

Saga of Sigurd, Inge, and Eystein, the Sons of Harald
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Sigurd died A.D. 1155, Eystein 1157, and Inge 1161.

Other literature is "Morkinskinna" and "Fagrskinna."

Sigurd Slembe is the subject of a drama by Bjornstjerne Bjornson, translated into English by William Morton Payne, and published by Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston, 1888.

Skalds quoted are: Kolle, Einar Skulason, and Thorbjorn Skakkaskald.

1. HISTORY OF KINGS SIGURD AND INGE.

Queen Ingerid, and with her the lendersmen and the court which had been with King Harald, resolved to send a fast-sailing vessel to Thronthjem to make known King Harald's death, and also to desire the Thronthjem people to take King Harald's son Sigurd for king. He was then in the north, and was fostered by Sadagyrd Bardson. Queen Ingerid herself proceeded eastward immediately to Viken. Inge was the name of her son by King Harald, and he was then fostered by Amunde Gyrdsen, a grandson of Logberse. When they came to Viken a Borgar-thing was immediately called together, at which Inge, who was in the second year of his age, was chosen king. This resolution was supported by Amunde and Thjostolf Alason, together with many other great chiefs. Now when the tidings came north to Thronthjem that King Harald was murdered, the Thronthjem people took Sigurd, King Harald's son, to be the king; and this resolution was supported by Ottar Birting, Peter Saudaulfson, the brothers Guthorm of Reine, and Ottar Balle, sons of Asolf and many other great chiefs. Afterwards the whole nation almost submitted to the brothers, and principally because their father was considered holy; and the country took the oath to them, that the kingly power should not go to any other man as long as any of King Harald's sons were alive.

2. OF SIGURD SLEMBIDJAKN.

Sigurd Slembe sailed north around Stad; and when he came to North More, he found that letters and full powers had arrived before him from the leaders who had given in their allegiance to Harald's sons; so that there he got no welcome or help. As Sigurd himself had but few people with him, he resolved to go with them to Thronthjem, and seek out Magnus the Blind; for he had already sent a message before him to Magnus's friends. Now when they came to the town, they rowed up the river Nid to meet King Magnus, and fastened their land-ropes on the shore at the king's house; but were obliged to set off immediately, for all the people rose against them. They then landed at Monkholm, and took Magnus the Blind out of the cloister against the will of the monks; for he had been consecrated a monk. It is said by some that Magnus willingly went with them; although it was differently reported, in order to make his cause appear better. Sigurd, immediately after Yule (January, A.D. 1137), went forth with his suite, expecting aid from his relations and Magnus's friends, and which they also got. Sigurd sailed with his men out of the fjord, and was joined afterwards by Bjorn Egilson, Gunnar of Gimsar, Haldor Sigurdson, Aslak Hakonson, the brothers Bendikt and Eirik, and also the court which had before been with King Magnus, and many others. With this troop they went south to

Saga of Sigurd, Inge, and Eystein, the Sons of Harald More, and down to the mouth of Raumsdal fjord. Here Sigurd and Magnus divided their forces, and Sigurd went immediately westwards across the sea. King Magnus again proceeded to the Uplands, where he expected much help and strength, and which he obtained. He remained there the winter and all the summer (A.D. 1137), and had many people with him; but King Inge proceeded against him with all his forces, and they met at a place called Mynne. There was a great battle, at which King Magnus had the most people. It is related that Thjostolf Alason carried King Inge in his belt as long as the battle lasted, and stood under the banner; but Thjostolf was hard pressed by fatigue and fighting; and it is commonly said that King Inge got his ill health there, and which he retained as long as he lived, so that his back was knotted into a hump, and the one foot was shorter than the other; and he was besides so infirm that he could scarcely walk as long as he lived. The defeat began to turn upon Magnus and his men; and in the front rank of his array fell Haldor Sigurdson, Bjorn Egilson, Gunnar of Gimsar, and a great number of his men, before he himself would take to his horse and fly. So says Kolle: --

"Thy arrow-storm on Mynne's banks
Fast thinn'd the foemen's strongest ranks;
Thy good sword hewed the raven's feast
On Mynne's banks up in the East.
Shield clashed on shield, and bucklers broke
Under thy battle-axe's stroke;
While thou, uncovered, urged the fray,
Thy shield and mail-coat thrown away."

And also this: --

"The king to heaven belonging fled,
When thou, in war's quick death-game bred,
Unpanzered, shieldless on the plain
His heavy steel-clad guards hadst slain.
The painted shield, and steel-plate mail,
Before thy fierce attack soon fail,
To Magnus who belongs to heaven,

Was no such fame in battle given."

Magnus fled eastward to Gautland, and then to Denmark. At that time there was in Gautland an earl, Karl Sonason, who was a great and ambitious man. Magnus the Blind and his men said, wherever they happened to meet with chiefs, that Norway lay quite open to any great chieftain who would attack it; for it might well be said there was no king in the country, and the kingdom was only ruled by lendersmen, and, among those who had most sway, there was, from mutual jealousy, most discord. Now Karl, being ambitious of power, listens willingly to such speeches; collects men, and rides west to Viken, where many people, out of fear, submit to him. When Thjostolf Alason and Amunde heard of this, they went with the men they could get together, and took King Inge with them. They met Earl Karl and the Gautland army eastward in Krokaskog, where there was a great battle and a great defeat, King Inge gaining the victory. Munan Ogmundson, Earl Karl's mother's brother, fell there. Ogmund, the father of Munan, was a son of Earl Orm Eilifson, and Sigrid, a daughter of Earl Fin Arnason. Astrid, Ogrnund's daughter, was the mother of Earl Karl. Many others of the Gautland people fell at Krokaskog; and the earl fled eastward through the forest. King Inge pursued them all the way out of the kingdom; and this expedition turned

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out a great disgrace to them. So says Kolle: --

"I must proclaim how our great lord
Coloured deep red his ice-cold sword;
And ravens played with Gautland bones,
And wolves heard Gautlanders' last groans.
Their silly jests were well repaid, --
In Krokaskog their laugh was laid:
Thy battle power was then well tried,
And they who won may now deride."

3. KING EIRIK'S EXPEDITION TO NORWAY.

Magnus the Blind then went to Denmark to King Eirik Eimune, where he was well received. He offered the king to follow him if he would invade Norway with a Danish army, and subdue the country; saying, that if he came to Norway with his army, no man in Norway would venture to throw a spear against him. The king allowed himself to be moved by Magnus's persuasions, ordered a levy, and went north to Norway with 200 ships; and Magnus and his men were with him on this expedition. When they came to Viken, they proceeded peacefully and gently on the east side of the fjord; but when the fleet came westward to Tunsberg, a great number of King Inge's lendemen came against them. Their leader was Vatnorm Dagson, a brother of Gregorius. The Danes could not land to get water without many of them being killed; and therefore they went in through the fjord to Oslo, where Thjostolf Alason opposed them. It is told that some people wanted to carry the holy Halvard's coffin out of the town in the evening when the fleet was first observed, and as many as could took hold of it; but the coffin became so heavy that they could not carry it over the church floor. The morning after, however, when they saw the fleet sailing in past the Hofud Isle, four men carried the coffin out of the town, and Thjostolf and all the townspeople followed it.

4. THE TOWN OF OSLO BURNT.

King Eirik and his army advanced against the town; and some of his men hastened after Thjostolf and his troop. Thjostolf threw a spear at a man named Askel, which hit him under the throat, so that the spear point went through his neck; and Thjostolf thought he had never made a better spear-cast, for, except the place he hit, there was nothing bare to be seen. The shrine of St. Halvard, was taken up to Raumarike, where it remained for three months. Thjostolf went up to Raumarike, and collected men during the night, with whom he returned towards the town in the morning. In the meantime King Eirik set fire to Halvard's church, and to the town, which was entirely burnt. Thjostolf came soon after to the town with the men he had assembled, and Eirik sailed off with his fleet; but could not land anywhere on that side of the fjord, on account of the troops of the lendemen who came down against them; and wherever they attempted a landing, they left five or six men or more upon the strand. King Inge lay with a great number of people into Hornborusund, but when he learned this, he turned about southwards to Denmark again. King Inge pursued him, and took from him all the ships he could get hold of; and it was a common observation among people, that never was so poor an expedition made with so great an armament in another king's

Saga of Sigurd, Inge, and Eystein, the Sons of Harald dominions. King Eirik was ill pleased at it, and thought King Magnus and his men had been making a fool of him by encouraging him to undertake this expedition, and he declared he would never again besuch friends with them as before.

5. OF SIGURD SLEMBIDJAKN.

Sigurd Slembidjakn came that summer from the west sea to Norway, where he heard of his relation King Magnus's unlucky expedition; so he expected no welcome in Norway, but sailed south, outside the rocks, past the land, and set over to Denmark, and went into the Sound. He fell in with some Vindland cutters south of the islands, gave them battle, and gained the victory. He cleared eight ships, killing many of the men, and he hanged the others.

He also had a battle off the Island Mon with the Vindland men, and gained a victory. He then sailed from the south and came to the eastern arm of the Gaut river, and took three ships of the fleet of Thorer Hvinantorde, and Olaf, the son of Harald Kesia, who was Sigurd's own sister's son; for Ragnhild, the mother of Olaf, was a daughter of King Magnus Barefoot. He drove Olaf up the country.

Thjostolf was at this time in Konungahella, and had collected people to defend the country, and Sigurd steered thither with his fleet. They shot at each other, but he could not effect a landing; and, on both sides, many were killed and many wounded. Ulfhedin Saxolfson, Sigurd's forecastle man, fell there. He was an Icelfander, from the north quarter. Sigurd continued his course northwards to Viken and plundered far and wide around. Now when Sigurd lay in a harbour called Portyrja on Lingard's coast, and watched the ships going to or coming from Viken to plunder them, the Tunsberg men collected an armed force against him, and came unexpectedly upon them while Sigurd and his men were on shore dividing their booty. Some of the men came down from the land, but some of the other party laid themselves with their ships right across the harbour outside of them. Sigurd ran up into his ship, and rowed out against them. Vatnorm's ship was the nearest, and he let his ship fall behind the line, and Sigurd rowed clear past, and thus escaped with one ship and the loss of many men. This verse was made upon Vatnorm (1): --

"The water serpent, people say,
From Portyrja slipped away."

ENDNOTES:

- (1) Vatnorm, the name of this man, means the water-serpent, and appears to have been a favourite name for war-ships also; hence the pun in the lines upon Vatnorm. -- L.

6. THE MURDER OF BEINTEIN.

Sigurd Slembidjakn sailed from thence to Denmark; and at that time a man was lost in his ship, whose name was Kolbein Thorliotson of Batald. He was sitting in a boat which was made fast to the vessel, and upset because she was sailing quickly. When they came south to Denmark, Sigurd's ship itself was cast away; but he got to Alaborg, and was there in winter. The summer

Saga of Sigurd, Inge, and Eystein, the Sons of Harald after (A.D. 1138) Magnus and Sigurd sailed together from the south with seven ships, and came unexpectedly in the night to Lister, where they laid their ships on the land. Beintein Kolbeinson, a court-man of King Inge, and a very brave man, was there. Sigurd and his men jumped on shore at daylight, came unexpectedly on the people, surrounded the house, and were setting fire to the buildings; but Beintein came out of a store-house with his weapons, well armed, and stood within the door with drawn sword, his shield before him, helmet on, and ready to defend himself. The door was somewhat low. Sigurd asked which of his lads had most desire to go in against Beintein, which he called brave man's work; but none was very hurried to make ready for it. While they were discussing this matter Sigurd rushed into the house, past Beintein. Beintein struck at him, but missed him. Sigurd turned instantly on Beintein; and after exchanging blows, Sigurd gave him his death-stroke, and came out presently bearing his head in his hands.

They took all the goods that were in the farm-house, carried the booty to their ships, and sailed away. When King Inge and his friends, and also Kolbein's sons, Sigurd and Gyrd, the brothers of Beintein, heard of Beintein's murder, the king sent a great force against Sigurd Slembe and his followers; and also travelled himself, and took a ship from Hakon Paulson Pungelta, who was a daughter's son of Aslak, a son of Erling Skjalgson of Sole, and cousin of Hakon Mage. King Inge drove Hakon and his followers up the country, and took all their gear. Sigurd Stork, a son of Eindride of Gautdal, and his brother, Eirik Hael, and Andres Kelduskit, son of Grim of Vist, all fled away into the fjords. But Sigurd Slembe, Magnus the Blind and Thorleif Skiappa sailed outside the isles with three ships north to Halogaland; and Magnus was in winter (A.D. 1139) north in Bjarkey Isle with Vidkun Jonson. But Sigurd had the stem and stern-post of his ship cut out, made a hole in her, and sank her in the inner part of Egisfjord, and thereafter he passed the winter at Tialdasund by Gljufrafjord in Hin. Far up the fjord there is a cave in the rock; in that place Sigurd sat with his followers, who were above twenty men, secretly, and hung a grey cloth before the mouth of the hole, so that no person could see them from the strand. Thorleif Skiappa, and Einar, son of Ogmund of Sand, and of Gudrun, daughter of Einar Arason of Reikiaholar, procured food for Sigurd during the winter. It is said that Sigurd made the Laplanders construct two boats for him during the winter up in the fjord; and they were fastened together with deer sinews, without nails, and with twigs of willow instead of knees, and each boat could carry twelve men. Sigurd was with the Laplanders while they were making the boats; and the Laplanders had good ale, with which they entertained Sigurd. Sigurd made these lines on it: --

"In the Lapland tent
Brave days we spent.
Under the grey birch tree;
In bed or on bank
We knew no rank,
And a merry crew were we.

"Good ale went round
As we sat on the ground,
Under the grey birch tree;
And up with the smoke
Flew laugh and joke,
And a merry crew were we."

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These boats were so light that no ship could overtake them in the water, according to what was sung at the time: --

"Our skin-sewed Fin-boats lightly swim,
Over the sea like wind they skim.
Our ships are built without a nail;
Few ships like ours can row or sail."

In spring Sigurd and Magnus went south along the coast with the two boats which the Laplanders had made; and when they came to Vagar they killed Svein the priest and his two sons.

7. OF SIGURD'S SLEMBE'S CAMPAIGN.

Thereafter Sigurd came south to Vikar, and seized King Sigurd's lendersmen, William Skinnare and Thorald Kept, and killed them both. Then Sigurd turned south-wards along the coast, and met Styrrkar Glaesirofa south of Byrda, as he was coming from the south from the town of Nidaros, and killed him. Now when Sigurd came south to Valsnes, he met Svinagrim outside of the ness, and cut off his right hand. From thence he went south to More, past the mouth of the Throndhjem fjord, where they took Hedin Hirdmage and Kalf Kringluage. They let Hedin escape, but killed Kalf. When King Sigurd, and his foster-father, Sadagyrð, heard of Sigurd Slembe's proceedings, and what he was doing, they sent people to search for him; and their leader was Jon Kauda, a son of Kalf Range. Bishop Ivar's brother, and besides the priest Jon Smyril. They went on board the ship the Reindeer, which had twenty-two rowing benches, and was one of the swiftest sailing vessels, to seek Sigurd; but as they could not find him, they returned north-wards with little glory; for people said that they had got sight of Sigurd and his people, and durst not attack them. Afterwards Sigurd proceeded southwards to Hordaland, and came to Herdla, where Einar, a son of Laxapaul, had a farm; and went into Hamar's fjord, to the Gangdaga-thing. They took all the goods that were at the farm, and a long-ship of twenty-two benches which belonged to Einar; and also his son, four years old, who was living with one of his labouring people. Some wanted to kill the boy, but others took him and carried him with them. The labouring man said, "It will not be lucky for you to kill the child; and it will be of no use to you to carry him away, for it is my son, and not Einar's." And on his word they let the boy remain, and went away. When Einar came home he gave the labourer money to the value of two ore of gold, and thanked him for his clever invention, and promised him his constant friendship. So says Eirik Odson, who first wrote down this relation; and he heard himself Einar Paulson telling these circumstances in Bergen. Sigurd then went southward along the coast all the way east to Viken, and met Fin Saudaulfson east at Kvildar, as he was engaged in drawing in King Inge's rents and duties, and hanged him. Then they sailed south to Denmark.

8. OF KING INGE'S LETTER TO KING SIGURD.

The people of Viken and of Bergen complained that it was wrong for King Sigurd and his friends to be sitting quietly north in the town of Nidaros, while his father's murderer was cruising about in the ordinary passage at the mouth of the Throndhjem

Saga of Sigurd, Inge, and Eystein, the Sons of Harald fjord; and King Inge and his people, on the other hand, were in Viken in the midst of the danger, defending the country and holding many battles. Then King Inge sent a letter north to the merchant-town Nidaros, in which were these words: "King Inge Haraldson sends his brother King Sigurd, as also Sadagyrd, Ogmund Svipste, Ottar Birting, and all lenders, court-men, house-people, and all the public, rich and poor, young and old, his own and God's salutation. The misfortune is known to all men that on account of our childhoods -- thou being five, and I but three years of age -- we can undertake nothing without the counsel of our friends and other good men. Now I and my men think that we stand nearer to the danger and necessity common to us both, than thou and thy friends; therefore make it so that thou, as soon as possible, come to me, and as strong in troops as possible, that we may be assembled to meet whatever may come. He will be our best friend who does all he can that we may be united, and may take an equal part in all things. But if thou refuse, and wilt not come after this message which I send thee in need, as thou hast done before, then thou must expect that I will come against thee with an armament; and let God decide between us; for we are not in a condition to sit here at so great an expense, and with so numerous a body of troops as are necessary here on account of the enemy, and besides many other pressing charges, whilst thou hast half of all the land-tax and other revenues of Norway. Live in the peace of God!"

9. OTTAR BIRTING'S SPEECH.

Then Ottar Birting stood up in the Thing, and first of all answered thus: "This is King Sigurd's reply to his brother King Inge -- that God will reward him for his good salutation, and likewise for the trouble and burden which he and his friends have in this kingdom, and in matters of necessity which affect them both. Although now some think there is something sharp in King Inge's message to his brother Sigurd, yet he has in many respects sufficient cause for it. Now I will make known to you my opinion, and we will hear if King Sigurd and the other people of power will agree to it; and it is, that thou, King Sigurd, make thyself ready, with all the people who will follow thee, to defend thy country; and go as strong in men as possible to thy brother King Inge as soon as thou art prepared, in order to assist each other in all things that are for the common good; and may God Almighty strengthen and assist you both! Now, king, we will have thy words."

Peter, a son of Saudaulf, who was afterwards called Peter Byrdarsvein, bore King Sigurd to the Thing. Then the king said, "Ye must know that, if I am to advise, I will go as soon as possible to my brother King Inge." Then others spoke, one after the other; but although each began his speech in his own way, he ended with agreeing to what Ottar Birting had proposed; and it was determined to call together the war-forces, and go to the east part of the country. King Sigurd accordingly went with great armament east to Viken, and there he met his brother King Inge.

10. FALL OF MAGNUS THE BLIND.

The same autumn (A.D. 1139) Sigurd Slembe and Magnus the Blind

Saga of Sigurd, Inge, and Eystein, the Sons of Harald came from Denmark with thirty ships, manned both with Danes and Northmen. It was near to winter. When the kings heard of this, they set out with their people eastwards to meet them. They met at Hvalar, near Holm the Grey, the day after Martinmas, which was a Sunday. King Inge and King Sigurd had twenty ships, which were all large. There was a great battle; but, after the first assault, the Danes fled home to Denmark with eighteen ships. On this Sigurd's and Magnus's ships were cleared; and as the last was almost entirely bare of men, and Magnus was lying in his bed, Hreidar Griotgardson, who had long followed him, and been his courtman, took King Magnus in his arms, and tried to run with him on board some other ship. But Hreidar was struck by a spear, which went between his shoulders; and people say King Magnus was killed by the same spear. Hreidar fell backwards upon the deck, and Magnus upon him; and every man spoke of how honourably he had followed his master and rightful sovereign. Happy are they who have such praise! There fell, on King Magnus's ship, Lodin Saupprud of Linustadar, Bruse Thormodson; and the forecastle-men to Sigurd Slembidjakn, Ivar Kolbeinson and Halyard Faeger, who had been in Sigurd Slembe's fore-hold. This Ivar had been the first who had gone in, in the night, to King Harald, and had laid hands on him. There fell a great number of the men of King Magnus and Sigurd Slembe, for Inge's men let not a single one escape if they got hold of him; but only a few are named here. They killed upon a holm more than forty men, among whom were two Icelanders -- the priest Sigurd Bergthorson, a grandson of Mas; the other Clemet, a son of Are Einarson. But three Icelanders obtained their lives: namely, Ivar Skrauthanke, a son of Kalf Range, and who afterwards was bishop of Thronhjerm, and was father of the archbishop Eirik. Ivar had always followed King Magnus, and he escaped into his brother Jon Kauda's ship. Jon was married to Cecilia, a daughter of Gyrd Bardson, and was then in King Inge's and Sigurd's armament. There were three in all who escaped on board of Jon's ship. The second was Arnbjorn Ambe, who afterwards married Thorstein's daughter in Audsholt; the third was Ivar Dynta, a son of Stare, but on the mother's side of a Thronhjerm family, -- a very agreeable man. When the troops came to know that these three were on board his ship, they took their weapons and assaulted the vessel, and some blows were exchanged, and the whole fleet had nearly come to a fight among themselves; but it came to an agreement, so that Jon ransomed his brothers Ivar and Arnbjorn for a fixed sum in ransom, which, however, was afterwards remitted. But Ivar Dynta was taken to the shore, and beheaded; for Sigurd and Gyrd, the sons of Kolbein, would not take any mulct for him, as they knew he had been at their brother Beintein's murder. Ivar the bishop said, that never was there anything that touched him so nearly, as Ivar's going to the shore under the axe, and turning to the others with the wish that they might meet in joy here-after. Gudrid Birger's daughter, a sister of Archbishop Jon, told Eirik Odson that she heard Bishop Ivar say this.

11. SIGURD SLEMBE TAKEN PRISONER.

A man called Thrاند Gialdkere was the steersman of King Inge's ship. It was come so far, that Inge's men were rowing in small boats between the ships after those who were swimming in the water, and killed those they could get hold of. Sigurd Slembe threw himself overboard after his ship had lost her crew, stripped off his armour under the water, and then swam with his shield over him. Some men from Thrاند's vessel took prisoner a

Saga of Sigurd, Inge, and Eystein, the Sons of Harald man who was swimming, and were about to kill him; but he begged his life, and offered to tell them where Sigurd Slembe was, and they agreed to it. Shields and spears, dead men, weapons, and clothes, were floating all around on the sea about the ships, "Ye can see," said he, "a red shield floating on the water; he is under it." They rowed to it immediately, took him, and brought him on board of Thrand's ship. Thrand then sent a message to Thjostolf, Ottar, and Amunde. Sigurd Slembe had a tinder box on him; and the tinder was in a walnut-shell, around which there was wax. This is related, because it seems an ingenious way of preserving it from ever getting wet. He swam with a shield over him, because nobody could know one shield from another where so many were floating about; and they would never have hit upon him, if they had not been told where he was. When Thrand came to the land with Sigurd, and it was told to the troops that he was taken, the army set up a shout of joy. When Sigurd heard it he said, "Many a bad man will rejoice over my head this day." Then Thjostolf Alason went to where Sigurd was sitting, struck from his head a silk hat with silver fringes, and said. "Why wert thou so impudent, thou son of a slave! to dare to call thyself King Magnus Barefoot's son?"

Sigurd replied, "Presume not to compare my father to a slave; for thy father was of little worth compared to mine."

Hal, a son of the doctor Thorgeir Steinson, King Inge's court-man, was present at this circumstance, and told it to Eirik Odson, who afterwards wrote these relations in a book, which he called "Hryggjarstykk". In this book is told all concerning Harald Gille and his sons, and Magnus the Blind, and Sigurd Slembidjakn, until their deaths. Eirik was a sensible man, who was long in Norway about that time. Some of his narratives he wrote down from Hakon Mage's account; some were from lendersmen of Harald's sons, who along with his sons were in all this feud, and in all the councils. Eirik names, moreover, several men of understanding and veracity, who told him these accounts, and were so near that they saw or heard all that happened. Something he wrote from what he himself had heard or seen.

12. TORTURE OF SIGURD SLEMBE.

Hal says that the chiefs wished to have Sigurd killed instantly; but the men who were the most cruel, and thought they had injuries to avenge, advised torturing him; and for this they named Beintein's brothers, Sigurd and Gyrð, the sons of Kolbein. Peter Byrdarsvein would also avenge his brother Fin. But the chiefs and the greater part of the people went away. They broke his shin-bones and arms with an axe-hammer. Then they stripped him, and would flay him alive; but when they tried to take off the skin, they could not do it for the gush of blood. They took leather whips and flogged him so long, that the skin was as much taken off as if he had been flayed. Then they stuck a piece of wood in his back until it broke, dragged him to a tree and hanged him; and then cut off his head, and brought the body and head to a heap of stones and buried them there. All acknowledge, both enemies and friends, that no man in Norway, within memory of the living, was more gifted with all perfections, or more experienced, than Sigurd, but in some respects he was an unlucky man. Hal says that he spoke little, and answered only a few, and in single words, under his tortures, although they spoke to him. Hal says further, that he never moved when they tortured him,

Saga of Sigurd, Inge, and Eystein, the Sons of Harald more than if they were striking a stock or a stone. This Hal alleged as proof that he was a brave hero, who had courage to endure tortures; for he still held his tongue, and never moved from the spot. And farther he says, that he never altered his voice in the least, but spoke with as much ease as if he was sitting at the ale-table; neither speaking higher nor lower, nor in a more tremulous voice than he was used to do. He spoke until he gave up the ghost, and sang between whiles parts of the Psalm-book, and which Hal considered beyond the powers and strength of ordinary men. And the priest who had the church in the neighbourhood let Sigurd's body be transported thither to the church. This priest was a friend of Harald's sons: but when they heard it they were angry at him, had the body carried back to where it had been, and made the priest pay a fine. Sigurd's friends afterwards came from Denmark with a ship for his body, carried it to Alaborg, and interred it in Mary church in that town. So said Dean Ketil, who officiated as priest at Mary church, to Eirik; and that Sigurd was buried there. Thjostolf Alason transported Magnus the Blind's body to Oslo, and buried it in Halvard's church, beside King Sigurd his father. Lodin Sauprud was transported to Tunsberg; but the others of the slain were buried on the spot.

13. EYSTEIN HARALDSON COMES TO NORWAY.

When the kings Sigurd and Inge had ruled over Norway about six years, Eystein, who was a son of Harald Gille, came in spring from Scotland (A.D. 1142). Arne Sturla, Thorleif Brynjolfson, and Kolbein Hruga had sailed westward over the sea after Eystein, accompanied him to Norway, and sailed immediately with him to Thronthjem. The Thronthjem people received him well; and at the Eyra-thing of Ascension-day he was chosen king, so that he should have the third part of Norway with his brothers Sigurd and Inge. They were at this time in the east part of the country; and men went between the kings who brought about a peace, and that Eystein should have a third part of the kingdom. People believed what he said of his paternal descent, because King Harald himself had testified to it, and he did not resort to the ordeal of iron. King Eystein's mother was called Bjadok, and she followed him to Norway. Magnus was the name of King Harald Gille's fourth son, who was fostered by Kyrpingaorm. He also was chosen king, and got a fourth part of the country; but Magnus was deformed in his feet, lived but a short time, and died in his bed. Einar Skulason speaks of them: --

"The generous Eystein money gave;
Sigurd in fight was quick and brave;
Inge loved well the war-alarm;
Magnus to save his land from harm.
No country boasts a nobler race
The battle-field, or Thing, to grace.
Four brothers of such high pretence
The sun ne'er shone upon at once."

14. MURDER OF OTTAR BIRTING.

After King Harald Gille's death Queen Ingerid married Ottar Birting, who was a lendermen and a great chief, and of a Thronthjem family, who strengthened King Inge's government much

Saga of Sigurd, Inge, and Eystein, the Sons of Harald while he was in his childhood. King Sigurd was not very friendly to Ottar; because, as he thought, Ottar always took King Inge's side. Ottar Birthing was killed north in the merchant town (Nidaros), in an assault upon him in the twilight as he was going to the evening song. When he heard the whistling of the blow he held up his cloak with his hands against it; thinking, no doubt, it was a snowball thrown at him, as young boys do in the streets. Ottar fell by the stroke; but his son, Alf Hrode, who just at the same moment was coming into the churchyard, saw his father's fall, and saw that the man who had killed him ran east about the church. Alf ran after him, and killed him at the corner of the choir; and people said that he had good luck in avenging his father, and afterwards was much more respected than he had been before.

15. BEGINNING OF KING EYSTEIN.

King Eystein Haraldson was in the interior of the Throndhjem district when he heard of Ottar's murder, and summoned to him the bonde-army, with which he proceeded to the town; and he had many men. Ottar's relations and other friends accused King Sigurd, who was in the town, of having instigated this deed; and the bondes were much enraged against him. But the king offered to clear himself by the ordeal of iron, and thereby to establish the truth of his denial; and accordingly a peace was made. King Sigurd went to the south end of the country, and the ordeal was never afterwards heard of.

16. BEGINNING OF ORM THE KING-BROTHER.

Queen Ingerid had a son to Ivar Sneis, and he was called Orm, and got the surname of King-brother. He was a handsome man in appearance, and became a great chief, as shall be told hereafter. Ingerid afterwards married Arne of Stodreim, who was from this called King's-mate; and their children were Inge, Nikolas, Philip of Herdla, and Margaret, who was first married to Bjorn Buk, and afterwards to Simon Karason.

17. JOURNEY OF ERLING SKAKKE AND EARL RAGNVALD.

Kyrpingaorm and Ragnhild, a daughter of Sveinke Steinarson, had a son called Erling. Kyrpingaorm was a son of Svein Sveinson, who was a son of Erling of Gerd. Otto's mother was Ragna, a daughter of Earl Orm Eilifson and Sigrid, a daughter of Earl Fin Arnason. The mother of Earl Orm was Ragnhild, a daughter of Earl Hakon the Great. Erling was a man of understanding, and a great friend of King Inge, by whose assistance and counsel Erling obtained in marriage Christina, a daughter of King Sigurd the Crusader and Queen Malmfrid. Erling possessed a farm at Studla in South Hordaland. Erling left the country; and with him went Eindride Unge and several lendersmen, who had chosen men with them. They intended to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and went across the west sea to Orkney. There Earl Ragnvald and Bishop William joined them; and they had in all fifteen ships from Orkney, with which they first sailed to the South Hebrides, from thence west to Valland, and then the same way King Sigurd the Crusader had sailed to Norvasund; and they plundered all around in the heathen

Saga of Sigurd, Inge, and Eystein, the Sons of Harald part of Spain. Soon after they had sailed through the Norvasund, Eindride Unge and his followers, with six ships, separated from them; and then each was for himself. Earl Ragnvald and Erling Skakke fell in with a large ship of burden at sea called a dromund, and gave battle to it with nine ships. At last they laid their cutters close under the dromund; but the heathens threw both weapons and stones, and pots full of pitch and boiling oil. Erling laid his ship so close under the dromund, that the missiles of the heathens fell without his ship. Then Erling and his men cut a hole in the dromund, some working below and some above the water-mark; and so they boarded the vessel through it. So says Thorbjorn Skakkaskald, in his poem on Erling: --

"The axes of the Northmen bold
A door into the huge ships' hold
Hewed through her high and curved side,
As snug beneath her bulge they ride.
Their spears bring down the astonished foe,
Who cannot see from whence the blow.
The eagle's prey, they, man by man,
Fall by the Northmen's daring plan."

Audunraude, Erling's forecastle-man, was the first man who got into the dromund. Then they carried her, killing an immense number of people; making an extraordinarily valuable booty, and gaining a famous victory. Earl Ragnvald and Erling Skakke came to Palestine in the course of their expedition, and all the way to the river Jordan. From thence they went first to Constantinople, where they left their ships, travelled northwards by land, and arrived in safety in Norway, where their journey was highly praised. Erling Skakke appeared now a much greater man than before, both on account of his journey and of his marriage; besides he was a prudent sensible man, rich, of great family, eloquent, and devoted to King Inge by the strictest friendship more than to the other royal brothers.

18. BIRTH OF HAKON HERDEBREID.

King Sigurd went to a feast east in Viken along with his court, and rode past a house belonging to a great bonde called Simon. While the king was riding past the house, he heard within such beautiful singing that he was quite enchanted with it, and rode up to the house, and saw a lovely girl standing at the handmill and grinding. The king got off his horse, and went to the girl and courted her. When the king went away, the bonde Simon came to know what the object of the king's visit had been. The girl was called Thora, and she was Simon the bonde's servant-girl. Simon took good care of her afterwards, and the girl brought forth a male child (A.D. 1047), who was called Hakon, and was considered King Sigurd's son. Hakon was brought up by Simon Thorbergson and his wife Gunhild. Their own sons also, Onund and Andreas, were brought up with Hakon, and were so dear to him that death only could have parted them.

19. EYSTEIN AND THE PEASANTS OF HISING ISLE.

While King Eystein Haraldson was in Viken, he fell into disputes with the bondes of Reine and the inhabitants of Hising Isle, who assembled to oppose him; but he gave them battle at a place

Saga of Sigurd, Inge, and Eystein, the Sons of Harald called Leikberg, and afterwards burnt and destroyed all around in Hising; so that the bondes submitted to his will, paid great fines to the king, and he took hostages from them. So says Einar Skulason: --

"The Viken men
Won't strive again,
with words or blows,
The king to oppose.
None safety found
On Viken's ground,
Till all, afraid,
Pledge and scat paid."

And further: --

"The king came near;
He who is dear
To all good men
Came down the glen,
By Leikberg hill.
They who do ill,
The Reine folk, fly
Or quarter cry."

20. WAR EXPEDITION OF KING HARALDSON.

Soon after King Eystein began his journey out of the country over sea to the west (A.D. 1153), and sailed first to Caithness. Here he heard that Earl Harald Maddad's son was in Thursa, to which he sailed directly in three small boats. The earl had a ship of thirty banks of oars, and nearly eighty men in her. But they were not prepared to make resistance, so that King Eystein was able to board the ship with his men; and he took the earl prisoner, and carried him to his own ship, but the earl ransomed himself with three marks of gold: and thus they parted. Einar Skulason tells of it thus: --

"Earl Harald in his stout ship lay
On the bright sand in Thursa bay;
With fourscore men he had no fear,
Nor thought the Norse king was so near,
He who provides the eagle's meals
In three small boats along-shore steals;
And Maddad's son must ransom pay
For his bad outlook that fair day."

From thence King Eystein sailed south along the east side of Scotland, and brought up at a merchant-town in Scotland called Aberdeen, where he killed many people, and plundered the town. So says Einar Skulason: --

"At Aberdeen, too, I am told,
Fell many by our Norsemen bold;
Peace was disturbed, and blue swords broke
With many a hard and bloody stroke."

The next battle was at Hartlepool in the south, with a party of horsemen. The king put them to flight, and seized some ships there. So says Einar: --

Saga of Sigurd, Inge, and Eystein, the Sons of Harald
"At Hartlepool, in rank and row,
The king's court-men attack the foe.
The king's sharp sword in blood was red,
Blood dropped from every Norse spear-head.
Ravens rejoice o'er the warm food
Of English slain, each where he stood;
And in the ships their thirst was quenched:
The decks were in the foe's blood drenched."

Then he went southwards to England, and had his third battle at
Whitby, and gained the victory, and burnt the town. So says
Einar: --

"The ring of swords, the clash of shields,
Were loud in Whitby's peaceful fields;
For here the king stirred up the strife. --
Man against man, for death or life.
O'er roof and tower, rose on high
The red wrath-fire in the sky;
House after house the red fiend burns;
By blackened walls the poor man mourns."

Thereafter he plundered wide around in England, where Stephen was
then the king. After this King Eystein fought with some cavalry
at Skarpasker. So says Einar: --

"At Skarpasker the English horse
Retire before the Norse king's force:
The arrow-shower like snow-drift flew,
And the shield-covered foemen slew."

He fought next at Pilavik, and gained the victory. So says
Einar: --

"At Pilavik the wild wolf feeds,
Well furnished by the king's brave deeds
He poured upon the grass-green plain
A red shower from the Perthmen slain.
On westwards in the sea he urges,
With fire and sword the country purges:
Langtown he burns; the country rang,
For sword on shield incessant clang."

Here they burnt Langatun, a large village; and people say that
the town has never since risen to its former condition. After
this King Eystein left England in autumn, and returned to Norway.
People spoke in various ways about this expedition.

21. OF HARALD'S SONS.

There was good peace maintained in Norway in the first years of
the government of Harald's sons; and as long as their old
counsellors were alive, there was some kind of unanimity among
them. While Inge and Sigurd were in their childhood, they had a
court together; but Eystein, who was come to age of discretion,
had a court for himself. But when Inge's and Sigurd's
counsellors were dead, -- namely, Sadagyrd Bardson, Ottar
Birthing, Amunde Gyrdson, Thjostolf Alason, Ogmund Svipter, and
Ogmund Denger, a brother of Erling Skakke (Erling was not much
looked up to while Ogmund lived), -- the two kings, Inge and

Saga of Sigurd, Inge, and Eystein, the Sons of Harald
Sigurd divided their courts. King Inge then got great assistance from Gregorius Dagson, a son of Dag Eilifson by Ragnhild a daughter of Skapte Ogmundson. Gregorius had much property, and was himself a thriving, sagacious man. He presided in the governing the country under King Inge, and the king allowed him to manage his property for him according to his own judgment.

22. HABITS AND MANNERS OF HARALD'S SONS.

When King Sigurd grew up he was a very ungovernable, restless man in every way; and so was King Eystein, but Eystein was the more reasonable of the two. King Sigurd was a stout and strong man, of a brisk appearance; he had light brown hair, an ugly mouth; but otherwise a well-shaped countenance. He was polite in his conversation beyond any man, and was expert in all exercises. Einar Skulason speaks of this: --

"Sigurd, expert in every way
To wield the sword in bloody fray,
Showed well that to the bold and brave
God always luck and victory gave.
In speech, as well as bloody deeds,
The king all other men exceeds;
And when he speaks we think that none
Has said a word but he alone."

King Eystein was dark and dingy in complexion, of middle height, and a prudent able man; but what deprived him of consideration and popularity with those under him were his avarice and narrowness. He was married to Ragna, a daughter of Nicolas Mase. King Inge was the handsomest among them in countenance. He had yellow but rather thin hair, which was much curled. His stature was small; and he had difficulty in walking alone, because he had one foot withered, and he had a hump both on his back and his breast. He was of cheerful conversation, and friendly towards his friends; was generous, and allowed other chiefs to give him counsel in governing the country. He was popular, therefore, with the public; and all this brought the kingdom and the mass of the people on his side. King Harald Gille's daughter Brigida was first married to the Swedish king Inge Halsteinson, and afterwards to Earl Karl Sonason, and then to the Swedish king Magnus. She and King Inge Haraldson were cousins by the mother's side. At last Brigida married Earl Birger Brose, and they had four sons, namely, Earl Philip, Earl Knut, Folke, and Magnus. Their daughters were Ingegerd, who was married to the Swedish king Sorkver, and their son was King Jon; a second daughter was called Kristin, and a third Margaret. Harald Gille's second daughter was called Maria, who was married to Simon Skalp, a son of Halkel Huk; and their son was called Nikolas. King Harald Gille's third daughter was called Margaret, who was married to Jon Halkelson, a brother of Simon. Now many things occurred between the brothers which occasioned differences and disputes; but I will only relate what appears to me to have produced the more important events.

23. CARDINAL NIKOLAS COMES TO THE COUNTRY.

In the days of Harald's sons Cardinal Nikolas came from Rome to Norway, being sent there by the pope. The cardinal had taken

Saga of Sigurd, Inge, and Eystein, the Sons of Harald
offence at the brothers Sigurd and Eystein, and they were obliged to come to a reconciliation with him; but, on the other hand, he stood on the most affectionate terms with King Inge, whom he called his son. Now when they were all reconciled with him, he moved them to let Jon Birgerson be consecrated archbishop of Thronhjelm and gave him a vestment which is called a pallium; and settled moreover that the archbishop's seat should be in Nidaros, in Christ church, where King Olaf the Saint reposes. Before that time there had only been common bishops in Norway. The cardinal introduced also the law, that no man should go unpunished who appeared with arms in the merchant-town, excepting the twelve men who were in attendance on the king. He improved many of the customs of the Northmen while he was in the country. There never came a foreigner to Norway whom all men respected so highly, or who could govern the people so well as he did. After some time he returned to the South with many friendly presents, and declared ever afterwards that he was the greatest friend of the people of Norway. When he came south to Rome the former pope died suddenly, and all the people of Rome would have Cardinal Nikolas for pope, and he was consecrated under the name of Adrian; and according to the report of men who went to Rome in his days, he had never any business, however important, to settle with other people, but he would break it off to speak with the Northmen who desired to see him. He was not long pope, and is now considered a saint.

24. MIRACLE OF KING OLAF.

In the time of Harald Gille's sons, it happened that a man called Haldor fell into the hands of the Vindland people, who took him and mutilated him, cut open his neck, took out the tongue through the opening, and cut out his tongue root. He afterwards sought out the holy King Olaf, fixed his mind entirely on the holy man, and weeping besought King Olaf to restore his speech and health. Thereupon he immediately recovered his speech by the good king's compassion, went immediately into his service for all his life, and became an excellent trustworthy man. This miracle took place a fortnight before the last Olafsmas, upon the day that Cardinal Nikolas set foot on the land of Norway.

25. MIRACLES OF KING OLAF ON RICHARD.

In the uplands were two brothers, men of great family, and men of fortune, Einar and Andres, sons of Guthorm Grabard, and brothers of King Sigurd Haraldson's mother; and they had great properties and udal estates in that quarter. They had a sister who was very handsome, but did not pay sufficient regard to the scandal of evil persons, as it afterwards appeared. She was on a friendly footing with an English priest called Richard, who had a welcome to the house of her brothers, and on account of their friendship for him she did many things to please him, and often to his advantage; but the end of all this was, that an ugly report flew about concerning this girl. When this came into the mouth of the public all men threw the blame on the priest. Her brothers did the same, and expressed publicly, as soon as they observed it, that they laid the blame most on him. The great friendship that was between the earl and the priest proved a great misfortune to both, which might have been expected, as the brothers were silent about their secret determination, and let nothing be observed.

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But one day they called the priest to them, who went, expecting nothing but good from them; enticed him from home with them, saying that they intended to go to another district, where they had some needful business, and inviting him to go with them. They had with them a farm-servant who knew their purpose. They went in a boat along the shore of a lake which is called Rands lake, and landed at a ness called Skiptisand, where they went on shore and amused themselves awhile. Then they went to a retired place, and commanded their servant-man to strike the priest with an axe-hammer. He struck the priest so hard that he swooned; but when he recovered he said, "Why are ye playing so roughly with me?" They replied, "Although nobody has told thee of it before, thou shalt now find the consequence of what thou hast done." They then upbraided him; but he denied their accusations, and besought God and the holy King Olaf to judge between them. Then they broke his leg-bones, and dragged him bound to the forest with them; and then they put a string around his head, and put a board under his head and shoulders, and made a knot on the string, and bound his head fast to the board. Then the elder brother, Einar, took a wedge, and put it on the priest's eye, and the servant who stood beside him struck upon it with an axe, so that the eye flew out, and fell upon the board. Then he set the pin upon the other eye, and said to the servant, "Strike now more softly." He did so, and the wedge sprang from the eye-stone, and tore the eyelid loose. Then Einar took up the eyelid in his hand, and saw that the eye-stone was still in its place; and he set the wedge on the cheek, and when the servant struck it the eye-stone sprang out upon the cheek-bone. Thereafter they opened his mouth, took his tongue and cut it off, and then untied his hands and his head. As soon as he came to himself, he thought of laying the eye-stones in their place under the eyelids, and pressing then with both hands as much as he could. Then they carried him on board, and went to a farm called Saeheimrud, where they landed. They sent up to the farm to say that a priest was lying in the boat at the shore. While the message was going to the farm, they asked the priest if he could talk; and he made a noise and attempted to speak. Then said Einar to his brother, "If he recover and the stump of his tongue grow, I am afraid he will get his speech again." Thereupon they seized the stump with a pair of tongs, drew it out, cut it twice, and the third time to the very roots, and left him lying half dead. The housewife in the farm was poor; but she hastened to the place with her daughter, and they carried the priest home to their farm in their cloaks. They then brought a priest, and when he arrived he bound all his wounds; and they attended to his comfort as much as they were able. And thus lay the wounded priest grievously handled, but trusting always to God's grace, and never doubting; and although he was speechless, he prayed to God in thought with a sorrowful mind, but with the more confidence the worse he was. He turned his thoughts also to the mild King Olaf the Saint, God's dear favourite, of whose excellent deeds he had heard so much told, and trusted so much more zealously on him with all his heart for help in his necessity. As he lay there lame, and deprived of all strength, he wept bitterly, moaned, and prayed with a sore heart that the dear King Olaf would help him. Now when this wounded priest was sleeping after midnight, he thought he saw a gallant man coming to him, who spoke these words, "Thou art ill off, friend Richard, and thy strength is little." He thought he replied to this assentingly. Then the man accosted him again, "Thou requirest compassion?" The priest replies, "I need the compassion of Almighty God and the holy King Olaf." He answered, "Thou shalt get it." Thereupon he pulled the tongue-stump so hard that it gave the priest pain; then he stroked with

Saga of Sigurd, Inge, and Eystein, the Sons of Harald his hands his eyes, and legs, and other wounded members. Then the priest asked who he was. He looked at him, and said, "Olaf, come here from Thronhjelm;" and then disappeared. But the priest awoke altogether sound, and thus he spoke: "Happy am I, and thanks be to the Almighty God and the holy King Olaf, who have restored me!" Dreadfully mishandled as he had been, yet so quickly was he restored from his misfortune that he scarcely thought he had been wounded or sick. His tongue was entire; both his eyes were in their places, and were clear-sighted; his broken legs and every other wound were healed, or were free from pain; and, in short, he had got perfect health. But as a proof that his eyes had been punched out, there remained a white scar on each eyelid, in order that this dear king's excellence might be manifest on the man who had been so dreadfully misused.

26. KING INGE AND SIGURD HOLD A THING.

King Eystein and King Sigurd had quarrelled, because King Sigurd had killed King Eystein's court-man Harald, the Viken man, who owned a house in Bergen, and also the priest Jon Tapard, a son of Bjarne Sigurdson. On account of this affair, a conference to settle it was appointed in winter in the Uplands. The two sat together in the conference for a long time, and so much was known of their conference that all three brothers were to meet the following summer in Bergen. It was added, that their conference was to the effect that King Inge should have two or three farms, and as much income as would keep thirty men beside him, as he had not health to be a king. When King Inge and Gregorius heard this report, they came to Bergen with many followers. King Sigurd arrived there a little later, and was not nearly so strong in men. Sigurd and Inge had then been nineteen years kings of Norway (A.D. 1155). King Eystein came later still from the south than the other two from the north. Then King Inge ordered the Thing to be called together on the holm by the sound of trumpet; and Sigurd and Inge came to it with a great many people. Gregorius had two long-ships, and at the least ninety men, whom he kept in provisions. He kept his house-men better than other lenders; for he never took part in any entertainment where each guest brings his liquor, without having all his house-men to drink with him. He went now to the Thing in a gold-mounted helmet, and all his men had helmets on. Then King Inge stood up, and told the assembly what he had heard; how his brothers were going to use him, and depose him from his kingdom; and asked for their assistance. The assembled people made a good return to his speech, and declared they would follow him.

27. OF GREGORIUS DAGSON.

Then King Sigurd stood up and said it was a false accusation that King Inge had made against him and his brother, and insisted that Gregorius had invented it; and insinuated that it would not be long, if he had his will, before they should meet so that the golden helmet should be doffed; and ended his speech by hinting that they could not both live. Gregorius replied, that Sigurd need not long so much for this, as he was ready now, if it must be so. A few days after, one of Gregorius's house-men was killed out upon the street, and it was Sigurd's house-men who killed him. Gregorius would then have fallen upon King Sigurd and his people; but King Inge, and many others, kept him back. But one

Saga of Sigurd, Inge, and Eystein, the Sons of Harald evening, just as Queen Ingerid, King Inge's mother, was coming from vespers, she came past where Sigurd Skrudhyrna, a courtman of King Inge, lay murdered. He was then an old man, and had served many kings. King Sigurd's courtmen, Halyard Gunnarson, and Sigurd, a son of Eystein Trafale, had killed him; and people suspected it was done by order of King Sigurd. She went immediately to King Inge, and told him he would be a little king if he took no concern, but allowed his court-men to be killed, the one after the other, like swine. The king was angry at her speech; and while they were scolding about it, came Gregorius in helmet and armour, and told the king not to be angry, for she was only saying the truth. "And I am now," says he, "come to thy assistance, if thou wilt attack King Sigurd; and here we are, above 100 men in helmets and armour, and with them we will attack where others think the attack may be worst." But the most dissuaded from this course, thinking that Sigurd would pay the mulct for the slaughter done. Now when Gregorius saw that there would be no assault, he accosted King Inge thus: "Thou wilt frighten thy men from thee in this way; for first they lately killed my house-man, and now thy court-man, and afterwards they will chase me, or some other of thy lendermen whom thou wouldst feel the loss of, when they see that thou art indifferent about such things; and at last, after thy friends are killed, they will take the royal dignity from thee. Whatever thy other lendermen may do, I will not stay here longer to be slaughtered like an ox; but Sigurd the king and I have a business to settle with each other to-night, in whatever way it may turn out. It is true that there is but little help in thee on account of thy ill health, but I should think thy will should not be less to hold thy hand over thy friends, and I am now quite ready to go from hence to meet Sigurd, and my banner is flying in the yard."

Then king Inge stood up, and called for his arms, and ordered every man who wished to follow him to get ready, declaring it was of no use to try to dissuade him; for he had long enough avoided this, but now steel must determine between them.

28. OF KING SIGURD'S FALL.

King Sigurd sat and drank in Sigrid Saeta's house ready for battle, although people thought it would not come to an assault at all. Then came King Inge with his men down the road from the smithy shops, against the house. Arne, the king's brother-in-law, came out from the Sand-bridge, Aslak Erlendson from his own house, and Gregorius from the street where all thought the assault would be worst. King Sigurd and his men made many shots from the holes in the loft, broke down the fireplaces, and threw stones on them. Gregorius and his men cut down the gates of the yard; and there in the port fell Einar, a son of Laxapaul, who was of Sigurd's people, together with Halvard Gunnarson, who was shot in a loft, and nobody lamented his death. They hewed down the houses, and many of King Sigurd's men left him, and surrendered for quarter. Then King Sigurd went up into a loft, and desired to be heard. He had a gilt shield, by which they knew him, but they would not listen to him, and shot arrows at him as thick as snow in a snow-shower, so that he could not stay there. As his men had now left him, and the houses were being hewn down, he went out from thence, and with him his court-man Thord Husfreyja from Viken. They wanted to come where King Inge was to be found, and Sigurd called to his brother King Inge, and begged him to grant him life and safety; but both Thord and

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Sigurd were instantly killed, and Thord fell with great glory.
King Sigurd was interred in the old Christ church out on the
holm. King Inge gave Gregorius the ship King Sigurd had owned.
There fell many of King Sigurd's and King Inge's men, although I
only name a few; but of Gregorius's men there fell four; and also
some who belonged to no party, but were shot on the piers, or out
in the ships. It was fought on a Friday, and fourteen days
before Saint John the Baptist's day (June 10, 1155). Two or
three days after King Eystein came from the eastward with thirty
ships, and had along with him his brother's son Hakon, a son of
King Sigurd. Eystein did not come up to the town, but lay in
Floruvagar, and good men went between to get a reconciliation
made. But Gregorius wanted that they should go out against him,
thinking there never would be a better opportunity; and offered
to be himself the leader. "For thou, king, shalt not go, for we
have no want of men." But many dissuaded from this course, and
it came to nothing. King Eystein returned back to Viken, and
King Inge to Thronthjem, and they were in a sort reconciled; but
they did not meet each other.

29. OF GREGORIUS DAGSON.

Somewhat later than King Eystein, Gregorius Dagson also set out
to the eastward and came to his farm Bratsberg in Hofund; but
King Eystein was up in the fjord at Oslo, and had his ships drawn
above two miles over the frozen sea, for there was much ice at
that time in Viken. King Eystein went up to Hofund to take
Gregorius; but he got news of what was on foot, and escaped to
Thelemark with ninety men, from thence over the mountains, and
came down in Hardanger; and at last to Studla in Etne, to Erling
Skakke's farm. Erling himself had gone north to Bergen; but his
wife Kristin, a daughter of King Sigurd, was at home, and offered
Gregorius all the assistance he wanted; and he was hospitably
received. He got a long-ship there which belonged to Erling, and
everything else he required. Gregorius thanked her kindly, and
allowed that she had behaved nobly, and as might have been
expected of her. Gregorius then proceeded to Bergen, where he
met Erling, who thought also that his wife had done well.

30. RECONCILIATION OF EYSTEIN AND INGE.

Then Gregorius went north to Thronthjem, and came there before
Yule. King Inge was rejoiced at his safety, and told him to use
his property as freely as his own, King Eystein having burnt
Gregorius's house, and slaughtered his stock of cattle. The
ship-docks which King Eystein the Elder had constructed in the
merchant town of Nidaros, and which had been exceedingly
expensive, were also burnt this winter, together with some good
vessels belonging to King Inge. This deed was ascribed to King
Eystein and Philip Gyrdson, King Sigurd's foster-brother, and
occasioned much displeasure and hatred. The following summer
King Inge went south with a very numerous body of men; and King
Eystein came northwards, gathering men also. They met in the
east (A.D. 1156) at the Seleys, near to the Naze; but King Inge
was by far the strongest in men. It was nearly coming to a
battle; but at last they were reconciled on these conditions,
that King Eystein should be bound to pay forty-five marks of
gold, of which King Inge should have thirty marks, because King
Eystein had occasioned the burning of the docks and ships; and,

Saga of Sigurd, Inge, and Eystein, the Sons of Harald besides, that Philip, and all who had been accomplices in the deed, should be outlawed. Also that the men should be banished the country, against whom it could be proved that they gave blow or wound to King Sigurd; for King Eystein accused King Inge of protecting these men; and that Gregorius should have fifteen marks of gold for the value of his property burnt by King Eystein. King Eystein was ill pleased with these terms, and looked upon the treaty as one forced upon him. From that meeting King Inge went eastward to Viken, and King Eystein north to Throndhjem; and they had no intercourse with each other, nor were the messages which passed between them very friendly, and on both sides they killed each other's friends. King Eystein, besides, did not pay the money; and the one accused the other of not fulfilling what was promised. King Inge and Gregorius enticed many people from King Eystein; among others, Bard Standale Brynjolfson, Simon Skalp, a son of Halkel Huk, Halder Brynjolfson, Jon Halkelson, and many other lenders.

31. OF EYSTEIN AND INGE.

Two years after King Sigurd's fall (A.D. 1157) both kings assembled armaments; namely, King Inge in the east of the country, where he collected eighty ships; and King Eystein in the north, where he had forty-five, and among these the Great Dragon, which King Eystein Magnuson had built after the Long Serpent; and they had on both sides many and excellent troops. King Inge lay with his ships south at Moster Isle, and King Eystein a little to the north in Graeningasund. King Eystein sent the young Aslak Jonson, and Arne Sturla, a son of Snaebjorn, with one ship to meet King Inge; but when the king's men knew them, they assaulted them, killed many of their people, and took all that was in the ship belonging to them. Aslak and Arne and a few more escaped to the land, went to King Eystein, and told him how King Inge had received them. Thereupon King Eystein held a House-thing, and told his followers how ill King Inge had treated his men, and desired the troops to follow him. "I have," said he, "so many, and such excellent men, that I have no intention to fly, if ye will follow me." But this speech was not received with much favour. Halkel Huk was there; but both his sons, Simon and Jon, were with King Inge. Halkel replied, so loud that many heard him, "Let thy chests of gold follow thee, and let them defend thy land."

32. KING EYSTEIN'S DEATH.

In the night many of King Eystein's ships rowed secretly away, some of them joining King Inge, some going to Bergen, or up into the fjords; so that when it was daylight in the morning the king was lying behind with only ten ships. Then he left the Great Dragon, which was heavy to row, and several other vessels behind; and cut and destroyed the Dragon, started out the ale, and destroyed all that they could not take with them. King Eystein went on board of the ship of Eindride, a son of Jon Morner, sailed north into Sogn, and then took the land-road eastwards to Viken. King Inge took the vessels, and sailed with them outside of the isles to Viken. King Eystein had then got east as far as Fold, and had with him 1200 men; but when they saw King Inge's force, they did not think themselves sufficiently strong to oppose him, and they retired to the forest. Every one fled his

Saga of Sigurd, Inge, and Eystein, the Sons of Harald
own way, so that the king was left with but one man. King Inge
and his men observed King Eystein's flight, and also that he had
but few people with him, and they went immediately to search for
him. Simon Skalp met the king just as he was coming out of a
willow bush. Simon saluted him. "God save you, sire," said he.

The king replied, "I do not know if thou art not here."

Simon replied, "That is as it may happen."

The king begged him to conceal him, and said it was proper to do
so. "For there was long friendship between us, although it has
now gone differently."

Simon replied, it could not be.

Then the king begged that he might hear mass before he died,
which accordingly took place. Then Eystein laid himself down on
his face on the grass, stretched out his hands on each side, and
told them to cut the sign of the cross between his shoulders, and
see whether he could not bear steel as King Inge's followers had
asserted of him. Simon told the man who had to put the king to
death to do so immediately, for the king had been creeping about
upon the grass long enough. He was accordingly slain, and he
appears to have suffered manfully. His body was carried to Fors,
and lay all night under the hill at the south side of the church.
King Eystein was buried in Fors church, and his grave is in the
middle of the church-floor, where a fringed canopy is spread over
it, and he is considered a saint. Where he was executed, and his
blood ran upon the ground, sprang up a fountain, and another
under the hill where his body lay all night. From both these
waters many think they have received a cure of sickness and pain.
It is reported by the Viken people that many miracles were
wrought at King Eystein's grave, until his enemies poured upon it
soup made of boiled dog's flesh. Simon Skalp was much hated for
this deed, which was generally ascribed to him; but some said
that when King Eystein was taken Simon sent a message to King
Inge, and the king commanded that King Eystein should not come
before his face. So King Sverre has caused it to be written; but
Einar Skulason tells of it thus: --

"Simon Skalp, the traitor bold,
For deeds of murder known of old,
His king betrayed; and ne'er will he
God's blessed face hereafter see."