

of the houses were near the water-side, and others at some distance from it. There they remained for the winter; but notwithstanding that there was snow, their cattle were able to feed themselves upon the grass. With the approach of spring, again, one morning early, they saw a great number of canoes, 'coming from the south, round the ness; so many as if the sea was sown with coal.' They also—as was the case on the former occasion—had poles swung over every canoe. Again the white shield was exhibited by Karlsefne's people, when the occupants of the canoes joined them; and the two commenced to barter. These people preferred red cloth to anything else that the Northmen had to offer them; and for this they gave in return skins and furs. They also wished to purchase swords and spears; but this was wisely forbidden by Karlsefne and Snorri Thorbrandson. We are told that the Skroelings gave an entire fur skin for a piece of red cloth a span long, which cloth they bound around their heads, doubtless as an ornament. When the cloth began to fall short, Karlsefne's people used to cut it into smaller strips, not wider than a finger's breadth; but still the Skroelings gave as much for each of these bits as they did for the larger pieces. When the cloth became quite exhausted, Karlsefne hit upon the expedient of making the women take out milk porridge to the Skroelings, who, as soon as they had tasted the excellence of this new article of commerce, would buy nothing but porridge. 'Thus,' says the Saga of Erik the Red, which particularly mentions this circumstance, 'the traffic of the Skroelings was wound up by their bearing away their purchases in their stomachs; but Karlsefne and his companions retained their goods and skins.'

It happened, at length, that a bull which Karlsefne had, ran out from the woods, about this time, and roared aloud. At this the terrified Skroelings rushed to their canoes, pushed

hastily off, and paddled away southward, along the coast, in the direction from which they had first come. Nothing further was seen of them for three weeks. It would seem that the Skroelings must have considered the roaring of Karlsefne's bull as, if not an open declaration of war, at least a *casus belli*. At the termination of the three weeks, they reappeared in great force—'were seen coming from the south like a rushing torrent!' The poles, too, which were swung over their canoes, 'were turned from the sun, and they all howled very loud,'—both of which incidents were considered as demonstrative of hostile intentions. So, this time, Karlsefne's people hung out, not a white, but a red shield, which was equivalent to telling the Skroelings to 'come on!' They did *come on*—with a vengeance, it may be said. They hurled a shower of missiles upon the Northmen, having, it is said, slings, among their other weapons. A sharp conflict ensued. Karlsefne's men at length gave way to the overwhelming numbers of their foes, and 'fell back along the river for it appeared to them that the Skroelings pressed upon them from all sides; and they did not stop until they came to some rocks, where they made a stout resistance.' It seems that, when this retreat took place, Freydis—who, as we have seen, was the daughter of Erik the Red, and wife of one Thorvard—was unable to run so nimbly as the rest, because of feminine reasons. Seeing the others fall back, she scornfully cried out: 'Why do ye run, stout men as ye are, before these miserable wretches, whom I thought ye would knock down like cattle? and if I had weapons methinks I could fight better than any of ye.' Yet she followed them slowly as best she could, the Skroelings still pursuing her. At length she came across a man—Thorbrand Snorrason—lying dead, with a flat stone stuck in his head and a naked sword lying by his side. Freydis seized the sword, turned