Summer 1967

CENTENNIAL NUMBER

THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN

"THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN, AUTHORIZED AS SECOND CLASS MAIL BY THE POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT, OTTAWA, AND FOR PAYMENT OF POSTAGE IN CASH." — PRINTED AT 868 ARLINGTON ST. WPG. 3.

The Icelandic Canadian

Volume XXV, No. 4 Winnipeg, Canada Summer 1967

THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN
A quarterly published by The Icelandic Canadian Club, Winnipeg, Manitoba

MAGAZINE BOARD
EDITORS: Judge W. J. Lindal, Editor-in-Chief and Chairman of the Board, 788 Wolseley Ave., Winnipeg 10; Prof. Haraldur Bessason, 91 Triton Bay, St. Vital, Winnipeg 8; Miss Shirley Bjarnason, 1010 Garfield St., Winnipeg 3; Miss Caroline Gunnarsson, 755 McMillan Ave., Winnipeg 9; Miss Salome Halldorson, 928 McMillan Ave., Winnipeg 9 Arilius Isfeld, 896 Palmerston Ave., Winnipeg 10; Miss Kristin Olson, 602-33 Kennedy St., Winnipeg 1; W. Kristjanson, 1117 Wolseley Ave., Winnipeg 10; T. O. S. Thorsteinson, 400 Parkview St., Winnipeg 12.

SECRETARY OF THE BOARD: Miss Mattie Halldorson, 32 Graham Apts., Wpg. 1
BUSINESS & CIRCULATION MANAGER: Hjalmur F. Danielson, 869 Garfield St.
ADVERTISING SOLICITOR: H. J. Stefansson, 296 Baltimore, Winnipeg 13

Editorial and news correspondence should be addressed to the Editor-in-Chief or to the Editor concerned. Subscriptions and business correspondence to the Business and Circulation Manager.

Subscription Rate: $2.00 per year. In Iceland kr. 100. Single copies .50c, in Icel. kr.25

Representatives in Iceland—
Baldur Þorsteinson, Skrifstofa Skógræktarfélags Íslands, Reykjavik

Authorized as Second Class Mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa.

INDEX OF CONTENTS—(continuation)

EDITORIAL

CANADA, OUR HOME AND NATIVE LAND

We celebrate this year our centennial as a nation. The year was ushered in with pealing bells, thundering cannon, and symbolic fires, and there have been countless centennial projects from coast to coast on an individual, community, provincial, and national scale, climaxed by the Pan-American Games and Expo 67.

Our origins, however, go much farther back than the term centennial implies. We remember that the Indians and the Eskimoes, who arrived thousands of years ago, proved very helpful to the European explorers. We remember Bjarni Herjólfsson, who sailed along our Canadian shores in 986 A.D., and Leifr Eiriksson, who a few years later explored our coasts extensively, and also Thorfinnur Karlsefni and later the timber-cutters in Markland. We remember John Cabot and Jacques Cartier and the first permanent settlement at Port Royal in 1605, and that the first permanent settlement in the United States was not founded till Jamestown, 1607. We remember also that responsible government was achieved in British North America by 1850.

Canada was founded in 1867, with four provinces and a population of not much over three million. The founders were faced with many serious problems, including much parish mentality, and great distances and a towering mountain barrier in the way of westward expansion.

But the founders had a vision of a Canadian nation and they devoted themselves to the founding. Theirs was a large vision and they possessed faith, courage, and determination.

The following have been some of the milestones to nationhood. The other provinces were brought in, one by one, till they numbered ten. Transcontinental railways and highways were built, a tremendous achievement. Immigrants poured in by the million, settling the great open spaces. In World War I the performance of the Canadian forces won recognition for Canadian nationhood, more formally spelled out in the Statute of Westminster. In World War II there was a total mobilization of all our resources and the Canadian contribution was of great importance to the Allied cause.

In recent years the material development of our country has been spectacular. With a population of twenty million, the gross national product is approaching the sixty billion dollar mark. Less than twenty years ago we imported 90 per cent of our oil; in 1967, Canada will be self-sufficient in petroleum. Foreign trade, including exports and imports, amounts to some twenty billion dollars annually. The dream of the founders has been realized.

Of vital importance is the fact that Canada as a nation has achieved what ten separate provinces could never have done. Besides the accomplishments mentioned above, Canada has promoted imaginative and ambitious regional developments, supported a National Research Council, launched Expo 67, a magnificent world fair, established an all-Canada basic standard of social welfare, and made important contributions to the Commonwealth and the United Nations.

We Canadians may well count our blessings: a land of peace and law and liberty; a free and democratic government; magnificent natural resources; a reputed second highest standard of living in the world; and a good measure of achievement in agriculture and industry, science, engineering, medicine, art and literature, and human relations.

In the face of all this some people express doubts that there is a Canadian identity and say that Canadians lack a national purpose. We Canadians may not wax lyrical about nationality but that is all to the good. There is a higher form of patriotism than flag-waving. Actions speak louder than words. The men who broke the sod loved their land. Fifty years ago, half-way back to Confederation, the Canadian forces possessed an **esprit de corps** to a high degree; the Canadian forces took pride in their Canadian identity. A million Canadian men and women served in the Second World War and a hundred thousand gave their lives in the two tragic world wars. The men and women who have helped to build up their country and have sacrificed for it have demonstrated love of country.

This sense of Canadian identity does not as yet extend to nearly all the citizens of Canada. People are coming to us from many lands and it will take time for a generally accepted Canadian identity, or personality, to develop. When it does evolve it will have added tone and color because of the varied elements of our population, the variety of national heritages, and it will be a stronger personality because of an unforced, natural development.

Imperative to the future of the human race, a world order is evolving, haltingly and agonizingly, it is true, but it is evolving. All the countries of the globe have become next-door-neighbors. A hundred countries or more form the United Nations. Japan is groping for a new kind of co-existence, this time based on economic cooperation for the benefit of the poorer countries in Asia. World trade is on a multi-billion dollar basis, and the Kennedy Round points to further development in this sphere. The Ecumenical Movement is an inter-faith development. The United Nations has many heartening achievements to its credit.

Canada, as a miniature world of some twenty racial elements living in peace, may be looked on as a model for the One World.

Canada is an advocate of one world, and has played an active part in the

Commonwealth and the United Nations affairs. Canadian peace-keeping contingents have served in Korea, on the Gaza Strip, in the Congo, and on Cyprus. External aid has taken the form of relief of famine and poverty and the prevention of disease; of agricultural, scientific and technological, and teaching projects, as well as money gifts for industrial and social development. This aid has been extended to various countries in Latin America, the West Indies, Asia, and Africa.

Canadians have demonstrated their love of country and sense of national identity and in our Centennial year we look forward to a continued and richer development of this identity. And Canadians today possess a national purpose. Much remains to be done to make our land a better land yet to live in and this world a better world, and Canadians are working towards this goal.

—W. Kristjanson

His Excellency

The Right Honorable Roland Michener, P.C., Q.C.

Governor-General of Canada

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
Ottawa

To the publishers and readers of The Icelandic Canadian, and indeed to all persons of Icelandic descent in Canada, I send my very warmest greetings and best wishes. It is a pleasure to be able to tell you, by means of this excellent publication, of my long-standing friendship with Icelandic Canadians dating from my school days, and my admiration for the contributions which they have made to the development and well-being of our country.

One of the challenges to Canadians as we face our second century since Confederation will be to adapt the traditional values which have won our country its present greatness to meet the new problems which will arise in the years to come. Our first century was one of physical challenge, to consolidate our territory and to control our environment. This challenge was met in the West by hard working and dedicated settlers such as the Icelandic Canadians. We must work as hard as they in our second century, but with new objectives, the objectives of closer national harmony and greater international co-operation. In this task Canada will be able to count on its citizens of Icelandic descent to continue their creative and valuable role.

ROLAND MICHENER

His Excellency Asgeir Asgeirsson, President of Iceland

SKRIFSTOFA FORSETA ÍSLANDS,
Reykjavík

On the occasion of the Centennial issue of the "Icelandic Canadian" magazine I extend my most heartfelt greetings to all its readers.

In Canada more people of Icelandic descent have their homes than anywhere in the world outside Iceland and it is indeed encouraging to see how well they have fared and how well they have preserved their Icelandic heritage.

I am looking forward to a visit to Canada next July on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Confederation. I shall on that occasion have the opportunity to meet people of Icelandic descent and I hope that my visit, and Iceland's participation in EXPO 67, will further strengthen the friendly relations between Iceland and Canada as well as the bonds between the Icelandic people at home and their relatives in Canada.

ÁSGEIR ÁSGEIRSSON,
President of Iceland.

Draft program for the visit of President Asgeir Asgeirsson to Canada

Tuesday 11 July

Early A.M.	Arrival at Dorval Airport in Montreal via Icelandic Airlines.
1640 hours	Official welcoming ceremony on Parliament Hill, Ottawa.
2000 hours.	Official Dinner at Government House hosted by the Governor-General.

Wednesday 12 July

1012 hours.	Arrive Ottawa City Hall. Greeted by Mayor.
1030 hours.	Arrive Centre Block on Parliament Hill. Meeting with members of the Canadian Government.
1110 hours.	Depart Centre Block for reception at the Home of Judge J. Thorson.
1120 hours.	Arrive Judge Thorson's home.
1205 hours.	Depart Judge Thorson's home.
1230 hours.	Arrive at Country Club for official luncheon hosted by Prime Minister Pearson.
1430 hours.	Formal departure ceremony.
1515 hours.	Depart Ottawa for Montreal by train.
1745 hours.	Arrive Montreal (Central Station)
1945 hours.	Arrive Montreal City Hall. Greeted by Mayor of Montreal.
2030 hours.	Official Dinner hosted by Mayor Drapeau of Montreal at City Hall.

Thursday 13 July

1045 hours.	Arrive Expo 67 at Place des Nations. Official welcoming ceremony.
1145 hours.	Visit to Icelandic National Pavilion.
1315 hours.	Luncheon hosted by the Commissioner General of Expo 67. Afternoon or evening Reception at the Scandinavian Pavilion.

Friday 14 July

1300 hours.	Depart St. Hubert for Quebec City by Federal Aircraft.
1400 hours.	Arrive Quebec City. Greeted by the Prime Minister of Quebec, Members of the Executive Council and others. Tour of Quebec City.
1500 hours.	Arrival Laval University. Greeted by the Chancellor, the Rector and other officials.
1730 hours.	Official reception hosted by Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Quebec.

2015 hours.	Official dinner hosted by the Prime Minister of the Province of Quebec at Hotel du Government.

Saturday 15 July

1000 hours.	Prime Minister Daniel Johnson of Quebec calls on President Ásgeirsson at the Chateau Frontenac.
1035 hours.	Arrive City Hall. Greeted by Mayor of Quebec City and members of municipal council. Brief reception.
1130 hours.	Depart Quebec City for Montreal.
Sunday 16 July	In Montreal. Incognito.
Monday 17 July	In Montreal. Incognito.

Official Visit to Manitoba

JULY 28th – AUGUST 2nd, 1967

His Excellency Ásgeir Ásgeirsson, President of The Republic of Iceland.
Honourable Emil Jónsson, Minister of Foreign Affair; Mrs. Jónsson.
His Excellency Pétur J. Thorsteinsson, Ambassador to Canada;
Mr. Thorleifur Thorlacius, Secretary to the President; Mrs Thorlacius;
Honourable Vilhjálmur Thor, Iceland's representative to the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, former Minister of Foreign Affairs; Mrs. Thor.
His Excellency John P. Sigvaldason, Canadian Ambassador to Iceland and Norway and Mrs. Sigvaldason will join the official Party in Winnipeg July 28th.

Friday, July 28

15:00	Arrival at Canadian Forces Base, Hanger No. 16, Whytewold Road, Ste. James, Man. To be welcomed by: His Honour Richard S. Bowles, Q.C., Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba; Honourable Duff Roblin, Premier of Manitoba, and others. Royal Canadian Mounted Police will provide escort to the cavalcade which will proceed to the Legislative Building, Broadway Avenue, where a short wreath-laying ceremony will take place at the statue of Jón Sigurðsson. At the conclusion of the ceremony at the Jón Sigurðsson statue, the President will proceed to Government House, 10 Kennedy Street, where he will be received by His Honour Richard S. Bowles, Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba and Mrs. Bowles, who will host them in Government House until the President's departure for Gimli on Sunday morning.
19:30	Official dinner tendered to His Excellency and party by His Honour Richard S. Bowles, Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba, and Mrs. Bowles, at Government House. Programme in accordance with the wishes of His Excellency.

Saturday, July 29

Morning	Leave Government House for University of Manitoba.
11:45	Luncheon at the University, hosted by Dr. Hugh H. Saunderson, President of the University of Manitoba. His Excellency will be asked to formally open the Guttormur J. Guttormsson section of the Icelandic Library. Departure from University.
14:45	Arrive at the PAN-AM POOL, Grant Avenue, Host Vaughan L. Baird, Q.C., Chairman, Canadian Diving Council.
18:15	Reception and dinner at the Fort Garry Hotel, Hosts: The Grand Lodge of Manitoba, Ancient Free and Accepted Masons; Freemasons of Icelandic descent.

Sunday, July 30

10:30	Leave Government House for Selkirk, Manitoba.
11:10	Arrive Betel Home Foundation, Manchester Avenue, Selkirk.
14:15	Arrive Canadian Forces Base Gimli. Greeted by Captain M. J. Dooher, Commanding Officer; Her Worship Violet Einarson, Mayor of Gimli; Members of the Town of Gimli; Chairman and members of the Icelandic Day Celebration Committee. Honourable George Johnson, M.D., M.L.A., Minister of Education, will represent the Province of Manitoba. Group Captain M. J. Dooher will host a dinner.
19:45	Visit to Betel Home.

Monday, July 31

10:00	His Excellency and party will participate in a parade through the town of Gimli officially inaugurating the 78th annual ISLENDINGADAGUR. At the conclusion of the parade the President will lay a wreath at the Cairn honouring the pioneers who settled in Manitoba in 1875.
12:00	Luncheon at the Lutheran Church. Hosts: Her Worship Violet Einarson, Mayor of Gimli, and The Town of Gimli.
14:00	Arrive at Gimli Park. The President will address the gathering.
17:30	Dinner at the St. Michel's parish church.
19:30	Return to Gimli Park, where community singing and other entertainment will precede the dance in the pavilion.

Tuesday, August 1

11:00	His Worship Stephen Juba, Mayor of Winnipeg, calls upon His Excellency at the Fort Garry Hotel.
19:00	Icelandic Community Dinner, Winnipeg Winter Club.

Wednesday, August 2

Morning	Departure from Winnipeg.

Centennial Message

by JOHN FISHER, Centennial Commissioner

It is quite possible too few Canadians, regardless of their racial sources, realize that about one quarter of our population—close to 5,000,000 souls—are of an origin other than British or French.

This lack of awareness of the size of our ethnic groups, if there is such a lack, may be taken as a compliment to the approximately 25 per cent of our population which is neither of British nor French extraction.

It means they who came here from abroad in the past century to make their homes and fortunes in Canada have completely taken their places and responsibilities as Canadians.

They have done this while, in many cases, retaining their homeland languages and the finest, and most interesting and colorful, of their national traditions and customs.

While giving the best possible support and interest to the cause of good Canadian citizenship, these people of other races have retained enough of their national cultures to provide splashes of color and glamour which help to make Canada a place of increasing interest to the world— and to its own people.

It has been my good fortune to move a great deal among the various ethnic groups and to have close associations with those who are leaders in those groups. In the most recent years while we have been organizing the current Centennial Year celebrations, my association has been more widespread and significant than ever—and most rewarding.

One of the most encouraging aspects of Centennial planning has been the consistent co-operation of the Ethnic groups and the Ethnic press.

It may surprise some readers to know that there are well over 100 periodicals published by Ethnic groups—some in the national language of the groups but often published in English or French.

The Ethnic press is a powerful influence in Canada. We are proud to know its influence in recent years has been devoted to helping make our Centennial a success. And always, I believe, its influence has been exercised for the betterment of Canada.

This is being written for the Icelandic Canadian, the periodical representing one of our oldest and smallest ethnic groups in Canada. It is a labor of love because I have had such happy associations with the Icelandic people and had the honor of proposing the toast to Canada at the 1965 annual anniversary celebration at Gimli, Manitoba.

It is a labor of love also because it is for your Centennial edition and gives me the opportunity again of telling the Icelandic people how much we in the Centennial Commission appreciate the consistent enterprise they have shown in finding ways to participate in the anniversary observances, and telling the people responsible for this periodical how thankful we are for its

steady support ever since the Centennial planning started.

To me, and I am sure to others, it is often a matter of wonderment that such a small ethnic group—representing about 25,000 out of the 5,000,000 Canadians who are neither French nor English in their origins—have made such a deep impression on Canadian life.

It is difficult to discuss this without seeming to be flattering the Icelandic people. But it is true, in my experience at least, that one seldom if ever hears of an Icelandic person who is not a worthy citizen; that Icelandic people have become notable in the records of our parliaments, our courts of justice, our educational institutions, and our professional and commercial life generally.

And those of Icelandic origin who make their careers on the land, the water, in the forests and in development of our mineral resources, usually are as good as any farmers, fishermen, woodsmen or miners in the world.

I choose to believe that the Icelandic people possess, probably more strongly and deeply imbedded in their fibres, the qualities that urged the British and French people when they came to the unknown hardships and risks of this vast and to them unknown country more than 300 years ago.

They and their descendants, and those who came after them in the next two or three centuries, built a great and modern nation, the founding of which we are celebrating this year.

Those French and British were not weaklings else they would have remained in the comparative comfort and safety of the old world. They were people of intelligence, resourcefulness, courage, determination, and a vast faith in their belief they could build a better life in the new world.

Icelanders have shared this task of nation building in almost the whole of this century of Confederation our Centennial celebrates.

The first major settlement of Icelanders was at what is now Gimli on the western shore of Lake Winnipeg and it is still the centre of the largest settlement of Icelandic people in Canada. They came there in 1875 and every August the founding of Gimli is celebrated fittingly.

So Icelandic people have been a part of the history of Canada under Confederation, and an amazingly important part considering their small numbers.

Icelanders are in the House of Commons, the Senate, the high courts and the University faculties. And they are in the leading ranks of our literary and artistic personalities.

A little over 1,000 years ago Norsemen settled on the largely desolate and volcanic island on the fringe of the Arctic circle they called Iceland. They did not like conditions at home and had the courage to brave a new land.

Nearly a hundred years ago conditions in Iceland were not satisfactory and so a small group set out across the western ocean to the land their great

native son Leif Eiriksson and his companions had visited long before Christopher Columbus made his first voyage.

As their forefathers had done at the end of the ninth century, the Icelandic pioneers who came to Canada had no sooner founded their New Iceland on Lake Winnipeg than they set about organizing their government, laws and educational system. Also newspapers.

A devotion to literature and education and to justice under law, and to thrift and efficiency in all things, made the Icelandic people happy and comfortable Canadians.

Those same qualities made it possible for them to make and continue to make important contributions to Canadian life and progress.

It would be a pleasure to mention some names of outstanding Icelandic Canadians but I will content myself with referring only to Eiriksson and that Viking of a more modern day, Vilhjalmur Stefansson, whose name will forever be associated with development of our Northern Arctic and who was born near Gimli.

Stefansson's name has been immortalized and will be still further honored as time goes by.

Meanwhile Eiriksson's name and deeds have been indelibly stamped on the Canadian mind and permanently set forth in a beautiful bronze plaque in the auditorium-foyer of our new National Library and Archives building in Ottawa where all visitors will face an account in English, French, and a facsimile of the actual saga in Icelandic characters, telling of his voyages to the new world.

That memorial was recently unveiled through enterprise and efforts of the Canadian (Icelandic) Centennial Committee and will be a matter of great interest and enlightenment for generations to come.

THE SPIRIT OF A NATION

by **Caroline Gunnarsson**

Is it true that the Centennial Commission is recruiting a work party to whitewash the Rockies?

It's really not a bad idea. We're neat and tidy people, respectable, modest and pure, but we needn't go about promoting the image in a colorless way. The paint job might take some of the glory out of the mountains, but it would add a splash of color to the people, for it takes courage to tackle the job. Since we have never learned the art of embroidery, we might as well play for real and show the world what puritanical zeal can amount to.

So far we have applied our energies mostly to our history. We have pruned and whitewashed that within an inch of its life. Ours have been lies of omission rather than those of creative commission.

Other nations do otherwise. They garb the men and women who have touched their history in fantastic fabrications. They hold halos over their heroes and revere their rascals. With us it's a matter of conscience to scrape the salty crust of folklore from our history; to serve it up bland and unspiced.

We seem to have lost sight of the fact we are the folk. We're the stuff of the nation, and the legends that grow up around the proven facts of history are part and parcel of us. Something within us inspired them in the first place and something within us responded to the grain of truth in them that made them ours.

Legends that hit us in the heart are the very essence of a culture that unites people in a mutual chuckle or tear. They should form part of the crest of their nationhood.

But have we ever felt as close to the Father of Confederation as the Americans, say, feel to the father of their country? We have not. Is this partly because of a guilty feeling we have about Sir John's drinking? He is certainly not all there without his bottle. Yet history books tend to leave it behind when they introduce him to our children. This may be better for his dignity, but it somewhat robs him of the color and ruggedness a hero needs for survival after death.

Could we not have learned to cherish a debonair Macdonald riding the hustings with the demon rum on his back—achieving the impossible in mighty defiance of the demon's evil designs? This took moral muscle. Let's admit it. No mean character could have tackled this sort of gremlin every day of his life and managed to father Confederation despite the interference.

But so far we haven't woven any glitter out of the wanton legends about Macdonald. Yet look what the Americans did with George Washington. They made him a president who never told a lie. This would be a political sin nowadays. Things are so complicated in our day that no good party man would dare confess to so uninventive a campaign.

But were we in personal attendance at the birth of the United States? For all we know, things may well have been that simple for the father of the U.S. It's their story, anyway, and they've stuck together in sticking to it.

George himself may not have been that pure, of course, but the people were, and the folk of a Puritan cult endowed the first hero they owned as a nation with the virtue they treasured most. The people have an uncanny talent for picking their man, and once they find him he is the symbol that unites.

We Canadians may never find it in our souls to enhance an ideal with a purifying lie, but we should resist the scholarly purism that is robbing our past of its glamor. Who, for example, needs historical proof that Laura Secord crossed enemy lines behind a cow for the love of a cause?

Whether she did or not is of no consequence. What does matter is that the fighting men of her day could see her doing it. As the daughter of a long line of women, I am proud of Laura, and I'd like to sic a cattle dog to the pundits who have taken a microscope to her passport into history. Laura is as true as the fighting men's confidence in the womanhood that backed their campaign.

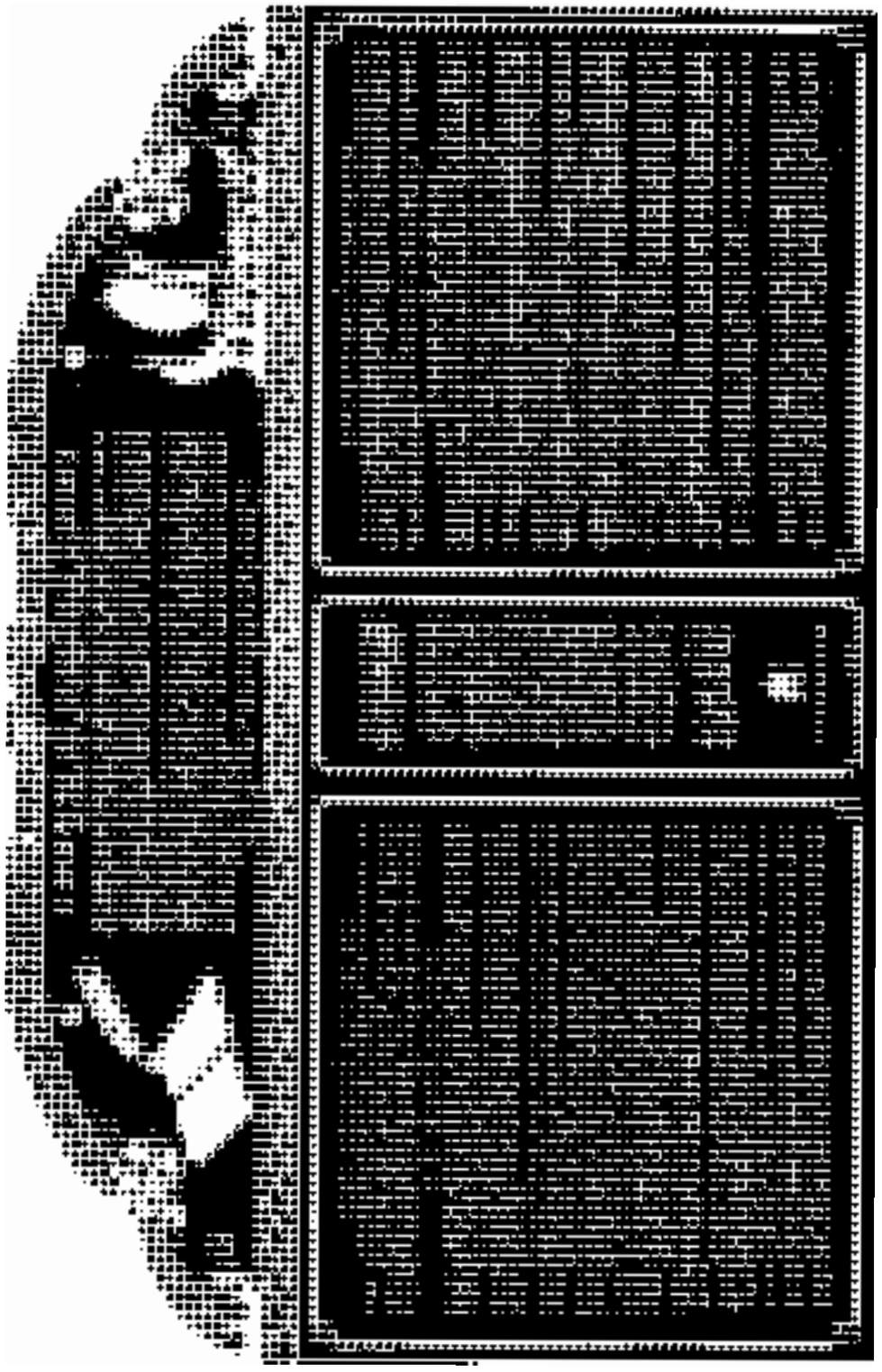
The telling incidents in the lives of people who occupy our national limelight must be cherished if we are to develop those unique peculiarities that might give us distinctive flavor as a nation.

I think that when our vintage ripens so that we can taste our own flavor, we may find our national symbol in Lady Macdonald riding the cow-catcher on our first cross country railway train. This is an indisputable truth of history, though seldom recalled. The better half of the foremost father of Confederation defied danger and official decorum to fully savor that great moment of our history.

Here was magnificent achievement; here was romance — a fabulously courageous enterprise taking its first steps toward bringing together this vast country from coast to coast. The first of Canada's first ladies was part of it and felt the surge of excitement in her blood. In tune with the moment she rode gaily into the future on the obstacle remover, for that's what a cow-catcher is to a train. This woman was possessed with the dauntless spirit of a budding nation, and her spontaneous behavior that day interpreted the spirit, a spirit we need not be ashamed to hand through the bloodlines down the ages.

Just a look at that girl through the rainbow mist of history should be enough to knit Canada's womanhood into the better half of a great nation—a nation that knows its nature and rides the obstacle mover toward a destiny that must surely have some importance to this planet and its people.

—Courtesy of the Winnipeg Free Press



The Canadian Icelandic Centennial Plaque in the Library and Archives Building, Ottawa

A CHAPTER IN CANADIAN HISTORY

DISCOVERY OF THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

This plaque commemorates the discovery of the Eastern Coast of Canada by Mariners from Iceland and Greenland in the late Tenth Century.

The historic excerpt reproduced below is from Graenlendinga Saga (The Saga of The Greenlanders) first committed to writing in Iceland about A.D. 1200 and preserved in Flateyjarbok (The Flatey Book), a vellum manuscript compiled in Iceland about A.D. 1390.

Part I records the sighting of new land in the west by Bjarni Herjolfsson, of Eyrar in Iceland, in A.D. 986. Part II describes the voyage of discovery of Leifr Eiriksson some years later and his landings in Helluland (Flatstoneland), Markland (Woodland), and Vinland (Wineland). These explorations led to an attempt at colonization by Thorfinnr Karlsefni whose son, Snorri Thorfinnsson, was born on this continent.

Archaeological Research in Western and Eastern Canada supports these ancient Icelandic recods of exploration and colonization.

I

BJARNI HERJÓLFSSON SIGHTS NEW LAND

. . .After that they saw the sun again and were able to get their bearings; they hoisted sail and after a day's sailing they sighted land.

They discussed amongst themselves what country this might be. Bjarni said he thought it could not be Greenland. The crew asked him if he wanted to land there or not; Bjarni replied, 'I think we should sail in close'.

They did so, and soon they could see that the country was not mountainous, but was well wooded and with low hills, so they put to sea again, leaving the land on the port quarter.

II

LEIFR EIRIKSSON'S EXPLORATIONS

. . . They made their ship ready and put out to sea. The first landfall they made was the country that Bjarni had sighted last. They sailed right up to the shore and cast anchor, then lowered a boat and landed. There was no grass to be seen, and the hinterland was covered with great glaciers, and between glaciers and shore the land was like one great slab of rock. It seemed to them a worthless country.

Then Leifr said, 'Now we have done better than Bjarni where this country is concerned—we at least have set foot on it. I shall give this country a name and call it Helluland".

They returned to their ship and put to sea, and sighted a second land. Once again they sailed right up to it and cast anchor, lowered a boat and went

ashore. This country was flat and wooded, with white sandy beaches wherever they went, and the land sloped gently down to the sea.

Leifr said, This country shall be named after its natural resources: it shall be called Markland'.

They hurried back to their ship as quickly as possible and sailed away to sea in a north-east wind for two days until they sighted land again. They sailed towards it and came to an island which lay to the north of it.

They went ashore and looked about them. The weather was fine. There was dew on the grass, and the first thing they did was to get some of it on their hands and put it to their lips, and to them it seemed the sweetest thing they had ever tasted. Then they went back to their ship and sailed into the sound that lay between the island and the headland jutting out to the north.

They steered a westerly course round the headland. There were shallows there and at low tide their ship was left high and dry, with the sea almost out of sight. But they were so impatient to land that they could not bear to wait for the rising tide to float the ship; they ran ashore to a place where a river flowed out of a lake. As soon as the tide had refloated the ship they took a boat and rowed out to it and brought it up the river into the lake, where they anchored it. They carried their hammocks ashore and put up booths; then they decided to winter there, and built some large houses.

There was no lack of salmon in the river or the lake, bigger salmon than they had ever seen. The country seemed to them so kind that no winter fodder would be needed for livestock; there was never any frost all winter and the grass hardly withered at all.

In this country, night and day were of more even length than in either Greenland or Iceland; on the shortest day of the year, the sun was already up by 9 a.m. and did not set until after 3 p.m.

When they had finished their houses, Leifr said to his companions, 'Now I want to divide our company into two parties and have the country explored. Half of the company are to remain here at the houses while the other half go exploring, but they must not go so far that they cannot return the same evening, and they are not to become separated.'

They carried out these instructions for a time. Leifr himself took turns at going out with the exploring party and staying behind at the base.

Leifr was tall and strong and very impressive in appearance. He was a shrewd man and always moderate in his behaviour.

— — — —

They slept for the rest of the night, and next morning Leifr said to his men, 'Now we have two tasks on our hands, on alternate days we must gather grapes and cut vines, and then fell trees, to make a cargo for my ship.'

This was done. It is said that the tow-boat was filled with grapes; they took on a full cargo of timber; and in the spring they made ready to leave and sailed away. Leifr named the country after its natural qualities and called it Vinland.

The Presentation and Unveiling of the Plaque

The presentation and unveiling of the plaque took place in the Auditorium-Foyer of the magnificent new National Library and Archives Building on Wellington St., Ottawa, on Friday, April 14, 1967 at 4:00 p.m. A platform, seating about 24 people, had been erected immediately in front of the plaque. Chairs were brought in for the invited guests, about two hundred in number, and were so arranged as to face the plaque.

The ceremony was carried out with due dignity. There was an orchestra present and uniformed members of the R.C.M.P. The proceedings opened with O Canada and closed with God Save the Queen. Honourable George J. McIlraith, the Minister of Public Works, was in the chair.

After delivering his opening address, (which is published herewith) the Chairman called upon Dr. P. H. T. Thorlakson, to present the plaque to the Right Honourable Lester B. Pearson, the Prime Minister of Canada, as a gift from Canadians of Icelandic descent to the government and the people of Canada.

Dr. Thorlakson, then delivered his presentation address (published herewith) and then called upon the Prime Minister to unveil the plaque and accept the gift.

The Prime Minister, in the course of his acceptance remarks, referred to the enrichment to Canada by the Icelanders who came here with their wealth of inheritance, of tradition and of culture. Within a short time, less than a century, they had made a remarkable contribution, both in war and in peace, to the building of this nation and the protecting of its cherished freedoms. On looking at the plaque he noted that the space occupied by the Icelandic version of this early "Chapter in Canadian History", was much less than that of the English and the French texts. He, therefore, suggested that Icelandic should be the official language of the House of Commons!

The Right Honourable
LESTER B. PEARSON
Prime Minister of Canada

The ceremony was followed by a reception in the Senate Chambers at which the hosts were, Senator, the Hon. William Benidickson and Mrs. Benidickson, and the Hon. Gunnar S. Thorvaldson and Mrs. Thorvaldson.

Address by
The Honourable George J. McIlraith

Minister of Public Works

I am pleased and honored to welcome you here today on behalf of the Government of Canada and to be part of this singular and significant event in our Centennial celebrations.

It is fitting and I think, very salutary, that in receiving this Centennial gift from Canadians of Icelandic origin we are recognizing that this country is more than the flower of a century—it is the pearl of a millenium. The mark of those who came before us and who paved the way to our present wealth and greatness spans many centuries and has roots in many parts of the world. It reminds us that we must always continue to grow as a country – not only physically but spiritually if we are to be worthy of our great land.

HONOURABLE G. J. McILRAITH
Minister of Public Works

Dr. Thorlakson, the members of the Canadian Icelandic Centennial Committee, and the hundreds of Icelandic-Canadians who have contributed to this gift are to be commended. While the plaque is a significant token of the Icelandic community's spirit, I need only look around this platform for the greatest proof of its contribution to Canada. I think of my old friend, Judge Walter Lindal; The Honourable J. T. Thorson, formerly President of the Exchequer Court of Canada, Dr. Thorlakson and the many distinguished persons with us here today. . . .

Before I turn over proceedings to Dr. Thorlakson for the presentation, I feel I should say a bit more about this distinguished man who, as Chairman of the Canadian (Icelandic) Centennial Committee, has worked so diligently to bring about this ceremony. A distinguished surgeon and professor of surgery, his career is a remarkable example of service to his country and community. He is Chairman of the Foundation Committee which established the Chair of Icelandic Language and Literature at the University of Manitoba. He was a member of the Medical Research Council of Canada under the late Sir Frederic Banting and in 1962 he was President of the National Cancer Institute. . . .

May I now call on him to present the Centennial Icelandic Plaque.

Address of Dr. P. H. T. Thorlakson

Chairman of the Canadian (Icelandic) Centennial Committee

On the first of July, our country will cross the threshold into the second century of Confederation. In honour of this historic occasion, Canadians have extended the traditional one day birthday celebration to one year of commemoration.

Many Centennial projects, varied and inspired in their conception, will remain as permanent tributes to the imagination and resourcefulness of the Canadian people.

There is an unmistakable desire on the part of many groups of Canadians to examine their own position and accomplishments relative to the opportunities that have been available to them since their arrival in this land.

At the close of this memorable Centennial year, every person will know more about the history and achievements of Canada—the land of his birth or the land of his adoption—and will have a deeper appreciation of what it means to be a Canadian.

We have gathered here today, in this magnificent National Library and Archives Building, to honour the Centennial of Confederation and to commemorate the discovery of the Western Hemisphere by mariners from Iceland and Greenland in the late tenth century.

From the dawn of history, the Western Ocean—also called the Green Sea of Darkness—was a constant challenge and a mystery to the sea-faring nations of Europe.

A period of great expansion—commonly known as the Viking Age—commenced towards the latter part of the eighth century and continued for over two hundred years. From the present Norway, Sweden and Denmark, this expansion took Norsemen to the east, to the south and to the west. They landed in Normandy, England, Scotland, and Ireland. In 874, they reached Iceland and established the old Icelandic Republic in 930. Towards the end of that century, they pushed on, first to Greenland and then further westward to the shores of a new continent which they called Vinland. Thus the North Atlantic Ocean—the dreaded Green Sea of Darkness—was successfully spanned for the first time.

DR. P. H. T. THORLAKSON
Chairman, Canadian (Icelandic) Cent. Com.

Knowledge of these explorations was bound to come to the attention of navigators and scholars in other countries. Indeed, we find the record of this knowledge in the writings of European scholars of that era, notably Adam of Bremen, one of the most distinguished scholars of Europe in the eleventh century. In his book, published in Latin between the years 1072 and 1076, he gives an account of the discovery of Vinland as related to him by the King of Denmark.

The settlements of Iceland and Greenland depended on foreign trade, manily with Norway and England, for their existence. Sheepskins, hides, wool, tallow, cheese, sulphur, and dried fish were exchanged for timber, tar, flour, honey, linens and metals. The luxury items of this trade and commerce—in those days—were white polar bears, walrus tusks and the renowned falcons, the hunting birds of royalty.

In the year 1396, the son of the Duke of Burgundy was captured by the Saracens. The Prince was held ransom for twelve Greenland falcons and this demand was duly met. This exchange serves to corroborate the fact that the trade routes to the far north were widely known.

Special mention should be made of the "court poetry" and the language of Iceland. During these early centuries, learned men—especially the Skaldic Poets—were invited to visit the courts of many European countries. These gifted men brought back important information from these foreign lands regarding current events, much of which was later incorporated in the vast Saga literature of Iceland. This ancient, classic language of Northern Europe—Old Norse, preserved and spoken in Iceland to this day—has a close kinship with Anglo-Saxon which forms the basis of the most forceful and effective speech in modern Eng lish. Icelandic is one of the required subjects in advanced studies of English in Universities of Great Britain, the older Universities of North America and in institutions of higher learning in other countries.

Trade and communication between Iceland and Greenland with the rest of Europe continued up to, and beyond, the period of active exploration and conquest of the New World by the Spanish, Portuguese, English, French, and Dutch navigators and explorers.

During the years before and after A.D. 1470, there was a determined effort by experienced and seasoned navigators to explore the lands they knew existed beyond the western horizon. They were encouraged and supported by merchants of means and by people in high authority.

On August 3rd, 1492, Christopher Columbus sailed southwest from Palos, Spain. He had carefully calculated the latitude along which he intended to travel. From his earlier experience as a navigator, while exploring the west coast of Africa, he knew that the prevailing trade winds blew westward at that time of the year. When he finally re-set his course due west, after reaching the Canary Islands, he fully expected to reach the shores of Asia.

Thirty-two days later, he and his crew landed on the Island of San Salvador in the Bahamas—the first European to sail that broad southern expanse of the Atlantic Ocean.

On some of the maps drawn in the fifteenth century, Vinland was shown as just another large island—"Vinlanda Insula"—in the North Atlantic, over twelve hundred miles north of the Caribbean Islands discovered by Columbus.

It is greatly to his credit that Columbus thoroughly informed himself before embarking upon his long and hazardous journey. By all reliable accounts that are available to us, he certainly did not just sail "out into the blue". If we can accept the biography written and published in 1521 by his own son, Ferdinand, as a reliable source of information, Columbus did visit Iceland in February 1477. His genius as a navigator and an explorer was enhanced because he had studied the scientific records of the time and thus, contrary to the popularly accepted theory of the day, he had sound reasons to believe that the world was round. By using the navigational information at his disposal, Columbus calculated that land could be reached by travelling seven hundred leagues westward from Spain. This estimate proved to be correct, even though he failed to reach the East Indies.

When Columbus was forced, at the Robida Convent, to give his reasons for his belief that land existed beyond the rim of the Western Ocean, he stated that he based this conviction " . . first, on the nature of things, secondly, on the reports of navigators; and third, on the authority of learned writers . . ."

In 1497, John Cabot sailed westward from Bristol, England, on a voyage of discovery. According to the well-known Canadian historians, Lower and Chafe, ". . .the prosperity of Bristol was dependent on the cod fisheries of Iceland. The agreement under which these were open to Englishmen was about to run out and the merchants of Bristol were naturally anxious to find new fishing grounds. ."

Cabot explored and charted the coasts of Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. On his return to England, he reported amongst other things—on the fabulous fishing grounds off the coast of Newfoundland. Subsequently, these fishing grounds provided an important source of food for the people of Europe.

In 1534 and 1535, Jacques Cartier sailed from France and explored the mighty St. Lawrence River as far as the Indian village of Hochelaga where the City of Montreal now stands. Cartier was the first person to apply the name Canada to this country.

Mr. Prime Minister, Ladies and Gentlemen—to become involved in a Centennial project of this kind has many compensations, one of which is that it adds to one's knowledge of the time and events described in the early Icelandic documents.

The ancient Icelandic Sagas are receiving increasing attention by modern scholars because of their great literary value and by historians because of the important information they shed on events that occurred in the early history of northern Europe.

Lord Tweedsmuir, a former Governor-General of Canada, said that: ". . . for myself, I put the Icelandic Sagas among the chief works of the human genius. . ."

In 1966, extensive use was made of the Sagas as the most authentic and complete source of information regarding the Battle of Hastings in 1066.

These ancient records also have preserved a grat deal of early Scandinavian history which would otherwise have been lost.

In 1965, the Yale University Press published a Pre-Columbian Vinland Map which provided further evidence to confirm the discovery of Vinland. This map was made about the year

1440 by a Swiss monk. At the top left hand corner of the map is inscribed the information that Vinland was discovered by Bjarni Herjolfsson and Leifr Eiriksson who found it a land of great fertility and many vines. The two inlets leading to the Hudson's Bay and the Gulf of St. Lawrence are clearly discernible on this map.

The recent archaeological discovery made at L'Anse-aux-Meadows, on the northern tip of Newfoundland, by Dr. Helgi Ingstad and his associates, has provided scientific proof of the existence of early Norse settlements in Newfoundland about the year A.D. 1000.

When the plaque is unveiled, it may come as a surprise to you, Mr. Prime Minister, and to others—as it did to me—to see how small a portion of the plaque is occupied by the original Icelandic version in the centre as compared with the English and French translations which appear on either side. The reason, of course, is that some of the original Icelandic words—when inscribed on thin leather—were abbreviated to conserve space. One letter and a mark may stand for a word or even a phrase. . . .

The discoveries of Bjarni Herjólfsson and Leifr Eiriksson surely constitute one of the earliest chapters in Canadian history.

I have the honour, Mr. Prime Minister, to present this bronze plaque to the Government and to the people of Canada as a Centennial Gift from Canadians of Icelandic descent.

Mr. Prime Minister, may I now invite you to unveil the plaque.

The Situs of the Centennial Plaque

The Canadian Icelandic Centennial Plaque has been placed on the wall of the auditorium-foyer of the new National Library and Archives Building in Ottawa. It is securely bolted to the wall but, if deemed advisable, it can be removed.

The choice was a most happy one, even more so than either James A. Langford, the Deputy Minister of Public Works (Designs) or this writer, who selected it and recommended it to the Minister of Public Works, could see in advance. The permanent chesterfield sets and other pieces of furniture, have now been placed in the auditorium-foyer and they are so arranged that everything is focussed on the wall between the two doors leading to the concert hall. Halfway between the two doors is the plaque and nothing, in addition to the plaque, is to be permanently affixed to the wall between the two doors. The auditorium-foyer may be used by departments of govern ment for particular purposes and on such occasions, paintings or other works of art might be placed on the wall or placed on tables immediately in front of the wall. But in no case is the plaque to be hidden from view.

There is another reason why that particular wall was selected. The two doors open into a concert hall which is on a par with the rest of that magnificent building—beautifully appointed, and with the most modern equipment for T.V. and film concerts. There is a definite need of a concert hall of that standard in the capital city, and

it is anticipated that not less than three or four concerts or meetings will be held each week, some in the evenings and some in the afternoons. The people attending will primarily consist of cultural groups and those in attendance will gather in the auditorium before and after, or during intermissions and will undoubtedly observe the plaque and read what is on it, in English or French.

The auditorium-foyer is always open when the main building is open, and probably also the concert hall. For the balance of the centennial year, and probably permanently, there will be guides in the building and it is expected that the large crowds of visitors will start in front of the spacious cloak room, proceed from there to the auditorium, then the concert hall, and then back to the main marble-walled auditorium, which is neither intended or suited for meetings or gatherings. From there the visitors will be taken to the spacious museum to the extreme right corresponding to the auditorium-foyer on the left.

Canadians of Icelandic descent, and, indeed, all Canadians, because of the inherent historic value of the plaque, owe a debt of gratitude to the government of Canada and in particular to the Prime Minister and the Minister of Public Works for allowing the plaque to be placed at that special site.

It should be added that an arrangement was made that if so desired the plaque could at a later date be moved to the contemplated Museum of Human History. The consensus of opinion in Ottawa among those who have seen the plaque and are interested, is that it should be permanently left where it is at present.

—W. J. Lindal

CANADA

by **Guttormur J. Guttormsson**

As a maid full-grown, unloved, alone,
On the future she did stare,
With treasures great, in her wild estate
She awaited the white man there,
With her eyes so blue, she at length did view
His ship as it shoreward sped,
And his noble mien, and the dazzling sheen
Of the halo around his head.

Quite winsome and mild she was, tho' wild,
And her friendship strong and whole,
That her love was real, did itself reveal
In the lights of her gentle soul.
With charming grace, they did embrace,
And heart to heart appealed,
With a heaving sigh, she opened her eye
And the whole world stood revealed.

He wove her a crown of the corn-stalk brown,
But a crown of laurel she wove,
For a prince was he and a princess she;
And their kingdom e'er prospered and throve.
From the soil so good, they take wealth and food—
They span death's yawning pit,
And their palace high is the vaulted sky
By the vernal sun uplit.

And there they rear their children, so dear,
Progressive, polite and brave,
And for ever they do faithful stay
To their kinsmen across the wave.
If the swords are drawn, they all are one,
For in them has ever remained
The hero-blood of their fathers good,
That never dry has drained.

O, Canada dear, we do revere
Thee, mother so kind and free,
And life's great door, shall close before
We turn our backs on thee.
In weal or woe, we ever show
That united in soul are we;
Tho' of different tongue, yet we all belong
To the same dear family tree.

Translated by **T. A. Anderson**

Citizens All

by **Arilius Isfeld**

One hundred years old! This is indeed extended time for an individual but for a country it is but the first stage in its desired existence. Canada has, however, lived through many exciting experiences during its first century. For the most part those events have been adventurous and pleasant milestones on the road to nationhood. Not least among those was the exciting event of its inhabitants becoming bonefide Canadian Citizens. A true Canadian citizenship was an endearing gift to the millions that called Canada home.

As this Centennial year progresses, we, the citizens of Canada, have roused ourselves to a flag-waving feeling of pride in our country. This outward action and spirit is in itself an excellent step forward but now as Canada "comes of age" we should in addition give serious thought to the basic citizenship principles involved in the development of a harmonious nation, respected and admired by all of humanity. If these principles are not nurtured in every succeeding year this surge of patriotic feeling during Centennial year may prove to be a passing fancy or a temporary emotional situation. To prove that this is not so we should take serious stock of ourselves in order to ascertain whether we qualify, individually and plurally, as truly good Citizens. If we find ourselves lacking in the desired qualities we should promptly make a serious attempt to correct the situation. It naturally follows that one must be, to some degree at least, informed in the area of what constitutes good Citizenship, before any positive action can be taken. What then is, "good Citizenship"?

Firstly a good citizen is a willing and interested member of his community. Here he must show consideration for the feelings and needs of others. He is at all times courteous to others, sharing in their task of making his community a better place in which to live. Here he is willing to support his religious institution and at the same time fully respects the religious institutions of those whose beliefs vary from his own and he gives all, irrespective of race or religion, the same consideration as he in turn expects from them. He does not frown upon the activities of others simply because those activities are contrary to his personal beliefs or feelings, but rather judges others by their true acts and deeds apart from his or their traditionally accepted rights or wrongs. He is at all times truthful, realizing that truth only is permanent and can never be destroyed whereas falsehoods, being of substance that never existed, cause only harm and eventually fall by the wayside. He steals not his brother's character by deliberately and unnecessarily defaming him or maliciously attacking him, but rather exemplifies his good qualities. He never takes an unfair advantage of others and realizes that taking such an advantage is a theft in disguise be it a value in time, money, reputation or character.

A good citizen does not live a life apart but rather joins in his community's activities, and cultivates a friendship with neighbors, at all times respecting their rights, and displaying courtesy, kindness and helpfulness in as far as his neighbors are willing to accept and return them.

A good citizen fulfils his obligations towards local governments. He is faithful in exercising his right to vote as he pleases; is willing to share in the work of local government and if he is a member of such a civic body he never forces his will upon other members, never allows other members to force their personal ideas upon himself, never allows sentiment nor personal prejudices to influence his decisions, never makes decisions that are not the result of carefully considered facts and fully respects the final decisions of the majority of the governing body. The good citizen attacks each problem with an open mind and is willing to change his attitude in spite of his personal opinions when actual facts reveal conditions are contrary to his original thinking. He, at all times, makes certain that information he presents during a discussion is accurate and reliable. He acquaints himself fully with his rights and duties while in office and in turn adheres to them rigidly.

A good citizen sees to it that his place of business or his home is a credit to the community in which he lives. He does not tolerate uncleanliness nor truly immoral activities in any shape or form. He takes pride in the accomplishments of others and strives to be a character worthy of their respect. He provides well for his family in the areas of daily necessities, culture, education and medical attention. Above all he works earnestly so that no one shall suffer because of his lack of ambition and effort. He never flaunts his riches in the face of the less fortunate and does not measure his respect for others by their value in dollars and cents.

Secondly a good citizen is an active and willing member of his nation. He displays a sincere non-fanatic patriotism tempered with the knowledge that his own nation can at times be fallible. He cultivates in himself a deep respect for his country; a respect he can understand others might have for their country. He accepts the cultures and recognizes the skills of ethnic groups making up his nation and attempts to weave them into the pattern of nationhood, thus making its overall culture richer and more attractive.

A good citizen acquaints himself fully with the public services his national government provides; an understanding of advantages derived from them and cultivates a willingness to pay his rightful share in maintaining them.

A good citizen always adheres to the laws of his country, realizing that those laws are the bulwark that preserves the freedom of the individual and thus of his nation. He should feel that the breaking of a law, however innocent it appears to him, is an act of aggression against his nation and a lack of trust in his fellowmen.

A good citizen has so much confidence in the national institutions of his country and the members of those institutions that he will always be willing to accept changes brought about by the will of the majority and willingly will carry out their requests.

Lastly, but quickly becoming the most significant, a good citizen considers himself a member of the world community. The idea that ones duties

are to his nation only has been blotted out permanently as the speed of modern transportation and communication has made next door neighbors of nations to the ends of the world. As a member of the world community a good citizen respects all races and creeds irrespective of apparent differences. He carefully keeps in mind that what other nations are striving for is the direct result of their cultures and beliefs; that they are as sincere in their adherance to their way of life as he is in his. He tries to understand their problems and thus recognize their viewpoints and accepts them without personally opinionated prejudice. This in turn means that a good citizen acquaints himself fully with world organizations and the part his own country plays in them. To the best of his ability he assists his own nation to be a member in good standing, always fostering better relations in order that peace, goodwill and due respect may be the result.

No longer is one able to give his whole loyalty to home and country; loyalty to the human race must have its share. The need of world citizenship has glaringly been thrust upon us. Let us hope that we can ably cope with it. May our Centennial enthusiasm carry us forward, toward world citizenship.

THE MESSAGE OF THE PRAIRIES

Across the level boundless plains
Where the untamed winds rove free.
Where the snow banks high
And the wild birds cry —
From there comes a message to me.

It is not a call to the cities,
To the dirt, the dust and the grime.
To the surging crowds
And the noises loud
Or the slums with their filth and slime.

The wild winds tell not of the city streets
With the clashing, clanging cars,
Of the autos that rush,
Through the stifling crush,
Or the lights that outshine the stars.

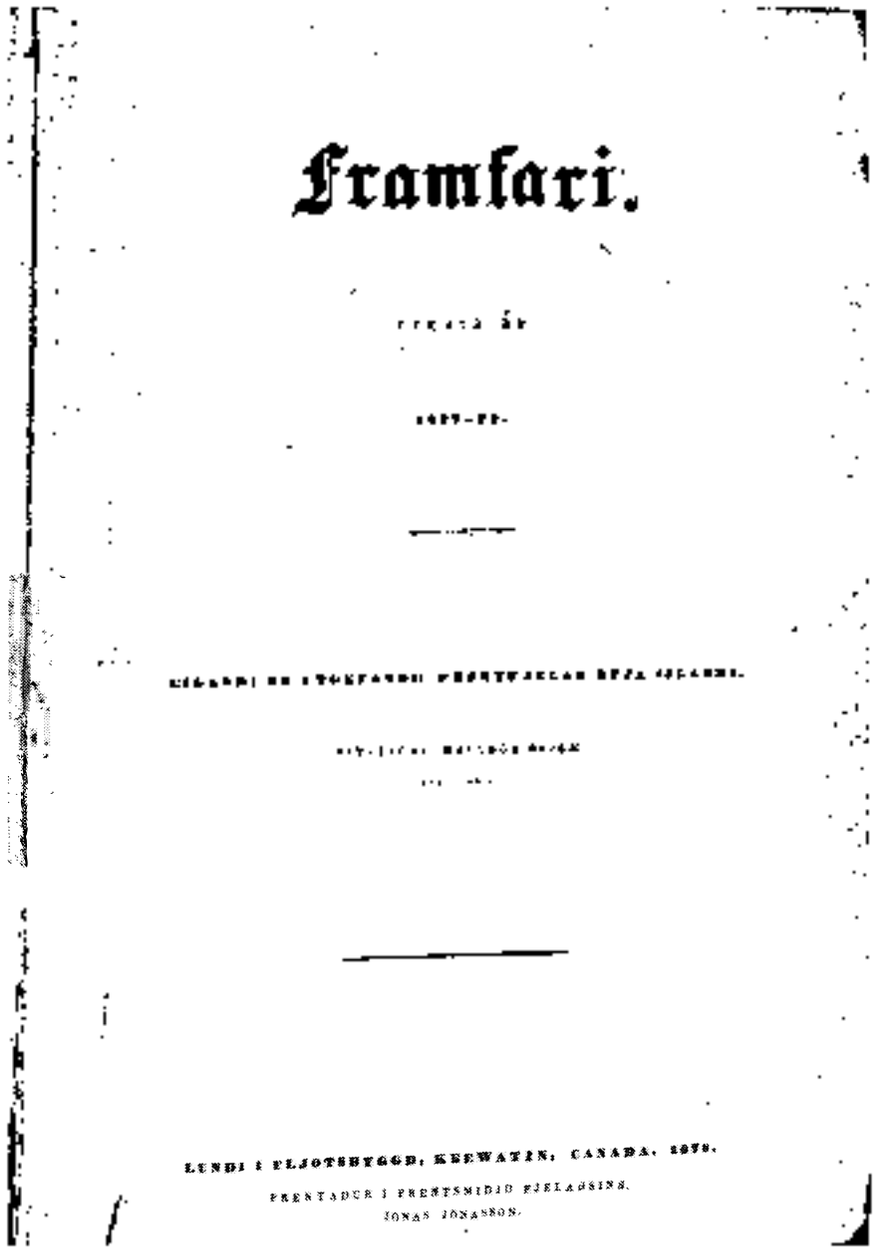
It tells me of wide sunlit spaces,
Swept by the north wind bold,
Of men who dare
Face the cutting air
And live on these prairies cold.

It tells me of free men whose lives
Are a daily struggle and toil;
Who in sun and rain
Attempt to gain
A living from the soil.

Not for them the stuffy office,
Not for them the factory's noise,
Not for them great wealth
But boundless health;
The outdoors is their choice.

'Tis these that the breezes waft to me
From across the valley so broad;
From the far regions blue
Comes this message true,
From the home of the all-knowing God.

(from Heimskringla, 1920) **—S. M. T.**


Framfari.

LUNDI I BYGGDUM NÝJA ÍSLANDS.

LUNDI I ÞJÓÐVERJA-BYGÐ, KEEWATIN, CANADA. 1878.

PRENTAÐUR Í PRENTSMIÐJU FJELAGSINS.

JÓNAS JÓNASSON.

The title page of **Framfari,** published at Lundi (Riverton), 1877-1880

Manitoba's New Iceland Region

By BALDUR H. KRISTJANSON, Deputy Minister of the Manitoba Development Authority

Prepared for the Centennial Issue of the Icelandic Canadian.

Having been given an opportunity to contribute to this special issue of the **Icelandic Canadian,** I thought it might be appropriate to discuss the New Iceland region of Manitoba from the point of view of a second generation Canadian born of Icelandic parents, who is a product of that region and who finds himself retaining many of his emotional roots in this area. I thought it might be appropriate, in part, because there must be many readers of the **Icelandic Canadian** scattered far and wide who would be interested in a thumbnail sketch of the region as it is today in terms of its economic position, present and potential.

In so doing, I must begin with some reasonable delineation of the geographic area under discussion. One might think, of course, that this would be easy — but it is not, simply because Icelanders did not settle and remain in one spot.

Technically we could say that New Iceland, at the outset, consisted of a strip of land on the west shore of Lake Winnipeg, varying in width from about 8 to 10 miles beginning from a point near Winnipeg Beach and extending northward to and including Hecla Island. But, at least the second generation Icelanders would think it should extend westward to Arborg and Vidir — to Lake Manitoba and Lake Winnipegosis.

This is comparable to what has come to be known as the Interlake Area of Manitoba. I suggest that this is a more meaningful delineation of New Iceland even though the Interlake is far from being occupied solely by people of Icelandic descent. It is more meaningful because we, as an ethnic group, find ourselves at home in this broad area having had a major part to play in its development from its earliest beginnings.

New Iceland, thus defined, is a region of great potential. Nearly a million acres of good agricultural land are yet to be brought into production. Its fishing industry remains a significant factor in the provincial economy. Its recreation possibilities are only now being fully appreciated. But it is a region that has been misunderstood due to an optimism about it in the early years that could not be sustained on the basis of the knowledge available at that time.

It is important to bear this last point in mind. The Icelanders shared with other groups of settlers a belief that this new land was a land of great promise. So they took up their work with a profound faith that the hardships encountered were transitory — that there would be, in a sense, a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. And I for one am glad they had this dream to sustain them in the early years for, without it, life for them would have become unbearable.

Dreams are, after all, the ultimate reality. Only those who cannot, or dare not, dream are forever doomed to underestimating the expanding reality that lies ahead. But it is also true that dreams never provide a critical path analysis — a detailed timetable of necessary activity to achieve given ends.

There was, of course, no timetable for the settlers in New Iceland because there was no way of knowing what lay ahead.

By contrast, today, when areas in Canada are opened up to settlement, every government insists on providing detailed scientific information about the area to the settler beforehand. Beyond this, a host of supplementary services are available. None of these were at hand for the settlers of New Iceland.

Instead, they had to rely on the judgement and leadership contained within their group. There were no alternatives. The life of New Iceland was decided by what the settlers themselves could do - by the judgement of leaders within the group. These leaders, and there were many of them, were the architects of the future of this region.

It was my good fortune to live with and to know some of the more significant architects of New Iceland. Not in the early years, but in the period when many of these men and women had reached the age where they could look back with pride upon a life of major accomplishments. They have told us of many things — disease and shortages of food among them. But what has impressed me is the priority given to those things on which modern writers on economic development place their highest values. First, and foremost, a developing economy must have law, order, and stable government. Second, provision must be made for an effective educational system. As most readers of the **Icelandic Canadian** will know, the settlers made their first decisive moves in precisely these areas. They knew the importance of good government and they understood the significance of the fullest possible development of the individual.

There was also a major sociological factor involved; namely, the high esteem accorded to women — particularly the mother.

I can remember my uncle Albert, the Rev. A. E. Kristjansson, interpreting the success of Icelandic settlement in Manitoba in terms of the role of the mother and in terms of the esteem in which she was held. I was too young at the time to understand the message. He was speaking to an Icelandic Celebration in Hnausa about 1931. Yet, on reflection, there can be no question today about the signal developmental role played by women in a modern society. And, contrasting this characteristic of the Icelandic community with attitudes held by other ethnic groups in the Interlake area, I am inclined to view that the Icelandic settlers had, in terms of their appreciation of the fairer sex, a substantial head start on progress.

These advantages are significant because they are in fact the precepts of modern life. They are the basis of progress. I believe, therefore, that the small group of Icelanders who landed on Willow Island sowed some of the most essential seeds of progress in the Interlake area of Manitoba.

In saying this, I do not wish to detract from the good qualities of all the other ethnic groups who settled this region. But I do suggest that the Icelanders made a peculiarly appropriate contribution to the settlement of this area by virtue of the characteristics referred to above.

Now, what of the future?

New Iceland, as we have defined it, is at the threshold of new developments which are of a truly pioneering nature. But this time we are pioneering in a different sense. This time we are attempting to re-design the entire economic structure of the area in keeping with the enormous possibilities arising from the accelerating tempo of technologic change.

Technology has had a marked effect on this region. And, whenever change comes quickly and on a large scale as it has come to the Interlake, major dislocations occur.

It is perhaps not generally understood that technologic advance affects primary producers such as farmers and fishermen with particular force. But it is true, nevertheless. Therefore, for the majority of the people involved here, quite major decisions akin to those made by the early settlers have to be made. Food production from the farm and from the fishery is being done by fewer and fewer people as science and machines are substituted for manpower.

This transformation has, in fact, been so rapid that the future of the Interlake has at times seemed to be in some doubt. But the very impact of the transformation taking place has brought the population of this area to appreciate the need for a comprehensive long-term development plan.

What we are witnessing in New Iceland today, therefore, is a bold experiment in social planning. Nine local area development boards in the Interlake Region have been studying in a most systematic fashion the longer term future of the area. And what they have learned is highly encouraging based on comprehensive technical studies financed by the provincial and federal governments over the past five years. Based on these findings, the local area development boards will give direction to the social and economic transformation that is now accelerating.

I cannot here describe in any detail the findings of the studies carried out. But on the whole the conclusions reached bear out the wisdom of the judgements made by the early settlers. Education, for example ,emerges as the number one priority and, as a result, a most comprehensive redevelopment of the educational system is already under way. And, the earlier assessment of the development potential has been substantiated — that the region will support a dynamic and growing economy based on its rich endowment of natural resources.

Agriculture will retain its dominant position in the economy as more land is brought into production and its methods are improved. The fishing industry will be stabalized and will continue as an important source of income. The future of manufacturing is less clear but some expansion is possible on the basis of the natural products of the Region and the trend toward the decentralization of industrial activity. The big unknown factor, however, is the future of the recreation industry.

We have in this Region vast natural resources for recreation which, in time, will be fully exploited. But we cannot predict with any great degree of accuracy the rate at which the demand for recreation development will grow for this particular area. All we know is that recreational pressures are growing steadily and that New Iceland has an important future in this regard.

I can conclude only that the future of this region remains as challenging and hopeful as it was when the Icelandic settlers first arrived and that, whatever the final details of the ethnic mosaic of the Interlake, I hope that no person of Icelandic descent will underestimate the wisdom of his forebears in selecting this area as a region of great promise.

THE HOME OF JON GUTTORMSON, ICELANDIC RIVER, MAN. c. 1891
Guttormur J. Guttormsson, poet (right), born in building on left, 1878

HOME OF STEPHAN G. STEPHANSSON, MARKERVILLE, ALBERTA
Taken in August, 1907

Where The Limitation Of Language And Geography Cease To Exist

by **HARALDUR BESSASON**

A few comments on the life and works of the Icelandic Canadian poet, Stephan G. Stephansson (All references to Stephansson's works in this article are to **Andvökur, I-IV**, Reykjavík 1953-58, identified here with the Roman numbers I-IV and to page no., and to **Bréf og ritgerðir I-IV**, Reykjavík 1938-1948, identified here with Arabic 1-4 and page no. Unless otherwise indicated, translations of references have been made by the present writer).

I.

The works of the Icelandic Canadian poet, Stephan G. Stephansson rank high in quality not only when compared with other literature in Icelandic, but also as a part of world literature concerned with human progress and betterment.

This does not imply that Stephansson's books should be regarded as guides to successful living. One could rather say that much of his work dwells on themes of intellectual value—themes which the poet often analysed in depth in highly symbolic poems.

By stating that Stephansson was engaged in the search for truth and that he reflected upon such human qualities as strength of character and the individual's desire to develop his intellectual powers one is, of course, speaking in generalities. Nevertheless, when applied to the subject at hand these words take on a special significance which is far removed from the realm of generalities. Stephan G. Stephansson's life and creative work were of no ordinary nature; one is indeed quite justified in stating that his attainments represent a case without parallel.

II.

Stephan G. Stephansson was born on the 3rd of October in 1853 in the district of Skagafjörður in northern Iceland. In 1870 the family moved from Skagafjörður to Suður-Þingeyjarsýsla, also in the northern part of Iceland. In 1873 all the immediate family emigrated to the United States and settled in Dane County, Wisconsin. Five years after their arrival there Stephansson married Helga Sigríður Jónsdóttir. "All I then possessed", Stephansson has written, "consisted of 160 acres of land which had only been partly cleared of its huge fir trees, and twelve barren, but fully cleared acres of sandy soil and a reasonably good house." (4,80).

In 1880 Stephansson and his family moved to the Garðar district near Mountain in North Dakota where they stayed until the spring of 1889 when they moved to a district close to Markerville in Alberta in western Canada where Stephansson lived until the day of his death, August 10 in 1927. It was in Alberta that Stephansson wrote most of his poems, some of which rank among the finest attainments in both Icelandic and Canadian letters.

When Stephansson left Iceland, he was only nineteen years of age. Financial circumstances had allowed for little formal education so that he did not get the chance to pursue higher learning. He has related a touching incident which shows how he, as a

youngster, reacted to this great obstacle which fate had placed in his path.

"When I was in Viðimýrarsel" (in Skagafjarðarsýsla), he wrote, "I had a strong desire to embark upon an educational career. From those years I can particularly recall one windy and chilly day on which I happened to see three young men as they rode past our farm. I knew that these young men were students who were on their way to a school in Reykjavík. . . This sight did not make me envious, but I was filled with a sense of depression and sorrow. I could not help shedding a few tears and, to avoid making a display of my emotions, I sought out a hiding place some distance away from our farm buildings. Soon my absence was noticed by my mother. She came out of the house and called my name, but I remained silent, since I did not want her to discover me in such a condition. However, she almost immediately discovered my hiding place, and noticing the depressed mood I was in, she naturally wanted to know what had upset me. Reluctanly I told her the truth. Many years later I heard my mother say that never in her life had she sensed the stifling effect of poverty as keenly as on this occasion. Her words made me deeply regret that I could ever have allowed myself to lose control of my emotions." (4,93)

This incident from Stephansson's youth not only reveals the difficult circumstances he had to contend with —it also shows his ability to cope with them. On this and many other occasions later in life, Stephansson was able to draw on his reserves of inner strength and to accept adversity as a challenge. He lived by the rule **að láta ekki baslið smækka sig** ('not to let the bitter struggle of life make him a lesser person', III, 87).

Since Stephansson had little opportunity to attend school, he made use of whatever informal education was available to him in the private homes of his district. This kind of education consisted mainly of the reading of literature, and young Stephansson read everything he came across. In his own home there was a collection of religious books; other literature he borrowed from neighboring farms (4, 84-85).

Memorial to Stephan G. Stephansson, at Vatnsskarði, Iceland.

Just before leaving Iceland in 1873, Stephansson received some private tutoring from a minister. Among the subjects which he studied was English. Later in life Stephansson greatly increased his knowledge of languages as is borne out both by his poems and

his essays, reflecting as they do a surprisingly extensive knowledge of the literatures of many lands.

In commenting on his own poetry, Stephansson referred to himself as the descendant of both Egill Skallagrímsson, a tenth century Icelandic poet, and of Loftur Ríki (1375-1432). "Name me an Icelander who is not descended from these men", he wrote (4, 81). With these words the poet emphasized the literary ties between himself and these two ancient authors—ties which remain unbroken through the entire history of the Icelandic people.

It is necessary to point out that even though the Iceland which Stephan G. Stephansson knew was a land of meagre material resources and limited opportunities, it was nonetheless, the intellectually reawakened Iceland of the 19th century. Aspirations for increased political autonomy and reassessment of the Icelandic heritage were important elements in many of the Icelandic works which were published during the first half of that century. The authors of these works were among the men who laid the foundation for modern Icelandic nationhood. As an example one should mention the writings of Jónas Hallgrímsson and Jón Sigurðsson, some of which had just been published when Stephan G. Stephansson was born. Stephansson was therefore in a better position than Icelandic poets had been one or two generations before him in that he had richer contemporary sources to draw upon.

III

As early as 1868 Stephansson composed a verse in which he described in a poetic manner the sense of boredom which laziness can create. This verse he entitled **Sjálfskaparvítið** (i.e., "the self-inflicted punishment", I. 11). One cannot help thinking that in this verse, which marked the beginning of a long and fruitful literary career, Stephansson declared that it was his own responsibility to dispose of one of the arch enemies of intellectual endeavour.

The importance of taking responsibility first on one's own shoulders is indeed a major hallmark of Stephansson's philosophy which emphasizes that all progress depends upon self-improvement. **Framförin er lífsins sanna sæla** ('progress is the only true enjoyment in life', IV, 39), he wrote. It was only natural that his concern for human progress would eventually prompt him to condemn "the idleness and wealth which thrives on the labours of the poor" (I, 211). His frequent criticisms of capitalistic exploitation were based on the belief that the exploited class is ever deprived of the benefits which a continuously expanding civilization can bring.

In his evaluation of history Stephansson observed that "even in remote antiquity the human mind attained intellectual goals comparable to those which it is now capable of attaining. What then constitutes our gain?" the poet asks himself (I, 212). His reply contended that even though the average life span of man is not long enough to afford any one individual an opportunity to notice the difference, enlightenment had constantly been extending its course so as to reach individuals who in the past had not been in a position to get to realize its presence (Loc. cit.).

The above assertion reveals an interesting aspect of Stephansson's concept of intellectual progress. One might perhaps call this a horizontal view of civilization which regards the task of

bringing it within the reach of an ever-increasing number of people to be of paramount importance. The poet envisaged the day when "one man's success is not another man's misery", in a world where power would cease to be the ultimate goal to strive for and fairness in every exchange among men would be accepted as "the supreme commandment"; (I, 211) where "an ode to the sun is sung by all the common heirs of mother earth." (II, 518). The foregoing makes it easy to understand why Stephan G. Stephansson was a pacifist whose feelings were deeply wounded by the numerous outbreaks of war that occured in his time (cf. for instance III, 132-210).

IV

In a poem from his later years (III, 194-195), Stephansson suggested that because of his deep understanding of the world around him, Christ was subjected to mockery, and that his benevolence and his ability to distinguish between truth and falsehood aroused a feeling of hatred among his fellow-men.

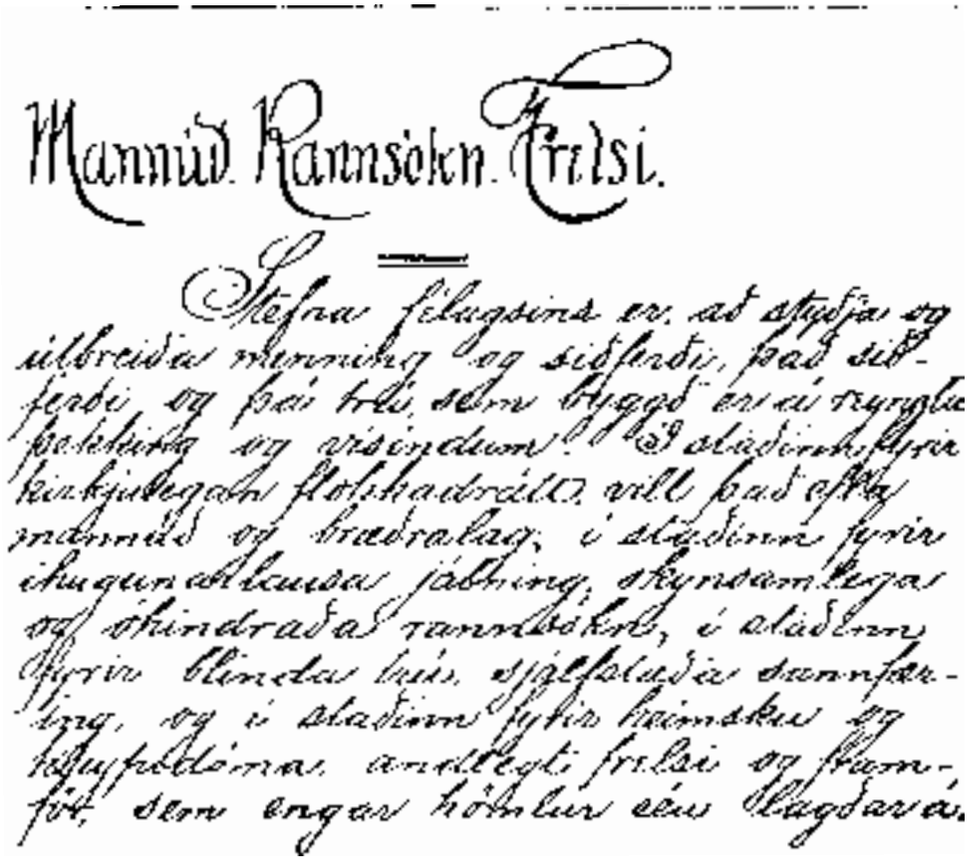
Considering the above reference it comes as a surprise, perhaps, to many of Stephansson's readers when he refers to himself as an "agnostic" (1, 344). It appears that by using this term the poet meant to imply that he rejected some of the fundamental tenets of the conventional Christian faith. He felt that the Church as he knew it had become stagnant because of unalterable dogmas (1, 41-42) and that it had failed to give enough consideration to life on earth—the life which according to Stephansson was "God himself" (3, 98).

As a child Stephansson received the kind of religious upbringing which was customary in 19th century Iceland. This involved a good deal of reading in strictly orthodox literature, as for instance 'The Sermons of Bishop Jón Vídalín' **(Vídalínspostilla)** (4, 83-84). Upon his arrival in North America, Stephansson joined a Lutheran congregation as was customary for other Icelandic immigrants, and in spite of some disagreement with the church minister, he remained an active member of the Church during his early years in North America (4, 86-87).

During his stay in North Dakota (1880-1889) Stephansson's affiliations with the Church deteriorated and came to an end. At that time he did not only join a group of men who had become dissatisfied with their church, but he also played a leading role in organizing in his district a society of freethinkers which received the name **Hið íslenzka menningarfélag** ('The Icelandic Cultural Society'). Stephansson was entrusted with the task of outlining the aims and objectives of this new organization. This he did in the following preamble to its constitution:
(cf. **Tímarit Þjóðræknisfélagsins** 1967, 12).

(See Page 51 for illustration)

As one can easily imagine the founding of the Icelandic Cultural Society in North Dakota was frowned upon by the leaders of the Icelandic Lutheran Church. In their own home district the members of the Society ran into considerable opposition (cf. Loc. cit.), and the Icelandic press in Winnipeg referred to this new society of freethinkers as a fellowship of disbelievers who had most of them come from the ranks of "unenlightened farmers" (**Sameiningin** 1888, no. 1, 13).


Mannúð. Rannsókn. Frelsi.

Stefna félagsins er: að stuðla að
alhliða menningu og siðfestu, það sið-
ferði og þá trú, sem byggð er á traustri
þekkingu og vísindum. Í því skyni hyggst
hið íslenzka fjelagsrit að vilja það efni
manndóms og drengskapar, í ræðum fyrir
hugsun alþýðu fræðing, ritgerðum lærðra
og óbundnu máli, í skáldum
fyrir blindra leið, sjálfstæða dómgáf-
ing, og í skáldum fyrir heimskra og
hégómafullra, andlegt frelsi og fram-
för, sem engar höftur séu lagðar á.

The Introduction to the Constitution of the Icelandic Cultural Society in Stephansson's own handwriting.

Humanity — Research — Freedom

This society has adopted as its avowed objective the promotion of good morals and culture and the cultivation of the kind of faith which is based on objective research. Instead of lending support to growing discontent within the Church, this society wishes to strengthen the idea of fellowship and a humanitarian outlook among men. The society will emphasize that unimpeded assessment of spiritual values must replace uncritical acceptance of conventional dogmas. Further, it is the aim of this oganization to let personal conviction replace blind faith and to force narrow-mindedness and prejudice to give way to unrestricted spiritual freedom and progress.

Stephansson wrote a polite rebuttal to the criticisms which were levelled at the Cultural Society (**Lögberg,** June 20, 1888). In his reply Stephansson showed firmness and ingenuity. However, he did not wish to become further engaged in religious polemics at this time. Shortly after his first direct encounter with the Church he moved to Alberta where at a comfortable distance from petty disputes he later increased his literary output both in quantity and quality. (cf. Óskar Halldórsson **Studia Islandica** 19, 23-24).

Stephansson has written about his participation in the Icelandic Cultural

Stephan G. Stephansson Memorial Cairn, Markerville, Alberta

Society; he considered it a significant factor in his own intellectual development (cf. I, 7), and believed that it had stimulated his poetic talent (cf. Þorkell Jóhannesson Nordæla 1956. 218). Finally, it is safe to say that when our poet laid down the rules for the Icelandic Cultural Society, he formulated a principle which he himself had resolved to follow, namely that of attempting an "unimpeded assessment of spiritual values."

According to Stephansson's own testimony the Icelandic Cultural Society in North Dakota was founded upon the same principles as societies which had formerly been founded in the United States by Professor Felix Adler (1851-1933).

Þorkell Jóhannesson and Óskar Halldórsson have pointed out that some of Stephansson's works must have been influenced by Adler's book of 1877 titled 'Creed and Deed' (Nordæla 1956, 218).

The following passages from that book are among those selected for discussion by Óskar Halldórsson:

> We do not therefore deny dogma, but prefer to remit it to the sphere of individual conviction with which public association should have no concern.
>
> ▲ ▲ ▲
>
> To broaden and deepen the ethical sentiment in ourselves and to hold up to the sad realities of the times the mirror of the ideal life is the object with which we have set out.
>
> ▲ ▲ ▲
>
> The dead are not dead, if we have loved them truly. In our own lives we give them immortality . . . All the good that was in them lives in you, the germ and nucleus of the better that shall be.
>
> ▲ ▲ ▲
>
> And now the new Ideal differs from Christianity in this, that it seeks to approach the goal of a Kingdom of Heaven upon earth. not by the miraculous interference of the Deity, but by the laborious exertion of men, and the slow, but certain progress of successive generations.
>
> ▲ ▲ ▲
>
> But the condition of all progress is experience; we must go wrong thousand times before we find the right.

(These references are from **Studia Islandica** 19, 70-72)

Óskar Halldórsson has rightly drawn attention to the resemblance between the above passages on one hand and some of Stephansson's observations in both his Introduction to the Constitution of the Icelandic Cultural Society and his poems and prose writings on the other. Special attention is called to the following lines:

"To think not in hours, but in ages,
At eve not to claim all our wages,"
(Transl. by Paul Bjarnason, **Odes and Echoes,** 118).

Halldórsson further mentions Stephansson's view that truth is always derived from beneficial experience. (cf. Op. Cit. 19, 72).

Stephansson's extensive knowledge of the American freethinkers movement is clearly indicated in one of his letters from 1890. In this letter he speaks of the American freethinkers from whom he demands "the kind of scholarly caution which can advance well founded statements rather than prejudice." (1, 9-10). Of their numererous publications Stephansson was only satisfied with **Boston Index** edited by B. F. Underwood (cf. **Tímarit** XLVIII, 19). However, he recommended the following publications as useful reading: **The New Ideal,** Boston; **Boston Investigator,** Boston; **Ironclad Age,** Indianapolis; **Truth Seeker,** New York; **Free Thought,** San Fransisco; **Secular Thought,** Toronto; **The Individualist,** Colorado; **Freethinkers Magazine,** N. York. (For further information, see Loc. Cit.).

Even though the freethinkers' movement had a lasting influence on Stephan G. Stephansson, he discarded much of its printed output and accepted only the kind of literature which in his opinion was likely to enhance intellectual maturity. (1, 10).

V

In a letter from 1910 Stephan G. Stephansson expressed his views on life on earth as follows:

"As far as one can see, life is eternal; it was and it will be. It is of the greatest importance that all the circumstances that surround life be favourable. What each and every individual has in common with the life of the living will live on after he ceases to exist." (1,220).

Life on earth was to Stephansson the kind of god that demands work as sacrifice, but since such sacrifice brings about improvement of the conditions of life it should also be regarded as a reward. The Icelandic writer Guðmundur Friðjónsson had this in mind when he maintained that Stephansson's affection for hard work was to him "the equivalent of religion" ("trúarbragðaígildi", cf. Hannes Pétursson in **Andvari** (Summer) 1959, 41; See also Guðm. Friðjónsson: **Ritsafn VI**, 419). One should note that it is indeed this kind of religion, to make further use of Friðjónsson's definition, which in Stephansson's poems is often contrasted with conventional faith. This contrast Stephansson subjected to careful scrutiny in many poems, among which is a long epic on Sigurður trölli (Sigurður the Big, I, 509-522) based on a story which is partly from Icelandic folklore. The poem depicts Sigurður trölli as a somewhat strange character who occupies an out-of-the-way shack in the mountains. Nearby is a treacherous path where in the past many travellers have been caught in snowstorms and perished. Sigurður trölli's daily chores consist of herding his sheep. However, his more important calling in life is that of saving the lives of those who lose their way and get into difficulties along the treacherous paths of the mountains. This man had made it his business to rescue people from death's door.

In spite of Sigurður trölli's concern for human lives, he fails to attend the parish church which is closest to his valley. As a result of this he is rebuked by the church minister who has taken such a dim view of Sigurður's negligence that he finds it necessary to classify him with the followers of Satan himself. (Continued on Page 72)

POEMS

by W. D. Valgardson

ON THE GOLDFIELD'S LEAVING FOR NORWAY HOUSE

The Goldfield's screw
churns black water from the mud
and brings to light
strange bits of wreckage
foreign to my sight

My neighbour
half a century old
tells stories

NEW EQUIPMENT

all day long
we replaced
wooden floats
handturned and irregular
with precision
made plastic
sectioned by
Japan's machines
stamped together
with epoxy resin

my neighbour's neighbour
seventy last May
watched
but did not understand

METRO KOLTAN

Metro
with his rich voice
and his rich life
comes infrequently
to tantalize us
with talk of Tuk Tuk
and McMurdo Sound
having seen the caribou migrate
and having tasted the
eight month isolation
of Hudson's Bay
he has feasted on life
while I
edge sitting
on my chair
B.A., B.Ed.,
and full of pride

DRAGGING OPERATION

You can tell by the way they handle
the body
Dumping it unceremoniously
Onto the deck
So that it lies stiff-armed
And obviously startled
By its part in the scene

You can tell by the satisfied
Tone of their voices as they say
To their wives on returning home
That they found him
Among the pilings
Below the second chute

You can tell by the way
They complain that it was cold work
And ask for coffee
Hot and steaming
You can tell
It was not themselves
They hauled from the bottom

NAILING BOXES

fish boxes
nailed together at five cents
a box don't give much money
to thirteen year olds
with drunken dreams
of movies and candy bars
they can purchase for the budding
breasts
in their grade eight room
but still less
do they give
when you are sixty years old
at five cents a box
on B.C. Packer's dock
hoping the factory will not start
to do their own assembling
snap ravenously
at scraps
he throws aside

SKAFTI ARASON

by Jack Baldwin

Skafti Arason

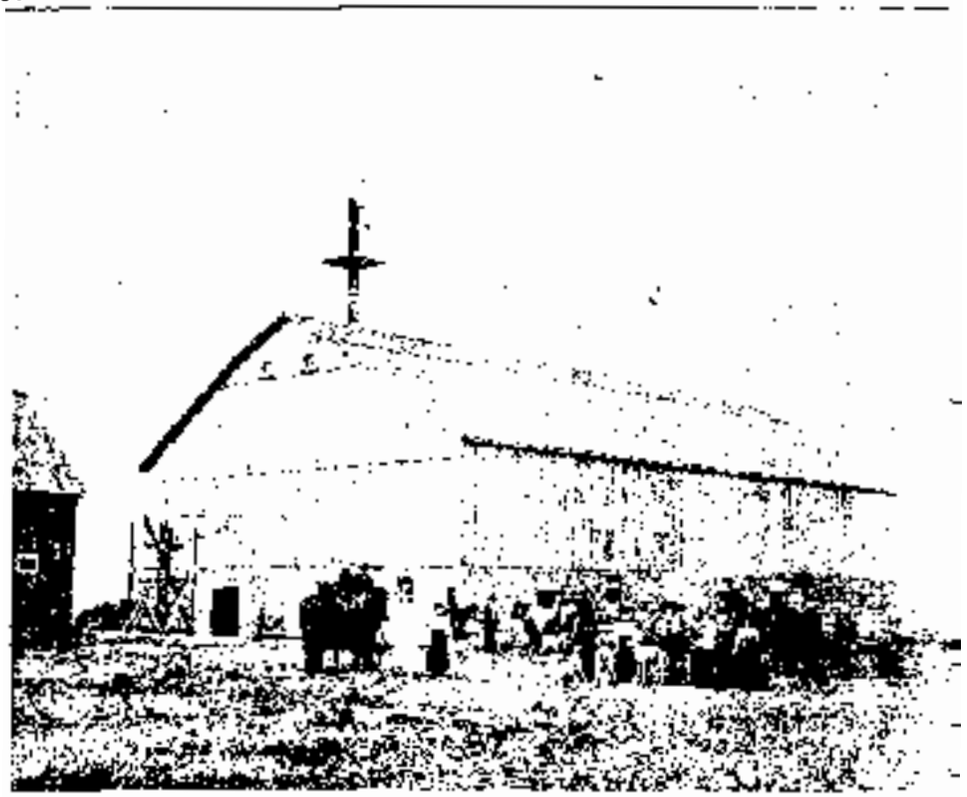
Having been asked to write a short history of Skafti Arason's farming operations in the Argyle community where Icelanders settled in the early '80's, I am doing so in the conviction that my father-in-law would rather be remembered as just one of the many brave and energetic early Icelandic settlers in this or any other district where Icelanders chose to build a home in a strange land, than be remembered by his worldly possessions or his accomplishments. He was a very modest man. Though energetic, he was not a robust person. He never sought notoriety or praise though he helped many settlers who followed him. He was a devout believer and lived accordingly.

Like so many of the early settlers, he never really felt he was coming to a strange land as most, if not all, knew Leif Erickson's history and felt they had a stake in his discovery. He had a strong sense of loyalty to Canada and was anxious to learn the English language.

The early history and hardships of Icelanders at Gimli are well known. Skafti Arason left Gimli March 15, 1881, and reached Argyle March 31st. Because of bad weather, he did not get to the homestead for which he had made application in the fall of 1880. He had $3.00 cash and personal effects loaded on three sleighs. One sleigh was covered and used as their living quarters. He had a few cattle, one pony, and a yoke of oxen.

His first crop in 1882 was the yield from 12 acres. In 1883 he sowed 47 acres. In 1884 he suffered a set back as the grain was frozen—and again in 1885 there was drought. The disastrous prairie fire of 1886 swept over a large part of the district and many settlers lost their grain and hay stacks.

In the fire, Skafti Arason lost a stable, all his hay, a new wagon, a mower and rake, 20 head of sheep, 15 out of 23 head of cattle, and a yoke of oxen. The year 1887 was the most rewarding—his crop yielded 1500 bushels of



The Arason barn, built 1902, in the Argyle District in Manitoba

wheat, 250 bushels of barley, and 800 bushels of oats.

From then on there was no stopping his advance. The picture of his barn is a good indication. In 1915 the family farmed 20 quarters of land and threshed 30,000 bushels of wheat.

Unfortunately, Mr. Arason did not live to see his plans come to full fruition as he died in 1903 at the age of 53.

Aside from giving the history of a successful early Icelandic individual, if this story could inspire the succeeding 3 or 4 future generations of Icelanders to develop the faith and courage of our forefathers to stand up and fight the elements of evil that have crept into the social order of the world today, our forefathers will not have lived in vain.

An Address to the Icelandic Canadian Club of Winnipeg

delivered by ROY ST. GEORGE STUBBS, on February 28, 1967

Some months ago, when the final sun had set for your great poet, Guttormur J. Guttormsson, I said to an Icelandic friend that I was going to attempt a brief account of his life and work. He suggested to me that I would be presumptuous to even think of undertaking such a task, that as one who could not speak his language, I would be reaching far above my height. You mistake my purpose, I told him, I shall not be speaking to Icelanders. I shall be speaking to English Canadians, and I shall tell them that they have had a great man, a great poet, living in their midst of whom they have not been aware. I may be able to strike a note which no Icelanders, with a due regard for the proprieties, could strike.

I come before you tonight in this same spirit. The Icelanders are a modest race. This is not to say that they suffer from any false sense of modesty. They have a good conceit of themselves. As members of a minority race, they have always realized that no presumptions will be made in their favor, that they must prove themselves, and prove themselves they have done —most abundantly. As a non-Icelander, I can speak of Icelanders without the restraint under which any modest Icelander must labour. But there are no considerations which would induce me to stretch the truth. I shall tell no lies.

My knowledge does not qualify me to speak to a group of Icelandic-Canadians. I must seek my warmth elsewhere and I find it in my admiration for a small race of people with whom quality has always counted for far more than quantity. Great size, in itself, is no recommendation. It is the use to which great size is put which is the ultimate consideration, and it seems to me, and I say this sincerely, that no race, unless it be the Jews, has ever made more of the gifts which the fates have bestowed upon it, than has the Icelandic race.

The first Icelander whom I met was Skuli Johnson. He tried to teach me Latin at Wesley College. The fault was not his. I have always regarded him as typical of his race — larger in size than the average, it is true, but still typical.

He was a true scholar. Love of knowledge was his ruling passion. He had ambition but it was an ambition which pointed in the right direction. He had no thought of piling up pelf for himself. His ambition was to pay his passage through life by giving honorable service—the service of a dedicated teacher—to his fellowmen.

Shortly before he died, Skuli Johnson was a patient in Grace Hospital. For a few days, while undergoing an operation, I was a patient in the next room. As fellow-patients, we visited back and forth. When I was leaving the hospital I went to say good-bye to him. These were his last words to me: "Stubbs, they tell me I am through, it is a great tragedy. I am just at my best. I have more to give now than I

had when you were my student." These words strike the very keynote of this remarkable man. He was a giver, not a grasper—and the gift that he wanted to give was the most precious he had to offer—himself.

Walt Whitman's words fit him as its bark fits the tree:

"Behold, I do not give lectures or
a little charity,
When I give I give myself."

I have said that Skuli Johnson was the first Canadian of Icelandic origin whom it was my privilege to know. I should perhaps qualify that statement. When I came into the world, my father was a partner in the legal firm of Rathwell, Johnson and Stubbs. While I was still in my cradle, I was introduced to that outstanding Icelandic-Canadian, Thomas H. Johnson; but, of course, having then no language but a cry, I could not return his greeting. During my childhood, I saw him on several occasions. But I never met him after arriving at the years of discernment. I cannot speak of him presonally. My father always spoke of him in terms of the highest praise—and to me who knew my father as one who never gave indiscriminate praise—that is recommendation enough.

Dad came to Canada from the British West Indies in 1902. The next year he entered the firm of Perdue, Rathwell and Johnson, as an articled student-at-law. Perdue was appointed to the bench in August, 1903, and Rathwell and Johnson continued the firm. When my father was called to the bar in 1906, they took him into partnership with them.

Johnson was elected to the Manitoba Legislature for the constituency of West Winnipeg in the general election of 1907. My father was his campaign manager. It was dad's first taste of politics and he often spoke to me of that hard-fought campaign. Sir Rodmond P. Roblin, an unabashed political pirate who must be admired because he never pretended to be anything but what he was, was then premier of Manitoba. To have defeated the Roblin political machine in West Winnipeg was no mean accomplishment.

Early in 1908, my father left Winnipeg for Birtle, where he took over the law practise of C. J. Mickle, who had been appointed County Court judge for the newly created Northern Judicial District of Manitoba. His place in the firm was taken by H. A. Bergman.

In his interesting book, The Icelandic People in Manitoba, Mr. W. Kristjanson speaks highly of this great Icelandic-Canadian. "Within a year of being called to the Bar," he writes, "he appeared before the Supreme Court of Canada as sole counsel, and won the case." I do not know of this case. But I can speak with a personal knowledge of one of Bergman's great cases. This case—Stubbs vs. Standard Reliance Mortgage Corporation—concerned the house on Winnipeg Avenue in which I was born. Standard Reliance held the mortgage on this property. It was on a standard mortgage form, then in general use, which provided for blended monthly payments, to include principal, interest and taxes. Dad asked the mortgage company for a statement. He was given a statement which did not show what portion of the monthly payments was being applied on interest and what on principal. He thought that the mortgaae did not meet the requirements of the Dominion Interest Act.

In 1916, with Bergman as his counsel, he sued the mortgage company in the Court of King's Bench and recovered a judgement from Chief Justice Mathers. The company appealed to the Manitoba Court of Appeal and the five judges of that court unanimously agreed with the trial judge. The company then went to the Supreme Court of Canada. In this court, Bergman was opposed by Eugene Lafleur, K.C., perhaps the greatest lawyer Canada has ever produced.

In the Supreme Court, three judges of a court of five decided in favor of the mortgage company. My father promptly gave notice of an appeal to the Privy Council. The company did not want to take any chance of losing its judgment in that final court and offered a settlement. My father made it a condition of settlement that Bergman's costs be paid in full. "And I shall see that he presents you with a good bill," he told the lawyers for the mortgage company.

Dad never saw Bergman's bill, but it is safe to say that it was not large enough. Bergman always set too low a value on his services. He was a great lawyer. He lived and breathed for his profession.

Sir Louis Davies, one of the two Supreme Court judges who had been in my father's favor, went on a vacation to the Bahamas a few months after the case had been determined. There he met another vacationer—William Elliot McCara, Registrar General of Manitoba, for forty years. One day, when they were having a friendly chat, Sir Louis said to McCara, "Tell me about that young man, Bergman, in your city. We had him before our court recently and he made a great impression on us. My brother judges and I predict a great future for him in the law."

Bergman was appointed to the Manitoba Court of Appeal in 1944. He was not a great judge. The bench and the bar call for different talents. Bergman's superb talents were those of the lawyer, not those of the judge. He could build up a case and present it in court in a manner which claimed general admiration. He was not in his true element when sitting in the seat of judgement.

But let us return to Thomas H. Johnson. It is not a characteristic of Icelandic lawyers generally to undervalue their services. But Johnson suffered from the same failing as Bergman.

He was Lord Strathcona's legal representative in Manitoba. Lord Strathcona had his title to his estate in Silver Heights challenged in the courts. George Elliott, an astute and aggressive lawyer, represented the plaintiff. He pressed his suit with great vigor, even to the extent of examining Lord Strathcona in London. But it became apparent to him eventually that he had no case. He offered to settle. Johnson approached Lord Strathcona with the offer. "There will be no settlement," said Strathcona. On the morning that the case was to open in court, Elliott threw in his hand and admitted defeat. Johnson sent his client a bill for $5,000.00. He received a letter from Lord Strathcona to this effect. You did not charge me enough. Enclosed is a cheque for $10,000.00.

When Thomas H. Johnson took his seat in the Legislature of Manitoba, he soon became a thorn in the side of Sir Rodmond P. Roblin. Politics were rough in those days. Roblin once threatened that he would harpoon Johnson's hide in a hundred places and trample him in the mud. Though he wielded a club that not many modern politicians could lift from the floor, Roblin lacked the capacity to carry out this threat. Johnson could

meet him on any day of the week, on his own terms.

When the Liberals came to power in 1915, under T. C. Norris, Johnson was taken into the cabinet as Minister of Public Works. He later held the portfolio of Attorney-General.

Norris gave this province the best government it has ever had. He redeemed more of his election promises than any premier of Manitoba, before his time, or since. He put on the statute books more social legislation—votes for women, prison reform, workmen's compensation, among other measures—than any government that has ever served this province. Standing at his right hand, when these good works were performed, was Thomas H. Johnson, a good parliamentarian, a good administrator, and a good Canadian.

Many years ago, I was invited to join the Liberal Party. With that end in view, I attended a small gathering of the party faithful. Speeches were made by several prominent Liberals. They all boiled down to the same thing—the Liberals were divinely constituted to be the rulers of Canada in perpetuity. As the evening wore on a slight, grey-haired man stood up to say a few words. He had not been speaking for more than a minute when I thought to myself, here is a man who spells the word Liberal with a small 'l'. I cannot remember his words, but they were to this effect: Poitics is service, not self-service. Let us show less enthusiasm for grasping greedily at the loaves and fishes of politics, and more for the good we may be able to do. Let us get down to fundamentals. Let us have a policy that looks beyond our party to the general good of the country.

When I tell you that this man was an Icelandic-Canadian, need I tell you his name? I did not have to tell my father. When I gave him an account of the meeting and I came to the one speech that put first things first, Dad said to me: "that could only have been my old friend Dr. S. J. Johannesson."

I hope that Canadians of Icelandic origin appreciate this truly great man for what he was. In all truth, Dr. Johannesson was a secular saint of humanity. He was not a typical Icelander. He was typical of humanity at its highest reach. He was a species composed of a single individual. The pattern from which he was made was used but once.

Schiller says:

"In the moral world too, there's
nobility.
Common natures
pay with that which they do,
noble ones
with what they are."

Dr. Johannesson was a man of noble nature. His works were great—but he himself was greater. But let me read to you one of his poems that reflects the magnificent spirit which was contained in his small envelope of flesh.

A mouse was raiding his larder — which was never too well stocked. He set a trap to catch this mouse, baiting it with a piece of cheese. He caught the mouse, and, when he came upon it in the trap, these thoughts welled up in his mind and he put them down on paper. Here, in Watson Kirkconnell's translation, is what he wrote:

TO A MOUSE IN A TRAP

Cowering and a prisoner,
Furry little beast,
How your mind is frantic,
Check'd your happy feast!

Life a bridge of terrors
Is for me and you;
You may think me larger,
Yet I'm little too.

Do not joy and sorrow
Meet us both alike?
Common laws of living
Through our pulses strike?

Sure the self-same essence
Each his breath supplies;
The same eternal spirit
Peeps out through your eyes.

To my heart's affection
My own home is best;
Dear to you, my mousie,
Is your own wee nest.

Though my strength far higher
In the scale may mount,
Does no gift of mousehood
Balance the account?

At your grief and panic,
All my passions fall;
I must call you sister,
Spare you after all.

Dr. Sig. Júl. Jóhannesson

These are the words of a man who had compassion for every living thing, a man who gave affirmations to life with every breath, one who would call no man friend who needlessly put his foot upon a spider.

After the political meeting, of which I have been speaking, I sought out Dr. Johannesson to tell him how much I had appreciated his remarks. I did not see him again for several years—until, in fact, I moved onto the next street to the street on which he was living. Then I saw him frequently. In the dead of winter, he would be dressed in a shabby coon-skin coat, his physician's bag in his hand, tramping the streets, carrying comfort to the sick, with the last thought in his mind of using his receipt book. One day he stopped me, we had a chat, and he invited me to his home.

Dr. Johannesson made quite a contribution to my education. One thing which he did for me, for which I have always been sincerely grateful, was to introduce me to the Icelandic poets, in English translation, of course, because of my limitation. I first heard the great names of Stephan G. Stephansson and Guttormur J. Guttormsson, from his lips.

In an article in the Winnipeg Tribune recently, I tried to express something of my appreciation of Guttormsson's poetry—that is the few echoes from the Icelandic that I have been able to overhear in English translation.

(Continued on page 83)

The Icelanders in British Columbia

by GUSTAF TRYGGVASON and NINA JOBIN

The Icelandic ethnic group in British Columbia has never been a large one. The first official figures available show that in 1902 there were 177 persons of Icelandic nationality in the province. This figure increased slowly over the next three decades and by 1931 Census returns show 858 persons of Icelandic origin in the province. Thereafter the increase in their numbers was more rapid, as indicated by later census returns. Their numbers increased to 1,478 in 1941, 3,557 in 1951 and 5,136 in 1961. By now about 20% of all Icelandic Canadians live in British Columbia.

The migration of Icelandic Canadians into British Columbia has some general characteristics which are worth mentioning. Firstly, the migration into the province has been a secondary migration. Most of these people had spent many years in other parts of Canada and the United States before coming to British Columbia. Secondly, the majority of those who have arrived have been Canadian or American by birth. In 1961 only 8% of the Icelandic Canadians in the province had been born in Iceland. Thirdly, the migration has been a distinctly individualistic migration. There is only one instance on record of a group arriving in the province with the intention of setting up an Icelandic colony.

The first Icelanders came in the 1880's and most of them settled, either permanently or temporarily, in Victoria. Among these were Olafur (Oliver) and Gudrun Johnson, who arrived around 1888. One of their sons, Byron (Bjorn) Ingimar, born in Victoria in 1890, later became a prominent figure in sports, business and politics in British Columbia. He was first elected to the legislature in 1933. In 1947 he became leader of the Liberal party and in that capacity he served as the Premier of the province from 1947 to 1953. Another early settler in Victoria was Christian Sivertz. One of his sons, Bent, served in the federal civil service, most recently as the Commissioner for the North West Territories. A third early settler, who arrived shortly after the turn of the century, was Sigurdur Christopherson. One of the first Icelanders to settle in Canada, he served the government as an immigration agent for many years before settling in Crescent Beach.

The first Icelander to settle in the Northern part of the province was T. J. Davidson, who arrived in Prince Rupert from Alberta in 1908. In 1913 a group of about ten families from Manitoba arrived in Prince Rupert enroute to the Queen Charlotte Islands, where they planned to establish an Icelandic colony. The attempt failed and these people were then urged to settle on Smith Island in the Skeena River estuary. There they established the village of Osland. By 1925, when the population was about 70 persons, the village had its own school, post office, store, a branch of the Farmer's Institute and an oil station serving the local fishing fleet.

This group tried to preserve some elements of their cultural heritage. "Glíma", an old Icelandic form of wrestling, was taught in the school house, which was also used as a community center where chess and card games were played and the regular Saturday night dances were held. A library containing both Icelandic and English titles was established in 1920. The Anglican mission boat, "Northern Cross", was a regular visitor to the small settlement.

Salmon fishing was the main occupation of the settlers. Most of them also kept small gardens and raised a few domestic animals. The Farmer's Institute was of considerable help in clearing the land. The settlers also made unsuccessful efforts to grow fruit and to raise mink.

Osland survived the hard years of the 1930's, partly due to the availability of fish and game. During the war years however, people began to move to Prince Rupert, where well-paying jobs were available and where their children could continue their schooling. By 1944 the school had been closed, the store and oil station moved elsewhere and the Farmer's Institute was dissolved. The post office was closed in 1952. Today the village has no permanent inhabitants, though some of the Icelandic families living in Prince Rupert maintain their old homes as summer houses.

At about the same time as Osland was being established a man by the name of Halldor Fridleifsson led a small group from Vancouver to Hunter Island, a large island forming the western boundary of Fitz Hugh Sound. By 1920 several families were living in this new settlement and in 1922 a small school was opened. Salmon fishing was again the main occupation. In the long-run, however, the settlers were not successful and by the end of the decade of the 1920's they had all returned to other areas.

A few Icelanders also settled in other parts of the province. There were some in the Okanagan around 1890 and a small group in Princeton during the 1890's though these stayed only a few years. After the turn of the century there were a few families settling in various towns in the interior, such as Vernon, Kelowna and Kamloops. Other areas in which Icelanders settled include Golden and Revelstoke (1940's), Campbell River (1920's), the Alberni Valley (1940's) and Kitimat (1950's). These scattered settlements, however, were always quite small and usually short-lived. Since the first settlers came to Victoria the Icelanders moving into the province have concentrated in the major urban centers, first in Victoria and then, beginning about 1900, in Vancouver. Presently about 90% of all the Icelandic Canadians in the province live in the Greater Vancouver area.

Vancouver is not only the area in which most of the Icelanders settled after their arrival in British Columbia. It is also the place in which almost all of their clubs and organizations were established. The only Icelandic club set up outside of the Vancouver area was the Icelandic Women's Club of Victoria, established in the early 1940's. That club has been active in preserving some elements of an Icelandic community life in that city. It has also been a good supporter of the Icelandic old folks home in Vancouver.

The first Icelandic society established in Vancouver was the literary society "Ingolfur", organized in 1908. The primary objective of this society was the establishment of a library of Icelandic books. The society also sponsored social gatherings and outings, at first by itself and then, after

1917, in co-operation with the Ladies' Aid "Solskin". Ingolfur was not a large club, in terms of members, but it was one around which much of the life of the Icelandic community revolved. In the 1930's it became one of the founding members of the Scandinavian Central Committee. In 1946 it merged with the social club "Isafold", which had been set up in 1940, to form the social-cultural society "Strondin".

The Ladies' Aid "Solskin" was established in November, 1917, by a group of Icelandic women. The members worked to assist the needy members of the Icelandic community. During the 1920's these women worked hard on a project to build an Icelandic community center in Vancouver. Property was purchased and money collected for this center. However, during the hard years of the 1930's there were many families and individuals who were in desperate need of assistance. The money collected for the center, as well as the funds realized from the sale of their property, was used to aid them. The ladies of "Solskin" gave of their time and energy, as well as money, to the old folks home which was established in 1947. Since then the members of "Solskin" have continued to support and work for the old folks home and their contributions towards the success of the home are deeply appreciated. Today as they prepare to celebrate their fiftieth anniversary, the Ladies of "Solskin" can look back with pride on half a century of honoured achievements.

During the 1930's and 1940's there were many other small groups and clubs active in the Icelandic community. Among these one might name the Icelandic Choir, which later became the choir of the Icelandic Lutheran Church; the Icelandic Badminton Club, which was active for many years, and the women's social and charitable club "Ljomalind", which was set up during the 1930's and which was active for many years. Another organization of importance to the Icelandic community was the Blaine Committee, set up in 1942. This Committee sponsored the annual Icelandic Day Picnic, which is held every summer in the Peace Arch Park in Blaine, on the Canada-United States border.

In 1917 the minister serving the Icelandic Church in Blaine began to give service to a small congregation of Icelanders in Vancouver. This congregation did not survive, being disbanded during the early 1930's. In 1941 the Icelandic Synod sent the Rev. Runolfur Marteinsson to Vancouver to establish a new congregation. His work met with success and in 1944 the Icelandic Lutheran Church of Vancouver was formally established. In the early 1950's, during the ministry of Rev. Eirikur Brynjolfsson, a building program was initiated and completed in 1956 with the dedication of the Icelandic Lutheran Church. During its history the church has been served by many dedicated ministers and laymen. Mention must be made of the members of the Women's Auxiliary of the church who have worked hard and successfully for their church. In 1963, when the Icelandic Synod merged with the United Lutheran Church of America, the local Icelandic Lutheran church became the Lutheran Church of Christ. But the change in the name has not brought about significant changes in the membership of the congregation; most of the members are still of Icelandic origin.

During the 1940's the Icelandic Canadians in Vancouver turned their attentions to the needs of their old-timers. Their considerations led to the establishment of the Icelandic Old

Folks Home Society in 1946. In 1947 the Society purchased an old mansion and converted it into a home for the older members of the community. The capacity of this home was soon strained and plans were made to replace it with a larger and more modern home. For various reasons the realization of these plans was delayed until the end of the 1950's. At that time a drive for funds was started and in 1961 sod for the new building was turned by the President of Iceland during his visit to Vancouver. The new home, with a capacity of sixty guests, was completed in 1963. The home has been and is still supported by the other Icelandic associations in Vancouver, as well as by many individuals in Vancouver and in many other parts of Canada and the United States.

The social-cultural club "Strondin" continued the activities performed by Ingolfur and Isafold. The library established by Ingolfur was maintained for many years until it was donated to the Old Folks Home in 1963. Strondin was very active in celebrating the major Icelandic holidays, such as the Thorrablot, Sumardagurinn fyrsti and the 17th of June. In recent years the society and the community have been honoured by the visits of prominent Icelanders, including the Presiden, the Prime Minister and the Ambassador to Canada and the United States. In 1963 Strondin sponsored a charter flight from Vancouver to Iceland, an action which established a new high in relations between Iceland and her foreign sons and daughters. Strondin was for many years an Associate Member of the Icelandic National League. This tie, however, came to an end in 1967 when the society was re-organized and re-named the Icelandic Canadian Club of British Columbia. The many changes which have come about in the long history of this club do not, however, reflect any changes in the objectives it has or in the ideals it upholds.

The Icelandic-Canadians in British Columbia are not very numerous and few have gained widespread public prominence through their activities. But they have not been remiss in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities to the province that is their home. In their varied occupations and interests they have contributed their share to the building of British Columbia and will continue to do so, working side by side with people of all origins.

Their feelings for the province and their hopes for the future are well summed up in the following excerpts from a poem written by the Icelandic Canadian poet Jonas Stefansson (Kaldbak) and dedicated to the Pacific Coast:

Standing with awe by the Arch of Peace,
With eyes inclined to thy rock-bound seas,
To thee and thy blessings I breathe a toast,
O beauteous, mighty Pacific Coast!

May Heaven inspire in thy hallowed youth
The hope that avails in the search for truth;
And may thy example and aims imbue
The earth, till thy wonderous dreams come true.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Almanak Olafs Thorgeirssonar 1926

Bjarnason, Pall **More Echoes.** Vancouver, 1962. (For the translation of the Stefansson poem).

British Columbia Bureau of Provincial Information. **The Population of**

Thomas H. Johnson

by T. O. S. Thorsteinson

When Thomas Herman Johnson was made attorney-general of Manitoba and Minister of public works in May, 1915, he made history. He was the first Icelander to become a cabinet minister in a Canadian government.

His life was symptomatic of early Icelandic pioneers, one of ambition and hard work, hunger for knowledge, deep concern for the affairs of his adopted land and an abiding interest in the development of his own province. Beginning as a school teacher, he left behind him a distinguished career in that role, as a lawyer, school trustee and legislator.

He died at his Winnipeg home on May 20, 1927, after a lengthy illness. He was 57.

Thomas H. Johnson

Mr. Johnson was born in Iceland February 12, 1870, and came to Canada with his parents in 1879. The family lived at Gimli for one and one-half years, then moved to Winnipeg where he attended school and sold papers on street corners to augment the family income. When he was 16 the family moved to Glenboro where he continued his schooling.

Securing a third class teacher's certificate in 1888, Mr. Johnson taught school in the Glenboro district for a while. Entering Gustavus Adolphus College at St. Peter, Minnesota, he taught school during summer months to finance his college education, this until he graduated.

Coming to Winnipeg following graduation, he chose to study law and articled with the law firm of Richards and Bradshaw. Called to the Manitoba bar in 1900, he formed a law partnership with S. J. Rothwell. He was the first lawyer of Icelandic descent to practice in Manitoba.

He was elected to the Winnipeg school board in 1903, and continued as a school trustee for four years. It was in 1907 that he was elected to the legislature for Winnipeg West as a Liberal, defeating Winnipeg Mayor Thomas Sharpe. He became an outspoken critic of the Conservative government under Sir Rodmond Roblin.

When in 1910 T. C. Norris became Liberal party leader, Mr. Johnson became his right hand man. In the following provincial election he was returned as M.L.A. for West Winnipeg. It was in 1915, following redistribution, that the Roblin government went down to defeat and the Norris administration took over. Mr. Johnson, elected in the new riding of All Centre Winnipeg, was successively minister of public works and attorney-general. He was an active promotor of progressive social legislation and he was an eloquent speaker.

Mr. Johnson was an outstanding lawyer and he represented the Province on two occasions, in defense of provincial rights at Ottawa and in the Kelly case before the Privy Council in England. He was made K.C. in 1919.

In the reorganization of the Norris government prior to the election of 1922, Mr. Johnson withdrew from active political life and did not offer himself as a candidate in the election. The characteristic energy which he had displayed during the 15 years of his political career had seriously undermined his health and made it absolutely incumbent upon him that he cease such strenuous work. He resumed his practice of law in the firm known as Johnson and Bergman.

His interest in human affairs continued unabated. From his earliest days he had evinced keen interest in Canada, an interest that endured and grew stronger with the passing years. He maintained to the last his interest in the Icelandic people and the history of the race. In 1926 the king of Norway conferred upon him the Order of St. Olaf for his services to the people of Norway. The same year, at the Norse-American Centennial celebration in Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota, the king of Denmark and then also of Iceland, conferred upon him the Order of the Falcon, an honor conferred by the Danish crown upon natives of Iceland who had done great service to their country.

In his early years in Winnipeg he was a member of the Carleton Club, a charter member of the Young Men's Liberal Club, and the first president of the Icelandic Liberal Club.

He was married June 21, 1898, to Aurora Frederickson. They had one daughter and two sons, Margaret Ethel, Mrs. T. H. Joly, Elswood Brandur and Cecil Frederick.

The Johnson family were Lutherans and burial took place from the First Icelandic Lutheran Church with Reverend Dr. B. B. Jonsson officiating and interrment in the family plot at Winnipeg's Brookside cemetery.

B. C. according to electoral districts, 1902. King's Printer, Victoria, 1902.

British Columbia — **The B. C. Coast.** Bull. No. 8, 1929. King's Printer, Victoria, 1929.

British Columbia — Department of Lands and Forests, **The B. C. Coast,** Bull. No. 9, 1950. King's Printer, Victoria, 1950.

Canada — **Sessional Papers,** 1918 — 1944.

Lindal, W. J. — Bureau Statistics. **Census** (1931 — 1961).

"Byron Ingimar Johnson". **Icelandic Canadian,** Vol. 22, No. 3, 1964, pp. 31 — 33.

Stefanson, H. J. — "The Sivertz Family". **Icelandic Canadian,** Vol. 7, No. 4, 1949, pp. 28 — 31.

Records and archives documents of the Icelandic societies in Vancouver were used extensively, as were the private papers of many individuals. The assistance of many individuals in the gathering of material for this account is gratefully acknowledged.

by HON. JOSEPH THORSON, P.C., Q.C.

CHARLES G. THORSON

CHARLES G. THORSON

With the death of Charles Gustave Thorson at Vancouver on August 7, 1966, the colorful life of a genius in the field of art came to an end.

Charles (Karl Gustaf) was born at Armstrong's Point in Winnipeg on August 29, 1890. He was the son of Stephen Thorson and his wife Sigridur (Thorarinsdottir). He attended Mulvey School but his schooling stopped there.

At a very early age he showed exceptional ability in drawing pictures of animals. This stemmed from a love of animals, particularly young ones, which showed itself in his early boyhood and remained with him throughout his life.

Charles was late in developing the genius that lay in him. There was an inner restlessness of spirit, sometimes turbulent and explosive, that led him to wander, in search of adventure, from place to place in Western Canada, without a fixed objective. His activities were of short duration and varied nature, a bank clerk in Saskatchewan, a fisherman on Lake Winnipeg, a coalminer in Alberta and a lumberjack in British Columbia. Finally, he returned to Winnipeg and settled down as a commercial artist with Bridgden's. In his employment with them he was a perfectionist.

It was not until 1934 that his career as an artist, in the true sense of the term, began. He left Winnipeg for Hollywood in the hope of working for Walt Disney and, on the strength of samples of his drawings of animals, which he had brought with him, he was employed by Walt Disney Productions the day after he called on them. This was the beginning of an exciting period for him. While he was with the Walt Disney organization he worked on the drawing of the animal pictures in "Snow White and The Seven Dwarfs".

During this period he created many animal characters. His most famous creation was "Bugs Bunny". Walt Disney gave him a personal letter certifying that "While Charles Thorson was in his employ he created the character of "Bugs Bunny".

Charles stayed with the Walt Disney organization for only a few years. Other companies in the "animated cartoon" field were anxious to secure his services and he became associated with many of them, Harman Isings, Metro Goldwyn Meyer, Warner Brothers, Leo Schlesinger, Max Fleischer and others. During this period he created more than 100 animated

An original drawing of Bugs Bunny by Charles Thorson

cartoon characters, including Elmer the Elephant, Tilly the Tiger, Hiawatha and Sniffles the Mouse. His travels in the United States took him to Miami, New York and back to Los Angeles.

Charles had a special gift, known to the art in which he lived as the "gift of animation". This was rare. He could make his animal characters seem to be alive. He could make them laugh or cry, be sad or gay, angry or humble. He seemed to be able to portray in his animals all the moods of which a human was capable. In this great gift of animation Charles Thorson had no superior.

KEEKO was a good little Indian boy, and because he was such a very good little boy, he had many friends. All the little animals were Keeko's friends. Each day he visited them in the forest, and they played games together.

Picture and text with the permission of the publishers.

— from KEEKO, by Charles Thorson

While Charles used his great talents in creating and drawing animated animal characters his greatest achievement was the writing and illustrating of a children's story-book called "Keeko". Here he was both a poet and an artist. The story is that of a little Indian boy who wanted to be like an Indian "brave" and have a head-dress of eagle feathers. The story is simply told and beautifully illustrated. Over 60,000 copies of it were sold in its first year and an abbreviated edition of it is still on the market. Unfortunately for the author, an improvident contract by him brought him little in the way of royalties for his work.

Charles loved children. He had plans for other children's books like "Keeko" and names for them, "Oogie", the story of an Eskimo boy, and "Zookie", the story of a little Zulu. But an occupational ailment caused by intense strain over the drawing board for long hours at a time prevented him from completing his plans.

After 14 years in the United States Charles returned to Canada and resided for several years in Toronto.

About 8 years ago he retired to Haney, B.C. in order to be near his son, Dr. Stephen Charles Thorson, to whom he was devoted and of whom he was intensely proud. At Haney he lived a quiet and tranquil life.

The personal charm that always graced him won him new friends. He delighted in recollections of his childhood days. The trials of a complex life were over. The fact that he was near his beloved son was sufficient.

Recently, a back injury destroyed his great physical strength and made him an invalid. Then cancer caused his death.

A great personality has gone.

WINS ROSE BOWL AWARD

Mrs. Eve Allen of Winnipeg was awarded the Rose Bowl at the close of the Manitoba Music Competition Festival in April after being judged the most oustanding singer. Mrs. Allen, the former Evelyn Thorvaldson, had previously in the festival won in the Grade A Women's Bach sacred solo class and Grade A women's operatic class, and was one of nine finalists in the Rose Bowl conetst in which she sang For Love My Saviour Now Is Dying, from Bach's St. Matthew Passion, and Plus Grand Dans Son Obscurite, from Charles Gounod's opera The Queen of Sheba to capture the coveted trophy. The festival ran for two weeks.

Mrs. Allen is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. T. Thorvaldson, of 5 Mayfair Place, Winnipeg.

Mrs. Eve Allen

Where the Limitation of Language and Geog raphy Cease to Exist

(Continued from page 53

In a dialogue which takes place between these two men the minister accuses Sigurður trölli of being altogether lacking in gratitude and humility towards his creator to which accusation Sigurður replies by telling his own story.

From Sigurður's account we learn that he was born in the valley in which he later decided to settle permanently. While he was still in his youth, Sigurður moved with his parents out of the valley down to the searshore. A short time later his father was drowned and his mother died from exposure while on her way to church. These tragic events gave young Sigurður reason to believe that fate was making a senseless attempt to exterminate his kinfolk. Therefore he made up his mind to launch a counter attack against fate and to avenge the heavy loss he had sustained. At this point, however, Sigurður was faced with the problem of deciding against whom he should wreak his vengeance.

Having considered this problem carefully, Sigurður came to the conclusion that catastrophes that befall innocent and defenseless people must be the doings of the ruler of the universe. He therefore decided to challenge this ruler by moving back to his native valley and try to prevent further catastrophes on the treacherous mountain roads. At the time of the dialogue between the church minister and Sigurður trölli the latter is able to report that he has avenged the death of two by saving the lives of eight.

Stephansson's poem about Sigurður trölli emphasizes that on the battlefield of life self sacrifice is the only means by which victory can be gained; the protagonist of this drama is the spokesman for the author's own convictions and beliefs. (cf. Hannes Péturs-son, op. cit).

Sigurður trölli represents an individual who in spite of extremely difficult circumstances succeeds in putting his capabilities to good use. In the snowstorms of the mountains this man shows superhuman strength. This kind of strength which increased with every challenge is the theme with which Stephansson, on many occasions, either conciously or subconciously, appears to have identified his own attributes and circumstances. In many of his poems the proportion between achievement and circumstance is of great significance, i.e., the first cannot be properly assessed without taking the other into account. Thus, the Viking sailor Grímur loðinkinni (Grímur the Shaggy Cheek) who became the first man to make full use of the sail is worthy of higher recognition than Robert Fulton the builder of the first steamship. In the poet's opinion both men deserve recognition. Nevertheless, the accomplishment of the pioneer who had only had his own ingenuity to draw on is to be judged as proportionately greater than that of the person who merely perfected the work begun by others. (cf. Sig Nordal, **Andvökur**, 1939, XXVIII).

Of particular interest are poems in which natural phenomena symbolize aspects of human life, as for instance **Greniskógurinn** (The Spruce Forest, cf. I, 317-319) where the poet draws a singularly graphic picture of a tall and splendid looking spruce tree which

derives its strength from a barren patch of land where other trees had not dared to take root. This poem with all its striking images reflects the spiritual development of the poet himself.

In this poem one discerns two kinds of conditions which constitute a threat to human progress. In the first instacne, the meagre soil and the unattractive environment symbolize a scarcity of intellectual resources. Secondly, the unfriendly appearance of the yellow hill which is on one side of the attractive spruce tree represents the ever present threat of bourgeois arrogance. But in spite of these opposing forces, the spruce tree grows so tall that its underbrush has great difficulties in even catching a glimpse of its top.

Such was our poet's faith in his fellow men that he believed that the individual could, on his own resources, overcome any restrictions which either social circumstances or other environmental conditions may create.

The foregoing discussion reveals that in many of his poems Stephan G. Stephansson was deeply concerned with the attainments of individual human beings. Nonetheless, the same poems clearly indicate that hard work alone is not of great significance in this regard, unless it is motivated by an unselfish desire to contribute to the welfare of others. This view is clearly expounded in the poem **Bræðrabýti** (I, 576-581) which contains an account of two brothers who fell heir to a barren and deteriorated farm. Both brothers became keenly interested in increasing the yield of their property, but their interest had different motivations. In his search for hidden treasures in the ground, one brother fell victim to greed and perished, while the other brother through unselfish labour managed to reverse a long prevailing trend towards deterioration and thus improve his part of the land for the use of future generations.

VI

As a poet who wrote all his works in Icelandic, Stephansson often reflected upon his own cultural heritage. This is the main theme of **Kolbeinslag** (The Lay of Kolbeinn, from 1914, III, 73-98), a long poem based on folk tales about an Icelandic farmer-poet by the name of Kolbeinn.

In Kolbeinslag the poet equates the Icelandic language and the literary traditions of Iceland with the very soul of the Icelandic people, a considerable part of which is contained in the literary compositions of Icelandic farmer-poets. The history of Iceland shows that for long periods the soul of the nation was indeed beset with disaster. Therefore, it has always been a legitimate question to ask just what it was that kept the Icelanders alive down through the centuries; this is the question put forth in Kolbeinslag.

In this poem the powers of evil are represented by Satan who has dedicated himself to the task of bringing about the ruin of all civilization in Iceland. Satan is fully aware that in order to achieve this end he must begin by destroying the Icelandic language, and since the farmer-poets have contributed much to the preservation of this language, it is only logical for Satan to dispose of them first. It is with this intention that Satan persuades Kolbeinn, the representative of the farmer-poets, to pledge his own soul in a verse-making contest in which the two of them engage.

Both contestants show great skill in

the art of capping verses: one contestant presenting his opponent with the beginning of a verse which the latter has to complete in accordance with the rules of both rhyme and alliteration. Occasionally the two contestants exchange their positions as is required by the rules of the contest.

This particular verse-making contest which is designed to destroy the loser goes on until Kolbeinn manages to present Satan with opening lines under a new metre called **Kolbeinslag** (Kolbeinn's Metre). Satan is not prepared for this innovation and is unable to complete the verse using this new metre. As a result of this he loses the contest. The lack of adaptability which is a "characteristic feature of the destructive forces in the world" (cf. Sig. Friðþjólfsson: **Studia Islandica** 19, 180) is among the reasons for Satan's defeat. It must also be conceded that in the contest Kolbeinn wielded the most powerful weapon of the Icelandic arsenal, namely the resilient poetic sword.

Kolbeinn's method of protecting himself against the forces of evil is therefore the very same method which the Icelandic nation has always used in its acrimonious struggle down through the centuries. It is the kind of defense which consists of the cultivating of the best traits of one's heritage. Thus Kolbeinslag not only provides an answer to the historian's question; it contains an important lesson based on the poet's own experience.

Stephan G. Stephansson had profound respect for his native land, Iceland, even though he admitted that in kindness it had not been as generous to him as to many others; "only death will part us," he wrote (I, 116). He was fully aware of his responsibilities as a representative of Iceland in his adopted land. This is borne out by the last lines of a poem from 1894 which can be paraphrased as follows: "Wherever I may travel, I shall cherish the hope that my motherland will never receive anything but pleasing news about my conduct." (I, 117).

In describing his attachment to his adopted land (or lands), Stephansson spoke of bonds of kinship (bróðurhug). His feelings for Iceland were, according to his own account, of a similar nature except that they had an element of sensitivity which one's homeland alone can foster. The poet related in a symbolic manner his personal experience in his poem **Bárðardalur** (Bárður's valley, III, 289-291), and owing to his own involvement this poem must be regarded as an interpretation of an episode from one of Iceland's oldest books, **Landnámsbók** (The Book of the Settlements from the 12th century.)

The poem recounts the experience of one of the settlers of ancient Iceland by the name of Bárður. This pioneer settled in a valley in the north of Iceland, but after a brief stay there he found that the cold gusts of wind from the north did not agree with him and moved to the southern part of Iceland. The ancient source from Landnámabók and Stephansson's poem are in agreement that Bárður's brief stay in the northern valley was not in vain. At the time of his departure from there he had stored a good supply of provisions which he could take with him to his new settlement in the south. "I know one who filled his knapsack in the same way," (III, 290) Stephansson tells us, keeping in mind that he himself brought with him to North America an inherent interest in literature and language which later became a powerful means of expression in his best poems.

The valley in northern Iceland gave its first settler Bárður a cool reception, but it gave him a twofold reward for his labour. In the first place it provided him with the kind of sustenance which stayed with him, even after he had moved to another district. Secondly, in its name Bárðardalur (Bárður's Valley) it faithfully preserved the memories of its first inhabitant.

The example of the ancient settler Bárður and Stephan G. Stephansson manifests the everlasting reciprocal faith between Iceland and those of her people who have the strength to cultivate what she has bestowed upon them.

VII

As has been indicated earlier the works of Stephan G. Stephansson belong to world literature, because, in many instances, they are universal in theme. Secondly, his works are a part of Icelandic literature, because they were written in the Icelandic language and have a distinctive Icelandic background. Thirdly, one would be entirely justified in classifying many of his poems as Canadian, since they were not only composed and printed in Canada, but, as shall be pointed out soon, were Canadian both in theme and idiom.

Stephansson had such rare command of his native tongue that one can truthfully say that his works are among the important linguistic sources for students of Modern Icelandic. This was duly recognized by the Chief Editor of the largest Modern Icelandic dictionary which has been published to date, Dr. Sigfús Blöndal, who selected a great number of lexical items for his dictionary from the poems of Stephan G. Stephansson (cf. **Dansk-islandsk ordbog,** Reykjavik 1920-1924).

As has been implied earlier the themes of Stephansson's poems span the entire range of events from the prehistoric (cf. **Skagafjörður,** I, 134-135) to the contemporary. His own experiences were also of a wide range, covering in time about three quarters of a century and in geography the distance from northern Iceland to the Canadian Rockies. Memories from his adolescence in Iceland provided him with themes and the raw material for descriptive metaphors for some of his best liked poems (cf. **Rammislagur,** I, 369-371); **Skagafjörður,** I, 134-140). A well-known Canadian literary scholar maintains that "No other Canadian poet in any language" has ever presented a comparable picture of Western Canada (Dr. Watson Kirkconnell: **University of Toronto Quarterly** V, 264-265). Among the poems on Canadian themes is **Klettafjöll** (The Rocky Mountains, I, 307-310). This poem and the location of the author's home in Alberta gave rise to the name **Klettafjallaskáldið** (The Poet of the Rocky Mountains), a name which all Icelanders occasionally use in reference to Stephan G. Stephansson.

To help explain Stephansson's use of Canadian idiom in his Icelandic poems the following verse from Kolbeinslag can be used as an example:

> Þó að spör á "eld" og "örk"
> yrðu kjörin ferða,
> axarför í bjarkabörk
> benda á örugg leiðarmörk.
> (III, 79).

An imperfect rendering of this verse follows: 'Although the pioneer's course of travel is neither shown by burning beacons nor lavishly praised in authors' writings, the "axe-marks" on the "birch

trees" show us the way'.

This verse from Kolbeinslag is not included here because of its high literary merit; rather it is an interesting example of metaphorical use where trail blazing in Canada is neatly linked with the poet's search back into the literary history of Iceland. It shows us clearly how perfectly Stephan G. Stephansson had adapted himself to the difficult role of an Icelandic Canadian.

— — — —

The Poet of the Rocky Mountains was a hard working farmer all his life. It is therefore difficult to explain how he managed to find time to write six volumes of his **Andvökur** (Reykjavík and Winnipeg, 1909-1938). Not less surprising is the posthumous four-volume edition of his **Bréf og ritgerðir** ('Letters and Essays', Reykjavík 1938-1948). As is implied in the name **Andvökur** which means 'restless or sleepless nights' and in several poems and letters, Stephansson had to pursue his literary career at night after others had gone to bed. His own creative work can only be equated with the superhuman accomplishments recounted in some of his poems. The late Professor F. Stanton Cawley called Stephansson "The Greatest Poet of the Western World" (cf. **Scandinavian Studies and Notes** XV 1938, 99-109). A professor of literature at the University of Toronto has referred to him as "probably the most extraordinary "common man" who ever made Canada his home." (H. Milnes: **New Frontiers** (Fall, 1953, 7).

Stephan G. Stephansson never spoke of his own greatness, but expressed instead the modest belief that the best traits which he had recognized in himself would survive him (I, 213). We know for certain that his literary works have survived their author and that an ever increasing number of people will wish to acquaint themselves with their content. The language in which they were written will pose a problem for many, but their wholesome view of humanity defies the limitation of both language and geography.

For detailed information on Stephansson's works the reader is referred to Dr. Richard Beck's **History of Icelandic Poets** 1800-1940, Cornell University Press 1950, 201-210.

JONAS PALSSON

by **DOROTHY GARBUTT**

The other evening I saw a film called "Carnegie Hall". It was full of hokum and what Meredith Willson calls "long hairs". The story was sentimental and inconsequential, serving only to bring the foremost musicians in Ammerica before the camera in their best loved performances.

And as I sat and watched the really marvellous close-ups of the maestros, the unbelievable dexterity of the artists and the profound charm of Lily Pons and Rise Stevens, the two glamor gals of the opera, my mind went back to the one real musician I had known in my life.

I don't know that he was famous in any way, but he had a local pre-eminence, and parents who wanted their children to have the best in music made sure that he was their teacher. His name was Jonas Palsson; he lived on Wictor street, for that was how he pronounced it and how I still think of it, and he was born in Iceland. He was short and stocky and of a thoroughly musicianly appearance. His hands were square, the fingers surprisingly short and spatulate. Surprisingly so, because they could span chords and skip around the keyboard, reaching notes at either end with such lightning speed that they seemed almost to be joined by little finger and thumb.

★ ★

Jonas Palsson

He was very strict and insisted on the hands being held just so, at such an angle that all the latent power and nimbleness of the fingers were at the command of each particular note. And the scales . . . oh, the scales! First of all, for the initiate, there was the Gustav Damn (you should pardon the expression) exercise book. I loved it, for it had excitingly brief five-finger exercises that cleverly led up to tuneful little airs, comprising the very graceful notes and pizziccatos just practised. The melodies were nearly all German Volklieder, pretty little folk songs such as "Du, Du, Liegst Mir Im Herzen" (which by the way, has just become popular with almost the very same words in English), or "In Einem Kuhlen Grunde," not to men-

tion "Ach, Du Lieber Augustin". I could have stayed with Gustav Damn for ever, but Mr. Palsson was firm and soon had me on the Schrimer's sonatine. These, and arpeggios, were the bane of my twelfth year.

★ ★

Come thirteen, and I was slated to play in Miss Jones', the head mistress's drawing-room one awful Tuesday evening in January. Mr. Palsson was determined I was to make as good a showing as any of the other teacher's pupils chosen as victims for the same evening. By then, I suspected he knew the worst, that I was no musician. At any rate he selected a piece for me, but whether it was a valse, an etude or a sonata I'll never know. It was replete with thumping crashes, crescendos, hands crossing over and kindred fireworks. Jonas very wisely judged that what I lacked in artistry, I could make up in virtuosity. For an encore, we rehearsed "Traumerei". But when the time came, we didn't need it, the audience, no doubt, feeling it had had enough.

Why Jonas Palsson plugged away at teaching me for all those years, I'll never know. I'd hate to think it was only because my parents paid on the dot. But, if he failed to teach me the piano—or rather, if I failed to learn—at least he did succeed in teaching me one thing—the love of fine music. For him, Chopin, Beethoven and Lizst were living, breathing human beings, and under his blunt fingers their music sprang to rare and lovely life. Forgetful of the hour's instruction allotted to me, he would sit and play one artits's work after another for me, but mostly for himself. He would talk and explain the passages to me and I would listen and absorb. It wasn't any of your teacher-pupil romances so beloved of Hollywood, for Mr. Palsson was a very much married man, with three darling little girls. But I feel sure that the man realized if he couldn't teach my fingers the intricacies of majors and minors, sharps and flats, at least he could instil in me a love of music. And for this understanding I have a lifelong gratitude.

—From the Winnipeg Citizen.

Two Sigríðurs

by Ingibjörg S. Goodridge

Now, at the beginning of the second century of Canada's nationhood. people everywhere are pausing to remember those whose achievements have played a significant part in the building of our young nation. It is only fitting that we, too, pause and remember the Canadians of Icelandic descent who made a noteworthy contribution. Icelanders have made their presence known and felt in many fields of endeavour. They have always taken an active part in the arts, politics, religion, education and in business.

Among the many who enriched the lives of Icelandic people and others in Winnipeg by the generous sharing of their musical talents, two women stand out by virtue of their voices, their personalities, and their accomplishments. Both women were born in Iceland, both possessed a soprano voice and both had the same Christian name.

Mrs. Sigríður Anna Hall

Sigridur Anna Hall came to Canada with her parents Jón and Halldóra Hördal, at the age of five years and settled in the Lundar district of Manitoba. At an early age it became evident that she had a singularly lovely voice. As may be imagined her family was most anxious for her to receive instruction and to develop her God-given talent. This necessitated leaving her childhood home taking up residence in Winnipeg. Here she began taking voice lessons. From that time on, her main interest became singing, an interest she maintained steadfastly all her life. Some years later she spent time studying in Minneapolis, Minnesota, as well as in New York.

Early in her musical career, she met a young musician, also of Icelandic origin, who, born at Gimli, Manitoba, had moved to North Dakota at the age of three years. Steingrimur Kristjan Hall attained his Bachelor of Music degree at Gustavus Adolphus Conservatory of Music at St. Peter, Minnesota, and then continued his studies at Chicago Musical College. In 1901 Sigridur Hördal was married to this promising young pianist, organist, composer and teacher.

Their home was a warm and hospitable one where music and gaiety were the order of the day. The gracious couple extended a friendly, kind hand to all who came and many remember them with gratitude. Going for a piano lesson was an event to be anticipated with joy.

For thirty years Mr. and Mrs. Hall

were the organist and soloist at First Lutheran Church, Winnipeg, where they held a unique spot in the hearts of all the congregation. Mrs. Hall's singing had a way of touching her hearers and of appealing to their aesthetic senses by evoking tender emotions or half-forgotten memories of the homeland or feelings of religious fervour. Always she had the able assistance of her husband-accompanist.

In addition to her church work, Mrs. Hall was ever ready to contribute to the program at secular concerts and entertainments, a contribution always welcomed and enjoyed.

In 1935 she moved to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, with her husband and later to Wynyard, Saskatchewan, where she continued to take part in the musical activities as long as she was able. Mrs. Hall passed away on May 10, 1954, and was buried from the First Lutheran Church, the church she called home for so many years and the scene of so many of her triumphs.

Mrs. Hall was a kind woman as many of her friends and neighbours bore witness to and often took a young singer under her wing and offered words of encouragement to the shy and timid. Others, before her time and since, have had more brilliant and more polished voices and have sung with greater knowledge and skill, but few have endeared themselves so completely to their listeners. She had a gift of being able to win her audiences and to transport them on wings of song above and beyond themselves.

— — —

Sigrid Olson came to Canada as a young child with her uncle and aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Johann Thorgeirson, who had adopted her. A warm, sunny-dispositioned child, she grew into a lovely, gracious woman who endeared herself to all who came to know and associate with her. In addition to receiving the customary education, her parents made it possible for her to obtain a thorough musical training. She soon became an excellent pianist, in fact showed great promise while she was still quite young. But her musical potential manifested itself further when it became evident that she was the possessor of a beautiful soprano voice. Then began years of study under the gifted and renowned voice teacher, Winona Lightcap of Winnipeg. Mrs. Olson's voice developed into a brilliant, cultured instrument which she used with intelligence and charm to thrill her audiences. Further training followed under well-known teachers at Chicago, Illinois, which added to her stature as a singer. She gave generously of her time and talent and was widely sought after as a

Sigrid Olson

soloist in Winnipeg. She had a commanding stage appearance and immediately won her audiences with her warm, sincere personality.

During the early years of radio, she was a member of the well-known Vesper Hour Choir. This choral group was heard on a national broadcast every Sunday afternoon at four o'clock and attained widespread popularity for the excellence of its performance. For several years she held the position of Soprano soloist at Augustine United Church, Winnipeg, where she was held in high esteem. Here, as elsewhere she won the affection and respect of her associates. Another of her musical interests was the Women's Musical Club where she had the honor of being invited to contribute to the program at various times. It was a member of the Winona Lightcap Studio Club that Mrs. Olson was able to utilize both her talents as a vocalist and an accompanist. Many a young voice student had reason to be grateful to Sigrid Olson for the support she gave at the piano during a performance, as well as for the warm smile of encouragement she flashed from time to time to the nervous soloist. She always had a ready word of cheer for those who needed it and was always willing to lend a helping hand.

She was a lifelong member of the First Lutheran Church. For a number of years she was the soprano soloist. She was also much in demand as a performer at all Icelandic functions. When the Wonen's Association—first known as the Junior Ladies' Aid—of the First Lutheran was formed, Mrs. Olson was one of the charter members. Her participation in all the activities was always wholehearted and generous. She never gave stintingly.

Sigrid Olson would not have been able to accomplish so much in the interests of music in her time and community, had it not been for the assistance and co-operation of her husband, Dr. Baldur H. Olson, to whom she was married on April 18, 1916. Dr. Olson, himself a lover of music, was a longtime member of the First Lutheran choir. He was ever his wife's greatest admirer and staunchest supporter, the one on whom she could always depend. Their home was full of warmth, charm and true hospitality as well as being a home of song and music where friends loved to come and to linger.

Unfortunately for her many admirers, Mrs. Olson withdrew from active performing while at the height of her career, when she still had so very much to give. She left behind her the memory of a voice young, vibrant and thrilling. This, possibly, was a wise decision because it contained no sadness of a voice-that-once-was or a talent-that-had-been. The sadness was in the hearts of all her friends who had looked forward to hearing that glorious voice and enjoying its beauty for many years to come. However, she maintained her lovely interest in music and musicians and supported both to her dying day.

— — —

These are the bare facts of the lives and careers of these two well-loved Icelandic singers. Their achievements were significant within the confines of the spheres in which they lived and worked. Their contributions were indeed noteworthy as they gave much enjoyment, as well as inspiration, to all who were fortunate enough to listen to them perform. They, each in her own time, brought recognition to the Icelandic segment of the Canadian nation, by focussing attention on this

minority group by the superiority of their art. For themselves, personally, they won the respect and admiration of fellow Canadians and because of their efforts and successes the Icelanders gained prestige in musical circles.

Mrs. Hall and Mrs. Olson, among the other outstanding members of their race, did much to help the Icelanders attain the honored place they now hold and will continue to hold in the young and thriving Canadian nation which in this year of 1967 celebrates its first Centennial.

Waiting for Spring

by Marion Johnson

You find Mrs. Bothwell alone in her tiny flat on the third flood, knitting perhaps, or thumbing through the pages of a well-worn volume, or gazing dully out a frosted glass at a dull and frozen world. You greet her cheerfully, although somehow you feel a little sad, and you inquire how she has been and what she has been doing.

"I am waiting for spring," she tells you.

In spring, there will be warm breezes and green leaves and grasses once again. And flowers. Mrs. Bothwell grows lovely roses in her window-box —pink, wellow, white, and last vear a single, blood-red blossom. In the spring, she will show you how the dear green buds begin peeping up at the first tender caress of vernal sunshine. But today, even the potted plants have begun to pall. They seem to wither and despair against the long, feelingless twilights.

You are seated now with your coat off, but held in your lap because you must not stay long. Mrs. Bothwell is busily preparing a cup of tea. You wish you could help, only you don't know how to go about it, so you just sit there awkwardly.

"My son sent me a letter, you know," she says gaily.

It is the same letter you heard about the last time you were here. You scarcely listen, although you are aware of the steady chirp of her voice, like the last, lonely chirp of the last robin to depart on the southward migration.

"Perhaps he will come to visit me this spring," she says.

The watery sunlight is slanting obliquely through the frosted glass and the creeping shadows whisper their silent warning. You hate to rush off like this, but of course Mrs. Bothwell can understand—so little time these days, all young people are riding a whirlwind. "Thanks for the tea and all."

"In the spring." The old lady smiles to herself. "In the spring . . ."

As you go out, you hear the soft click of the latch behind you.

Address delivered to The Icelandic Canadian Club of Winnipeg

Continued from page 61

I nursed a desire to speak to you tonight about Stephan G. Stephansson. But a friend made me conscious of my limitations; and I gave up the thought. "Stephansson is too difficult a poet," he said, "he is the Robert Browning of Iceland." I may be permitted to say one thing of him. He lived in the light of his own counsel:

"No other enticements can answer
When Honor has called to the man
Who gears not his work to his wages,
But wills the results to the ages
And plans to improve what he can."

These lines are from his poem "The Brothers' Destiny" in the translation of Paul Bjarnason.

One day Dr. Johannesson gave to me two sheets of foolscap on which were typed an English translation of part of Stephansson's great poem Armistice—a scorching indictment of war and all its bitter fruits—the poem which brought its author to the attention of the authorities.

I have lost these two sheets, by this I mean, after changing my home half a dozen times, in the Canadian gypsy fashion. I cannot put my hands on them, and I cannot remember by whom the translation was made. I think it was Skuli Johnson. I now have on my shelves a complete translation of the poem—from the pen of Paul Bjarnason. I never met Mr. Bjarnason, I know him only through his books and through the medium of a brief correspondence.

I wrote to ask for his permission to quote at length from his translations of Guttormsson's poems. He replied: "Most certainly you may use anything you wish from my books. They were not written with the idea in mind of making money. I just wanted to express myself in the open."

My last letter from him is dated January 21st, of the present year. "Though I am old and almost through," he wrote, "I would love to hear from you once more on any subject or topic. I am just trying to pass the time with as much comfort as seems available." When he wrote these words, death was only a few days away. In one stride came the dark, as he would have wished it.

For the enlightenment of those, like myself, to whom Icelandic is a sealed book, he made a determined assault upon the language barrier, with his admirable translations. I should like to record publicly my thanks to him. For the past month, while I have been preparing this talk, his books, Odes and Echoes, and More Echoes, and Watson Kirkconnell's The North American Book of Icelandic Verse, have been my bedside companions. I hope they have enabled me to catch something of the essential essence of the Icelandic mind — a mind which has given its best manifestation in poetry.

I could say to you tonight something of present Icelandic friends. I could speak of one who has brought great acclaim to your race—Hon. J. T. Thorson, who taught me at Manitoba Law School, and who did me the honor of writing a preface for one of my books. I could say a word about Judge W. J. Lindal—who is with us tonight, who is more than a mere lawyer, whose intellectual interests have never been bounded by his profession.

I could mention Senator G. S. Thorvaldson—a first rate fellow, though his politics, particularly for an Icelander,

are all wrong. But what is in a name? Having known Solly for many years, I cannot bring myself to believe that he wears his political label as smugly as members of less enlightened races are pleased to do. I could mention Rev. Philip M. Petursson, a friend of thirty years' standing. As one of the French painters once said, "He who is a follower will always be behind." Unless I have seriously mis-read history, it has never been the place of the Icelander to be behind. He has never been a follower. He has been one who breaks the trail for others to follow. Philip Petursson's politics, not the politics of his party but his own special brand—in the forefront of the fray, where the heat of battle is most intense—from a true Icelandic point-of-view, should be acceptable. I could speak of Will Kristjanson who was a good next-door neighbor of my parents for several years. Or, of his namesake Kris Kristjanson, a member of the remarkable Kristjanson family,—a family that can claim five Ph.D's—which must surely be a record.

But I had to set myself limits. And I determined to speak of Icelandic friends of the past, not of the present.

And now to open a more general theme. What have the Icelanders contributed to world culture? Their achievement in the field of literature, begun at a time when most of the nations of the world were sleeping through the period of history known as the Dark Ages, is unquestionably their greatest achievement. "The Icelandic sagas, taken as a whole," says Watson Kirkconnell in his book The European Heritage, "constitute the most important contribution to European literature in the twelve centuries between Virgil and Dante". To the early Icelanders, poetry was a necessity of life—food for the spirit's need. No other country has produced as many poets per capita, as Iceland. Many of them, many of the greatest, were self-schooled, of humble origin. Like the great Icelandic-Canadians, St. G. St. and G. J. G., they went to the books and they studied life at first hand; they quarried their own knowledge and they distilled their own wisdom, drop by drop, until their very souls became saturated and overflowed in poetry.

Such poets are sometimes called "peasant-poets". Even Skuli Johnson in his address at the unveiling of the monument to Stephan G. Stephansson at Markerville, in Alberta, fell into error, when he said "St. G. St. is essentially in the peasant-poet tradition of Iceland." The phrase is most inappropriate. It should never be used. The word "peasant" has taken on an unpleasant meaning. It is used as a mark of degradation, to suggest a low level of mentality—the level at which unfortunately, the dumb, driven human cattle of this world, through no fault of their own, are doomed to live. In this sense, there were no peasants in Iceland. There were many people who lived in the most abject poverty, but they lived a life of the mind.

In my office I have a copy of the Columbia Encyclopedia. When I was working on this talk, I turned up the article on Iceland. I came upon this statement: "The Icelanders are beyond doubt the most literate and best-informed nation in the world. There is a university at Reykjavik: the high educational level, however, is due to ancient tradition and ingrained civilization rather than to formal schooling." Could praise go much higher?

Next in the roster of Iceland's great achievements must be placed her contribution to practical politics. She gave the world an early lesson in ocracy. In England, there sits a Parliament familiarly known as the mother of parliaments. In Iceland, there sits a Parliament which has been called the grandmother of parliaments. As it was in the field first, it deserves this name.

The Germanic tribes, of whom Tacitus tells us, had an assembly which was held in the open air and attended by all free men. It was called the Ting or Thing, and had a two-fold purpose: to make laws for the organization and social control of the tribe, and to settle legal disputes.

Adopting and refining this loose organization of the Germanic tribes, which came to them by way of Norway, the Icelanders determined to establish one central Ting or Thing for their whole country. In 930, they set up an organization which they called the Althing. In his book, The Vikings, Johannes Brondsted, says, "The annual session of the Althing was held in the summer in a place called Thingvellir in the south-western part of the island. Here the people gathered to hear the laws proclaimed, to lodge their suits, to worship their gods, to display their skills, and to buy and sell."

As these words suggest the Althing had authority to adjudicate as well as to legislate.

The great legal scholar, Sir Frederick Pollock, once said; "In Iceland, about the same time (he had been speaking of England before the Norman Conquest of 1066) there was a highly technical system of law; courts were regularly held, and their constitution was the subject of minute rules; and there were generally two or three persons to be found who had the reputation of being more skilled in law than their neighbors." For a picture of early Icelandic law in action, that illustrates the features to which Pollock refers, I go to the Saga of Burnt Njal. Gwyn Jones, in his book The North Atlantic Sagas, refers to this saga as 'Iceland's supreme work of art". Its rich canvas, he says, gives us "the very feel of the great days of the Republic."

Njal's saga is an absorbing chronicle of blood feuds and law suits. It makes evident the inherent weakness in the early Icelandic legal system. The Althing had no machinery by which it could enforce its decrees—like the United Nations today. A powerful litigant who was disappointed with an award, often disregarded it, and, taking the law into his own hands, made an appeal to the sword.

On the first page of Njal's Saga, we are introduced to Mord Fiddle, "a great taker up of suits, and so great a lawyer that no judgments were thought lawful unless he had a hand in them." Fiddle does not survive until the end of the tale. In his turn Njal become a "taker up of suits." He was "wealthy in goods" and "handsome of face; no beard grew on his chin. He was so great a lawyer that his match was not to be found. Wise, too, he was, and foreknowing and foresighted. Of good counsel, and ready to give it, and all that he advised men was sure to be the best for them to do. Gentle and generous, he unravelled every man's knotty points who came to see him about them."

Njal had a good friend named Gunnar. But there was a serpent lurking in ambush. She was Gunnar's wife, the beautiful, prodigal and fierce Halligerda. By her treachery and base scheming she instituted a feud between the two friends. After sundry killings on both sides, the climax of the feud came when Njal was burnt to death, with his sons and his wife, in his own home.

Flosi, who was in command of the raiders, did not want to burn Njal– it was the sons whom he was after.

He begged Njal to leave the burning house. "I have no wish to come out" answered Njal, "for I am an old man and little fitted to avenge my sons, and I will not live my life in shame."

"Then Flosi spoke to Bergthora (Njal's wife): "Come out, lady, for I would not for anything burn you here indoors."

"I was given to Njal young," said Bergthora, "and it was my promise to him that we should share the same fate."

If there are elements of barbarism in this scene, there are elements of nobility as well.

Njal's kinsmen undertook to avenge his death, — to avenge the burning Their first step was to seek redress at the Althing. They placed their case in the hands of another Mord, a man of eloquent tongue, but of crafty mind and devious ways. Mord launched a suit against Flosi. Their was no written pleadings. A lawsuit was begun by a verbal notice of suit given before the Althing. The case was heard at the next sitting. Mord went to the Hill of Laws and gave notice of his suit in these words: "I take witness to this, that I give notice of an assault laid down by law against Flosi, Thord's son, for that he rushed at Helgi Njal's son, and dealt him a brain or a body, or a marrow wound, which proved a death-wound, and from which Helgi got his death. I say that in this suit he ought to be made a guilty-man, an outlaw not to be fed, not to be forwarded, not to be helped or harboured in any need."

The suit was heard at the next session of the Althing. The fortunes of between Mord and Flosi in a most legal battle see-sawed back and forth amazing way. The procedure was highly technical. One false move in the intricate game was enough to defeat the ends of the law, we must not use the word justice, the end for which law is still aiming and now and then getting an arrow or two near the bulls-eye.

In the end Flosi, a man of wisdom and integrity, a prisoner of fate, who accepted his fate — who had no hope that he could alter the rulings of heaven — Flosi was convicted and a sentence of banishment was passed upon him. But the saga does not end here.

For all the good that came out of the verdict of the Althing, Mord might as well have stayed away from the Hill of Laws and saved his breath. The verdict was disregarded. The blood-feud was resumed and the killings, on both sides, continued apace. But, due to Flosi's nobility of soul, the saga ends on a note of reconciliation.

Njal's Saga does not mirror a well developed legal system, it does mirror a striving for a better method of settling disputes, than an appeal to force. The Icelanders were slowly growing up.

Let me recall here a significant point. The first settlers in New Iceland governed themselves as a republic for a period of twelve years, for four years before, and for eight years after, the formulation of their constitution at Sandy Bar on January 11th, 1878. This constitution made no provision for the punishment of wrong-doers. Why, this omission? The early settlers simply did not expect to have any wrong-doers among them. They expected obedience to the laws, not from fear of punishment, but because to obey laws in which one has had a hand in making, is the sensible, the honourable, thing to do. They expected that good would be done, without bribe of

heaven, or threat of hell, because good is good to do.

What was it that finally caused the Icelanders to sheath their swords forever? My belief is, and there are many hints in the saga of Burnt Njal, to justify this belief, that deep in their innermost souls, they had a quality, a quality which they shared with the English — the quality of law-abidingness. Their sense of justice came from their own natures. Even when they were indulging in their blood feuds, they knew that force is never the ultimate solution to any problem. They knew that they could not live on an intellectual level in an atmosphere of violence. They knew that peace is the great blessing, but not a peace that is bought at too great a price — the price of chains and slavery, — whether of body or mind. Bishop Jón Arason, the last Catholic bishop of Iceland, was speaking as a true Icelander when he said, shortly before he bent his neck to the axe of the executioner:

"Every man should be true to his convictions, even though as a harvest he reap death."

In 1930, the Icelanders celebrated the millennial anniversary of the Althing. In our centennial year, we are celebrating, among other things, the hundredth birthday of our Canadian Parliament, a child of the Mother of Parliaments. We have a long way to go. In comparison with the Icelanders, in Emerson's words, we are only at the cock-crowing and the morning star.

What have Canadians of Icelandic origin contributed to Manitoba? I shall answer this question in borrowed words. In her book, Manitoba Milestones, published in 1928, Margaret McWilliams, offered a tentative answer:

. . . . ."of all the peoples who have come to Manitoba," she wrote, "(they) have most quickly become identified with the British population, and have made most progress in the general life of the province. One of their number who came as a small boy, Hon. Thomas Johnson, became Attorney-General of Manitoba. Their most famous representative is the explorer, Stefansson, who was born on the shores of Lake Winnipeg in 1879. At the time of the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of their coming they claimed in the west 18 members of the legislatures, 2 Rhodes Scholars, 19 professors, 40 lawyers and 40 doctors, a remarkable percentage out of the 16,000 who now live in Canada, of whom 12,000 are in Manitoba."

A more recent answer has been given by Arthur R. M. Lower, in his Canadians in the Making, published in 1958: "Scandinavians, who are numerous in Canada", said Dr. Lower, "but rather scattered, are usually thought of as solid citizens. quickly becoming integrated into the general community, yet, Icelanders apart, they have contributed no one of prominence to the Canadian political and judicial world, and only half of Frederick Philip Grove to the literary. The Icelanders rate high on any count — literary figures, public men, judges, professors, have proceeded from this small concentrated people."

Just a word in passing about one of their literary figures. When his granddaughter, Heather Sigurdson (now Mrs. William Ireland) was chosen Miss Manitoba for 1958, Guttormur J. Guttormsson was a very proud man. He went about saying to his friends, "I guess this makes me the grandfather of Manitoba." Had he written his poetry in English, one fact is certain: he would have been the grandfather of Manitoba's men of the pen — and that

statement takes in far too little territory.

Now let me cite to you a thought-provoking statement of Stephen Leacock's, from his book, Canada The Foundation of its Future: "But although it remained for centuries a closed chapter (he is speaking of the discovery of Vinland, Wineland, the Good, by Leif Ericson), this coming of the Norsemen to Canada is of more than academic or historic interest. It bears directly on our future. We want them back again. Of all the people who have come to settle among us, there are none to whom the Canadian climate and environment is as congenial as to the Scandinavian races. They are in a sense, more Canadian than ourselves. I have heard it argued by one of the most illustrious scientists of McGill that the peculiar tone and rigour of our climte, or most of it, will turn us all into Scandinavians before it has done with us."

Canada is a rich mosaic. The dominant colours in this mosaic are British and French. Tonight, we have reached the last lay of the second month of our centennial year, and English-speaking and French-speaking Canadians are calling names at each other, like two spoiled brats across a back fence, brats that each deserves a sound spanking. Not all of them, of course, but large numbers of them, go to the facts of history with closed minds. They go in search of those subtle half-truths that can be twisted to support their own side of the case. They are not impartial judges. They are advocates pleading a cause.

Any mature Canadian, no matter what his racial origin may be, would welcome a cultural duality in Canada; indeed, a cultural plurality, if we could rise to that height at our present stage of development. But a political duality would be our ruin as a nation. Our provinces would become the Balkan States of North America.

Both races, — the English and the French — are at fault. It may be an idle question, but can the degrees of fault be apportioned? To attempt an answer to this question, at this time, may be an offence against good taste, If so, I am guilty of that offence. It seems to me that at this stage the French-speaking Canadian is feeling his nourishment more than the English-speaking Canadian, that he has grown the fatter upon a moonshine diet of historical myths, half-truths, and, in the parliamentary phrase, just plain terminological inexactitudes.

To possess her immortal soul inviolate, for another hundred years, Canada has need of her minority races. They may be able to hold the balance true, to introduce a note of sanity into the chaos of discord.

In his invocation to Iceland, Dr. Johannesson said (the translation is Paul Bjarnason's):

"Remember, then, thy destiny
and dower.
Thy duty to the world each
pregnant hour:
To be a guiding light to peace
and power."

If the Icelander owes a duty to the world at large to be a guiding light, and he does, as all men do, to the limit of their ability, the Icelandic Canadian, in addition to this duty, owes a more immediate duty — one nearer home — a duty to promote the unity of Canada.

"Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." No minority race is better equipped than the Icelandic Canadian race to act as the little leaven that may leaven the

discord now disturbing the harmony of our country. This sober purpose is a challenge worthy of a Viking heritage.

Canada is no longer cold, alien soil to the Icelander. It has become his home, though he may often spare a thought for a small island, nestling in the arms of the North Atlantic —

"Maid of the Mountain
and the misty sea."

ELECTED PRESIDENT

Mrs. H. F. Danielson was elected president of the Manitoba Drama League at the annual meeting held in connection with the Final Manitoba Drama Festival held at Brandon, Man. May 11, 12 and 13th.

Mrs. H. F. Danielson

The Manitoba Drama League is composed of all the main drama clubs and groups in Manitoba and N. W. Ontario; membership at present is 35 drama groups and a host of individuals. The M.D.L. operates an extensive library of plays and books on drama, and publishes a small periodical which is sent to all members. But the most important work of the M.D.L. is its widespread work in helping all members, and many others as well, to upgrade their efforts in the fields of Drama and Speech Arts by giving instruction free of charge at workshops all over the province.

During the last five years Mrs. Danielson has been in charge of this work and she has organized several hundred workshops in over 30 places in the Province where drama groups get help and instruction in all aspects of drama. Mrs. Danielson and a few others in the league have thus spent thousands of hours to help interested groups in making their drama work more effective.

Nine Drama groups, winners in their district festivals, took part in the festival at Brandon. The adjudicator was Ron Hartman, actor, director and drama teacher from Toronto. The district festivals in the Province are adjudicated by seven members of the Manitoba Drama League, including Mrs. Danielson, who have certificates as accredited adjudicators in Drama and Speech Arts.

At the first annual festival of the Drama League, in 1931, the winner was a drama group from Arborg, Man., directed by Mrs. Danielson, who also took the leading role. Mrs. Danielson was judged the best actress in the festival. Later she studied at the Banff School of Fine Arts on a scholarship.

Last year Mrs. Danielson was honored by the Drama League by a Life Membership for distinguished service in the field of Drama.

HELGI EINARSSON — a pioneer of the Interlake District.

by W. Kristjanson

Among the pioneers of the northern Interlake district of Manitoba Helgi Einarsson was distinctive. "He lived and worked and made history in the Interlake area for a matter of seventy years." He was a pioneer, a trail-breaker, independent-spirited, an innovator, and he was highly esteemed.

Einarsson was born in Iceland in 1870. In early childhood he learned the meaning of work and responsibility, watching over the sheep at night and helping in the fall sheep round-up.

In his boyhood he lived in the world of books, reading avidly all he could lay his hands on, at home and on loan in the community. "I read nearly all the Icelandic sagas, all the sagas of the Norwegian kings, the Icelandic folk stories, the Arabian Nights, and much more," he later recalled.

Helgi Einarsson

As a boy of eleven and twelve he gave much thought to religion and was already well-versed in the Bible. Most of the teachings of the New Testament he liked, but not the teachings of the Old Testament. He came to the conclusion that if God created people only to send them direct to Hell, He was unjust and he would have naught of Him. "When summoned into His presence, I would scold Him for all He had done so that He would have to expel me."

Helgi received his formal education from an itinerant teacher who visited the home a few times, a month at a time. The young pupil made speedy progress in arithmetic and geography, learning the location of the countries of the world and a good measure of information about each.

The family emigrated to Canada in 1887, arriving in Winnipeg in July of that year. The father's capital then amounted to $280.

Together with three others, the family proceeded to Lundar, where the first Icelandic settler in that district had just commenced building his log house. In the fall the 17-year-old youth, with 12 others, went north on Lake Manitoba for fishing.

A Canadian farmer and store-keeper, William Sifton, was then located at the Narrows. He received the newcomers hospitably and at Christmas the Sifton family sent over choice food to the fishermen's camp. Warm friendship among the young people followed. Years later Einarsson said: "I have never met with people I liked so well".

During his first two years in Manitoba Einarsson engaged in the type of work familiar to many of the Icelandic newcomers. In the summer he worked on the railroad, shovelled coal, cut cordwood, and worked at a sawmill. In winter he fished.

At the sawmill at Basket Creek on Lake Manitoba he saw a good sample of the racial mixture in America. Of twelve employees there were three Norwegians, two Icelanders, one Englishman, one Scot, one Irishman, one American, one Canadian, one Australian, and one Hungarian. Indians were employed in casual labor. Einarsson never learned race prejudice.

In his first spring at the Narrows, an experience influenced Einarsson strongly. Discovering one day that he was without flour, he went to the local store. The only flour in stock was the poorest grade, sold only to Indians. At the railroad this grade sold for one dollar a bag, but the price asked of him was five dollars. "I considered that this was the lowest price I ever paid for flour, for it taught me never to depend on others," he said later.

In 1892 the local Indian agent engaged Einarsson as skipper on the boat he used for conveying treaty money to Indians on Lakes Manitoba, St. Martin and Winnipegosis. This first acquaintance with the Indians was extensively developed in the years to come.

In the early nineties Einarsson began to freight fish from the Narrows to Winnipeg, and to buy fish. This brought him in contact with important fish-dealers, including Hugh Armstrong of Portage la Prairie and W. J. Guest of Winnipeg. A business association was built up that lasted for many years—in the case of Guest for forty years. He was well-regarded by these men and his credit was always good.

Years later he was in sharp competition with Armstrong, for the latter represented the big commercial fish companies and Einarsson was one of a few independent buyers who kept up the price of fish on Lake Manitoba. Armstrong he considered the keenest businessman he ever met.

Often the big companies offered such low prices that Einarsson turned to selling personally on the market stands in Winnipeg and to small retail stores. In 1896, when times were hard and the sale of fish lagged, he took a quantity of fish across the border to Grand Forks, Fargo and neighboring towns, and with vigorous canvassing disposed of all his supply.

Dealing in fish soon expanded into general store business and about the turn of the century Einarsson had stores at Fairford, Lake St. Martin, Sandy Bay, Little Saskatchewan, and other places.

His trade was chiefly with Indians and his store-clerks were mainly Ind-

ian. Unfortunately for him, these gave credit too freely and were poor collectors. Einarsson himself had the same weakness. "I have had a great many opportunities to become rich, but I have been too conscious of the other fellow's difficulties", he said. "However, I have no regrets."

His turnover was impressive and he was thought to be wealthy, but such was far from being the case.

In 1912 Einarsson had a large supply of fish on hand but the market was dull. Frozen fish was selling at two cents a pound by the carload. He then initiated a way of marketing fish hitherto untried in his part of the country, that of shipping unfrozen fish by express to New York. Shipping charges for unfrozen fish were fourteen cents a pound. At first Einarsson was laughed at but when the time came that he was able to outbid his competitors, Armstrong and others followed suit. Shortly only unfrozen fish was being shipped from Western Canada to the large American markets.

Another innovation, this time in material for net-making, was initiated by Einarsson. With the outbreak of the First World War hemp came to be in short supply and available only at a high price. Einarsson harked back to his first year of fishing, when lacking funds he had used No. 10 cotton thread to make his own. These had stood up as well as the hemp nets, if not better. He now decided to try cotton thread again.

After extensive travel and investigation, embracing Chicago, Philadelphia, New York and Toronto, and interviews with many people who had no faith in cotton nets, he was able to place orders in Chicago, through the backing of the firm of Diersen and Johnson in that city, with whom Einarsson had previously dealt.

On this occasion Einarsson also visited Cincinnati, Pittsburg, New York and other places to promote the sale of fish. He was courteously received and shown marked hospitality by prominent company officials with whom he had dealt for many years.

Icelanders engaged in the fishing industry in Manitoba have been instrumental in bringing about changes in regulations to benefit fishermen. Einarsson brought about several such improvements, notably the advancement of the opening date of the fishing season from December 15 to November 10. When the delegation which had been organized by him had made their presentation, the minister's private secretary was asked if he knew Einarsson. He said, yes, he knew him; he had caused him more trouble than any other man in the whole country.

"When I write this", said Einarsson in 1952, "it lacks but a month until I have been here sixty years. I have traded here nearly every year and I have a small store this winter. I make enough to break even and for food. After sixty years of trading the outcome is this: I have loaned on the average $800 a year which I have been unable to collect, and carry on my books uncollectable debts amounting to $40,000.

"But I am very well satisfied with life as it has been. I have, to quote the Bible, seen the riches of the world and their glory. I have known the poorest Indians in their log cabins in the wilderness, and the homes of millionaires in the large cities of the United States. I have stayed in turn in the finest hotels in the States and Canada, and slept on the floor of an Indian cabin, or camped in the woods with snow at my back and a fire in front and I have slept well."

Helgi Einarsson died in December, 1961, at the age of 91 years. His grave is high up on the banks of the Dauphin River, overlooking the stream where it enters into Sturgeon Bay on Lake Winnipeg. His grave was dug by friends, his pinewood coffin was nailed down by his sons, and his four sons carried the coffin to the grave.

Said the service-station attendant at Gypsumville to the minister returning from the funeral which he had conducted: "So you were burying old Helgi Einarsson today. He was a good man and would have been wealthy if so many hadn't stolen from him."

Three old-timers at Ashern who knew Einarsson personally have written: "Helgi never drank and would never have sold liquor to the Indians or to any other man who was under the influence of alcohol".

The money which Helgi Einarsson made sifted through his fingers, but he died having earned the high esteem of all who knew him.

—From the Winnipeg Free Press

The Dorcas Society

by Mattie Halldorson

An Icelandic Lutheran congregation, the origin of the First Lutheran Church, was formed in Winnipeg in 1878. It is interesting to note that a woman, Andrea Fischer, was elected to serve on the first Board of Trustees. Two women were chosen to work on the first Board of Deacons.

In 1886, frú Lára Bjarnason, the wife of the pastor, was instrumental in forming a "Kvenfélag", or Ladies' Aid, as it was later called. They have been active throughout all the yeras. Last year their eightieth anniversary was suitably celebrated by the Church.

In 1931 it was felt that the time had come when it was necessary to form a women's organization which would conduct it's meetings in the English language. Through the efforts of Mrs. B. B. Jonsson, the pastor's wife, The Women's Association was formed. They continued to work in the interest of The First Lutheran Church until 1966 when they amalgamated with The Dorcas Society of the Church to become The First Lutheran Church Women.

In 1949 The Women's Association, through the president, Mrs. V. J. Eylands, the pastor's wife, deemed it advisable to sponsor an evening group for young married women and business women who were unable to attend afternoon meetings. On January 7th, 1949, The Dorcas Society was organized, with thirty charter members. At one time there were 150 on the membership roll. The main article of the constitution was that the society would support the church spiritually and financially.

Several names were considered for the new group but when the ballots were read the name Dorcas, a name taken from the Bible, was chosen. Dor-

cas had devoted her life to the needy.

During the first year of operation a cook book, containing favorite recipes of members and friends, was printed. It received such widespread interest that a second edition was required to meet the public demand.

Each year various projects were launched, such as "Country Store Night", where numerous articles and home baking were offered for sale; plays, with members as actresses, were staged; fashion shows, with members as models; teas; coffee parties; smorgasbords, Thanksgiving concerts were sponsored. All affairs met with considerable success.

A Church parade was held each year.

The Board of Deacons have for many years packed and delivered hampers to the needy at Christmas time. The Dorcas set aside the last meeting in November as "White Gift Night". Parcels containing food, candy and other articles, donated by the members, were individually wrapped in gay Christmas paper and labelled for the hampers. While they worked together they sang carols. A delightful evening! This practice is now carried on by the First Lutheran Church Women.

The executive committee made every effort in planning to make the meetings interesting and rewarding. Speakers from many walks of life gave papers on their field of endeavour; missionaries home on furlough from the foreign field told their experiences; artists performed at several meetings; travellers told of their sojourn in many lands. One young woman shared her experiences as a hitch hiker in Europe.

One of the later studies was the work done by the people in various departments of the church. The pastor, deaconess, superintendent of the Sunday School and the chairman of the Board of Deacons gave lectures regarding their particular positions. It gave a clear insight into the tremendous amount of organization and planning it takes to operate a large church proficiently.

Sunrise Lutheran at Husavik, Manitoba, which was owned and operated by The Lutheran Women's League, was supported financially and materially throughout the years by The Dorcas. Each year members contributed hampers of jams and jellies for the campers. Two children, who needed assistance, were sponsored each season. While it was hard work to go to the camp for clean-up each spring before camp opened everyone seemed to enjoy the day. A few coffee breaks helped to keep going to get the job done. Refreshments were supplied for one of the closing sessions of camp. A committee would go down in the evening to serve coffee and dainties to the campers and their families.

Fellowship! What a beautiful word. It encompasses friendship, tolerance, goodwill and service. The Dorcas can look back on the fellowship it engenderd in the cause of the Lutheran Church.

The Society is grateful for the splendid support it received from the public and the co-operation of all those who helped to make the work so interesting an rewarding.

Times change and one must go forward. After careful consideration The Womans' ssociation and The Dorcas came to the decision to amalgamate to be a stronger force in the church. On January 20th, 1966, The First Lutheran Church Women was organized.

Thus The Dorcas Society reached the end of an era after seventeen years of devoted service to The First Lutheran Church.

-30-

ÞORSKABÍTUR, a remarkable Icelandic Poet

by Paul Bjarnason

Paul Bjarnason

It is generally agreed by now that the Icelanders are a nation of poets. During the Viking age the only scalds of note were Icelandic, and ever since a great many Icelanders have practised the art. Nowhere else can the output per capita compare with what they have done. The reason for this is perhaps the fact that the Icelandic language, highly inflected, lends itself so well to versification. At first the odes were rather strained and crude; but in recent centuries the method has greatly changed and the result is a meticulous compilation of generally simple thoughts and words in artistic form, which is the essence of poetry. And because of this simplicity and the exactness of alliteration and rhyme it is almost impossible of translation into any other language. And yet some scho'ars have freely admitted the excellence of Icelandic prosody, and some have even attempted to translate some of it to the world.

Even when I was very young I could

ÞORSKABÍTUR (Þorbjörn Bjarnarson)

not help admiring the "hits" I saw and learned in both English and Icelandic, and in my school years I even tried to make up a few verses, with little or no success. My friend and schoolmate, Vilhjalmur Stefansson, was already writing notable poems in English and I learned them all by heart. I had also learned some of "Kain's" masterful comic poems and some of St. G. Stephansson's deep and immaculate gems, but was otherwise rather ignorant about our people's special art. And then it happened that I was stationed in Pembina, N. Dakota for two years and got acquainted with Thorbjörn Bjarnarson (Þorskabítur), whom the many Icelanders in Pembina at that time knew little about and seemed to care less. He was poor in worldly goods, lame and reserved. He was born in Borgarfirði, Iceland, in 1859, and emigrated to America at 32 and therefore always remained an Icelander in essence in his new environment. Yet he was also a good American, as most Icelanders have been in that country.

Raw and ignorant as I was, I visited him many times, and he was kind enough to read to me some of his poems, none of which I could help admiring, though two of his masterpieces had not then come into being: "Halley's Halastjarna", and "Stuðlagar Stutthendingar", both top-one products of the poetic art.

In 1914 his "Ljóðmæli" was published (by the help of some friends); but so far the art of this author has not been adequately acknowledged by our people, let alone those others in the poetic world who eventually must evaluate good work, even if done in a foreign language. My verdict is that "Þorskabítur" was one of the best poets that our people in America have produced, and I think that the recognition of him as one of the greats is far past due. He has gone beyond any possibility of recompense; but we can still be the inheritors of his inimitable gift.

Many of the world's greatest thinkers and writers died before the depth and value of their work was fully realized and appraised, and I think that Þorskabítur was one of them. He was not as prolific as some of the others whose fame has become assured; but bulk is not the chief value of a product. A few outstanding masterpieces rate higher and longer than bookfuls of good medium stuff; and Þorskabítur's few masterpieces will never be surpassed.

Ed. — This article was specially written for the Centennial number of The Icelandic Canadian just prior to Paul Bjarnason's death.

EQUITY

by Paul Sigurdson

What does it matter —
To wash with a Bendix,
Or scrub crude cotton,
Like an Arab, with his feet —
Which is right?

What does it matter —
Diamonds flashing,
Blue-cold fire,
Coiled on the neck
Of a vain debutante;
Or beads of teeth
Torn from a tiger,
Snaking between
The potent breasts
Of a Nubian virgin —?

Are we whites
The wise people?
Is there no ignorance
In sophistication?

Sometimes I feel
Life's true meanings
Are saved for the hungry,
The weary, the simple,
The sad, the lost and the pained.

OUR LOSS

by Paul Sigurdson

The General cries: "Victory!"
The shark with the full-house,
The sweaty reliefer,
The slick disc-jockey,
The town mayor, obese and important,
The college die-hard,
And the boy at marbles.

What is this grasping for a word?
Sneaking, grovelling, fawning,
Pounding, pushing, tearing,
Jostling brother and brother,
Kin and non-kin, white and
non-white—
All for the sound of three syllables?
Is it for the vaulting of the pulse
within,
The physical upcharge of exultation?
Is it for the sheer glee
From the tumbling cascade of frenzied
applause?
Or is it the last taint from the savage
Who gloated over a bleeding head?

Lord, let it not take Armageddon
To teach us,
How bleak, and scorched and empty
Is this word.

KING LETHARGY

by Paul Sigurdson

Shelled, surrounded, 'prisoned, tied,
On my couch I lie;
My blood could not be lazier,
If I were due to die.

Bring a crow-bar and a wrench
To pry me from my den;
It shall take more than guile or God
To make me lift a pen.

A HISTORY OF THE SAGAS

Excerpts—translated by BOGI BJARNASON from the Icelandic of Pétur Sigurðsson (c. 1930)

Of all the Northerly peoples the Icelanders alone preserved the Saga Literature.

Coeval with the discovery and colonization of Iceland the history of the Scandinavian peoples emerges out of the mist of legend and hyperbole. This is more than co-incidence; for of all the northerly peoples the Icelanders alone preserved, orally, through many generations, the epics and sagas of men and events, until with the advent of learning they were reduced to writing and thus saved from extinction. The possession of learning sufficient to this task was peculiar to the Icelanders, wherefore memory and tradition reverts back only to the pioneers of Icelandic colonization, but rarely beyond.

It is the reverse of obvious why the field of material for song and saga that the Viking era provided was allowed to lie fallow among the Norse, Swedes and Danes, and to finally pass out of the memory of men. Yet such are the facts. But the important aspect of the matter is the further fact that the descendents of the pioneers in Iceland preserved in memory, in the form of song and tale, through many centuries, the history and lore of that colorful age. They preserved and passed on orally to succeeding generations the story of the colonization of Iceland, the origins of the settlers, their beliefs and traditions, the founding of the state and its statutes, till the advent of the art of writing provided a more secure medium of preservation. In like manner they preserved, and later reduced to writing, the history of Norway, their motherland, its kings and national heroes, with due attention to their feats, at home and abroad. Nor did they stop at this, for they recognized as alien nothing that had a bearing on the history of the Scandinavian peoples. They preserved inviolate the histories of the Faroes and Orkneys. The history of Sweden would be less complete but for the wealth of information contained in the Icelandic writings from the period following the Viking age. The same, and to an even greater degree, may be said concerning the history of Denmark, for the Icelandic writers were zealous in their self-imposed task of recording accounts of events in, or touching upon, the Danish nation, as Saxo Grammaticus, the Danish historian (in his **Gesta Danorum**), gratefully acknowledges.

▲ ▲ ▲

Instances of the Preservation of Reliable Accounts in the Memory of Men.

The Icelandic Sagas and older Sagas of the Norse Kings are accounts of men and events of an earlier day. The subject-matter of each had been preserved orally and passed on from one generation to the next for varying periods up to 300 years before their contexture was realized in writing. It may well appear incredible to the moderns that reliable accounts could be preserved in the memories of men for so long a time; but the fact is well attested that the memories of primitive races unacquainted with the art of writing are amazingly capacious and retentive. Necessity and constant use sharpen the faculty, while distracting occupations and interests such as reading and allied arts do not scatter the attention. A classic example of this is Caesar's reference to the Gallic Druids.

The Icelandic Althing (parliament) was instituted and a code of laws agreed upon in 930. A provision of the laws required the appointment of a spokesman-at-law who had the code in his keeping and whose task it was to enumerate and elucidate the entire code to the assembly, the recital to be completed every third year. He also served as the final arbiter where interpretation of the point of law was in question. The Icelanders of that day were keenly interested in this code and apt pleaders; sons of leading men studied under those more learned in the law, a wide knowledge in this respect being a necessary qualification for intelligent participation in Althingi as well as an aid in possible future disagreements with their fellows. But the code of the republic was not only involved but voluminous, and not many in our day would be equal to the task of memorizing it word by word with a thoroughness enabling them to recite it in toto and at the same time render judgment in whatever dispute might arise. But these ancient scholars appear to have met this difficulty with singular efficiency for no reference is to be found of spokesmen being brought to nonplus or rendering unconstitutional judgment although intimations may be found in the sagas that validity of certain laws was at times in question. There appears to have been no difficulty in finding candidates for the office of spokesman equal to the position among the comparatively small class socially eligible—chieftains and their sons—although evidence supports the view that a satisfactory incumbent was encouraged to remain in office, being elected again and again to three year terms. This condition obtained for nearly two centuries during which eighteen spokesmen held office. In the light of this we may the better understand how the vast store of historical knowledge in prose and rhyme found a repository in the minds of the people and was passed on to succeeding generations.

Illustrative of how faithfully traditions were preserved with succeeding members of families the descriptions of foreign places may be cited. As might be expected they were more often brief and inexact and sometimes more or less inaccurate. In other instances foreign places are described correctly and with amazing minuteness. In the Saga of Egill **Skallagrimsson** may be found an account of a battle between the forces of King Athelstane of England and those of the Scots in which the former was victorious. With King Athelstane were the brothers **Thorolfur** and **Egill Skallagrímssynir,** Thorolfur losing his life in the battle. In the account a fairly close description of the battlefield is given, and is called **Vinheidr** (The Heath of Vines). It has been long determined that the battle in question is that which Anglo-Saxon historical accounts place at Brunanburgh, or Wendune, in the year 937. A British scientist, Neilson, has, on the strength of three separate Anglo-Saxon accounts, determined the location as Burnswork Hill in Dumfriesshire, and this is accepted as final. He has subsequently made a survey of the ground in the light of the description of it

found in Egils Saga and decided that this description is substantially correct —accurate in nine particulars and nowhere wrong. Some of these particulars are of such a nature that coincidence cannot be ascribed, as where the saga mentions cities to both north and south of the heath, these being fortresses from the days of the Romans in England. (Footnote:—The Scottish Historical Review Vol. VII. The Saga of Egil was not reduced to writing until 250 years after the battle.)

In certain parallel instances the accounts in Icelandic Sagas may be compared with those of foreign historians. The story of the battle at Vinheidi is remarkably in accord with Anglo-Saxon authorities, although inaccuracies may be found, and Egils Saga places the date as the year 925. —In the King Alfred the Great's translation of the works of Orosius, **Historia Adversus Paganos,** may be found an appraisal of Norway in the ninth century, which may be compared with the first section of Egils Saga. In the main the two are in harmony; one the work of a Norman in England prior to 900, the other written in Iceland 300 years later. In Njals Saga a lengthy interpolation describes the battle of Clontarf in 1014, which corroborates Erse accounts of this battle in main particulars. **Knytlinga Saga** tells of incidents which are likewise found in the Danish History of Saxo Grammaticus. These are in parts at wide variance, where Saxo is patently the more reliable historian; in others they are in agreement, with similar words and phrasing, the one in Latin, the other in Icelandic.

When it can be shown that descriptions of foreign places and tales of incidents which transpired in far lands, where no local associations could aid the memory, were preserved in oral form for two or three centuries and emerged approximately unaltered, the assumption is strengthened that accounts in the better Icelandic Sagas and Sagas of the Norse Kings of incidents of antiquity are subtantially correct.

▲ ▲ ▲

Some of the Sagas are unreliable as Histories

It has been shown above, and instances cited, how accounts were preserved in oral form without modification for two or three centuries, until reduced to writing. Conversly it may be shown that some other accounts were unreliable in whole or in part. Some of the sagas are, in this respect, a mixture of truth and fiction. A few are doubtless reliable in all main particulars. The younger sagas are in every respect less reliable. When the traditional tales came to be written the originals had characteristics of changed times, and scribes were more free with interpolations. In like manner some of the older sagas suffered at the hands of transcribers. Some of the verses are thus not of the tenth but of the thirteenth century. When the latest of the sagas came to be written, the art of saga-writing had reached the stage of decadence and sagas were bodied forth without a tittle of tradition at their base.

▲ ▲ ▲

The Sagas as Literary Works of Art

Although the sagas are not commonly regarded as authentic historical records, all are in agreement upon

their value as literary works of art.

Each saga is, with a few exceptions, a complete whole, in unbroken continuity from beginning to end. The Major sagas may be said to be a pattern in this respect. The descent of the protagonist is traced from the days of his first ancestor in the land, his rearing and early adventures, his social standing and connections, love affairs, disagreements and slayings, and not infrequently ends with his own fall and the corollary vengeance exacted by surviving relatives. The stages unfold in their proper sequence, and are all directed to illuminate the culminating event of the story. Fatalism, prognostications, occult and supernatural things, which were generally given credence then and down to a comparatively recent past, have important roles in the unfolding of the plots. The **personæ** are unlike those found in legends and heroic tales, where every character may be assigned to a class according with the role he is designed to act—wholly good and perfect or wholly bad, brave or cowardly, superwise or doltish, handsome or hideous; the characters in each class being drawn to a pattern to serve a purpose. The men and women of the sagas are living people—people of flesh and blood. They are of all stations in life, of varying temperements, princely and plebian, rich and poor, good and bad; men of ambition and intense desires; staid men and studious; men of low estate and little importance. All differ in their mental makeups, and each is so presented in his mixture of qualities good and bad that he stands before the reader a creature of life and blood. Nor are they drawn in the present-day manner, with copious descriptions and psychological analyses of bents and reasons, but emerge clear in their own words, actions and reactions. The outward appearance of characters is delineated in some of the sagas, and not in others. Natural descriptions, properly speaking, are not met with in the sagas; places, lay of the land and weather are described where and to the extent only that is necessary to a proper understanding of events. The style is terse, pointed and strikingly original, yet nowhere forced or unnatural, and free of superfluous words and digressions. It is unmistakably molded by oral rendition—evidence that the sagas were told and not read.

Posthumously Honored

Dr. Thorbergur Thorvaldson, Canada's foremost concrete chemist and world leader in this field who died in October, 1965, was posthumously honored at two significant events in April.

The first was a symposium in his honor at the Royal York Hotel in Toronto under the auspices of the division of building research of the National Research Council, held in conjunction with the annual meeting of the American Concrete Institute. Specialists in the field of concrete from Canada, United States and England presented papers. Among guests at the symposium was Mrs. Thorvaldson, who was honored at a noon luncheon presided over by Dr. R. F. Leggett, chairman of the building research division of the National Research Council. Dr. J. W. T. Spinks, president of the University of Saskatchewan and longtime colleague of Dr. Thorvaldson, spoke about him and Mrs. Thorvaldson.

Dr. Thorbergur Thorvaldson

The second event took place three days later in the Thorvaldson Building at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon, named after him, where a large oil painting of him was unveiled. The oil portrait was commissioned by former research students and colleagues in the department of chemistry and chemical engineering at the university.

At the same ceremony, Saskatchewan Minister of Education G. J. Trapp presented identical plaques from the Saskatchewan government to the university and to Mrs. Thorvaldson. The plaques commemorate the naming of a lake in northern Saskatchewan in honor of Dr. Thorvaldson, Thorvaldson Lake, two miles long, is in the La Ronge Pre-Cambrian area 50 miles northeast of La Ronge village.

The plaques, each showing an aerial photogrpah of Thorvaldson Lake and a photograph of Dr. Thorvaldson, give principal dates in the late scientist's life and mention some of the honors he received. The inscription says the lake was named after Dr. Thorvaldson "to honor his brilliant career as a researcher, particularly his studies on the chemistry of cement, and his inspiration and leadership as a teacher of chemistry."

PARADISE REVISITED

by Betty Jane Wylie

Ed.—Mrs. Betty Jane Wylie is the daughter of the late Dr. Jack McKenty and of Mrs. Jack McKenty, of Winnipeg. Mrs. Jack McKenty is the former Inga Tergeson, of Gimli, Manitoba.

My Grandmother came from Iceland. Not many North Americans can make that statement. Iceland has a small population to begin with, and most of it has been content to stay right there. But in the nineteenth century Mount Hekla, one of the island's many volcanoes, erupted, and the refugees went to Canada. The first Icelandic settlers landed at Willow Point, on the shores of Lake Winnipeg (home of the goldeye and the whitefish) in 1875. My maternal grandparents arrived separately from Iceland in their teens, met and married in Winnipeg, Manitoba, in 1887, and moved on up to Gimli, near Willow Point, to raise a family.

For thirty-five years Gimli has been the site of the annual **Íslendingadagurinn** (Icelandic Celebration Day).

As a child, I went to Gimli with my family every summer and we lived in a cottage two doors away from my grandparents' house and my grandmother's cooking. In Icelandic the name Gimli means paradise, and the focal point of my gastronomic Eden was my grandmother's kitchen. Actually, there was a trinity of heavens because she had two kitchens and a shed. In the heat of summer she used to move down to the basement to do her baking. There she had duplicate utensils and a small wood stove whose warm little heart was delighted to tend to her breads, cakes, and pies as a welcome change from pots of starch and bluing for the laundry. The shed off my grandmother's main kitchen accommodated the overflow from closets and pantry. I loved that shed. In it were extra toaster racks, outsize skillets, raincoats, fishing rods, wet bathing suits and stockfish. Sheets of stockfish hung on great hooks. We used to tear off pieces of it and use the fish as a shovel to dig up the butter we at it with. No one in the family makes stockfish andy more; freezers have made drying fish unnecessary. Every gain is accompanied by a loss, and homemade stockfish is a victim of freezers.

I remember more than stockfish. I remember **rullu pylsa**, cold spicy meat we ate in open-faced sandwiches; rusks, sweet plain buns sliced and oven-dried, which Grampa used to soak in his **mola-kaffi** (coffee with loaf sugar in it) and suck through his store teeth; and thick slices of bread spread with mysostur, which looks like peanut butter but which will give a pleasant shock to anyone proceeding to eat it on that assumption because it is cheese. There were **kringlur,** or arabellas, sweet cinnamon yeast dough with caraway seeds baked in pretzel shapes; **astarbollur,** or love balls, plain baking-power doughnuts with currants in them at Christmastime, and **steiktir partar,** or fried boats, which were a kind of wafer

filled with whipped cream. These were all good with coffee, which is the national Icelandic and Icelandic-Canadian beverage. I'm sure that it must have been an Icelander who invented the coffee break, though I have no proof. But the greatest delicacy of all is also what is probably the best known Icelandic specialty—**vinarterta.**

This cake is, of course, based on the **Torte** principle. In fact, the name **vinar** does not mean wine but a corruption of the word Vienna. It is a Viennese **Torte,** but the use of dried fruit makes it peculiarly Icelandic.

Vinarterta (Icelandic Cake)

Cream together 1 cup butter and 1½ cups sugar. Beat in 3 eggs, ½ cup milk, 1 teaspoon each of almond and vanilla extract, 3 teaspoons baking powder, and just enough sifted flour to make a dough that can be handled, almost like a cooky dough. Be careful not to use too much flour. Roll the dough out thin and cut it in 8-inch circles. Fit the rounds into 8-inch cake pans. Bake the rounds in a moderate oven (350° F.) for 10 to 15 minutes. Watch carefully. The cake should be light in color. You should be able to make 11 layers, enough to make a 5-layer and a 6-layer cake. Cool the layers before filling them.

Prune Filling

Cook 2 pounds prunes in water to cover until they are soft and the water is almost absorbed and let them cool. Remove the stones and put the prunes through a meat grinder. Put the prunes in a pan, add 2½ cups sugar and 1 teaspoon finely ground cardamom seed, and heat gently, striring occasionally and being careful not to let the mixture burn. Cool the filling and spread the cake layers, making, as suggested, 2 cakes. Frosting is optional, but a plain vanilla icing does paint the lily nicely.

Gramma used to cut a circle the size of a tumbler out of the center of all her cakes and slice the wheel. My brother always got the circle while the rest of us ate the spokes. But she used to save the turnovers for me: bits of leftover pastry turned over sugared blueberries or apples. **Pönnukökkur,** cold waferlike pancakes sprinkled with brown sugar and rolled up; rosettes, flower-shaped delicacies made with a timbale iron, covered with whipped cream and maybe a dab of strawberry jam: these I remember too, along with more common treats like the crumbly rich date bar that I learned, when I grew up, to call matrimonial cake.

Here are the pancakes of my memory.

Pönnukökur (Icelandic Pancakes)

Beat 2 eggs, add 3 tablespoon sugar, ½ teaspoon each of salt and grated nutmeg, and ¾ cup milk. Beat well. Sift together 2 cups sifted flour, ¼ teaspoon baking soda, and 1 teaspoon baking powder and add alternately with 1¾ cups milk. Rub a small amount of butter on the bottom of a frying pan or, better yet, use a griddle that requires no fat. Make the pancakes the diameter desired; if they are 4 or 5 inches across they roll up nicely. Serve cold, sprinkled with brown sugar.

My grandmother used to do a baked

stuffed whitefish for Sunday dinner that rivaled roast suckling pig for appearance, impressiveness, and sheer rich eating. Although many of her recipes and techniques died with her—she had a knack with meat and fish that few people ever achieve—this is a fair approximation from my aunt Anna.

Icelandic Baked Whitefish

Wipe out the cavity of a whole Lake Winnipeg whitefish with a clean damp cloth. Tear day-old bread into fairly large pieces to make about 2 cups bread crumbs. Add 1 medium onion, chopped, and ½ cup chopped celery to the bread crumbs in a bowl. Season with ½ teaspoon salt, pepper to taste, and ½ teaspoon each of thyme, majoram, and sage. Melt ½ cup butter and stir it into the dry mixture. Add 1 slightly beaten egg and mix well. Stuff and lace the fish and place it on an oiled baking pan with strips of bacon laid on top. Bake the fish in a hot oven (400° F.), allowing 10 minutes per inch of thickness.

Lake Winnipeg whitefish is the best whitefish there is, if I may be pardoned the chauvinism—firm, tender, and mealy all at once—but Lake Winnipeg goldeye is the delicacy that, along with wild rice, has put Manitoba on the food map of the world. Smokehouses dot the shores of the lake where the fresh-caught goldeye is transformed into something truly rich and exotic. The scales take on a deep red-gold color; the flesh is coral and rich and sweet and lifts easily off the skeleton. Smoked goldeye is easy to prepare because the alchemy has been achieved in the smokehouse. You can wipe the fish and wrap it in oiled double-thick aluminum foil and heat it in a moderate oven for half an hour, or you can wrap and tie it in parchment paper and cook it for twenty minutes in boiling water. All the sauce it requires then is melted butter and a twist of lemon. Lest I be accused of drumming up a little tourist trade, may I say that air freight and freezers have made fresh smoked goldeye widely available.

We like to make Aunt Anna's **fiskibollur** with Lake Winnipeg pickerel (Americans call it walleyed pike), but you can use almost any freshwater fish.

Fiskibollur (Icelandic Fish Balls)

Put 1 pound pickerel fillets and a small onion through the meat grinder twice. Put the fish and onion mixture in a bowl and add ½ cup milk, the yolks of 2 eggs, 1½ teaspoons salt and a scant ¼ teaspoon pepper. Beat with an electric mixer for 10 to 15 minutes. Fold in the egg whites, beaten to a peak. Take a heaping tablespoon of the mixture, dip it in seasoned flour, and shape into cakes (12 cakes in all). Sauté the cakes in butter until they are golden brown. When they are nicely browned, transfer them to a heavy aluminum pot and pour in ½ cup court bouillon to start. Steam the cakes for half an hour, adding more liquid if necessary.

I can remember my grandfather sitting down to an evening meal of cold meat, bread, a good cheese, and fruit. Gramma used to cook pork hocks for him and Grampa would take a clamp knife and slice off little pieces as he needed them for his bread and butter—a Scandinavian open faced sandwich. The breads my grandmother used to make were typically Icelandic. There was a "boiled" bread that was simply strips of yeast dough that was fried in deep fat. They were tough, chewy, and delicious. You might say that flatbraud is the Icelandic counterpart of the Southern corn-meal hoecake. Originally it was baked right on the stove; the scoured black top of the old wood-burning stove provided a hot flat surface for quick even cooking.

Flatbraud (Icelandic Fried Cake)

Mix together 1 cup each of sifted rye and white flour, ½ cup cracked wheat, ½ teaspoon soda, and a pinch of salt to taste. Make a well and stir in enough boiling water to make a fairly stiff dough. Roll out about half an inch thick and fry on a very hot griddle using a small amount of fat.

There are three prepared meats that I remember, all of them good, but quite different from each other. They have enjoyed a vogue of late on Winnipeg's holiday buffet tables. The most popular is a lamb roll, the delicate pink of which is distinctive.

Rullu Pylsa (Icelandic Lamb Roll)

Have your butcher bone a 2-pound piece of lamb flank but leave it in one piece. Lay the meat flat on the table, boned side up. Mix together 2 tablespoons salt, ½ teaspoon saltpeter, ¾ teaspoon each of ground cloves, ground allspice, and pepper and spread the mixture over the meat. Finely chop 1 medium onion and spread over the flank, then roll up the meat and tie it. Sew both ends and the loose edge with a kitchen needle and coarse thread. Wind string tightly all over the roll. Salt the surface thoroughly and wrap in wax paper. Store the meat in the refrigerator and leave it for seven days to allow the spices to work through. The saltpeter, of course, will give the meat its pink color. After the seasoning period is over, put the roll in a pan in water to cover. Bring to a boil, then simmer for 1½ hours. Remove the roll and when it has cooled, place it in a cool place between two smooth surfaces with a heavy weight on top and leave overnight. (We have a cold closet and we find that Volume I and II of the GOURMET COOKBOOK make a sufficient weight). The next day, discard the strings and store the meat in the refrigerator. It is best served cold and sliced very thin, on buttered dark brown bread.

Kæfa is another prepared meat that goes well on a buffet table.

Kæfa (Icelandic Meat Loaf)

Place 3 pounds each of veal shank and shoulder of lamb in a large pot in water to cover. Boil for 3 hours, or until the bones can be easily removed, and put the meat through the meat grinder twice or grind very fine. To the stock add 2 large onions, ground, 1 teaspoon each of pepper, ginger, and allspice, and 2 tablespoons salt. Boil down the stock until it measures about three cups, then add the ground meat and boil it 20 minutes longer, stirring constantly. Pour into an oiled mold or loaf pan and chill. Unmold and slice to serve.

The ingredients of **lifrapilsa** might suggest some relation between the Icelanders and the Scots. I have no argument. I like oatmeal sausage and haggis, too.

Lifrapilsa (Icelandic Liver Loaf)

Put 1 pound beef liver through the meat grinder with ½ pound suet. Mix in 1 cup rolled oats, ¾ cup wheat flour, 1½ cups milk, and 2 teaspoons salt. Pack into a greased casserole and cover. Place the casserole in a shallow pan of water and bake in a moderately slow oven (325° F.) for 2 hours. Serve cold. This is a simplified version. My grandmother used to pack the liver-oats mixture into cotton bags which she sewed up and boiled for about 3 hours.

The tricks that memory plays on us are familiar enough. The awesome hallway of one's childhood becomes, to anyone who has the temerity to face it again as an adult, a tiny vestibule. The reason for the change is, of course, empirical. The snowstorms of my childhood have never been equalled. Snowdrifts used to tower above my head; they never do now, and I conveniently forget the fact that my head is higher than it used to be. But the food of my childhood retains its charm. For me, Gimli is still Paradise.

—Courtesy of **Gourmet.**

The Imposter (continued from Spring 1967 issue)

One day toward evening not long after his return home he took his horse, saddled it, and, without telling anyone, rode off straight to the Valdal farm. He gave no thought to what he should say or do, simply rode directly into the yard. There was no one around the house though he saw some people working in the hay just outside the home field.

He knocked on the door—three hard blows—but no one answered. He entered the passageway as he had so often done, in former days, without announcing himself. He went past the pantry and the kitchen; no one was there either. So he mounted the stairs leading to the sitting room and threw open the door.

He had somehow dimly suspected what he would find. There sat Monsieur Lavatte in Mr. and Mrs. Valdal's room with Sara on his lap. She had her arms around his neck. Over them and behind them hung an old circular curtain, almost shutting out the light of the day. Flies buzzed against the window and a June bug droned outside on the wall of the house. Otherwise peace and quiet surrounded the lovers.

Sara stood up slowly as though half against her will, walked toward Sigurd and tentatively stretched out her hand. He ignored it, pushed her aside and crossing to the Count, seized him by the shoulder. He felt that he was on the verge of flinging him against the wall—maybe even of killing him. He saw red and there was a buzzing in his ears, perhaps from anger or something even worse. But the Frenchman was completely unmoved. Staring with abominable calm into Sigurd's face which was distorted with passion, he said, "You'll make an ass of yourself, fighting with me. I am considered to be very strong—and Mademoiselle Valdal will hate you afterwards."

Sigurd drew back his hand. What the count had said was true. He had to admit that his conduct was more to be censured than that of the count; yet it was degrading to yield to this dog of a Frenchman. He turned to Sara to see whether she was laughing at him. She stood there exactly as he had left her, staring first at one and then at the other, oftener and longer at the count, Sigurd noticed.

To him her beauty seemed even more seductive and perfect than ever. It was no longer that cold, pure maidenly beauty which had lived in his memory while he was abroad, and had lured him home despite the enticements of Copenhagen. No, she had now assumed another charasteristic—an expression often seen on the face of a woman in love for the first time.

Sigurd felt the blood boiling in his veins as the full realization came upon him, and he remembered how Sara was treating him. It came to him that the whole thing was indeed a comedy —a farce wherein everyone acted as the mood seized him.

Aping the accent of the Count he said in a mocking tone: "My mother has informed me that your count is supposed to have come here to search for old shells in the comb of the hill, but that he cannot even tell a scallop from an ordinary shell and he has become notorious in other parts of the country. Where do you suppose his countship has its estates?"

Having now stood up, the Frenchman said stiffly: "I say to hell with all the shells! now that I have met Sara. My dukedom is here, and she is the duchess.—Isn't that so, my dear?"

Sigurd pretended not to hear the count and continued: "Are you not embarrassed that everyone in the whole countryside is laughing at you for having allowed this pot-bellied redhead to seduce you?"

Sara turned a little pale, but it was obvious that she neither could nor would change her mind. Her eyes sparkled like diamonds when she looked at the count, and Sigurd realized that she would consider himself an enemy. The count resumed his seat, and, with both hands in his pockets, crossed his legs. Looking up at Sigurd, he whistled between his teeth. It was obvious that he was not frightened and that he didn't care a fig what names he was called.

Sigurd realized that any further action would be pointless and would only result in further alienating the affection of this young woman.

Sigurd was convinced that this so-called count was nothing more than an unprincipled braggart who had decided to visit this faraway land in the belief that here it would be possible to play the role of a great man with little effort—easier than anywhere else. He had heard of travellers of such caliber and even had known one such roustabout who had come into the district to inspect shells, just as this one had. He had pretended to be a representative of a scientific society in Germany and had assumed the title "Doctor". But when the chips were down, he didn't know a word of Latin and couldn't even pay for a night's lodging at the farm. Sigurd was convinced that this count was of the same ilk. But what good would it do though he were to show Sara how suspicious he was of this foreigner who, claiming to be a nobleman and the owner of a dukedom, had arrived, only two or three weeks before, with but a single suitcase, and with the avowed intention of collecting shells. What proof did the Frenchman have for his cock-and-bull story? Sigurd was sure that it was not the "dukedom" but rather this balding redhead that infatuated her.

Turning on his heel he left without a word and rode home. He despised Sara and himself too. He did feel more at ease in his mind now, when he thought of them together. This did not last for long however. Soon jealousy attacked him again, with greater force than before, to the point where he could neither sleep nor eat.

So it was. Sigurd looked like a sick man. He avoided talking to anyone, replying abruptly, when spoken to. His mother became more distressed with every passing day, for she knew the cause of his suffering. His father slammed doors if he became aware of Sigurd in the house and muttered under his breath. It was as though some depression lay over the whole house. People spoke in whispers and became noticeably silent when the vicar's son was near.

Then, one day someone rode into the yard. Sigurd's friends, the Englishman with his manservant had arrived, precisely at the time indicated in the infallible schedule. A feeling of elation came over Sigurd, and he went out to greet the guests and to bid them welcome.

The hunter's eyes looked harder at Sigurd than ever before, but neither mentioned the redheaded count, though each knew that the other was thinking of him. After the guests had refreshed themselves and rested, sud-

denly after a long silence the Englishman said, "Shall we not go and meet that Redhead. I imagine that he is still at your sweetheart's, isn't he?"

Sigurd admitted that such was the case, but said that he did not care to go there again. He explained that he had already tried a few days before to open her eyes but that his efforts had been in vain.

"Would you marry her if she gave up the count?"

"No," answered Sigurd quickly.

"Is it revenge that you want?" pursued the Englishman.

"No, not that either. The only thing that I wish fervently to accomplish, is to pry them apart," replied Sigurd with a heavy sigh.

"I am happy to hear that, and it will give me the greatest pleasure to help you do just that. We shall not have a long preamble; merely take me to where the count is, and I will take care of what happens next."

Sigurd scarcely considered whether it was gentlemanly or manly to turn over to someone else, his interest in this matter. Always the same desire burned within him, the desire to separate Sara from this balding redhead. Within an hour they had set out for the Valdal home.

"How do her parents take this?" asked the Englishman when they had almost reached the house. It was obvious that he had heard rumors of Sara's conduct in the matter.

"They don't do much one way or the other. They believe that he is a wealthy gentleman and consider him a better catch than me. Anyway, I think Sara does just about what she likes without interference from her parents."

"In that case we shall have to turn directly to Miss Valdal and to the count himself." A moment later they had ridden into the yard.

Most of the members of the household were at home; they could be seen entering the house or going out to the inner field as the guests rode into the yard. The only one who was left in the yard was old Valdal himself. Waiting for them he greeted the guests with little enthusiasm.

Sigurd requested to talk with M. Lavitte, Duke of Normandy. Yes, he was at home, "but wouldn't it be best to go on in if you want to talk with him?" added Valdal.

Sigurd told the Englishman that

the farmer understood English, and left it to him to decide whether he wanted to meet the count inside.

"Will you be so kind," said the Englishman, "as to tell the honorable count, the former grocery clerk at ————fjord (here the Englishman mentioned a certain Icelandic trading village), that we should like to speak with him?"

Thordur Valdal was visibly startled and scarcely new how he should answer, but at that moment the "count" came out. He was smiling, and as far as could be determined, completely self-assured. He had heard the last words spoken and went directly to Sigurd who stood in the middle of the courtyard with his arm over the seat of his saddle.

"I'm not completely at home in English, but I seemed to understand that this companion of yours intimated that he knew me and my past. Will you do me the favor to ask him before we go further into this affair, where he got his information about me and my past. The count now spoke perfect Icelandic, but one could detect that he was not born in the district.

Sigurd translated his words into English, and the Englishman in turn gave the following report in just a few words Two years before he had been a fellow passenger with an old Icelandic merchant who had long been in business in this land. On one occasion they had walked together on the deck talking about this and that. All at once the merchant had grabbed his arm, peering forward at a group of passengers.

"I have never seen him look at me with such evil before," the merchant had said in a half whisper.

"I looked forward at the passengers," the Englishman continued, "and among them was none other than this count, the one who stands before us now. Curious, I asked the merchant

what he meant, and he motioned me to come with him into his cabin. There he unfolded the whole story.

He said that several years ago he had taken into his service the son of a friend from Copenhagen, who was of a good family but who had become indigent through disorderliness and gambling. This gifted young man, about 16 or 17 years of age, gradually worked his way into favor so that he was trusted with the accounts and the monies of the business. One fall, as on previous occasions, the merchant sent this clerk, providing him with a loosely worded power of attorney and proper credentials, to take the last ship that season to Copenhagen. When the pilot boat returned, the merchant received greetings from the clerk who had absconded with $2,000 from the business.

Arriving in Copenhagen he had deceived the merchant's business associates. His deception lasted right up to the time when the first mail arrived from Iceland and his whole story fell apart; at this point he disappeared and was not heard of for many years Finally, about three years ago the merchant thought he recognized him in Reykjavik among passengers disembarking from a mail ship. Shortly thereafter the "count" accosted the merchant, spoke with him and received his word that he would not reveal his identity. He barely had passage money, so nothing could have been extracted from him. In any event, the merchant had been extremely fond of him in days gone by.

According to his story the "count" had lived for a long time among the French of Canada and the merchant understood that he was wanted by the authorities in several other places besides Iceland. After this occasion, whenever he was aware of his presence, the merchant avoided talking to him. More than once, while on his business trips to and from Iceland he either saw him or heard his name mentioned. It was his opinion that the "count" sought refuge in Iceland, from time to time, after having committed crimes abroad, and he liked neither the idea of his going free nor that of being the one to turn him in. Then came the time I referred to. It probably seemed to the "count" that his old master, the merchant, had looked at him as though he was fed up with the whole affair. But when the merchant saw the "count's" evil glance as we walked there together, he came to the conclusion that he should no longer keep the secret of the "count's" identity. For this reason he told me the whole story and on the very same day informed the "count" of what he had done. The merchant being a gentleman, and having retained some affection for his former clerk, requested that I tell no one about the past of this reprehensible fellow. I agreed upon condition that I might reveal his identity if I became aware that anyone was about to be harmed by him. I consider that under the present conditions it would be a default on my part to remain silent as to who this so-called count really is."

All had listened silently to the story of the Engishman, the count no less than the others. It was apparent that he nuderstood most of what was said, but he didn't let a muscle quiver, nor did he show in any way that he was alarmed. When the Englishman had finished, the "count" went to a window that looked out on the courtyard and called in a loud clear voice: "Miss Valdal! You are requested to be so kind as to come out. We have guests who have news for you."

Sara came directly. She was dressed

in a close-fitting light summer dress, her hair swept into a bun. She was as bright and beautiful as the summer day, itself. Walking over to the "count", she stood by his side as though waiting for him to tell her where they would go.

The count then spoke calmly, but in a voice so loud that it could be heard throughout the entire courtyard. "I am neither a count nor a rich man. On the contrary, I own nothing more than what I have with me, and I am sought by the law of this country. Any one of you can take me to the authorities and have me thrown in jail."

A death-like silence fell over all as they heard his confession. Everyone looked at Sara Valdal, who stood as if rooted to the spot. Her face was white as the scarf she wore about her neck. She stood erect and carried her head high as though she were receiving the crown of a countess. There was no indication from her bearing that her dreams of royalty were being swept into the dustheap to be trampled upon.

Her father could control himself no longer. He moved with a single stride to where the count and Sara stood and roughly snatched his daugter's arm. A growl like that of a wild beast escaped his lips.

"Do you intend to follow him off to jail?" he asked, quivering with fury.

Sara withdrew her arm and replied as she looked at Sigurd: "I have long suspected that which has now come about—I beg of you not to suggest that I turn back, any more than I shall request that you take me back."

When Sara had uttered these words, it was as though a different expression came over the count. He shook himself as a horse does when it is set free in the pasture, then walked to where Sigurd was standing.

"I am confident that you will not try to stop me from leaving since you would only heap unhappiness on this girl who will follow me wherever I go. And I gathered from the statement of the Englishman that as things now stand, he is bound by his word to my former master, to leave me alone. And as far as you are concerned," he said, turning to old Valdal and smiling, "I know that I am no more anxious than you are that I get safely away from Iceland."

Sigurd and Valdal looked at each other. There was nothing to do but what the count had proposed, namely, to remain silent and let him leave. Sigurd could not help but admire the courage and the presence of mind that this man displayed, alone, as he was, wanted by the police, and despised by many.

Sigurd translated for the Englishman the last that had been said. They agreed on this course of action; they had no alternative.

As he rode out of the yard, Sigurd glanced over his shoulder at Sara, but she pretended not to see him. For a long time he appeared distracted and preferred to be alone with his thoughts. It was always the same feeling that plagued him, neither love for Sara nor a sense of loss, but rather unendurable envy of the "count" who had such power over her.

A short hour after Sigurd and the Englishman left, the imposter was conducted to the nearest harbor. After the "count's" disappearance, Sara revealed her fellings to no one and avoided the company of others. Later, the following summer a messenger came from the harbor village and delivered a letter to her from abroad. With her one-year-old daughter she sailed out into the world, to be heard of no more.

INDEX TO ADVERTISERS

PRINTED BY VIKING PRINTERS, 868 ARLINGTON ST., WINNIPEG 3