

tions, in order that they might be corroborated, it is not necessary to point out the many "supposes" and adroit changes called forth by the text, in order to force it to say just what might be desired. Neither is it found advisable that the "simple and unaffected sagas," the "only reliable history" we have, should be allowed to speak for themselves, because a skilled interpreter can carefully interpolate and explain, whenever such may be deemed necessary, which is quite frequent. Nor has it been thought best to give a succinct account of the sagas by the advocates of the pre-Columbian theory, and a correct analysis of their contents, for undoubtedly such an exposure would not add to the lustre which it has been attempted to cast over them. De-spoiled of careful editing, the many *supposes* eliminated, the facts and contents made known, the record would present itself in an unenviable light.

It is not the advocating of a theory, the foisting of an idea, the building up of a clever hypothesis, that is to be desired. If the sagas give a simple, clear, convincing narrative of a voyage or voyages to the western world, and if those sagas have been written by men desiring to speak only the truth although, there might be a slight tendency to romancing, and the descriptions of places are accurate enough to be traced out, and if written before the discovery by Columbus, there can be but one result. It must then be admitted that the sea-rovers saw the New World. If so, what then?

This being true, there is no need to abuse Columbus and hold him up to the scorn of mankind. It will be unnecessary to traduce Christianity and hold up the ancient Norse as patterns of excellence, and as having enjoyed an ideal civilization. The distinguished authors who have expressed doubt and disbelief will be hoisted on their own petard.

It is not a subject for strong adjectives or loud declamation. The sagas should receive the same treatment as any other piece of writing that has been brought to light after having remained covered for ages. The facts they present should be accepted; the theories for what they are worth; the romancing rejected; the marvellous sifted, and the whole analysed.

It must not be assumed that it is here purposed to make an investigation into every line pointed out in these literary remains, for now we are interested only in their purported relation to the discovery of America. Nor is it to be presumed that a happy conclusion will be reached, for the confusion, as exhibited by the past, must be expected to be continued in the future. That same tendency to theorize, already referred to, and desire to be at variance with rugged facts, will still be the great companion of some—erratic, tempestuous, baneful.