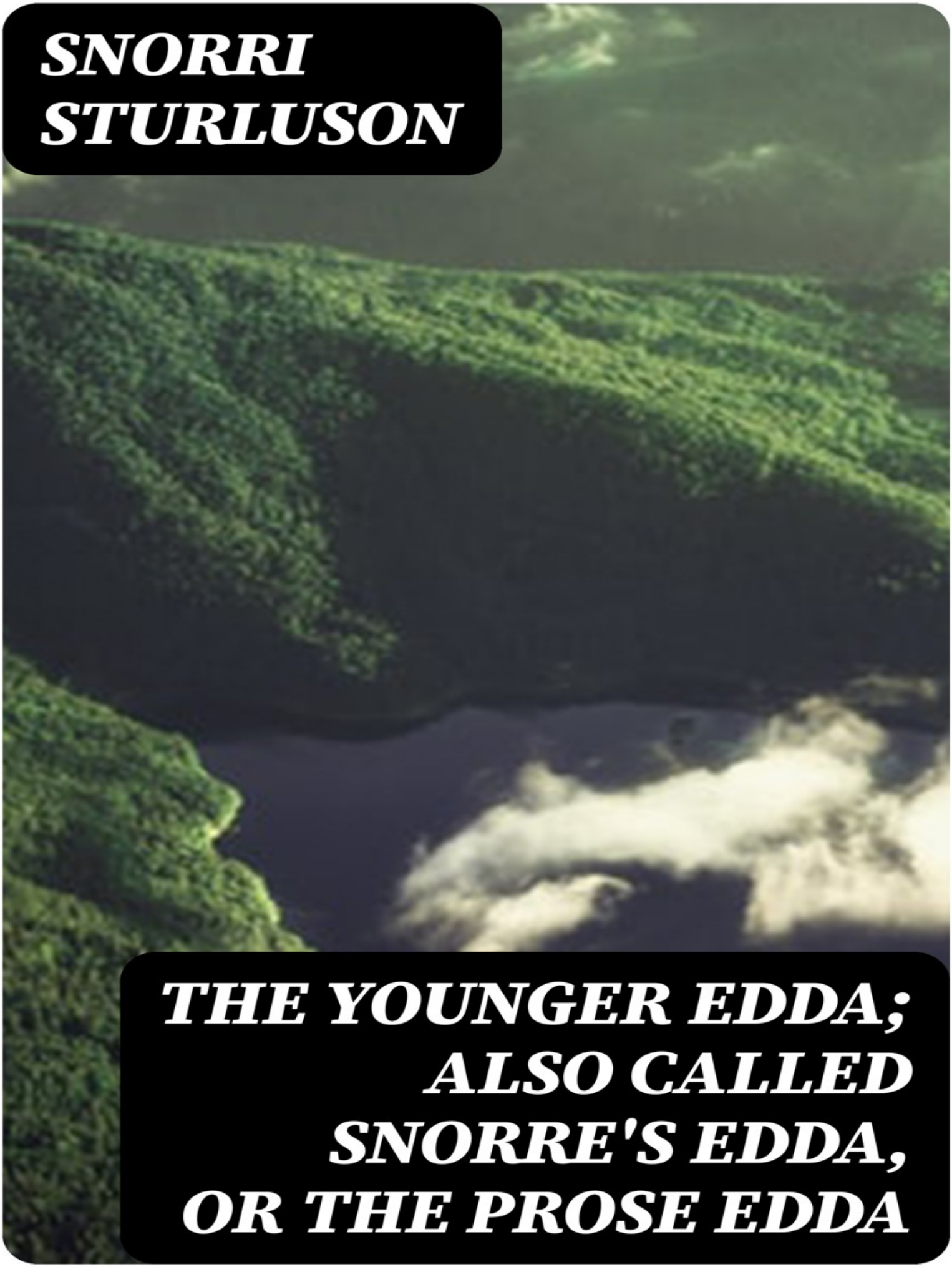
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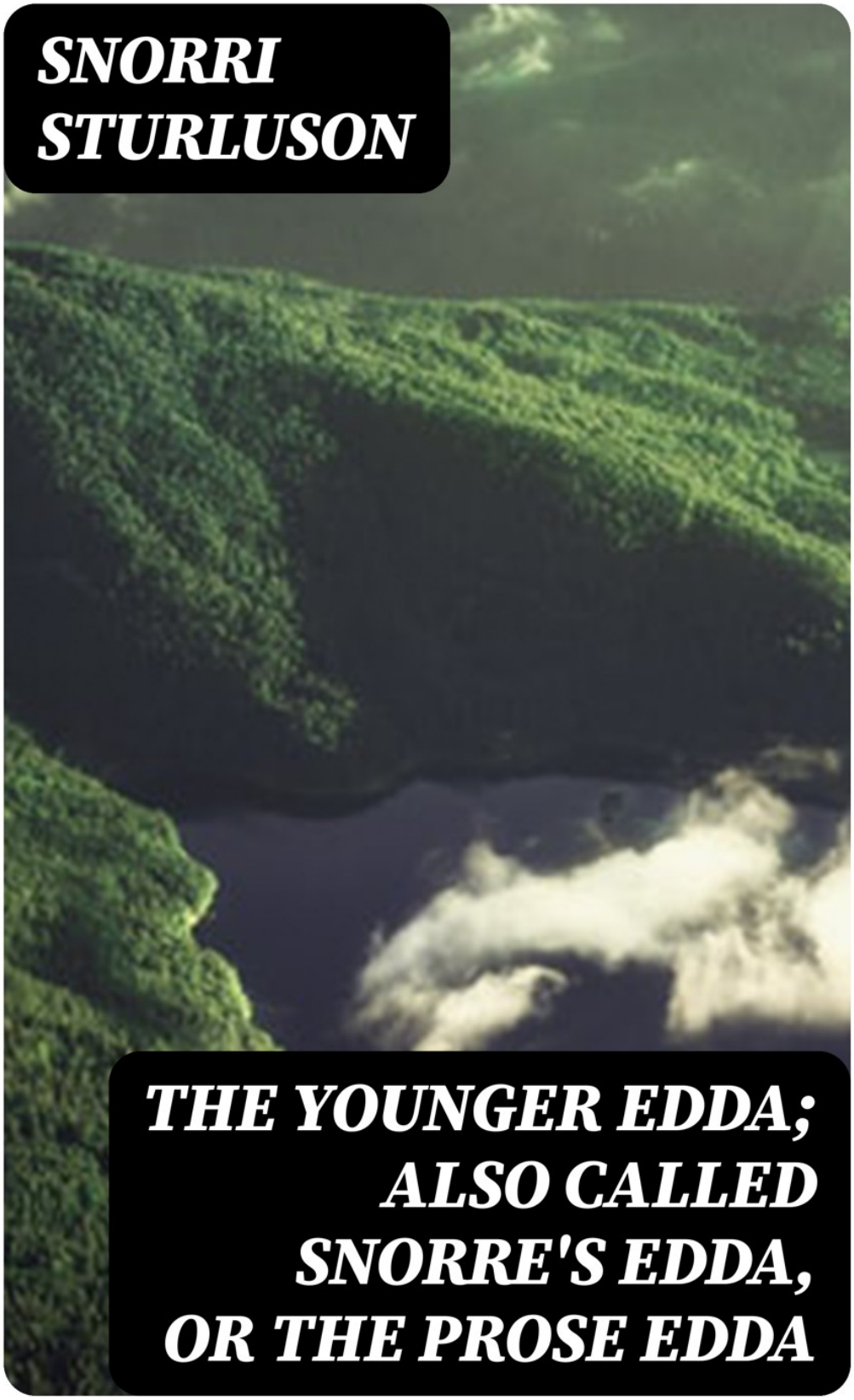
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Table of Contents

PREFACE.

In the beginning, before the heaven and the earth and the sea were created, the great abyss Ginungagap was without form and void, and the spirit of Fimbultyr moved upon the face of the deep, until the ice-cold rivers, the Elivogs, flowing from Niflheim, came in contact with the dazzling flames from Muspelheim. This was before Chaos.

And Fimbultyr said: Let the melted drops of vapor quicken into life, and the giant Ymer was born in the midst of Ginungagap. He was not a god, but the father of all the race of evil giants. This was Chaos.

And Fimbultyr said: Let Ymer be slain and let order be established. And straightway Odin and his brothers—the bright sons of Bure—gave Ymer a mortal wound, and from his body made they the universe; from his flesh, the earth; from his blood, the sea; from his bones, the rocks; from his hair, the trees; from his skull, the vaulted heavens; from his eye-brows, the bulwark called Midgard. And the gods formed man and woman in their own image of two trees, and breathed into them the breath of life. Ask and Embla became living souls, and they received a garden in Midgard as a dwelling-place for themselves and their children until the end of time. This was Cosmos.

The world’s last day approaches. All bonds and fetters that bound the forces of heaven and earth together are severed, and the powers of good and of evil are brought together in an internecine feud. Loke advances with the Fenris-wolf and the Midgard-serpent, his own children, with

all the hosts of the giants, and with Surt, who flings fire and flame over the world. Odin advances with all the asas and all the blessed einherjes. They meet, contend, and fall. The wolf swallows Odin, but Vidar, the Silent, sets his foot upon the monster’s lower jaw, he seizes the other with his hand, and thus rends him till he dies. Frey encounters Surt, and terrible blows are given ere Frey falls. Heimdal and Loke fight and kill each other, and so do Tyr and the dog Garm from the Gnipa Cave. Asa-Thor fells the Midgard-serpent with his Mjolner, but he retreats only nine paces when he himself falls dead, suffocated by the serpent’s venom. Then smoke wreathes up around the ash Ygdrasil, the high flames play against the heavens, the graves of the gods, of the giants and of men are swallowed up by the sea, and the end has come. This is Ragnarok, the twilight of the gods.

But the radiant dawn follows the night. The earth, completely green, rises again from the sea, and where the mews have but just been rocking on restless waves, rich fields unplowed and unsown, now wave their golden harvests before the gentle breezes. The asas awake to a new life, Balder is with them again. Then comes the mighty Fimbultyr, the god who is from everlasting to everlasting; the god whom the Edda skald dared not name. The god of gods comes to the asas. He comes to the great judgment and gathers all the good into Gimle to dwell there forever, and evermore delights enjoy; but the perjurers and murderers and adulterers he sends to Nastrand, that terrible hall, to be torn by Nidhug until they are purged from their wickedness. This is Regeneration.

These are the outlines of the Teutonic religion. Such were the doctrines established by Odin among our ancestors. Thus do we find it recorded in the Eddas of Iceland.

The present volume contains all of the Younger Edda that can possibly be of any importance to English readers. In fact, it gives more than has ever before been presented in any translation into English, German or any of the modern Scandinavian tongues.

We would recommend our readers to omit the Forewords and Afterwords until they have perused the Fooling of Gylfe and Brage's Speech. The Forewords and Afterwords, it will readily be seen, are written by a later and less skillful hand, and we should be sorry to have anyone lay the book aside and lose the pleasure of reading Snorre's and Olaf's charming work, because he became disgusted with what seemed to him mere silly twaddle. And yet these Forewords and Afterwords become interesting enough when taken up in connection with a study of the historical anthropomorphized Odin. With a view of giving a pretty complete outline of the founder of the Teutonic race we have in our notes given all the Heimskringla sketch of the Black Sea Odin. We have done this, not only on account of the material it furnishes as the groundwork of a Teutonic epic, which we trust the muses will ere long direct some one to write, but also on account of the vivid picture it gives of Teutonic life as shaped and controlled by the Odinic faith.

All the poems quoted in the Younger Edda have in this edition been traced back to their sources in the Elder Edda and elsewhere.

Where the notes seem to the reader insufficient, we must refer him to our Norse Mythology, where he will, we trust, find much of the additional information he may desire.

Well aware that our work has many imperfections, and begging our readers to deal generously with our shortcomings, we send the book out into the world with the hope that it may aid some young son or daughter of Odin to find his way to the fountains of Urd and Mimer and to Idun’s rejuvenating apples. The son must not squander, but husband wisely, what his father has accumulated. The race must cherish and hold fast and add to the thought that the past has bequeathed to it. Thus does it grow greater and richer with each new generation. The past is the mirror that reflects the future.

R. B. ANDERSON.

University of Wisconsin,
Madison, Wis., *September, 1879*.

THE YOUNGER EDDA.

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION.

The records of our Teutonic past have hitherto received but slight attention from the English-speaking branch of the great world-ash Ygdrasil. This indifference is the more deplorable, since a knowledge of our heroic forefathers would naturally operate as a most powerful means of keeping alive among us, and our posterity, that spirit of courage, enterprise and independence for which the old Teutons were so distinguished.

The religion of our ancestors forms an important chapter in the history of the childhood of our race, and this fact has induced us to offer the public an English translation of the Eddas. The purely mythological portion of the Elder Edda was translated and published by A.S. Cottle, in Bristol, in 1797, and the whole work was translated by Benjamin Thorpe, and published in London in 1866. Both these works are now out of print. Of the Younger Edda we have likewise had two translations into English,—the first by Dasent in 1842, the second by Blackwell, in his edition of Mallet's Northern Antiquities, in 1847. The former has long been out of print, the latter is a poor imitation of Dasent's. Both of them are very incomplete. These four books constitute all the Edda literature we have had in the English language, excepting, of course, single lays and chapters translated by

Gray, Henderson, W. Taylor, Herbert, Jamieson, Pigott, William and Mary Howitt, and others.

The Younger Edda (also called Snorre's Edda, or the Prose Edda), of which we now have the pleasure of presenting our readers an English version, contains, as usually published in the original, the following divisions:

1. The Foreword.
2. Gylfaginning (The Fooling of Gylfe).
3. The Afterword to Gylfaginning.
4. Brage's Speech.
5. The Afterword.
6. Skaldskaparmal (a collection of poetic paraphrases, and denominations in Skaldic language without paraphrases).
7. Hattatal (an enumeration of metres; a sort of Clavis Metrica).

In some editions there are also found six additional chapters on the alphabet, grammar, figures of speech, etc.

There are three important parchment manuscripts of the Younger Edda, viz:

1. *Codex Regius*, the so-called King's Book. This was presented to the Royal Library in Copenhagen, by Bishop Brynjulf Sveinsson, in the year 1640, where it is still kept.

2. *Codex Wormianus*. This is found in the University Library in Copenhagen, in the Arne Magnæan collection. It takes its name from Professor Ole Worm [died 1654], to whom it was presented by the learned Arngrim Jonsson. Christian Worm, the grandson of Ole Worm, and Bishop of Seeland [died 1737], afterward presented it to Arne Magnusson.

3. *Codex Upsaliensis*. This is preserved in the Upsala University Library. Like the other two, it was found in Iceland, where it was given to Jon Rugmann. Later it fell into the hands of Count Magnus Gabriel de la Gardie, who in the year 1669 presented it to the Upsala University. Besides these three chief documents, there exist four fragmentary parchments, and a large number of paper manuscripts.

The first printed edition of the Younger Edda, in the original, is the celebrated “Edda Islandorum,” published by Peter Johannes Resen, in Copenhagen, in the year 1665. It contains a translation into Latin, made partly by Resen himself, and partly also by Magnus Olafsson, Stephan Olafsson and Thormod Torfason.

Not until eighty years later, that is in 1746, did the second edition of the Younger Edda appear in Upsala under the auspices of Johannes Goransson. This was printed from the Codex Upsaliensis.

In the present century we find a third edition by Rasmus Rask, published in Stockholm in 1818. This is very complete and critical. The fourth edition was issued by Sveinbjorn Egilsson, in Reykjavik, 1849; the fifth by the Arne-Magnæan Commission in Copenhagen, 1852.1 All these five editions have long been out of print, and in place of them we have a sixth edition by Thorleif Jonsson (Copenhagen, 1875), and a seventh by Ernst Wilkin (Paderborn, 1877). Both of these, and especially the latter, are thoroughly critical and reliable.

Of translations, we must mention in addition to those into English by Dasent and Blackwell, R.Nyerup’s translation into Danish (Copenhagen, 1808); Karl Simrock’s into German (Stuttgart and Tübingen, 1851); and Fr. Bergmann’s into

French (Paris, 1871). Among the chief authorities to be consulted in the study of the Younger Edda may be named, in addition to those already mentioned, Fr. Dietrich, Th. Mobius, Fr. Pfeiffer, Ludw. Ettmuller, K.Hildebrand, Ludw. Uhland, P.E. Muller, Adolf Holzmann, Sophus Bugge, P.A. Munch and Rudolph Keyser. For the material in our introduction and notes, we are chiefly indebted to Simrock, Wilkin and Keyser. While we have had no opportunity of making original researches, the published works have been carefully studied, and all we claim for our work is, that it shall contain the results of the latest and most thorough investigations by scholars who live nearer the fountains of Urd and Mimer than do we. Our translations are made from Egilsson's, Jonsson's and Wilkins' editions of the original. We have not translated any of the Hattatal, and only the narrative part of Skaldskaparmal, and yet our version contains more of the Younger Edda than any English, German, French or Danish translation that has hitherto been published. The parts omitted cannot possibly be of any interest to any one who cannot read them in the original. All the paraphrases of the asas and asynjes, of the world, the earth, the sea, the sun, the wind, fire, summer, man, woman, gold, of war, arms, of a ship, emperor, king, ruler, etc., are of interest only as they help to explain passages of Old Norse poems. The same is true of the enumeration of metres, which contains a number of epithets and metaphors used by the scalds, illustrated by specimens of their poetry, and also by a poem of Snorre Sturleson, written in one hundred different metres.

There has been a great deal of learned discussion in regard to the authorship of the Younger Edda. Readers specially interested in this knotty subject we must refer to Wilkins' elaborate treatise, Untersuchungen zur Snorra Edda (Paderborn, 1878), and to P.E. Muller's, Die Æchtheit der Asalehre (Copenhagen, 1811).

Two celebrated names that without doubt are intimately connected with the work are Snorre Sturleson and Olaf Thordsson Hvitaskald. Both of these are conspicuous, not only in the literary, but also in the political history of Iceland.

Snorre Sturleson2 was born in Iceland in the year 1178. Three years old, he came to the house of the distinguished chief, Jon Loptsson, at Odde, a grandson of Sæmund the Wise, the reputed collector of the Elder Edda, where he appears to have remained until Jon Loptsson's death, in the year 1197. Soon afterward Snorre married into a wealthy family, and in a short time he became one of the most distinguished leaders in Iceland, He was several times elected chief magistrate, and no man in the land was his equal in riches and prominence. He and his two elder brothers, Thord and Sighvat, who were but little inferior to him in wealth and power, were at one time well-nigh supreme in Iceland, and Snorre sometimes appeared at the Althing at Thingvols accompanied by from eight hundred to nine hundred armedmen.

Snorre and his brothers did not only have bitter feuds with other families, but a deadly hatred also arose between themselves, making their lives a perpetual warfare. Snorre was shrewd as a politician and magistrate, and eminent as

an orator and skald, but his passions were mean, and many of his ways were crooked. He was both ambitious and avaricious. He is said to have been the first Icelander who laid plans to subjugate his fatherland to Norway, and in this connection is supposed to have expected to become a jarl under the king of Norway. In this effort he found himself outwitted by his brother's son, Sturle Thordsson, and thus he came into hostile relations with the latter. In this feud Snorre was defeated, but when Sturle shortly after fell in a battle against his foes, Snorre's star of hope rose again, and he began to occupy himself with far-reaching, ambitious plans. He had been for the first time in Norway during the years 1218-1220, and had been well received by King Hakon, and especially by Jarl Skule, who was then the most influential man in the country. In the year 1237 Snorre visited Norway again, and entered, as it is believed, into treasonable conspiracies with Jarl Skule. In 1239 he left Norway against the wishes of King Hakon, whom he owed obedience, and thereby incurred the king's greatest displeasure. When King Hakon, in 1240, had crushed Skule's rebellion and annihilated this dangerous opponent, it became Snorre's turn to feel the effects of the king's wrath. At the instigation of King Hakon, several chiefs of Iceland united themselves against Snorre and murdered him at Reykholt, where ruins of his splendid mansion are still to be seen. This event took place on the 22d of September, 1241, and Snorre Sturleson was then sixty-three years old. Snorre was Iceland's most distinguished skald and sagaman. As a writer of history he deserves to be compared with Herodotos or Thukydides. His Heimskringla, embracing an elaborate

history of the kings of Norway, is famous throughout the civilized world, and Emerson calls it the Iliad and Odyssey of our race. An English translation of this work was published by Samuel Laing, in London, in 1844. Carlyle's Early Kings of Norway (London, 1875) was inspired by the Heimskringla.

Olaf Thordsson, surnamed Hvitaskald,[3] to distinguish him from his contemporary, Olaf Svartaskald,[4] was a son of Snorre's brother. Though not as prominent and influential as his uncle, he took an active part in all the troubles of his native island during the first half of the thirteenth century. He visited Norway in 1236, whence he went to Denmark, where he was a guest at the court of King Valdemar, and is said to have enjoyed great esteem. In 1240 we find him again in Norway, where he espoused the cause of King Hakon against Skule. On his return to Iceland he served four years as chief magistrate of the island. His death occurred in the year 1259, and he is numbered among the great skalds of Iceland.

Snorre Sturleson and Olaf Hvitaskald are the two names to whom the authorship of the Younger Edda has generally been attributed, and the work is by many, even to this day, called Snorra Edda—that is, Snorre's Edda. We do not propose to enter into any elaborate discussion of this complicated subject, but we will state briefly the reasons given by Keyser and others for believing that these men had a hand in preparing the Prose Edda. In the first place, we find that the writer of the grammatical and rhetorical part of the Younger Edda distinctly mentions Snorre as author of Hattatal (the Clavis Metrica), and not only of the poem itself, but also of the treatise in prose. In the second place, the

Arne Magnæan parchment manuscript, which dates back to the close of the thirteenth or beginning of the fourteenth century, has the following note prefaced to the Skaldskaparmal. “Here ends that part of the book which Olaf Thordsson put together, and now begins Skaldskaparmal and the Kenningar, according to that which has been found in the lays of the chief skalds, and which Snorre afterward suffered to be brought together.” In the third place, the Upsala manuscript of the Younger Edda, which is known with certainty to have been written in the beginning of the fourteenth century, contains this preface, written with the same hand as the body of the work: “This book hight Edda. Snorre has compiled it in the manner in which it is arranged: first, in regard to the asas and Ymer, then Skaldskaparmal and the denominations of many things, and finally that Hattatal, which Snorre composed about King Hakon and Duke Skule.” In the fourth place, there is a passage in the so-called Annales Breviores, supposed to have been written about the year 1400. The passage relates to the year 1241, and reads thus: “Snorre Sturleson died at Reykholt. He was a wise and very learned man, a great chief and shrewd. He was the first man in this land who brought property into the hands of the king (the king of Norway). He compiled Edda and many other learned historical works and Icelandic sagas. He was murdered at Reykholt by Jarl Gissur’smen.”

It seems, then, that there is no room for any doubt that these two men have had a share in the authorship of the Younger Edda. How great a share each has had is another and more difficult problem to solve. Rudolf Keyser’s opinion is (and we know no higher authority on the subject), that

Snorre is the author, though not in so strict a sense as we now use the word, of Gylfaginning, Brage's Speech, Skaldskaparmal and Hattatal. This part of the Younger Edda may thus be said to date back to the year 1230, though the material out of which the mythological system is constructed is of course much older. We find it in the ancient Vala's Prophecy, of the Elder Edda, a poem that breathes in every line the purest asa-faith, and is, without the least doubt, much older than the introduction of christianity in the north, or the discovery and settlement of Iceland. It is not improbable that the religious system of the Odinic religion had assumed a permanent prose form in the memories of the people long before the time of Snorre, and that he merely was the means of having it committed to writing almost without verbal change.

Olaf Thordsson is unmistakably the author of the grammatical and rhetorical portion of the Younger Edda, and its date can therefore safely be put at about 1250. The author of the treatise on the alphabet is not known, but Professor Keyser thinks it must have been written, its first chapter, about the year 1150, and its second chapter about the year 1200. The forewords and afterwords are evidently also from another pen. Their author is unknown, but they are thought to have been written about the year 1300. To sum up, then, we arrive at this conclusion: The mythological material of the Younger Edda is as old as the Teutonic race. Parts of it are written by authors unknown to fame. A small portion is the work of Olaf Thordsson. The most important portion is written, or perhaps better, compiled, by Snorre Sturleson, and the whole is finally edited and furnished with

forewords and afterwords, early in the fourteenth century,—according to Keyser, about 1320-1330.

About the name Edda there has also been much learned discussion. Some have suggested that it may be a mutilated form of the word Odde, the home of Sæmund the Wise, who was long supposed to be the compiler of the Elder Edda. In this connection, it has been argued that possibly Sæmund had begun the writing of the Younger Edda, too. Others derive the word from *óðr* (mind, soul), which in poetical usage also means song, poetry. Others, again, connect Edda with the Sanscrit word Veda, which is supposed to mean knowledge. Finally, others adopt the meaning which the word has where it is actually used in the Elder Edda, and where it means great-grandmother. Vigfusson adopts this definition, and it is certainly both scientific and poetical. What can be more beautiful than the idea that our great ancestress teaches her descendants the sacred traditions, the concentrated wisdom, of the race? To sum up, then, we say the Younger, or Prose, or Snorre's Edda has been produced at different times by various hands, and the object of its authors has been to produce a manual for the skalds. In addition to the forewords and afterwords, it contains two books, one greater (Gylfaginning) and one lesser (Brage's Speech), giving a tolerably full account of Norse mythology. Then follows Skaldskaparmal, wherein is an analysis of the various circumlocutions practiced by the skalds, all illustrated by copious quotations from the poets. How much of these three parts is written by Snorre is not certain, but on the other hand, there is no doubt that he is the author of Hattatal (Clavis Metrica), which gives an enumeration of

metres. To these four treatises are added four chapters on grammar and rhetoric. The writer of the oldest grammatical treatise is thought to be one Thorodd Runemaster, who lived in the middle of the twelfth century; and the third treatise is evidently written by Olaf Thordsson Hvitaskald, the nephew of Snorre, a scholar who spent some time at the court of the Danish king, Valdemar the Victorious.

The Younger Edda contains the systematized theogony and cosmogony of our forefathers, while the Elder Edda presents the Odinic faith in a series of lays or rhapsodies. The Elder Edda is poetry, while the Younger Edda is mainly prose. The Younger Edda may in one sense be regarded as the sequel or commentary of the Elder Edda. Both complement each other, and both must be studied in connection with the sagas and all the Teutonic traditions and folk-lore in order to get a comprehensive idea of the asa-faith. The two Eddas constitute, as it were, the Odinic Bible. The Elder Edda is the Old Testament, the Younger Edda the New. Like the Old Testament, the Elder Edda is in poetry. It is prophetic and enigmatical. Like the New Testament, the Younger Edda is in prose; it is lucid, and gives a clue to the obscure passages in the Elder Edda. Nay, in many respects do the two Eddas correspond with the two Testaments of the Christian Bible.

It is a deplorable fact that the religion of our forefathers seems to be but little cared for in this country. The mythologies of other nations every student manifests an interest for. He reads with the greatest zeal all the legends of Rome and Greece, of India and China. He is familiar with every room in the labyrinth of Crete, while when he is

introduced to the shining halls of Valhal and Gladsheim he gropes his way like a blind man. He does not know that Idun, with her beautiful apples, might, if applied to, render even greater services than Ariadne with her wonderful thread. When we inquire whom Tuesday and Wednesday and Thursday and Friday are named after, and press questions in reference to Tyr, Odin, Thor and Freyja, we get at best but a wise and knowing look. Are we, then, as a nation, like the ancient Jews, and do we bend the knee before the gods of foreign nations and forsake the altars of our own gods? What if we then should suffer the fate of that unhappy people—be scattered over all the world and lose our fatherland? In these Eddas our fathers have bequeathed unto us all their profoundest, all their sublimest, all their best thought. They are the concentrated result of their greatest intellectual and spiritual effort, and it behooves us to cherish this treasure and make it the fountain at which the whole American branch of the Ygdrasil ash may imbibe a united national sentiment. It is not enough to brush the dust off these gods and goddesses of our ancestors and put them up on pedestals as ornaments in our museums and libraries. These coins of the past are not to be laid away in numismatic collections. The grandson must use what he has inherited from his grandfather. If the coin is not intelligible, then it will have to be sent to the mint and stamped anew, in order that it may circulate freely. Our ancestral deities want a place in our hearts and in our songs.

On the European continent and in England the zeal of the priests in propagating Christianity was so great that they sought to root out every trace of the asa-faith. They left but

unintelligible fragments of the heathen religious structure. Our gods and goddesses and heroes were consigned to oblivion, and all knowledge of the Odinic religion and of the Niblung-story would have been well nigh totally obliterated had not a more lucky star hovered over the destinies of Iceland. In this remotest corner of the world the ancestral spirit was preserved like the glowing embers of Hekla beneath the snow and ice of the glacier. From the farthest Thule the spirit of our fathers rises and shines like an aurora over all Teutondom. It was in the year 860 that Iceland was discovered. In 874 the Teutonic spirit fled thither for refuge from tyranny. Here a government based on the principles of old Teutonic liberty was established. From here went forth daring vikings, who discovered Greenland and Vinland, and showed Columbus the way to America. From here the courts of Norway, Sweden, Denmark, England and Germany were supplied with skalds to sing their praises. Here was put in writing the laws and sagas that give us a clue to the form of old Teutonic institutions. Here was preserved the Old Norse language, and in it a record of the customs, the institutions and the religion of our fathers. Its literature does not belong to that island alone,—it belongs to the whole Teutonic race! Iceland is for the Teutons what Greece and Rome are for the south of Europe, and she accomplished her mission with no less efficiency and success. Cato the Elder used to end all his speeches with these words: *“Præterea censeo Carthaginem esse delendam.”* In these days, when so many worship at the shrine of Romanism, we think it perfectly just to adopt Cato’s sentence in this form: *Præterea censeo Romam esse delendam*.

FOREWORD.

1. In the beginning Almighty God created heaven and earth, and all things that belong to them, and last he made two human beings, from whom the races are descended (Adam and Eve), and their children multiplied and spread over all the world. But in the course of time men became unequal; some were good and right-believing, but many more turned them after the lusts of the world and heeded not God’s laws; and for this reason God drowned the world in the flood, and all that was quick in the world, except those who were in the ark with Noah. After the flood of Noah there lived eight men, who inhabited the world, and from them the races are descended; and now, as before, they increased and filled the world, and there were very many men who loved to covet wealth and power, but turned away from obedience to God, and so much did they do this that they would not name God. And who could then tell their sons of the wonderful works of God? So it came to pass that they lost God’s name; and in the wide world the man was not to be found who could tell of his Maker. But, nevertheless, God gave them earthly-gifts, wealth and happiness, that should be with them in the world; he also shared wisdom among them, so that they understood all earthly things, and all kinds that might be seen in the air and on the earth. This they thought upon, and wondered at, how it could come to pass that the earth and the beasts and the birds had the same nature in some things but still were unlike in manners.

One evidence of this nature was that the earth might be dug into upon high mountain-peaks and water would spring up there, and it was not necessary to dig deeper for water there than in deep dales; thus, also, in beasts and birds it is no farther to the blood in the head than in the feet. Another proof of this nature is, that every year there grow on the earth grass and flowers, and the same year it falls and withers; thus, also, on beasts and birds do hair and feathers grow and fall off each year. The third nature of the earth is, that when it is opened and dug into, then grass grows on the mould which is uppermost on the earth. Rocks and stones they explained to correspond to the teeth and bones of living things. From these things they judged that the earth must be quick and must have life in some way, and they knew that it was of a wonderfully great age and of a mighty nature. It nourished all that was quick and took to itself all that died. On this account they gave it a name, and numbered their ancestors back to it This they also learned from their old kinsmen, that when many hundred winters were numbered, the course of the heavenly bodies was uneven; some had a longer course than others. From such things they suspected that some one must be the ruler of the heavenly bodies who could stay their course at his own will, and he must be strong and mighty; and of him they thought that, if he ruled the prime elements, he must also have been before the heavenly bodies, and they saw that, if he ruled the course of the heavenly bodies, he must rule the sunshine, and the dew of the heavens, and the products of the earth that follow them; and thus, also, the winds of the air and therewith the storms of the sea. They knew not

where his realm was, but they believed that he ruled over all things on the earth and in the air, over the heavens and the heavenly bodies, the seas and the weather. But in order that these things might be better told and remembered, they gave him the same name with themselves, and this belief has been changed in many ways, as the peoples have been separated and the tongues have been divided.

2. In his old age Noah shared the world with his sons: for Ham he intended the western region, for Japheth the northern region, but for Shem the southern region, with those parts which will hereafter be marked out in the division of the earth into three parts. In the time that the sons of these men were in the world, then increased forthwith the desire for riches and power, from the fact that they knew many crafts that had not been discovered before, and each one was exalted with his own handiwork; and so far did they carry their pride, that the Africans, descended from Ham, harried in that part of the world which the offspring of Shem, their kinsman, inhabited. And when they had conquered them, the world seemed to them too small, and they smithied a tower with tile and stone, which they meant should reach to heaven, on the plain called Sennar. And when this building was so far advanced that it extended above the air, and they were no less eager to continue the work, and when God saw how their pride waxed high, then he sees that he will have to strike it down in some way. And the same God, who is almighty, and who might have struck down all their work in the twinkling of an eye, and made themselves turn into dust, still preferred to frustrate their purpose by making them realize their own littleness, in that

none of them should understand what the other talked; and thus no one knew what the other commanded, and one broke what the other wished to build up, until they came to strife among themselves, and therewith was frustrated, in the beginning, their purpose of building a tower. And he who was foremost, hight Zoroaster, he laughed before he wept when he came into the world; but the master-smiths were seventy-two, and so many tongues have spread over the world since the giants were dispersed over the land, and the nations became numerous. In this same place was built the most famous city, which took its name from the tower, and was called Babylon. And when the confusion of tongues had taken place, then increased the names of men and of other things, and this same Zoroaster had many names; and although he understood that his pride was laid low by the said building, still he worked his way unto worldly power, and had himself chosen king over many peoples of the Assyrians. From him arose the error of idolatry; and when he was worshiped he was called Baal; we call him Bel; he also had many other names. But as the names increased in number, so was truth lost; and from this first error every following man worshiped his head-master, beasts or birds, the air and the heavenly bodies, and various lifeless things, until the error at length spread over the whole world; and so carefully did they lose the truth that no one knew his maker, excepting those men alone who spoke the Hebrew tongue,—that which flourished before the building of the tower,—and still they did not lose the bodily endowments that were given them, and therefore they judged of all things with earthly understanding, for spiritual wisdom was not given

unto them. They deemed that all things were smithied of some one material.

3. The world was divided into three parts, one from the south, westward to the Mediterranean Sea, which part was called Africa; but the southern portion of this part is hot and scorched by the sun. The second part, from the west and to the north and to the sea, is that called Europe, or Enea. The northern portion of this is cold, so that grass grows not, nor can anyone dwell there. From the north around the east region, and all to the south, that is called Asia. In that part of the world is all beauty and pomp, and wealth of the earth's products, gold and precious stones. There is also the mid-world, and as the earth there is fairer and of a better quality than elsewhere, so are also the people there most richly endowed with all gifts, with wisdom and strength, with beauty and with all knowledge.

4. Near the middle of the world was built the house and inn, the most famous that has been made, which was called Troy, in the land which we call Turkey. This city was built much larger than others, with more skill in many ways, at great expense, and with such means as were at hand. There were twelve kingdoms and one over-king, and many lands and nations belonged to each kingdom; there were in the city twelve chief languages.5 Their chiefs have surpassed all men who have been in the world in all heroic things. No scholar who has ever told of these things has ever disputed this fact, and for this reason, that all rulers of the north region trace their ancestors back thither, and place in the number of the gods all who were rulers of the city. Especially do they place Priamos himself in the stead of Odin; nor must

that be called wonderful, for Priamos was sprung from Saturn, him whom the north region for a long time believed to be God himself.

5. This Saturn grew up in that island in Greece which hight Crete. He was greater and stronger and fairer than other men. As in other natural endowments, so he excelled all men in wisdom. He invented many crafts which had not before been discovered. He was also so great in the art of magic that he was certain about things that had not yet come to pass. He found, too, that red thing in the earth from which he smelted gold, and from such things he soon became very mighty. He also foretold harvests and many other secret things, and for such, and many other deeds, he was chosen chief of the island. And when he had ruled it a short time, then there speedily enough became a great abundance of all things. No money circulated excepting gold coins, so plentiful was this metal; and though there was famine in other lands, the crops never failed in Crete, so that people might seek there all the things which they needed to have. And from this and many other secret gifts of power that he had, men believed him to be God, and from him arose another error among the Cretans and Macedonians like the one before mentioned among the Assyrians and Chaldeans from Zoroaster. And when Saturn finds how great strength the people think they have in him, he calls himself God, and says that he rules heaven and earth and all things.

6. Once he went to Greece in a ship, for there was a king’s daughter on whom he had set his heart. He won her love in this way, that one day when she was out with her

maid-servants, he took upon himself the likeness of a bull, and lay before her in the wood, and so fair was he that the hue of gold was on every hair; and when the king's daughter saw him she patted his lips. He sprang up and threw off the bull's likeness and took her into his arms and bore her to the ship and took her to Crete. But his wife, Juno, found this out, so he turned her (the king's daughter) into the likeness of a heifer and sent her east to the arms of the great river (that is, of the Nile, to the Nile country), and let the thrall, who hight Argulos, take care of her. She was there twelve months before he changed her shape again. Many things did he do like this, or even more wonderful He had three sons: one hight Jupiter, another Neptune, the third Pluto. They were all men of the greatest accomplishments, and Jupiter was by far the greatest; he was a warrior and won many kingdoms; he was also crafty like his father, and took upon himself the likeness of many animals, and thus he accomplished many things which are impossible for mankind; and on account of this, and other things, he was held in awe by all nations. Therefore Jupiter is put in the place of Thor, since all evil wights fearhim.

7. Saturn had built in Crete seventy-two burgs, and when he thought himself firmly established in his kingdom, he shared it with his sons, whom he set up with himself as gods; and to Jupiter he gave the realm of heaven; to Neptune, the realm of the earth, and to Pluto, hell; and this last seemed to him the worst to manage, and therefore he gave to him his dog, the one whom he called Cerberos, to guard hell. This Cerberos, the Greeks say, Herakles dragged out of hell and upon earth. And although Saturn had given