

occasional poetry. His poems were not published in book form till after his death. Thorarensen seldom employs intricate metres, but his best poems are replete with inspiration, profound wisdom, and weird power akin to that of Eddic lays.

*Sveinbjörn Egilsson, D.D.* (1791—1852) head-master of the Grammar School in Reykjavik, a renowned classical scholar, wrote some very good poetry, though not of the highest order. But his brilliant prose translations of Homer are of an unsurpassable beauty of style.

*Hjálmar Jónsson (Bólu-Hjálmar)* (1796—1875) is a remarkable example of a great poetical talent, which even the worst fate cannot quell. Born and bred in utter poverty and living for many years as a farmer unpopular and misunderstood by his neighbours, he yet managed to acquire considerable culture; and his poetical genius, his command of language, and his stern and steely temper are such, that his poems, which to a great extent consist of satirical verses and complaints of his hard fate, are among the most powerful poetical compositions in our language.

*Sigurður Breiðfjörð* (1798—1846), was another peasant bard whose life was no bed of roses. He learned to be cooper in Copenhagen and followed that trade in Greenland for some time, but never settled down permanently anywhere. Breiðfjörð was our greatest writer of *rímur*, and, though sometimes a careless worker, many of his *rímur* are really good. He has also written a great number of poems and ditties remarkable for their sweetness and beauty, especially the pieces descriptive of his country's nature, which are inspired by a pure, tender and almost child-like delight in natural scenery.

*Jónas Hallgrímsson* (1807—1845), naturalist, is perhaps the most popular and most influential of Icelandic poets of the nineteenth century. This is due to his deep appreciation of the grandeur and beauty of Icelandic scenery, his sincere patriotism, his tenderness of touch and unrivalled beauty of language.

*Grímur Thomsen* (1820—1896) Ph.D., was for a number of years in the Danish foreign office and diplomacy, but during the last thirty years of his life he lived in Iceland, as a farmer at Bessastaðir. In spite of his cosmopolitan culture he was an Icelander to the core, both in thought and expression, and in his poetry he has given us powerful and vivid pictures of persons and events, drawn from our sagas and tales.

*Benedikt Gröndal* (1826—1907), son of Sveinbjörn Egilsson, was a versatile writer, a man of brilliant parts, and a fertile but unre-