

pendent researches of great consequence. The first good map of Iceland was made by the great mathematician *Björn Gunnlaugsson* (1788—1876), and based upon his own surveying.

On most of the principal branches of science something has been written in Icelandic, both for schools and for purposes of general instruction; but a characteristic feature of it all is that it has been adapted to the public at large, who read almost everything that comes in their way. And the Icelandic peasantry's love of reading is proved by the fact that single impressions of most books number 1000—2000 copies, and sometimes even more.

*The novel.* As already mentioned, the Icelandic sagas ended in the fourteenth century in fiction pure and simple; and the style and technique of the best Icelandic sagas left very little to be learned from the modern novel. There was therefore no need for the Icelanders to invent a new form in the nineteenth century in order to be able to write a novel; the form was there ready to hand.

*Jónas Hallgrímsson* is 'the father' of the modern novel in Iceland, though he wrote but one, the '*Grasaferðin*', an exquisite little story, depicting rural life. This was followed by district judge *Jón Thoroddsen's* (1819—1868, also a lyric poet of some note) '*Dálitil ferðasaga*' (A Short Sketch of a Travel), showing marked ability. His other works in this field are the popular '*Piltur og stúlka*' (Lad and Lass) and '*Maður og kona*' (Man and Wife, unfinished), his masterpiece, published after his death. Thoroddsen's subject is the life of the common people, and his characters, especially the more peculiar ones, are drawn with such skill that they haunt the mind of every Icelander, and his scenes of rural life bear the stamp of reality. He has an abundance of tender humour, and his purity of style and spontaneity of expression combine to make him one of the great masters of modern Icelandic prose. *Benedikt Gröndal* wrote witty, humorous stories in the style of the chivalric saga. *Gestur Pálsson* (1852—1891), the editor of a newspaper, while studying at the university of Copenhagen, came under the influence of the realistic literary movement, which about that time had its flourishing period in Denmark. He wrote a few short stories in the spirit of that school. He is a close observer and depicts his characters with great force and clearness, but is often bitter in his satire. The Rev. *Jónas Jónasson* (1856—1918) who wrote mostly short stories, describes peasant life with severe realism, dwelling especially on its shady side. *Einar Hjörleifsson Kvaran* (1859—) studied at the university of Copenhagen, and was then for a number of years