

Americanæ," p. xxiv., note 1, says: ". . . to him, inquiring concerning Western lands").

But what information thereupon, and, generally, what answer Bishop Magnus gave Columbus remains still a matter of hypothesis, upon which nothing has yet been found in authentic writings. To be sure, there are several grounds that permit us to accept the theory that Bishop Magnus related to Columbus all about the well-known discoveries of the Western lands by the Icelanders, since there can be no doubt that the bishop himself had adequate knowledge of these discoveries, for they not only formed a part of the history of his fatherland, but also belonged to the oral traditions of the inhabitants of Helgafell, and, moreover, were preserved in the written chronicles of the monastery of which he had been abbot. . . .

It would be superfluous hereon once more to point out that the knowledge of the existence of Western lands, and consequently of America, was in no wise confined to Iceland.

For the elucidation of these voyages to unknown lands in those remote times there is placed at the disposal of the historian a proportionately rich source of material. A series of parchment manuscripts remains extant in which more or less mention of America occurs, evidently under the names used by the Icelanders. Also a quantity of paper manuscripts, which, however, mostly contain only accounts from old parchment docu-