

over the country, sometimes singly, but more frequently in groups, along fissures in the earth's crust. In and near the volcanic zone there is a considerable number of Solfataras and Mudvolcanoes, the fumes from which consist mainly of sulphuretted hydrogen, hydrogen, and carbonic acid gas. But in other places of the country the hot springs are mostly alkaline, the chief constituent of the (spring) gases being nitrogen.

Most hot springs keep the same temperature all the year round irrespective of the weather conditions. But all hot springs are not equally hot, the temperature varying from 10° C. to boiling point. No springs show more than 100° C. on the surface, while at the bottom of a deep well the heat may rise even to 120° C.

Some of the hot springs in Iceland are intermittently eruptive, the best known being the *Stóri Geysir* (i. e. the Great Geysir) in *Haukadal* (Hawksdale) in the south. Its eruptions have been very unequal in height, the highest yet known measuring 67 metres. At present the most powerful hot springs in Iceland are *Norðurhver* (Northspring) in *Reykjahverfi* (Reekie-Parish) in Thingeyjar district, throwing jets to a height of 11 metres; *Smiður* and *Ótherrishola* (Wet-weather Hole) near *Stóri Geysir* and *Grýla* in Ölfus.

### EARTHQUAKES

Earthquakes (*jarðskjálftar*) are frequent in Iceland, especially in the south-western and north-eastern parts of the country, and have at times done a great amount of damage to property. As late as 1896 an earthquake, confined to the lowlands in the south, destroyed a great number of farm-houses.

### LAKES AND RIVERS

Though there are a great many *rivers* in Iceland and some of them have a considerable volume of water, yet none are navigable on account of their swift currents. Such rivers as are fed by glaciers are whitish-grey in colour, because they carry with them a large quantity of mineral dust, eroded by the glaciers from the rocks on which they rest. This water, charged as it is with minerals, has proved useful for irrigation purposes. In many of the rivers, where they leave the highlands, there are lofty falls, the best known being the *Gullfoss* (The Goldforce) in the *Hvítá* (Whitewater) in the south, and *Detifoss* in the *Jökulsá* in Axarfjörður (Axefirth). In the spring thaws the waters in the rivers increase greatly, and the rushing streams carry with them quantities of gravel and loose stones, which, when the rivers quiet