he was merry-hearted and humble in his speech, playful, and behaved after the manner of youths; well befriended he was of all the commonalty.

CHAPTER IX. THE BEGINNINGS OF KING SIGURD.

MARKUS O' SHAW was the name of an Upland man, a kinsman of Earl Sigurd. Markus gave fostering to a son of King Sigurd, who also hight Sigurd. And after this the Uplanders took Sigurd to king by the rede of Earl Sigurd, and other chiefs who had followed King Hakon, and still they had a powerful host. Fared oft their flock atwain; the king and Markus were less on the wind-board, but Earl Sigurd and other chiefs, with their companies, were more in face of the peril. They fared with their flock most about the Uplands, but whiles down into the Wick.

Erling Askew had ever with him his son Magnus, and he also had under his rule all the host of the fleet, and the warding of the land. He was in Biorgvin some while that autumn, and fared thence east into Wick, and set up in Tunsberg, and arrayed for wintering there; he gathered in from about the Wick scat and dues such as the king owned, and had also a goodly host and mickle.

But inasmuch as Earl Sigurd had but little from the land, and his following was many, his wealth soon ran short, and wheresoever chiefs were not

near, wealth was sought all lawlessly, somedeal by reckless guilt-charges, somedeal by bare robbery.

CHAPTER X. EARL SIGURD DOOMED.

IN that time stood the realm of Norway in mickle bloom; the bonder-folk were wealthy and mighty, and unwonted to the unfreedom and unpeace of the flocks; and there befell speedily much talk and many tales when robberies were done.

The men of Wick were full friends of King Magnus and of Erling, mostly for the cause of their friendship for King Ingi, the son of Harald, whereas the Wick-folk had always with their strength served under that shield. Erling let ward be holden over the town, and twelve men waked every night. Erling would ever be holding Things with the bonders, and oft was that talked of, the turbulence of the men of Sigurd. And by the talking over of Erling and other men of the host, was gotten of the bonders great cheer to this, that it would be a mickle happy work that men should let that flock thrive never. Arni, King's-stepfather, spake long on this matter, and hard at the close; for he bade this to all men who were at the Thing, both the men of Erling's host, and the bonders, and the townsfolk, to make weapon-take to this end: to doom by law Earl Sigurd and all the flock of them, both alive and dead, to the devil, and by the fierceness of the folk and their fickleness, they all yeasaid it; and this unheard-of deed was done and settled even accord-

ing to what was laid down by law as to dooms at Things. Priest Roald Long-talk spake on this affair; he was a man nimble of speech, and his speech came much to the same point as all that had been spoken before. Erling feasted folk through Yule at Tunsberg, and gave war-wage there at Candlemass.

CHAPTER XI. OF ERLING.

EARL SIGURD went with the flower of his host about the Wick, and many folk went under him by reason of his mastery, and many paid fine; in this wise he went far and wide about up inland, and came down upon folk in sundry places. Some there were in his flock who privily sought truce with Erling, and answer came thereto, that all men who asked therefor should have life and limb, but they only should have land-abiding who were not in great guilts against him. But when the band heard that men should not have land-abiding, that held the flock much together; for there were many who wotted themselves to be so proven, as that Erling would deem them much guilt-bitten. Philippus, the son of Gyrd, made peace with Erling, and got back his lands, and fared home to his estate. But a little after thither came the men of Sigurd and slew him. Many blows did each deal the other in chasings or manslaughters; but that is not written, wherein the lords had no dealings together.

CHAPTER XII. ERLING GETS NEWS OF EARL SIGURD.

IT was in the early part of Lent that news came to Erling how Earl Sigurd would come to meet him, and he was heard of here and there, whiles anigh, whiles further off. So Erling sent out spies so that he should be ware whereby they should come down. Every evening, also, he let blow all his host up from the town, and they lay out nightlong all gathered, and all the host arrayed in ranks.

Then came news to Erling that Earl Sigurd and his were a short way thence away up at Re. So Erling arrays his faring from the town, and had with him all the townfolk that were fight-worthy and weaponed, likewise all chapmen, save twelve men, who were left behind to guard the town. He left the town on Tuesday in the second week of Longfast after nones, and every man took with him two days' victual; they fared away that night, and it was slow for them to bring the host out of the town. For every one horse and every one shield were two men; and when the host was tallied, it was nigh on thirteen hundreds of men. And when news came to them they were told that Earl Sigurd was in Re at a homestead which hight Ravenness with five hundreds of men. Then let Erling call together the host, and told them the tidings he had heard; and all egged on to hie them on, and fall on them unawares in their houses or else fight forthwith in the night.

Erling spake and said thus: "That will be

deemed likely that a meeting betwixt me and Earl Sigurd may speedily come to pass; there are in their flock withal a many men whose handiwork might well be remembered of us, in that they hewed down King Ingi, and so many others of our friends that it would be slow to tell the tale of them. Those deeds they did by the craft of the fiend and with wizardry and nithingship; for it standeth here in our laws and land-right, that no man has so foredone him as that it be not nithingship or murder whenas men be slain a-night-tide. This flock has sought for itself such omens by the counsel of wizard-folk, that they should fight by night, but not under sun; have they withal by such-like goings on won such victory, as to stride over the head of such a lord as they have laid to earth. Now have we often said and shown, how abominable their ways seem to us, in that they have broken into battle by night. So therefore let us rather follow the example of those chiefs, who are better known unto us, and it is better to take after, to fight in the bright day and in battle-array, than to steal by night upon sleeping men. We have a good host against them, seeing that theirs is no greater than it. So shall we abide the day and the light, and hold together in battle-array, if they will give us any onfall."

After that all the host sat down; some tore down certain hayricks, and made them lairs thereof, some sat on their shields, and so abode the daylight. Chill was the weather with drift of sleet.

CHAPTER XIII. OF EARL SIGURD'S ARRAY.

EARL SIGURD had so first got the news, that the host was come nigh upon them. His men stood up and weaponed them, and knew unclearly how mickle host Erling and his had; and some would flee, but most would abide. Earl Sigurd was a wise man and deft of speech, but was not called a man of mickle daring, and he also was fainer of fleeing, and gat therefor mickle blame of his men.

But when it took light, both sides fell to arraying their host. Earl Sigurd ranked on a certain brent above the bridge, betwixt it and the town; fell thereby a little river.

But Erling and his ranked them on the other side of the river. At the back of their array there were men a-horseback well-weaponed; they had the king with them.

The earl's men saw that the odds would be great, and told it for rede to seek to the wood. The earl answered: "Ye tell me there goes no heart with me, but now shall that be tried, and let each one look to it that he neither flee nor falter ere I do. We have a good fighting-ground; let them come over the bridge, and when the banner cometh over the bridge, then plunge we upon them down over the brent; and now let no one flee from the other."

Earl Sigurd had a browned kirtle, and a red cloak with tucked-up skirts, shoes of shanks' leather on his feet; he had a shield, and a sword

which was called Bastard. The earl said: "That wot God with me, that rather than take mickle gold, would I get in one stroke of Bastard on Erling Askew."

CHAPTER XIV. THE FALL OF EARL SIGURD.

THE host of Erling Askew would go forth towards the bridge, but he spake, bidding them go up along the river: "This is but a little river and no trouble in the way, for the land is level thereby." And so was it done. The earl's array fared up along the brent over against them, and when the brent came to an end, and it was level and good across the river, then spake Erling that his men should sing Pater Noster and pray that they might gain the day who had the better cause. Then they sang Kirial aloud, all of them, and all beat their weapons on their shields. But amidst that din slunk away and fled three hundreds of men out of Erling's host. Erling and his host went over the river, but the men of the earl whooped the war-whoop. But the onfall down over the brent upon Erling's array failed them, and the battle befell on the slope of the brent, and was first with spear-thrusts and speedily thereon with handy strokes; the banner of the earl fared a-heel, so that Erling and his men got up upon the brent. Then was the battle short ere the earl's folk fled into the wood at their back. Then this was told to Earl Sigurd, and men bade him flee. He answered: "Forth with us now, while

yet we may." And forward they went right valiantly, hewing on either hand. In that brunt fell Earl Sigurd and Jon Sveinson, and nigh on sixty men. Erling and his lost but few men, and drave the rout even unto the wood. There Erling stayed his host, and turned aback. He came thereto where thralls of the king would drag the raiment off Earl Sigurd, who was not utterly dead, though he knew nought. He had stuck his sword into its sheath, and it was lying there near him. Erling took it up and beat the thralls therewith, and bade them crawl off. After this Erling turned back with his host and sat up in Tunsberg. Seven nights after the fall of the earl the men of Erling took Eindrid the Young, and he was slain.

CHAPTER XV. OF MARKUS O'SHAW AND KING SIGURD.

MARKUS O'SHAW and Sigurd, foster-father and foster-son, betook them down into the Wick when spring came on, and there got them ships. But when Erling heard that, he went east after them, and they met at King's Rock, and Markus and his fled out into Hising-isle, and there drifted down to them the folk of the land, the Hising-dwellers, and went into the array of Markus' men. Erling and his rowed to land, and the men of Markus shot upon them.

Then spake Erling with his men: "Take we their ships, and go not up to fight a land-host;

the Hising-dwellers are ill to seek home, hard men and unwise. But a short while will they have this flock with them, whereas Hising is a little land." So was it done, that they took the ships, and brought them over to King's Rock. Markus and his folk fared up into the Marklands, and were minded to fall on thence; and now either side had news of the other. Erling had a much throng with him, and drew thereinto men from the countrysides; neither side as then fell on the other.

CHAPTER XVI. THE BEGINNINGS OF ARCHBISHOP EYSTEIN.

EYSTEIN, the son of Erlend Sloven, was chosen for archbishop after the death of Archbishop Jon. Eystein was hallowed the same year that King Ingi fell. But when Archbishop Eystein came to the see, he was in good favour with all the folk of the land. He was a man right stirring and of great kindred, and the Thrandheimers gave him good welcome, for most of the great men within Thrandheim-law were bound to the archbishop either by kinship or affinity, and all in full friendship with him. The archbishop then began to sound the bonders. First talked he how needy of wealth the see was, and on the other hand what uprising it stood in need of now, if it were to be upheld so much the more seemly than before, as it was more of dignity than erst, since an archbishop's chair had been set up there. He bade this of the bonders, to grant him in payment of fines to him a silver-proof ounce, but before he had

taken the fine-proof ounce which passed current in payment of fines to the king, but these two ounces differ by one-half the value of that which he would have, the silver-proof, being by that much the better of the two. Now by the power of the friends and kinsmen of the archbishop, and the shoving of himself, this was brought about, and it was doomed as law throughout all Thrandheim-law, and all the folklands that were within his archbishopric.

CHAPTER XVII. OF MARKUS AND KING SIGURD.

WHEN Sigurd and Markus had lost their ships in the Elf, and saw that they might get no chance of Erling, they turned them to the Uplands, and so went by the overland road to Thrandheim, where they had a good welcome, and there was Sigurd taken for king at the Eres'-Thing. Many of good men's sons there betook them to the flock; they got them aboard ship and arrayed them busily, and fared south to Mere when it summered, and took up all the king's dues wheresoever they went.

In Biorgvin there were for the warding of the land Nicolas, the son of Sigurd, Nokkvi, the son of Paul, and yet other captains of companies, Thorolf Dryllr, Thorbiorn Rentmaster, and many others.

Markus and his sailed from the north and heard that the men of Erling had a throng in Biorgvin; so there they sailed by the outer course, and south

about it. Men would be saying that that summer the men of Markus had fair wind whithersoever they would fare.

CHAPTER XVIII. THE SLAYING OF KING SIGURD AND MARKUS.

ERLING ASKEW, so soon as he had learnt that Markus and his had turned them to the north, held north into Wick, and drew to him folk, and was soon many manned, and had big ships and many. But as he sought out into Wick he fell in with contrary winds, and lay in havens here and there all that summer.

But when Markus and his came east to Listi, they heard that Erling had an overwhelming host in the Wick, and therewith they turned back north. And when they came into Hordland they were minded for Biorgvin, and when they were off the town Nicolas and his came rowing from within against them, and had folk mickle more and ships bigger. Saw then Markus and his that there was nought to choose than to row south away; so some made out for the main, some south into the sounds, some into the firths. But Markus with some company ran up aland in the island called Skarpa. Nicolas and his took their ships, gave truce to Jon, son of Hallkel, and some other men, but slew most that they caught. Some days later Eindrid Heathfilly found Sigurd and Markus, and they were flitted to Biorgvin. Sigurd was to-hewen out from Gravedale, but Markus was hanged with another man on Wharfness; and this was Michael-

mass. Then the flock that had followed them drifted asunder.

CHAPTER XIX. OF ERLING AND THE HISING-DWELLERS.

FRIREK COCK-BOAT and Biarni the Evil, Onund, son of Simon, and Ornof Rind had rowed out into the main sea with sundry ships, and held on out by the high sea course east round the land. But wheresoever they came aland they robbed and slew the friends of Erling. But when Erling heard of the slaying of Sigurd and Markus, he gave home-leave to landed-men and hosting-bound folk; but he himself held with his own folk east across the Fold, for he had news of the men of Markus being there. Erling held for King's Rock, and dwelt there the autumn through. In the first week of winter fared Erling out into Hising-isle with much folk, and craved there a Thing. The Hising-dwellers came down and held up the Thing. Erling laid guilts at their hands in that they had run into flock with Markus' men and arrayed an host against him. Ozur hight the man who was richest among the bonders, and who spoke on their behalf. The Thing was long, and at last the bonders handselled judgment to Erling, and he appointed a meeting within a week in the town, and named fifteen men of the bonders to come thither. But when they came, Erling doomed against them to pay three hundreds of neat. Fare the bonders home and liked their lot but ill. A little after the river was laid with ice, and Erling's

ship was frozen in ; and then withheld the bonders the fine, and laid them into a gathering awhile.

Erling arrayed there for a Yule-feast, but the Hising-dwellers had a guild-ale, and held their fellowship through Yule-tide. The night after the fifth day of Yule, Erling fared out into the island and took the house on Ozur, and burnt him therein, and slew in all ten tens of men, and burnt three homesteads, and fared sithence back to King's Rock. Sithence came the bonders to him and paid him the fine.

CHAPTER XX. THE SLAYING OF FRIREK COCK-BOAT AND BIARNI THE EVIL.

ERLING ASKEW got ready so soon as it was spring, when he might float his ships for ice, and fared from King's Rock. He heard that they harried north in the Wick who had erst been Markus' men. Erling held spies over their farings, and went to seek them, and found them as they lay in a certain haven. Onund, the son of Simon, and Ornof Rind got away, but Frirek Cock-boat and Biarni the Evil were laid hands on, and much of their fellowship slain. Erling let bind Frirek to an anchor and cast over-board ; and for that work was Erling the most ill-liked within the Thrandheim-laws, for Frirek had there the best of kindred. Biarni Erling let hang ; he spake the foulest of words, as his wont was, ere he was hanged. So says Thorbiorn Skald-Askew :

Erling drew on the Vikings
 Fate on the Wick-firth's eastside ;
 Was many a man of Cock-boat
 Gat hurt, as there he fared on.
 Fared was a fluke twixt shoulders
 Of Frirek ; but the ill-willed
 Biarni, to men unhelpful,
 'Gainst tree hung somewhat higher.

Onund and Ornof, and all the bands that had got away, fled to Denmark, but were whiles in Gautland or in the Wick.

CHAPTER XXI. PARLEYS BETWEEN ERLING AND THE ARCHBISHOP.

ERLING ASKEW afterwards held on to Tunsberg, and tarried there long through the spring. But when it summered he went north to Biorgvin, where was then all-mickle throng. There was then Stephanus, a legate from Romeburg, and Archbishop Eystein, and other inland bishops. There also was Brand, to boot, who was then hallowed for Iceland ; there was also Jon, the son of Lopt, the daughter's son of King Magnus Barefoot ; and at that time had King Magnus and other kinsmen of Jon owned to his kinship. Archbishop Eystein and Erling Askew would often be talking privily together. And one time was that in their talk that Erling said : " Is it true, lord, what men say, that thou hast eked the price of the ounce to thee for fines from the bonders in the north country ? " The archbishop answers : " That is very sooth that the bonders have granted it to me to eke the

price of the ounce for my fines; they have done that at their free will, and through no hard dealings of mine, and thereby they have eked God's glory and the wealth of our see."

Said Erling: "Is it so, lord, that this be according to the laws of King Olaf the Holy, or hast thou taken this matter aught beyond what is written in the law-book?" The archbishop answers: "So will the holy King Olaf have framed his laws as he gat the yea-word and the goodwill of all the folk thereto; but it is not to be found in his law that the eking of God's right be banned." Erling said: "As ye will eke thy right, so wilt thou will to strengthen us herein, that even as much we eke the king's right." The archbishop answers: "Thou hast eked now by enough the name and the dominion of thy son Magnus; but if I have unlawfully gotten the price of the ounce from the Thrandheimers, am I then minded that the law-breaking beareth bigger, that he should be king over the land who is not a king's son; there is neither law thereto nor example in the land." Erling said: "When Magnus was taken to king over Norway's realm, that was done with the wotting and rede of thee and other bishops here in the land." Answers the archbishop: "Thou behightedst then, Erling, if we were of one mind with thee that Magnus were taken to king, that thou wouldst strengthen God's right in all places with all thy might." "I say yea thereto," said Erling, "that I have behight to uphold God's law and the land-right with all my strength and the king's. Now I see here better rede than that each of us should

lay wyte-words on the other; let us rather hold to all our privy pledges. Strengthen ye Magnus to the realm as thou hast behight, but I shall strengthen thy dominion in all things profitable."

Then fared all the talk smoothly between them. Then spake Erling: "If Magnus be taken to king even as goeth custom of yore here in the land, then must thou of thine own might give him a crown, as be God's laws on the smearing of a king to power. But though I be not a king, nor come down from a kingly race, yet have most of them who have been kings within my memory been such as not to know as well as I did what was law or the land's right. But the mother of Magnus is the daughter of a king and a queen, wedlock-born. Magnus withal is the son of a queen who was a lawful wife. And if thou wilt give him the king's hallowing, sithence none may rightly bereave him of the kingdom. Nought was William the Bastard a king's son, yet he was hallowed and crowned to king over England, and sithence has the kingdom of England been held in his kindred, and all have been crowned. Nought was Svein Wolfson in Denmark a king's son, and yet he was a crowned king there, and his sons after him, and one after another of those kinsmen have been crowned kings. Now here in the land is an arch-see, and that is a great honour and dignity to our land. Eke we it now with good things, and have we a king crowned no less than have the Englishmen and the Danes."

Sithence the archbishop and Erling talked this matter over often; and thereupon the archbishop

bore the matter before the legate, and easily gat the legate turned so as to be of one mind with him. And then the archbishop had a meeting with the suffragan bishops and other clerks, and bare this matter before them; and they all answered with one accord, saying that that was their rede as the archbishop would have it be; and they all urged that the hallowing should go forward so soon as they found that that was what the archbishop was pleased to let so be. So then this was the judgment of all.

CHAPTER XXII. THE HALLOWING OF KING MAGNUS.

ERLING ASKEW let array in the king's garth a mighty feast, and the great hall was hung with pall and bench-cloths, and all fitted up at exceeding great cost. There was feasted the court and all the household service, and a multitude of guests and many lords. Then Magnus took king's hallowing of Archbishop Eystein, and at that hallowing were other five bishops and the legate and a throng of clerks. Erling Askew and twelve landed-men with him swore oath to the laws with the king. And on the day when was the hallowing, the king and Erling gave banquet to the archbishop and the legate and all the bishops, and that feast was of the most glorious; father and son giving then many great gifts. At this time King Magnus was eight winters old, and had then been king for three winters.

CHAPTER XXIII. OF THE MESSENGERS OF THE DANE-KING.

BY this time King Waldimar of Denmark had heard the tidings from Norway, that now Magnus was sole king there, and that scattered were all other flocks there in the land. So the king sent his men with letters to the two, King Magnus and Erling, calling to their mind the privy pledges which Erling had bound with King Waldimar, even as hereintofore is written, to wit, that King Waldimar should own of the Wick from the east unto Rygjarbit, if Magnus should become sole king over Norway. And when the messengers came forward and showed to Erling the letters of the Dane-king, and he understandeth the claim the Dane-king hath on Norway, Erling brought this before other men upon whose rede he threw himself. But they said all one and the same thing, that never should the Danes have part in Norway, for men said, that that had been the worst age there in the land, when the Danes had power over Norway. The Dane-king's messengers told their errand before Erling and craved a clear say of him. Erling bade them fare with him in harvest-tide east into the Wick, saying, that he would then give a clear answer, when he had met the men of the Wick who were the wisest.

CHAPTER XXIV. OF ERLING AND THE MEN OF WICK.

IN the autumn Erling Askew went east into Wick and abode in Tunsberg, and he sent men over to Burg and let summon there a four-folks'-Thing. Sithence fared Erling thither with his folk. And when the Thing was set, then Erling spake, and told what counsels had been made fast between him and the King of Denmark when Erling and his had raised this flock for the first time. "Now will I," said he, "hold all pledges which we made then, if that be the will and desire of you bonders, rather to serve under the King of Denmark than the king who here is hallowed and crowned king to this land."

The bonders answered Erling and said thus: "For nought will we become the Dane-king's men, so long as one of us Wick-dwellers is alive." Rushed forth then all the throng of them with whooping and calling, and bade Erling hold his oaths which he had then sworn to all the folk of the land, "to ward the land of thy son, but we shall all follow thee." And therewith the Thing broke up. After that the messengers of the Dane-king went back south to Denmark, and told of their errand, even as it was. The Danes laid great blame on Erling and on all Northmen, saying they were never proven in aught but evil; and the rumour went abroad that the Dane-king would have his host out next spring and harry Norway. Erling went in the harvest-tide north to Biorgvin,

and sat there through the winter and gave out war-pay there.

CHAPTER XXV. LETTERS OF THE THRANDHEIMERS.

THAT winter fared certain Danes about the country inland, saying that, as oft befell, they were going to the holy King Olaf to wake. But when they came to Thrandheim they met there many mighty men, and told their errand, to wit, that the Dane-king had sent them to the Thrandheimers to seek their friendship and welcome if he should come into the land, and he promised to give them both dominion and wealth. With this message there went a letter of the Dane-king under his seal, and therewith a bidding that the Thrandheimers should send him in return letters under seal. This they did, and most men took well to the message of the Dane-king. The messengers went back east again when Lenten fast was wearing. Erling sat in Biorgvin, and when spring came Erling's friends told him what rumour they had learnt from men of ships of burden from the north from Thrandheim, the import thereof being that the Thrandfolk were his open foes, and that they gave it out at their Things, that if Erling came to Thrandheim he would never come out past Agdirness with his life. Erling said that was but slander and fool-talk. Erling gave out that he would be faring south to Unarheim to Rogation-days' Thing, and let array a twenty-benched cutter and

a fifteen-benched scow, and a victualling ship of burden withal. But when the ships were albout strong southerly gales came on. On Tuesday in Rogation-days let Erling blow his folk to the ships, but men were loath to leave the town, and deemed it ill to row against the wind. Erling laid his ships north into Bishopshaven. Then spake Erling: "Ill do ye murmur at rowing in the teeth of the wind; so fall to now and raise the masts and hoist sail, and so let the ships go north." So did they, and sailed north that day and the night. On Wednesday, towards eve, they sailed in past Agdirness, and there there was a great fleet before them, ships of burden and other ferries and cutters, and this was an host for a wake on its way in to the town, part of it going before them, part abaft them, wherefore the townfolk were not heeding the sailing of longships.

CHAPTER XXVI. OF ERLING AND THE THRANDHEIMERS.

ERLING came to the town at the time when matins were being sung up at Christ's Church. Erling and his made a rush into the town, and they were told that Alf the Red, the son of Ottar Brightling, a landed-man, was still sitting and drinking with his following. Erling set upon them, and Alf was slain and most of his following. Few other men fell, for most folk were gone to church. This was in the night before Ascension-day. Straightway the next morning Erling let blow all folk out to Ere-Thing.

And at this Thing Erling bore charges against the Thrandheimers, and laid on them treason against the king and himself, and he named Bard Cocktail, and Paul, son of Andreas, and Raz-Bard, who then had in charge the townlands, and a great many others. They answered and pleaded not guilty. Then Erling's chaplain stood up and held up many letters and seals, and asked if they knew their seals there which they had sent in the spring to the King of Denmark? and then were the letters read out. There, moreover, were the Danish men with Erling who had fared in the winter with the letters, for it was Erling who had got them to do this; and now they gave out before all people the words which each one had spoken: "This thou didst say, Raz-Bard, smiting thy breast: 'Out of this breast came from the first all these redes.'" Bard answered: "I was mad, then, my lord, when I said such things." So there was no other way out of this but to handsel Erling doom on all the case. And straightway he took an exceeding deal of wealth from many men, and laid down as ungildsome all them that were slain. Fared Erling sithence back south to Biorgvin.

CHAPTER XXVII. KING WALDIMAR'S RAID ON NORWAY.

KING WALDIMAR had out that spring a mickle host in Denmark, and made with that host north for the Wick. Straightway when he came into the realm of Norway's

king, then had the bonders a gathering before him and a throng of men. The king fared peacefully and quietly ; but wheresoever they fared on the mainland, men would shoot at them even if there were but one or two ; and that the Danes deemed full ill-will to them of the people of the land.

But when they came to Tunsberg, King Waldimar summoned a Thing at Howes, but none sought thereto from the countrysides. Then King Waldimar spake to his host on this wise : “ Easily is it to be seen of this landsfolk, that they all stand against us. Now we have two choices on hand : one, to fare the war-shield over the land, and spare nothing, neither man nor goods ; the other, to fare south again with things as they are ; and it is more to my mind to fare into eastern ways to heathen lands which lie broad enough before us, rather than to slay down Christian folk, however worthy they be thereof.”

But all the others were eager for harrying, yet the king had his way, in that they fared back south ; yet all-wide was robbing toward in the out-ishes, and wheresoever the king himself was not near. So they went south to Denmark and nothing of tidings befell.

CHAPTER XXVIII. ERLING'S JOURNEY TO JUTLAND.

ERLING ASKEW heard that the Dane-king was come into the Wick, and he called out the all-men host from all the land, both of men and ships, and that was the greatest rush to arms, and he held all that host east along the land. But when he came east to Lidandisness, he heard that the Dane-host was gone back south to Denmark, and that they had robbed far and wide about the Wick. Then Erling gave home-leave to all the hosting-bound folk, but he himself and sundry landed-men sailed with a much many ships south after the Danes to Jutland. And when they came there where it is hight Deersriver, there lay before them the Danes come back from the hosting with many ships. Erling set upon them and fought with them. The Danes fled away speedily and lost many men, but Erling and his robbed the ships and the cheaping-stead, and got there full mickle fee, and fared sithence back to Norway. So for a while there was unpeace betwixt Norway and Denmark.

CHAPTER XXIX. ERLING'S JOURNEY TO DENMARK.

KRISTIN, King's-daughter, fared that autumn south to Denmark, and went to King Waldimar her kinsman; they were children of two sisters. The king gave her exceeding good welcome, and made over to her such grants

as that she might get her men well holden there. She would often be talking to the king, and he was all-blithe with her. But next spring Kristin sent men to Erling, and bade him go meet the Dane-king and make peace with him. The summer after was Erling in the Wick; and he dight a longship and manned it with the goodliest of his folk, and then sailed over unto Jutland. He heard that King Waldimar was in Rand-oyce, and thither Erling sailed, and came to the stead when most folk were sitting at the meat. But when they had rigged their tilts and moored the ship, Erling went up with eleven men, all byrned, with hats over their helms, and swords under their cloaks, and went to the king's chamber. Then was faring in the service, and the door was open, and Erling and his went in straightway up to the high-seat, and Erling spoke: "Truce will we have, king, both here and for our home-faring." The king looked round at him and said: "Art thou there, Erling?" He answered: "Erling is here, and tell us speedily whether we shall have truce."

There were within eighty of the king's men, and all weaponless. The king said: "Truce shall ye have, Erling, as thou cravest; on no man do I dastardly if he come to see me."

Then Erling kissed the king's hand, and walked out sithence to his ship. There he tarried for a while with the king, and they talked over a peace-making between them and the two lands, and they agreed that Erling should abide there as hostage with the Dane-king, and Asbiorn Snare, the

brother of Archbishop Absalon, should go to Norway as hostage in return.

CHAPTER XXX. KING WALDIMAR'S TALK WITH ERLING.

THAT was on a time when King Waldimar and Erling were talking, that Erling said : " Lord, that meseemeth likeliest to peace, that ye have all that of Norway which was behight in our privy talk, and if it be so, what lord wouldst thou set thereover, any Dane perchance ? " " Nay," says the king. (Says Erling :) " No lords from Denmark will will to fare to Norway, and have there to deal with a hard and unyielding people, they who already be here in a good case with thee. For that sake I fared hither, that for nought will I miss thy friendship. Hither to Denmark have fared afore, men of Norway, such as Hakon Ivarson and Finn Arnison, and thy kinsman, King Svein, made both his earls. Now I am in Norway a man of no less might than were they then, and the king gave them Halland to rule over, a dominion that was his own before. Now meseemeth, lord, that thou mightst well grant me this fief in Norway, if I become thy man and be under thine hand, so that I hold this dominion of thee ; likewise also that King Magnus, my son, may not forbid me this, but I will be linked to thee, and owe thee all the service which that name maketh due."

Such things talked Erling, and others of like kind, and at last it came to this, that Erling went under King Waldimar's hand, and the king led him

to seat and gave him earldom, and the Wick for a dominion to rule over. After that Erling fared home to Norway, and was earl sithence while he lived, and kept in peace with the Dane-king ever after. Erling had four base-born sons, one hight Reidar, another Ogmund, both by one mother; the third Finn, the fourth Sigurd, and their mother was Asa the Light; they were the younger ones. Kristin, King's-daughter, and Erling had a daughter hight Ragnhild; she was wedded to Jon, the son of Thorberg, from Randberg. Kristin left the land with a man called Grim Rake; they went out to Micklegarth, and lived there for a while, and had sundry children together.

CHAPTER XXXI. THE BEGINNINGS OF OLAF.

OLAF, the son of Gudbrand, the son of Shavehew, and Maria, the daughter of King Eystein Magnuson, was fostered at Sigurd Bait-hat's, in the Uplands. But while Erling was in Denmark, fosterfather and fosterson, Olaf and Sigurd, raised a flock to which many Uplanders betook themselves. Then was Olaf taken to king there. With their flock they went about the Uplands, but whiles down to the Wick, whiles east into the Marklands, but they were not shipped. But when Earl Erling had news of this flock, he fared with his host into the Wick, and kept to his ships through the summer, and was in harvest-tide in Oslo, and feasted there through Yule. He let hold spies about inland on the flock, and

went himself up country in search of them, together with Orm King's-brother; and when they came to the water called ,¹ they took all ships that were round the water.

CHAPTER XXXII. A PRIEST BETRAYS ERLING.

THE priest who sang at Rydiokul, which is on the water, bade the earl and his to a feast, to come there at Candlemass. The earl behight his faring, deeming good to go to hours there. They rowed thither over the water on the eve of the mass-day. But that priest had another rede on hand. He sent men to bring news to Olaf and his about the farings of Erling. He gave Erling and his strong drink through the evening, and let them drink right much. And when the earl and his went to sleep, their beds were made in the banquet chamber. But when they had slept for a little while the earl awoke, and asked if it were time for matin-song. The priest said the night was but little spent, and bade them sleep in quiet. The earl answers: "Many things do I dream to-night, and ill do I sleep." Thereupon he fell asleep. A second time he awoke, and bade the priest stand up and sing the hours. The priest bade the earl sleep, saying it was midnight. And the earl lay down and slept a little while, and then leapt up and bade his men clothe themselves. They did so, and took their weapons and went to church, and laid down the

¹ Lacuna in the MSS.

weapons outside while the priest sang the matin-song.

CHAPTER XXXIII. FIGHT AT RYD-IOKUL.

IN the evening the news came to Olaf, and they walked that night six miles by road, and men deemed that a wondrous walk. They came upon Rydiokul at matin-song, and pit-mirk it was as might be. Olaf and his made for the guest-chamber, and whooped the war-whoop, and slew within some men who had not gone to the matin-song. But when Erling and his heard the whoop, they ran to their weapons, and made away down to the ships. Olaf and his met them against a certain garth-wall, and there was battle, and Erling and his moved down along the wall, and the wall shielded them. They had a much less folk; fell a many of them, many were wounded. What helped them most was that Olaf and his kenned them not, so mirk as it was, but Erling's men made sturdily on for the ships. There fell Ari Thorgeirson, the father of Bishop Gudmund, and many others of Erling's bodyguard. Erling was wounded on his left side, and some men say that he himself drave his own sword against himself, whenas he drew it. Orm was also much wounded. With great toil they got to their ships, and thrust off from the land forthwith. It was deemed that Olaf and his had borne with them the greatest ill-luck to this meeting, seeing how Erling and his were betrayed, if Olaf and his

had but fared forth with more rede. Afterwards men called him Olaf the Unlucky, but some called them Hoodswains. They fared with that flock inland once again as erst. But Earl Erling fared out into the Wick to his ships, and tarried the rest of the summer in the Wick, while Olaf and his were in the Uplands, or, at whiles, east in the Marks; and so held they the flock for the next winter.

CHAPTER XXXIV. BATTLE AT STANGS.

THE next spring Olaf and his went out into the Wick and took there the king's dues, and dwelt there long through the summer. Earl Erling learned that, and went with his host east to meet them, and their meeting was on the east side of the firth, where it is hight Stangs. There was mickle battle, and Earl Erling had the victory. There fell Sigurd Bait-hat and many of Olaf's men, but he saved himself by flight, and fared sithence south to Denmark, and was the next winter in Jutland in Alburg. But the next spring Olaf took the sickness which led him to death, and he is laid in earth there at Mary's Church, and the Danes call him holy.

CHAPTER XXXV. THE SLAYING OF HARALD.

NICOLAS PERIWINKLE, the son of Paul, the son of Skopti, was a landed-man of King Magnus; he laid hands on Harald, who was said to be the son of King Sigurd

Haraldson and Kristin King's-daughter, brother to King Magnus by the same mother. Nicolas brought Harald to Biorgvin, and handed him over to Earl Erling. It was the manner of Erling, when his unfriends came before him, that he spake nought, or few to them, and measuredly what there was of it, if he were of mind to slay them, but those, who he would should have life, he ill-used in words to the utmost. Erling said but little to Harald, and men misdoubted them on what he was minded. Then men prayed King Magnus to plead peace on behalf of Harald with Erling, and the king did so. The earl answered: "That is what thy friends arede thee, but thou wilt rule the realm for but a short while if thou followest upright counsels only." Sithence Erling let flit Harald over into Northness, and there was he to-hewen.

CHAPTER XXXVI. THE BEGINNINGS OF KING EYSTEIN EYSTEINSON.

EYSTEIN is named a man who was called the son of King Eystein, the son of Harald; he was at this time a young man not fully ripe. It is told thereof that he came forth one summer up into Swede-realm, and fared to find Earl Birgir Brosa, who at that time was wedded to Brigida, the daughter of Harald Gilli, and sister to the father of Eystein. Eystein set before them his errand, and prayed them for avail. The earl, yea, and both of them, took his case well, and behight him their avail, and he tarried there for a while. Earl Birgir gave to Eystein

some folk and a good penny for his maintenance, and sent him well out of hand, and they both behight him their friendship. Then Eystein fared north into Norway, and came down into the Wick; and forthwith folk flocked to him, and that flock grew in strength, and they took Eystein for king, and they fared into Wick with that flock through the winter. But inasmuch as their means ran short, they robbed widely; so landed-men and bonders got folk together against them. But when they were overborne by strength, they fled away into the shaws and lay long out in the wild-woods; and their raiment went off them, so that they wrapped birch-bark about their legs, wherefore the bonders called them Birchlegs. They ran oft into the builded parts, and came forth here and there, and betook them to onset straightway wherever they had not too many men before them. They had sundry fights with the bonders, and now this, now the other side, got the best of it. Three pitched battles had the Birchlegs, and gained the day in all. In Crookshaw they were wellnigh undone; for the bonder-gathering came on them in throng. The Birchlegs felled timbers athwart their way, and ran sithence into the wood. For two winters the Birchlegs were in the Wick, so that they came not into the north country.

CHAPTER XXXVII. OF THE BIRCH-LEGS, KING MAGNUS, AND ERLING ASKEW.

KING MAGNUS had been king for thirteen winters when the Birchlegs hove up. The third summer they betook themselves to ships; they fared along off the land, and got them money and men. At first they were in the Wick; but, as the summer wore, they set out for the north, and went so speedily that no news went before them until they came to Throndheim. The Birchlegs had in their flock most of Markmen and Elfgrims, and very many they had from Thelmark, and were now well weaponed. Eystein, their king, was fair-faced and goodly to look upon, little-faced, and not a mickle man; by many folk he was called Eystein Maiden.

King Magnus and Earl Erling sat in Biorgvin whenas the Birchlegs sailed northward about them, and were not aware of them. Erling was a rich man, wise of wit, the greatest warrior if unpeace were toward, a good land-councillor, and handy at rule; he was called somewhat grim and hard-hearted, but for this chiefly, that he allowed but few of his unfriends land-abiding, even though they prayed for it, and for that reason many chose to run to the flocks so soon as such hove up against him. Erling was a tall man and hard knit, somewhat high-shouldered, long-faced, sharp-faced, light of hue, and became much hoary; he bore his head somewhat halt; merry-hearted was he, and stately of mien; he had raiment of ancient

fashion, long jerkins, and long sleeves to kirtles and shirts, welsh cloaks and high-laced shoes. Such attire he let the king wear while he was young, but when he ruled himself he arrayed himself much bravely. King Magnus was light-hearted and playful, of mickle merriment, and a mickle wencher.

CHAPTER XXXVIII. OF NICOLAS.

NICOLAS, the son of Sigurd, the son of Rani, was son of Skialdvor, the daughter of Bryniolf Camel, who was sister to Haldor, the son of Bryniolf, and of one mother with King Magnus Barefoot. Nicolas was the most of lords. He had a manor in Halogaland, in Angle-isle, where 'tis hight Steig. Nicolas owned a garth in Nidoyce, down below John's church, on ground owned by Chaplain Thorgeir. Nicolas was oft in Cheaping, and ruled all things among the townspeople. Eric Arnison, who was also a landed-man, had to wife Skialdvor, the daughter of Nicolas.

CHAPTER XXXIX. OF ERIC AND NICOLAS.

THAT was the latter Marymass, when men went away from matin-song in the town, that Eric went to Nicolas and said: "Father-in-law, that say certain fîshermen who are come from without, that longships be sailing into the firth, and men guess that there will be the

Birchlegs; and this is the business, father, to let blow all the townsfolk with weapons out to the Eres."

Nicolas answered: "I fare not, son-in-law, after the gabble of fishermen. I shall send spies out into the firth, and to-day we shall hold a Thing."

So Eric went home; and when it rang to high mass Nicolas went to church. Then came Eric to him and said: "I think, father, the tale must be true, for here are now the men who say they saw the very sails. Meseemeth that rede, to ride out of the town and gather us folk, for meseemeth we are somewhat short of men in the town." Answered Nicolas: "So quacksome as thou art, son-in-law! Let us first hearken mass, and then make our redes sithence;" and Nicolas went to church.

But when the mass was sung, Eric went to Nicolas and said: "Father-in-law, now are my horses ready, and I shall ride away." Nicolas answers: "Farewell, then; we shall have a Thing at the Eres, and ken what folk we have in the town." So Eric rode away, and Nicolas went to his own house, and then sat down to table.

CHAPTER XL. THE FALL OF NICOLAS.

BUT at the time when the victuals were set, a man came in and told Nicolas that the Birchlegs were rowing into the river. Then Nicolas called out that his men should weapon them; and when they were weaponed Nicolas bade them go into the loft, and the unhandiest rede was that, whereas, if they had warded the garth, then would the townsfolk have

come to help them. But the Birchlegs filled all the garth, and sithence went all round about the loft. Now they called to each other, and the Birchlegs offered Nicolas truce, but he naysaid it. Sithence they fought ; and Nicolas and his warded themselves with bow-shot and hand-shot and oven-stones. But the Birchlegs hewed at the houses, and shot at their swiftest. Nicolas had a red shield with gilt nails therein, and starred with William's girth. The Birchlegs shot so that the arrows stuck even up to the reedbands. Nicolas said : " Now the shield lies to me." There Nicolas fell, and a great part of his following, and he was most bemoaned. The Birchlegs gave truce to all the townsfolk.

CHAPTER XLI. EYSTEIN TAKEN FOR KING IN NIDOYCE.

SITHENCE was Eystein taken to king, and all folk went under him. For a while he tarried in the town, and after went up into Thrandheim ; there came much folk to him. There Thorfin the Swart of Snos came to him with a following of men. Early in winter they went out to the town, and then there came to them the sons of Gudrun of Saltness, John Kitten, Sigurd, and William. They fared up from Nidoyce to Orkdale, and there were they tallied up to well-nigh twenty hundreds of men. Fared they so to the Uplands, and thence out over Thotn and Hathaland, and unto Ringrealm.

CHAPTER XLII. THE FALL OF KING EYSTEIN.

KING MAGNUS went east into the Wick in the autumn with some of the host, and with him went Worm King's-brother. Earl Erling was left behind in Biorgvin, and had there a much folk; and he was to deal with the Birchlegs if they should fare by the west. King Magnus, he and Worm, both, sat in Tunsberg, and the king feasted there through the Yuletide. King Magnus heard that the Birchlegs were up in Re. So the king, he and Worm, went out of the town with their host and came into Re. There was deep snow on the ground, and the weather was wondrous cold. But when they came to the homestead, they went out of the tun unto the road, and without of the garth they ranked them, and trampled the snow hard for themselves; they had not full fifteen hundreds of men. The Birchlegs were at the other stead, and some of them here and there in houses. But when they were ware of King Magnus' host they were fetched together and thrust into array. So when they saw the folk of King Magnus, they thought, as was sooth, that theirs was the more, and so gave battle forthwith. But as they pushed forward along the road, only few men abreast might get on, but those who ran out of the road got snow so deep that they might scarce get on at all, and so brake their array; but they fell who pushed on foremost along the road, and then the banner was hewn down, and they who were nighest shrank aback, and some brake into

flight. The men of King Magnus followed them up, and slew one after the other whomsoever they caught. The Birchlegs might come now into no array, and were bare before the weapons, and then many fell, and many fled. And here it befell as oft will be, however valiant and bold at arms men may be, that, if they get great strokes and break into flight, most of them will be loath to come back. Took to flight now the main host of the Birchlegs, and a many fell, for the men of King Magnus slew all that they might, and to no man was peace given, those whom they caught, and the flight drifted wide ways about. King Eystein turned to flight, and ran into a certain house and prayed for peace, and that the bonder should hide him ; but the bonder slew him, and then went to find King Magnus, and met him at Ravenness. The king was in the guest-chamber, a-baking him at the fire ; and there were many men. Sithence men fared, and flitted the body thither, and the king bade men step up and ken the body. A certain man sat on the cross-daïs in the corner, and he was a Birchleg, but no man had given heed to him. When he saw the body of his lord, and kenned it, he stood up swift and hard, axe in hand, and ran swiftly up the floor and hewed at King Magnus, and it came on the neck by the shoulder. A man saw where the axe swept, and shoved him aside, whereby the axe turned down into the shoulder, and that was a great wound. Then he reared the axe aloft a second time, and hewed at Worm King's-brother ; he lay in the daïs, and the blow was aimed at both his legs ; but when Worm

saw that a man would slay him, he turned thereat swiftly, and cast his feet forward over his head, and the axe came on the daïs-stock and stuck fast. But weapons now stood so thick on the Birchleg that he might scarce fall down. Then saw they that he had dragged over the floor after him his guts, and that man's valour is right much bepraised.

King Magnus' men drave the flight long, and slew all that which they might. There fell Thorfin of Snos; fell there also many other Thrandheimers.

CHAPTER XLIII. OF THE BIRCHLEGS.

THIS flock, called Birchlegs, had gathered together in great multitude, and this was a folk hard, and the men the boldest of men-at-arms; their host was somewhat untame, and fared much turbulent and reckless when they deemed they had a great strength of their own. They had in their flock few who were men of sober counsels, or went to the ruling of land or laws, or to steer an host; and though some of them were better knowing, yet the band would have only that which seemed good to themselves, deeming they might be without fear because of their multitude and valour. But in what of the host got away there were many wounded, and had lost their weapons and clothes, and all were they moneyless; some of them made eastward for the Marklands, many for Thelmark, most of those, to wit, who had kindred there; some went all the way east into Swede-realm. All saved themselves, for little

hope was harboured of truce from King Magnus or Earl Erling.

CHAPTER XLIV. OF KING MAGNUS ERLINGSON.

KING MAGNUS fared sithence back out to Tunsberg, and became all-famed for this victory; for it had been the saying of all folk that Earl Erling was breast and ward of that fatherhood; but when King Magnus had gained the day over such a strong flock and so thronged, and had had the lesser host, all men were minded to think that he would overcome all, and that he must be by as much the greater warrior than the earl, as he was the younger than he.

... was harbored ... from King Magnus ... of Norway

CHAPTER XIV OF KING MAGNUS
BERINGSON

KING MAGNUS' first voyage back on
to Norway, and he was all the way
his voyage, for it had been the
of all the time that living was dead and
of that fatherhood - but when King Magnus
and gained the day over such a strong back and so
throughout and had the lesser part all men
were obliged to think that he would overcome all
and that he must be by or with the greater warrior
than the rest was the stronger than he