

the Codex Flatoiensis, a manuscript dating from the close of the fourteenth century, supposed to have been lost for many years, eventually found in the library of the island of Flatœ, and now preserved in the archives of Copenhagen. The antiquity of this work has never been seriously disputed, and the story of the voyages of the Northmen to America is proved not to have been an interpolation in an old work, by the fact that they form the framework of the narrative, which would be utterly destroyed by their omission. They cannot therefore be viewed as post-Columbian interpolations into a record of pre-Columbian events. They are a plain straightforward account of the doings of certain adventurers, who set forth, not for purposes of discovery, but for purposes of gain; and there is not the least intimation that the writers had any idea of the magnitude of the discoveries which they relate. Had these been mere echoes of the discoveries of Columbus, it seems to us impossible that the narrative would have been so artless and simple as we find it. Their style, we may add, is distinctly that of the heroic age of Scandinavian enterprise, such as the *Heimskringla*, or the *Orkneyinga Saga*. It would have been impossible for a writer of the sixteenth century to have imitated successfully the older Sagas without being detected by his contemporaries, or betraying himself by the insertion of some detail belonging to his own time. We therefore believe that the Codex is genuine, and accept the narrative to be as truly historic as the pages of Froissart, or the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. We are quite aware that there is a prejudice against the historic value of these Sagas among some modern critics, the grounds for which we have never been able to discover. It is very generally urged against their credibility that the statements of the wintering in Greenland, and of the fruits of Vinland are not consistent with the present climate in those regions. To our mind they give the stamp of genuineness and antiquity to the narrative, because now we have evidence from other quarters that the climate of Greenland, and consequently that also of the adjoining coast of America, has become more severe than it was when the deserted Danish settlements were founded. A similar change has also taken place in the climate of Iceland. The story of the discovery of America by the Northmen is not generally known to English readers, and we will therefore give it in some little detail.

Eric the Red emigrated from Iceland to Greenland in the spring of 986, along with Heriulf Bardson. In the autumn Biarne, a son of the latter, set sail from Iceland to join his father, and after having been driven out of his way by fogs and winds into