

cold, and the middle, that is, the torrid zone, by reason of the heat, were neither inhabited nor habitable, it was inferred that the one of the two remaining zones in our hemisphere and the other in the opposite one were habitable. They admitted, therefore, that men could dwell even beyond the torrid zone. And whence could they come to the knowledge of that, if no crossing from the one to the other was possible? Another absurd conclusion also followed, that those who dwelt beyond the torrid zone must derive their origin from other than our own first parents, Adam and Eve. But experience, the mistress of everything, has refuted the false assertion of all of them. And, indeed, as regards the northern region of the world, Galeotus of Narni,* Saxo Grammaticus,† Olaus Magnus,‡ have left witness, in tracts that they have written, that the Hyperboreans and the dwellers in Scandinavia and other regions lying far to the north can not only endure the cold, but

* A professor of literature at the University of Padua, and afterwards, secretary to Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary. The book alluded to here in his "De Incognitis Vulgo," published 1479, for the opinions expressed in which he was reprimanded by the Inquisition. Died 1492.

† Born in the Island of Zealand. He wrote a history of the Northern nations to 1186 which was well known to Shakespeare.

‡ Born 1493; became Bishop of Zagrate and Chancellor of Hungary. His principal works are his Chronicle, his description of Hungary, and his History of Attila, the latter of which seems to me to have been familiar to Gibbon, although a work of very rare occurrence. It was printed at Prestburg, 1538. Olaus died 1568.