

In connexion with historical writing it may not be out of place to mention the Icelandic *Folk-Tales*, perhaps the most remarkable branch of our literature. These are: stories of elves; stories of trolls; ghost stories; stories of magic; legends; stories of outlaws; fairy-tales, etc. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries they have been collected, and several volumes have already been published; but the subject is by no means exhausted yet. They are a good mirror of the nation's imaginative power and art of story-telling, for they have been told and written down by men of all classes, and show the influence which the reading of the Icelandic sagas by generation after generation has exercised on the popular style and form.

From the 17th century onwards many eminent Icelandic scholars, both at home and abroad, have devoted themselves to the scientific study of the *Icelandic language and literature*, to the compiling of dictionaries, and to editing and elucidating Old-Icelandic texts. Some of the most prominent among these are Magnús Ólafsson, Guðmundur Andrésson, Hálfván Einarsson, Björn Halldórsson, Sveinbjörn Egilsson, Finnur Magnússon, Konráð Gíslason, rector Jón Thorkelsson, Guðbrandur Vigfússon, Björn M. Ólsen, Finnur Jónsson, Sigfús Blöndal, Halldór Hermannsson, Sigurður Nordal, Alexander Jóhannesson.

Much has been written on Icelandic laws, ancient and modern, and something also on medical science. A great deal of *Theological* literature, for the most part translations, dates from the Reformation period. Icelandic translations of the New Testament and the Bible were printed in 1540 and 1584 respectively. Of the many books of sermons which in course of time have appeared in Iceland, mention should be made of bishop Jón Víðalín's *Húspostilla* (Book of Family Sermons), first published 1718—20 (13th edition in 1838). Bishop Víðalín is the greatest pulpit orator Iceland has ever produced. His language is rich and racy and his sermons distinguished by religious fervor, eloquence, and profound observations of life.

In the field of *Natural science* Eggert Ólafsson did great research work, the most important results of which are contained in his *Travel-Book* (Itinerary) in two large 4^{to} volumes, published in Copenhagen in 1772. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the geology of Iceland has been made the subject of scientific study by Jónas Hallgrímsson, Th. Thoroddsen, H. Pjeturss, and Guðmundur Bárðarson. The study of the botany of Iceland has been pursued by Stefán Stefánsson and Helgi Jónsson. In zoology Bjarni Sæmundsson has made inde-