

that he, as it were, broke new ground in the realm of Icelandic poetry. In vigorous Icelandic he depicts American life and scenery. His poems contain meditations on many of the deepest questions of modern life, — his latest achievement being a long poem on the Great War —, and show an inexhaustible wealth of generous thought and acute observation. His poems have now been published in five big volumes. There is luxuriance and force in his style, and though his diction may sometimes lack clearness and ease, yet the majority of his works bears the hall-mark of a great poetical genius. In 1917 he was invited to Iceland, and everywhere received with the greatest enthusiasm.

*Thorsteinn Erlingsson* (1858—1914), studied at the university of Copenhagen, which, however, he left without taking his degree. He was for a time the editor of a newspaper, and then went in for teaching English. Erlingsson first attracted attention with a few poems savouring of freethinking and socialism. He combines an almost unequalled mastery of words and rhythms, is witty, telling, and at times bitter in his satire. But his lyre has also tender strings, and his simple and heartfelt pieces in the old *rímur*-metre are the finest of their kind in our literature.

*Hannes Hafstein* (1861—1922), a lawyer and Minister of Iceland for a number of years, began to write verse at a comparatively early age, and most of his poetical work had been done before he was past his prime. His poems are refreshing like the sea breeze, some giving expression to his pleasure in rural scenery; others are full of the vigour of youth, its fun and frolic; there are love-poems and verses on conviviality; patriotic poems where he strikes a serious note; noble commemorative pieces, and touching elegies.

*Einar Benediktsson* (1864—) a lawyer, was for a time the editor of a newspaper; practised at the bar for a few years and then obtained the post of a district judge. But for the last twenty two years he has mostly lived abroad. Benediktsson has published four volumes of poetry besides a masterly translation of Ibsen's *Peer Gynt*. He now ranks first among living Icelandic poets, and has extended the realm of Icelandic poetry more than any one else. He is the *Viking* who on his raids and expeditions in many lands has boldly captured new and grand themes to sing. In his poems on such world-cities as Rome and London, his descriptions are so vivid that the reader sees these gigantic towns rise before his mind's eye in all their majestic beauty and grandeur, with glimpses into their past and