

true to his friends and much loved and regretted by his country men.

Njal was a peace loving man and was the greatest lawyer of his age and known all over Iceland for his wisdom, peaceful ways, and mediatory methods in settling feuds or trouble amongst the people. He was one of the prime movers in organizing laws and regulations regarding the peace and prosperity of the country and its people. He was a great friend of Gunnar and on one occasion said to him: "If you do not refuse to be reconciled to the 'Court Board' you will be victorious," but Gunnar would rather die than leave the place he was born in.

Njal's sons, more especially one by name of Skarphjedin, were wicked. Presumably this could be accounted for on account of the Viking blood flowing in their veins.

Njal had a foster son, called Hoskuld. He became a leader of a constituency near his home, and another leader not far from him was called Mord. He was a very bad man and envied Hoskuld's success and honest ways. So he enveigled himself into the good graces of Njal's sons and they became great friend. He worked on their feelings to such an extent that by slandering Hoskuld, he induced them to murder their foster brother, whom the people knew to be an innocent man. So the relatives and friends of Hoskuld got together at the home of the Njals, set fire to the house and burned them and their father and mother. They offered to spare the father and mother, but they refused and said they would rather die than live, after this disgraceful act of their sons.

The Althing or Congress.

The Althing was called to meet on Thingvall, (or Congress lawn), every year in the latter end of June and this was made a law. It was imperative for the pronouncing lawyer or head leader and the others to be there at the appointed time and anyone owning real estate, was forced to either meet on the Thingvall or pay a fine to their leaders. This law was also put in the statutes.