

strained imagination; extensively read, witty, and profoundly influenced by foreign romanticists. But though much of what he wrote is second-rate, there are not a few passages full of poetic fire, and some of his lyrics are among the most finished in the language.

*Páll Ólafsson* (1827—1905) a farmer. Of our peasant bards he is the greatest artist in rime. His touch is light, lyrical; but he can also be witty and at times bitter. Many of his improvisations were caught up by the people as soon as they came from the author's lips, and spread far and wide over the country.

*Steingrímur Thorsteinsson* (1831—1913), some time head-master of the Grammar School in Reykjavík, a classical scholar and a man of learning and culture, is the author of many beautiful and touching patriotic songs. He has given us noble pictures of Icelandic scenery and rural life, poems on the philosophy of life, and a number of epigrams. He has also translated many foreign works, e. g. the Arabian Nights, Andersen's Fairy Tales, Shakespeare's King Lear, Byron's Mazeppa, The Prisoner of Chillon and many of his shorter poems, besides a variety of lyrical pieces by different other authors.

*The Rev. Matthías Jochumsson* (1835—1920), Iceland's greatest poet for half a century, lived for the last twenty years of his life on a literary pension granted him by Althingi. He was honorary citizen of Akureyri (where he lived) and D. D. honoris causâ at the university of Reykjavík. Jochumsson is a voluminous writer of poetry, and though it is not all equally good, his genius when at its best is truly wonderful and prophetic. His funeral poems are the greatest in our language, and by his profound understanding of our history and his rare gift of sympathy he can embrace and re-create the most diverse characters. To our religious poetry he has also contributed some of its noblest and loftiest hymns. At his magical touch all distinction between the centuries disappears, and he is in an equal degree Iceland's most ancient and most modern poet. Of his many translations these may be mentioned: four plays by Shakespeare, Byron's Manfred, Tegner's Fridthjofs Saga, Ibsen's Brand, and a great number of short poems by different authors, English, German and Scandinavian.

*Stephan G. Stephansson* (1853—1927) is among the most peculiar phenomena in Icelandic literature. The son of a poor farmer and brought up on a remote farm in Iceland, he never went to school, and, when about twenty years of age, emigrated to America, where he three times took land for cultivation and always lived the strenuous life of the settler. Yet his native culture stood him in such good stead