

QUESTIONS.

1. In what way does the poet try to comfort himself in his grief (ll. 9-20)?
2. What is Longfellow's idea of the next life, as expressed in this poem (ll. 21-44).

THE SKELETON IN ARMOUR.

Of *The Skeleton in Armour*, Longfellow wrote:—"This ballad was suggested to me while riding on the seashore at Newport (Rhode Island). A year or two previous, a skeleton had been dug up at Fall River (Mass.), clad in broken and corroded armour; and the idea occurred to me of connecting it with the Round Tower at Newport, generally known hitherto as the Old Windmill, though now claimed by the Danes as a work of their early ancestors."

In the tenth and eleventh centuries, Norse sea-rovers had established small settlements in Greenland and had pushed as far south as the New England coast. There is, however, no evidence that either the Skeleton in Armour or the Round Tower at Newport were in any way associated with the visits of the Northmen. The Round Tower, or Old Windmill, was probably built about 1675.

- 17. Viking. A Norse sea-pirate.
- 19. Skald. Bard, or poet.
- 20. Saga. Ancient Norwegian legend.
- 28. gerfalcon. A large falcon of the Arctic regions.
- 38. were-wolf. A man who had assumed the form of a wolf.
- 42. Corsair. Pirate.
- 49. wassail-bout. A carousal. Wassail is spiced ale.
- 53. Berserk. A legendary Norse hero of the eighth century.
- 93-6. If they did not wish the dove to follow the sea-gull (sea-mew) they should not have left her nest unguarded.
- 109. flaw. Gust.
- 110. Skaw. A cape on the north of Jutland, in Denmark.
- 159. skoal. Hail!