

VII. *Historical Remarks on the introduction of the game of Chess into Europe, and on the ancient Chess-men discovered in the Isle of Lewis ; by* FREDERIC MADDEN, *Esq. F.R.S. in a Letter addressed to* HENRY ELLIS, *Esq. F.R.S., Secretary.*

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Read 16th February, 1832.

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British Museum, Jan. 28, 1832.

MY DEAR SIR,

THE origin of the Game of CHESS, like the origin of Romance, has been the subject of frequent discussion, and for a long period seemed to be enveloped in nearly equal obscurity. But, in tracing the former, we possess one considerable advantage over those who have discussed the source of fiction in the middle ages—the acknowledged fact, that the game of Chess could not have been produced by more minds than one, although it may subsequently have been modified, improved, or altered, according to the genius and habits of the people by whom it was adopted. It is sufficient, therefore, at present to assume, on the authorities produced by the learned Dr. Hyde and Sir William Jones, that for the invention and earliest form of this game we must look to India,<sup>a</sup> from whence, through the medium of the

<sup>a</sup> The attempt of Christie to re-assert the claims of the Greeks, in his *Essay on the ancient Game attributed to Palamedes*, 4to, Lond. 1801, however ingenious it may be thought, offers no sort of proof, and is contradicted by all historical evidence.—It is, however, possible, that the ancient Egyptians may also have possessed a knowledge of chess ; for among the plates of Hieroglyphics published by Dr. Burton, No. 1, we find at Medinet Habou two representations of some tabular game, closely resembling it ; and I am informed that a more perfect representation exists on the temples at Thebes. Perhaps the forthcoming work of M. Champollion and his coadju-

Persians and Arabs (as demonstratively proved by the names of the chess-men), it was afterwards transmitted to the nations of Europe.

Among the numerous writers who have treated of this game,<sup>b</sup> it is to be regretted so few should have directed their attention to its history ; and more particularly to the epoch of its introduction into the western world, and the state of the game as then played by Europeans. Instead of this, we are presented, in general, with vague surmises and unconnected quotations, which, although curious in themselves, do not enable us to form any very distinct notions on the subject. One opinion however is adopted, I believe, by all ; namely, that the game was imported from the East by the crusaders, and by their means circulated throughout Europe—an hypothesis which, if true, would necessarily exclude all knowledge of it previous to the year 1100.

Yet this opinion, plausible as it may at first seem, labours under many difficulties ; and on a more careful examination will, I think, appear to have been received too hastily. I do not here insist on the claims of the Irish chroniclers to belief, when they relate that Cahir Mor, who died A.D. 177, among other legacies, left several chess-boards (*fichell*) and men (*muintir*) to his son ;<sup>c</sup> nor to the more positive testimony of the Welsh laws of Howel Dha (about A.D. 943) which speak of some species of game played with

tors may throw light on this inquiry, as well as on the query which necessarily follows, viz. whether the Egyptians received the game from the Hindoos, or the reverse.

<sup>b</sup> The only treatises worth mentioning, in which the game is considered historically, are those of M. Sarasin, among his works, 4to. Par. 1656, pp. 259-277 ; of Dr. Hyde, *De Ludis Orientalibus*, 12mo Oxon. 1694 ; of M. Freret, in tom. v. of the *Histoire de l'Académie des Inscriptions*, pp. 250-264, 4to, 1729 ; of the Hon. Daines Barrington, in the *Archæologia*, vol. ix. pp. 16-38 ; of FRANCIS DOUCE, Esq. in the same work, vol. xi. pp. 397-410 ; of M. L. Dubois, in tom. i. of the *Magasin Encyclopédique*, pp. 48-62, 1806 (almost wholly pillaged from Freret) ; and in four Papers by the late Lake Allen, Esq. (assisted by the writer of the present communication) inserted in the *New Monthly Magazine* for 1822, vol. iv. pp. 316-320, 497-502 ; vol. v. pp. 125-130, 315-320. —See also Singer's *Researches into the History of Playing Cards*, 4to, 1816 ; and, *instar omnium*, Twiss's *Collections on the Game*, 2 vols. 8vo, Lond. 1787, 1789, with the additions in his "Miscellanies," 8vo, Lond. 1805. The most copious list of writers on this subject will be found at the end of *Ben-oni, oder die Vertheidigungen gegen die Gambitzüge im Schache*, &c. von A. Reinganum, 8vo. Frankf. am. M. 1825.

<sup>c</sup> See Hyde's *Hist. Shahiludii, Prolegom.* and pp. 28, 52 ; and Twiss, vol. ii. pp. 261-264.

black and white men (*werin*) on a table-board (*tawlbwrdd*.)<sup>d</sup> In both instances I shall consider the fact *not proven*; since it cannot be reconciled with the statements of oriental writers, nor with the chronology of the game. Besides these objections, the meaning of the terms employed is by no means certain, and may, with far greater probability, be referred to the game of tables or draughts, than to chess. Other evidence, however, exists, which would seem to warrant an inference contrary to that which ascribes the knowledge of chess in Europe to the period of the crusades. At what time this game passed from the Arabs to the Greeks of the Lower Empire, has not yet been ascertained. Hyde, Du Cange, and others, have quoted a passage from the *Alexiad* of Anna Comnena, in which the Emperor is said to have been accustomed to rise in the night, and play at chess (τὸ ζατείκιον) with his favourites. The fair historian expressly adds, that the game was derived by the Greeks from the Assyrians, or Arabs of Syria. Now, Alexius reigned from A.D. 1080 to A.D. 1118; and this has been considered the earliest notice of the game after it arrived at Constantinople.

But if we may depend on the fidelity of an oriental historian,<sup>e</sup> we ought to ascribe its appearance in the east of Europe full three centuries anterior. In an epistle from the Emperor Nicephorus to the Caliph Haroun al Rashid, written soon after the accession of the former in A.D. 802, he makes a pointed allusion to the game of chess. "The Queen," said he, speaking of Irene, the mother of Constantine, "to whom I have succeeded, considered you as a *Rook* رخ and herself as a *Pawn* بيدق. That pusillanimous female submitted therefore to pay to thee a tribute, the double of which she ought to have exacted from thyself." What were the original terms employed in speaking of the Rook and Pawn, we have no means of knowing, since the passage exists only in the words of the Arabic writer. But the familiar manner in which such a metaphor is used, sufficiently proves the game to have been some time previously introduced amongst the Greeks, and long enough to be generally understood.

<sup>d</sup> Wotton's *Leges Wallicæ*, l. 3, c. vii. pp. 266-7, fol. Lond. 1730. The board was made of ivory, bone, or horn, and the game was played with *eight* men only on each side.

<sup>e</sup> *Abulfedæ Annales*, tom. ii. p. 85, 4to. Hafn. 1790.

Assuming this as a fact (and I do not see how it can be questioned), we may naturally infer that its progress would not be long confined to the shores of the Propontis, but speedily be transported to the most northern extremity of Europe. This would be rendered easy by the communication maintained between the courts of Constantinople and France, and by the frequent intercourse kept up through the medium of the adventurers of Italy and Scandinavia, who were allured to the eastern metropolis by the advantages of commerce, the prospect of military service, or by the more humble and sanctified object of a pilgrimage to the Holy Sepulchre. Under such circumstances it requires no very great exertion of our credulity to receive the story quoted by the Duke of Lunenburg from an old German Chronicle in the library of Mark Velser, in which the son of Otkar, a Bavarian prince, named Roch, is said to have been killed by a son of King Pepin, on account of the former having conquered repeatedly at Chess.<sup>f</sup> The same story, which must be referred, at latest, to the middle of the eighth century, is repeated by Metellus of Tegernsee, a monastery in Upper Bavaria, near the lake of Zurich, who in his poem intitled *Quirinalia*, or the acts of Saint Quirin, composed in the year 1160, writes as follows :

“ Huic ludo Tabulæ Regis erat filius obuius,  
 Donec doctior hic obtinuit promptius aleam,  
 Rixam victus agit, corde patris fortè potentius,  
 Et Rocho jaculans, mortiferè vuluus adegerat. ”

<sup>f</sup> “ Et dum filii dictorum Principum in *Scaco* luderent, filius Okarii semper Pipini filium vicit. Pipini tamen filius de potentiâ patris præsumens, filium Ducis per tempora percutiens interfecit.” *Das Schach-oder König-Spiel, Gustavi Seleni*, fol. Lips. 1617, p. 14.

This story is repeated in the Fragment of a Chronicle, published by Canisius, *Thes. Monument.* Tom. iv., in which it is referred to the year 746 ; and in the Chronicle of Andreas Presbyter, printed by Marq. Freher, p. 17.

<sup>g</sup> Canisii Thesaur. Monument. tom. iii. pt. 2, p. 134. ed. Basnage, fol. Acta Benedict, Sæc. 3. pt. 1, p. 603. This circumstance furnished, in all probability, the prototype of an incident commonly introduced in the old Romances, and thence into Historians. In the Romance of *Ogier le Danois*, Charlot, son of Charlemagne, cleaves the head of Baudoin, natural son of Ogier, with a chess-board of gold. (See an illumination representing this, in MS. Reg. 15 E. vi. f. 82.) So, likewise, Thibaut breaks the head of his nephew Galyen (*Roman de Galyen Rethore*) ; Reynaud kills Berthelot, the nephew of Charlemagne (*Roman des Quatre Filz Aymon*, and *Roman de Reynaud de*



The above anecdote is rendered more credible by an incidental passage in the account of the translation of the body of St. Stremon, Bishop of Arverne, in the fourteenth year of King Pepin, A. D. 764, to the monastery of Maussac, where, says the anonymous writer, "in token of his reverence for the blessed Martyr, the King bestowed many precious gifts, such as a set of chrystalline chess-men, various gems, and a large sum of gold."<sup>h</sup>

But the strongest proof that the game of chess was introduced into France during the period of the Carlovingian dynasty, is to be found in the ivory chess-men still preserved in the Cabinet of Antiquities, in the Bibliothèque du Roi at Paris, which have been hitherto regarded too lightly. This has arisen from two causes, the first from their never having been seen by any English writer except Twiss; and secondly, from the strange mistake of Dr. Hyde, who represented the Pawns as bearing muskets (sclopetos) on their shoulders, and consequently of very modern workmanship. These pieces were formerly deposited in the treasury of the abbey of St. Denis, and in a History of the Abbey, published in 1625, are thus noticed: "L'Empereur et Roy de France, saint Charlemagne, a donné au Thresor de Saint Denys un jeu d'eschets, avec le tablier, le tout d'ivoire; iceux eschets hauts d'une paulme, fort estimez: le dit tablier et une partie des eschets ont esté perdus

*Montauban*); Fabour lays dead at his feet the son of the Soldan of Persia (*Romance of Guy of Warwick*); and Bevis of Hampton narrowly escapes having his scull fractured. In the French Chronicles we read, that Henry the First, when prince, played with the Dauphin of France, and knocked the chess-board about his head; a story which is copied by Daniel, Carte, Hayward, and Burton, but falsely referred by the latter to William the Conqueror. See Twiss, vol. ii. pp. 45, 139, 140. In the old Gestes of the Warins, cited by Leland, Collectan. i. 230, a similar story is told of Prince John, son of Henry II. and Fulk Fitz-Warin. The ancient chess-boards were very massive, and often made of the precious metals or stones. See New Mon. Mag. vol. v. p. 125, 1822. The colours of the squares were either black and white, red and white, or yellow and white. (See MS. Cott. Cleop. B. ix.) With regard to the size, that on which Charlemagne's pieces stood must have been prodigious; and it would require one above two feet square to play with the chess-men which form the subject of the present Paper.

<sup>h</sup> "Ubi pro reverentiâ beati Martyris, plurima reliquit [Pippinus Rex] insignia, scilicet *saccho* (i. *schachos*) crystallinos, et lapides pretiosos, et auri plurimum," *Acta Benedict. Sæc.* 3. pt. 2, p. 192.

par succession de temps, et est bien vray semblable qu'ils ont esté apportez de l'Orient, et sous les gros eschets il y a des caractères Arabesques."<sup>i</sup>

Dr. Hyde quotes a somewhat similar passage from another writer (Millet), and gives us the Arabic inscription engraved on the larger pieces as follows : من عمل يوسف الناكلي. *Ex opere Josephi Nicolai* ; arguing from the name, that the artist was an European.<sup>k</sup> But with all respect to Hyde's oriental learning, it is evident we ought to translate the words (as in Menage), *Ex opere Josephi al-Nakali*, i. e. the work of Joseph, native of Nakali, probably a city of Asia Minor, now called by the Turks, *Aineh-ghiol*.<sup>l</sup> The pieces, as described by the same author, represent a King, Queen, Archer, Centaur, Elephant, and Pawn. Mr. Twiss, who actually saw these chess-men at St. Denis, previous to the year 1787, says that at that time only fifteen pieces and one pawn remained, all of ivory, yellowed by time. He gives, nevertheless, a very unsatisfactory account of them, but states the King to be about twelve inches high and eight broad, very clumsily carved, and the Pawn about three inches high, representing a dwarf bearing a large shield. A private engraving of the Pawn was circulated by Twiss, which completely disproves the assertion of Hyde with regard to the muskets. But we are fortunately enabled to form a more accurate judgment of the antiquity and form of these singular pieces from the figures of the King and Queen engraved in Willemin's splendid work.<sup>m</sup> They are each represented sitting on a throne, within an arched canopy, of a semi-circular shape, supported by columns, and on either side of the King two male, of the Queen two female personages, are seen in the act of drawing aside a curtain. The King holds a sceptre in his hand, and the Queen an oval ornament, probably intended for the mound. The dresses and ornaments are all strictly in keeping with

<sup>i</sup> Histoire de l'Abbaye de S. Denis, par Jacques Doublet, Religieux de la dite Abbaye, 4to. Par. 1625.

<sup>k</sup> Hist. Shahilud, pp. 72, 132.

<sup>l</sup> V. D'Herbelot, and Baudrand.

<sup>m</sup> *Monumens Français Inédits*, fol. Par. 1806—1832. This work is not yet complete, and the text describing the above plate is unfortunately wanting. There is no copy in the Museum, and I am indebted for the sight of one to Thomas Willement, Esq. I have made some attempts to procure drawings and measurements of all these chess-men, but whether I shall succeed or not, time will show.

the Greek *costume* of the ninth century ; and it is impossible not to be convinced, from the general character of the figures, that these chess-men really belong to the period assigned them by tradition, and were, in all probability, executed at Constantinople, by an Asiatic Greek, and sent as a present to Charlemagne, either by the Empress Irene, or by her successor Nicephorus. With both these sovereigns (in imitation of his predecessor Pepin's policy), the Frankish monarch had maintained a friendly intercourse by means of embassies, and nothing could have been better calculated to excite the interest of the royal barbarian, than the materials of a game which had recently been brought to the knowledge of western Europe. One thing is certain, that these chess-men, from their size and workmanship must have been designed for no ignoble personage, and from the decided style of Greek art visible in the figures, it is a more natural inference to suppose them presented to Charlemagne by a sovereign of the Lower Empire, than that they came to him as an offering from the Moorish princes of Spain, or even from the Caliph Haroun Al Raschid, whose costly gifts to the Emperor of the West are detailed so minutely by the German historians. The value also attached to them at that period, is testified by their having been placed, together with the most costly ornaments of the state, in the abbey of St. Denis, where they were preserved till the time of the revolution. It is possible also, that this transaction may have given rise to the passage above quoted, of a similar donation by King Pepin to the monastery of Maussac.

Admitting the above hypothesis to be correct, we shall cease to wonder at the perpetual references in the ancient French romances to the game of chess in the time of Charlemagne. This is remarkably the case in the Romance of Guerin de Montglave, which turns wholly upon a game of chess, at which Charlemagne had lost his kingdom to Guerin. The short dialogue which preceded this game, on which so great a stake depended, as narrated by the hero of the story to his sons, is characteristic, and has been thus modernised by the Comte De Tressan. “ ‘ I bet,’ said the Emperor to me, ‘ that you would not play your expectations against me on this chess-board, unless I were to propose some very high stake.’ ‘ Done,’ replied I ; ‘ I will play them, provided only you bet against me your kingdom of France.’ ‘ Very good, let us see,’ cried Charlemagne, who fancied himself to be strong

at chess. We play forthwith—I win his kingdom—he falls a-laughing at it; but I swear by St. Martin, and all the Saints of Aquitain, that he must needs pay me by some sort of composition or other.”<sup>n</sup> The Emperor, therefore, by way of equivalent, surrenders to Guerin all his right to the city of Montglave (Lyons), then in the hands of the Saracens, which is forthwith conquered by the hero, who afterwards marries Mabilette, the Soldan’s daughter. In another romance, containing the history of *Les Quatre Filz Aymon*, we read that Duke Richard of Normandy was playing at chess with Ivonnet, son of Regnaut (Rinaldo), when he was arrested by the officers of Regnaut, who said to him (we quote from the old translation of Copeland, 1504), “ ‘ Aryse up, Duke Rycharde; for, in despite of Charlemayne that loveth you so muche, ye shall be hanged now.’ When Duke Rycharde saw that these sergeautes had him thus by the arm, and helde in his hande a lady (*dame*) of ivery, where w<sup>t</sup> he would have given a mate to Yonnet, he withdrew his arme, and gave to one of the sergeautes such a stroke with it into the forehead, that he made him tumble over and over at his feete; and than he tooke a rooke (*roc*) and smote another w<sup>t</sup> all upon his head, that he all to brost it to the brayne.” Examples of this nature might be multiplied to some extent, but the above will be sufficient to shew the manner in which the old romancers introduce the game.

Another instance, of a later date indeed than the period I have left, but early enough to prove my position, that chess must have been known in Europe previous to the first crusade, presents itself in the Epistles of Damiano, Cardinal Bishop of Ostia, who died in 1080. In a letter to Pope Alexander II. [1061-1073] he mentions an adventure which took place between himself and a Bishop of Florence. “Whilst we were travelling together,” he writes, “having arrived in the evening at a resting-place, I withdrew myself to the neighbouring cell of a priest; but he remained with a crowd of

<sup>n</sup> “ ‘ Je parie, que vous ne voudriez pas jouer contre moi vos esperances, sur cet échiquier, à moins que je ne misse gros au jeu.’ ‘ Si fait,’ repondis-je, ‘ les jouerai, pourvu que gagiez contre moi seulement votre royaume de France.’ ‘ Eh bien ! voyons,’ dit Charles, qui se croyoit fort aux échecs. Nous jouons; je lui gagne son royaume; il se met à rire; moi, je jure par Saint Martin, et par bien d’autres saints de mon pays d’Aquitaine, qu’il faut bien qu’il me paye par quelque accommodement.” *Bibliothèque des Romans*, Oct. 1771, vol. ii. p. 8.

people in a large house of entertainment. In the morning, my servant informed me that the Bishop had been playing at the game of chess; which thing when I heard, it pierced to my heart like an arrow. At a convenient hour, I sent for him, and said, in a tone of severe reproof, 'The hand is stretched out; the rod is ready for the back of the offender.' 'Let the fault be proved,' said he, 'and penance shall not be refused.' 'Was it well,' rejoined I; 'was it worthy of the character you bear, to spend the evening in the vanity of chess-play (in vanitate *scachorum*), and defile the hands and tongue which ought to be the mediators between man and the Deity? Are you not aware that, by the canonical law, bishops, who are dice-players, are ordered to be suspended' (*deponantur*). He, however, seeking an excuse from the name of the game, and sheltering himself under this shield, suggested that dice was one thing, and chess another; consequently, that dice alone were forbidden by the canon, but chess tacitly allowed. To which I replied thus,—'Chess,' said I, 'is not named in the text, but is comprehended under the general term of dice. Wherefore, since dice are prohibited, and chess is not expressly mentioned, it follows, without doubt, that both kinds of play are included under one term, and equally condemned.' To this the poor prelate could make no reply, and was ordered by his superior, by way of penance for his offence, to repeat the Psalter over thrice, and to wash the feet of, and give alms to, twelve poor persons.<sup>o</sup> Twiss infers from this story, that chess was then a thing quite new and strange, vol. i. p. 109; but I apprehend the direct reverse should be the conclusion.

The preceding observations have been called forth by a singular discovery, made in the course of the last twelvemonth, which throws no inconsider-

<sup>o</sup> "Dum aliquando sibi essem comes itineris, vespertinum tandem subeuntes hospitium, ego me in presbyteri cellam semovi, is autem in spatiosa domo cum commeantium turba resedit. Mane autem facto, à meo mihi agasone significatum est, quod prædictus Episcopus ludo præfuerit *Scachorum*. Quod profectò verbum, velut sagitta, cor meum acutissimè pupugit.—Ille autem ex diversitate nominum defensionis sibi faciens scutum, ait, aliud *Schachum* esse, aliud aleam. Aleas ergo auctoritas illa prohibuit, *Schachos* vero tacendo concessit. Ad quod ego: *Schachum*, inquam, scriptura non ponit, sed utriusque ludi genus aleæ nomine comprehendit." *Epist. Damiani*, 4to, Par. 1610, p. 45.

able light on the early history of the game of chess, after its arrival in Europe. It was thus announced in one of the Scottish newspapers of June last :—“Some months ago, a very curious discovery was made in the parish of Uig, Isle of Lewis, which must prove highly interesting to Scottish antiquaries. A peasant of the place, whilst digging a sand bank, found upwards of seventy pieces of bone, most of them representing Kings, Bishops, and Knights, dismounted and on horseback. The figures are of excellent workmanship ; and, judging from the costume, certainly of very remote antiquity. That they were originally carved for the ancient purpose of Chess-play, seems the most probable conjecture, and had been destined to relieve the sadness of cloistered seclusion ; for they were discovered near the ruin known to have been a nunnery, and still named *Taignir collechin dugh an Uig*, the House of Black Women in Uig.<sup>p</sup> With the other articles was found a Buckle of the same kind of bone or ivory, beautifully executed, and in perfect preservation, as are all the rest.”

By the liberality of the Trustees of the British Museum, these figures now form a part of the national collection of antiquities, and it is hoped that an accurate delineation and description of them may not be unacceptable to the Society of Antiquaries, even should the writer of the present communication fail in his attempt to give them “a local habitation and a name.”

The number of these chess-men—for such they are—exclusive of the fourteen table-men or draught-men, and the fibula found with them, amounts to sixty-seven ; of which number nineteen are pawns, the rest superior pieces. Of these, six are Kings, five Queens, thirteen Bishops, fourteen Knights, and ten pieces which I shall designate by the title of *Warders*, which here take the place of the Rook or Castle ; forming, altogether, the materials of six or more sets. For the sake of distinction, part of them were originally stained of a dark red or beet-root colour ; but from having been so long subject to the action of the salt-water, the colouring matter, in most cases, has been discharged. The pieces vary also in size, according to the

<sup>p</sup> A private letter from Edinburgh states the story of the Nunnery to be fictitious, but that a ruin of some note exists not far from the spot where these chessmen were found.

sets of which they formed a part ; and, although so many remain, it is difficult at present to select even two sets which correspond exactly. A short comparative statement of the height, circumference, and base, of the largest and smallest of each sort, is subjoined :

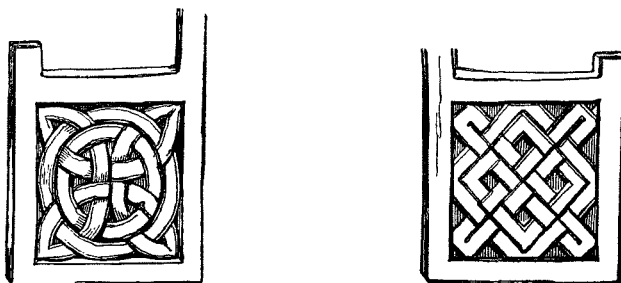
	Height.	Circumference.	Base.
Largest King	$4\frac{1}{8}$ inch.	$6\frac{3}{4}$ inch.	$2\frac{1}{4}$ by $1\frac{5}{8}$ inch.
Smallest ditto	$3\frac{1}{8}$	$5\frac{1}{8}$	$1\frac{5}{8}$ by $1\frac{1}{4}$
Largest Queen	$3\frac{7}{8}$	$5\frac{3}{8}$	$1\frac{3}{4}$ by $1\frac{3}{8}$
Smallest ditto	3	5	$1\frac{5}{8}$ by $1\frac{3}{8}$
Largest Bishop	4	$5\frac{3}{8}$	2 by $1\frac{3}{8}$
Smallest ditto	$2\frac{7}{8}$	$4\frac{1}{4}$	$1\frac{1}{2}$ by $1\frac{1}{4}$
Largest Knight	4	$6\frac{1}{4}$	$2\frac{1}{4}$ by $1\frac{1}{2}$
Smallest ditto	$2\frac{7}{8}$	$5\frac{1}{4}$	2 by 1
Largest Warder	4	5	$1\frac{7}{8}$ by $1\frac{3}{8}$
Smallest ditto	$2\frac{7}{8}$	$4\frac{1}{4}$	$1\frac{1}{2}$ by $1\frac{1}{8}$
Largest Pawn	$2\frac{3}{8}$	$3\frac{3}{4}$	$1\frac{3}{8}$ by $\frac{7}{8}$
Smallest ditto	$1\frac{5}{8}$	$2\frac{3}{8}$	$\frac{7}{8}$ by $\frac{7}{8}$

I. The KINGS. In point of costume and attitude these nearly resemble each other. They are represented as elderly men, with large spade-shaped beards, moustaches, and hair falling in plaits over their shoulders, having low trefoil crowns on their heads, either plain or ornamented with a border, and sitting on chairs of a square form, with high backs, which are richly carved with various scrolls, figures of animals, interlaced arches, and tracery work, in the best style of art of the twelfth century, as seen on monuments and in manuscripts. Their dress consists of an upper and an under robe, the former of which, or mantle (*clamys*), is thrown in folds over the left arm, and left open on the right side as high as the shoulder (where it is fastened by a clasp), for the purpose of leaving the arm free. This was the usual and most ancient form of regal dress, and is every where presented in the MSS. and seals of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, as well as in those of England, Scotland, France, and Germany. Each of the figures holds a sword with both hands across his knees, as if in the act of drawing it, according to the old mode assigned to royal personages. Thus, in the *Grimnis-mal*, one of

the Eddaic poems, King Geirrautr sat with his sword on his knee, the blade half-drawn, listening to the words of Odin.<sup>q</sup> The swords are broad and short, and the scabbard is marked, either with a simple longitudinal line, or with lines diagonally placed, resembling those in the illuminations prefixed to the Theotisc Harmony of the Gospels, MS. Cott. Calig. A. VII.<sup>r</sup> A similar description of weapon, held by a king in the same position as above described, may be seen in Reenhielm's Notes on the Saga of Thorsten Viikings-son,<sup>s</sup> copied from an Icelandic MS. of the thirteenth century. He supposes this to be the species of sword called *Sax*, to distinguish it from that termed *Machir* (μάχηρα), which was of greater length.

The minuter differences of the several figures will best be illustrated by taking them up separately, and comparing them with what I designate No. 1, which has been selected for engraving, as shown in Pl. XLVI. fig. 1, 2.

No. 2—Differs from the former in having no beard nor moustaches. The crown is quite plain, and the hem or border of the tunic is shown. On the back of the chair appears the elegant ornament engraved in Pl. XLIX. fig. 11. On the sides of the royal seat are also two smaller patterns, as annexed.

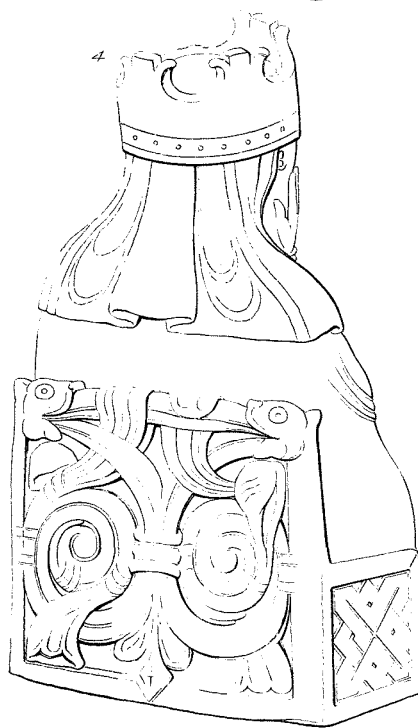
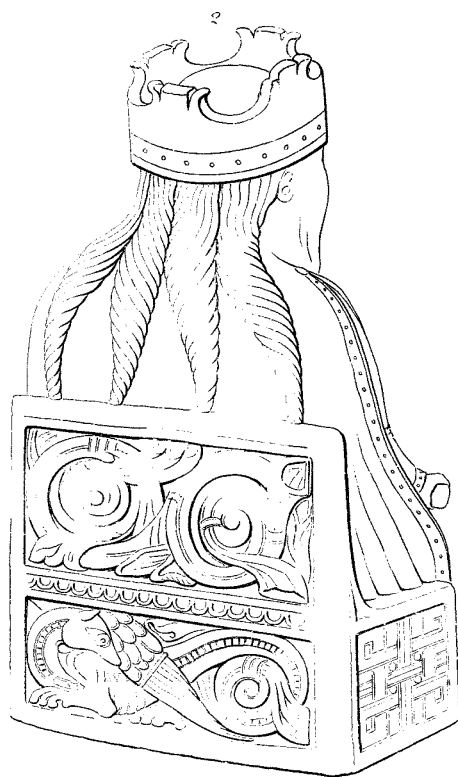
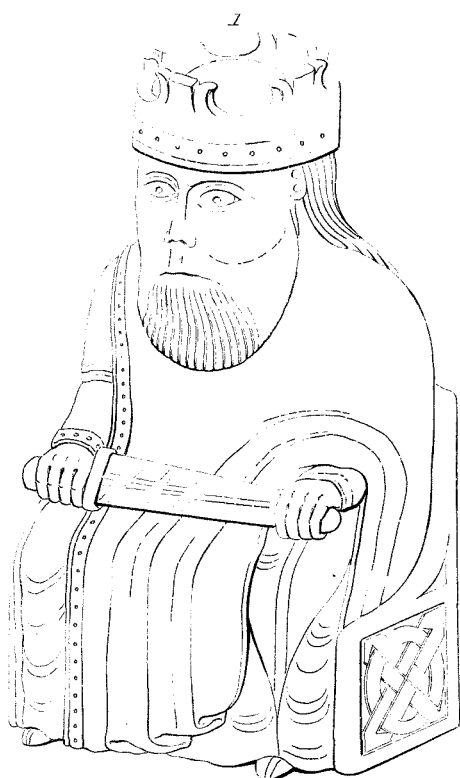


<sup>q</sup> Edda Sæmundar, vol. i. p. 68. Cf. Anderson's Diplom. Scot. pl. xxiv.

<sup>r</sup> This MS. has been absurdly called King Canute's Prayer Book, and Strutt has engraved figures from the illuminations prefixed as specimens of Danish armour of the reign of Canute. But these miniatures have no connexion at all with the MS., and were added to it at a recent period. They were evidently executed in France about the middle of the twelfth century, and, in many respects, correspond very accurately with the costume of the Chess-men I am describing.—See Strutt's *Horda*, pl. 26, 27, and *Chron. of England*, vol. ii. p. 215. Meyrick's *Ancient Armour*, vol. i. p. lxix. Cf. Willemin's *Monumens Français Inédits*, fol.

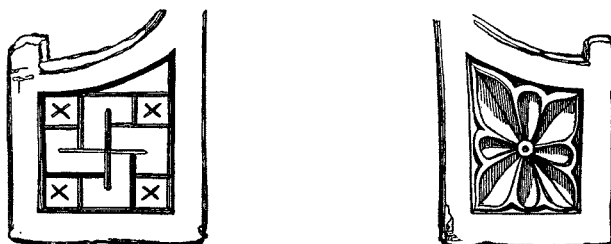
<sup>s</sup> 12mo. Ups. 1680, p. 85.





*Ancient Chefsmen, found in the Isle of Lewis.*

No. 3.—This figure is of lower stature, and of ruder appearance and workmanship, particularly in respect to the features. The hair is not plaited, as in the preceding instances, but spreads over the back in six long wreaths. The crown has a rude ornament cut on it in front, and the tunic covers the feet entirely. The sword has been broken off. On the back of the seat is a less artificial form of ornament (Pl. XLIX. fig. 8.), which would also indicate an earlier period of art than most of the other pieces; and on the sides are the following:

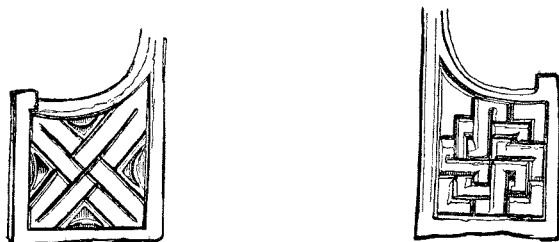


No. 4.—Resembles No. 2, but is of smaller size and inferior workmanship. It seems to have been originally coloured *red*. The two side ornaments also are very similar to those on No. 2. That on the back of the chair is engraved on Pl. XLVIII. fig. 5.

No. 5.—Probably belonged to the same set as the last, as it is of the same size and form. The face is without beard, and a plain crown, as No. 2. The hair differs from the other instances, and, instead of flowing over the shoulders, is cut round a little below the neck. The crown and hair are damaged behind. The feet are also not seen, but covered by the border of the tunic. The ornament behind the seat is in Pl. XLIX. fig. 10, and those on the sides are represented beneath.



No. 6.—The only variation here worth notice is, that the plaits of hair are disposed in five, instead of four wreaths, as in the plate. The back of the chair is remarkable, as well for its neat execution, as from its exhibiting the intersection of the round arch, as seen in our early Norman churches. It is represented in Pl. XLIX. fig. 3, and the smaller ornaments appear thus :



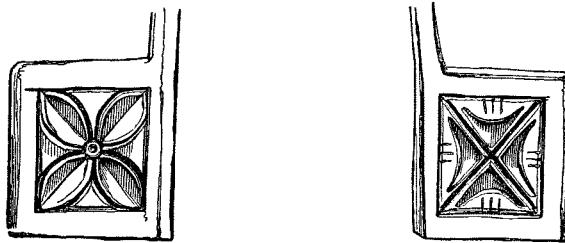
It is not a little remarkable, that a figure resembling in most respects those above described, and made of the same material, should have been discovered about sixty years ago, in a ruinous part of the Castle of Dunstaffnage, in Scotland, situated on the coast of Argyleshire, opposite to the Isle of Mull. Mr. Pennant gives an engraving of it in his *Scottish Tour of 1772*, vol. ii. p. 410, pl. 44; but erroneously conjectures it to have been cut in memory of the famous coronation chair in which the monarchs of Scotland were anciently wont to be crowned. But he is certainly mistaken, and there can be no doubt but that the figure once formed one of a set of chess-men similar to those before us.

II.—The QUEENS. These are also represented sitting in chairs, ornamented in a style similar to those of the Kings, and crowned. From the back of the head of each hangs a species of hood, which spreads over the shoulders, and was worn universally by ladies of rank in the middle ages, as is proved by MSS. and monuments, particularly of the Franks and Saxons.†

† See Montfaucon, *Monumens de la Monarchie Française*, vol. i. pl. 8. ; Mailliot, *Recherches sur les Costumes des Anciens Peuples*, tom. iii. 4to. Par. 1809; MS. Cott. Nero, c. iv. f. 13 b. ; Strutt's *Dresses*, vol. i. p. 12, from MS. Cott. Claud. B. iv. ; and *Horda*, pl. 28, figure of Canute's Queen, from the Hyde Abbey Book, at Stowe.

The same head-attire is shown in the monuments of Sweden and Denmark.<sup>u</sup> From the shoulders to the feet hangs a long mantle, which shows in front a sub-garment or gown. The sleeves of this, like those of the Saxons and Norman French, are short, with a worked border, and from the elbow to the wrist is a series of plaits, resembling bands, which probably were wound round the arm. Most of the figures are represented in a contemplative posture. The head rests upon the right arm, which is supported by the left. This is the case with three out of the five instances; but in No. 1, engraved on Pl. XLVI. fig. 3, 4, the left hand holds a drinking-horn,<sup>\*</sup> curiously shaped. The other variations of consequence follow :

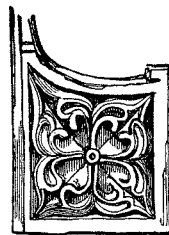
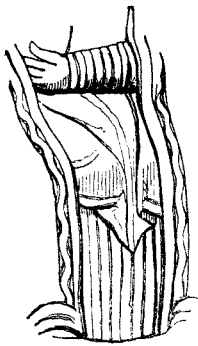
No. 2.—The ornament on the back of the seat, over which hangs a piece of drapery, is given in Pl. XLIX. fig. 9, and the smaller ones are below.



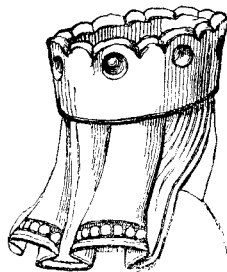
<sup>u</sup> See in Peringskiöld, *Attalar för Swea och Götha Konunga Hus*, fol. Stockh. 1725, the monument of King Eric and his Queen Richessa, at the beginning of the thirteenth century; the seal of Ingebirga, wife of Duke Waldemar, and Countess of Holland in 1317; and the monument of Birger Peterson and his wife, 1328.

<sup>\*</sup> Respecting the use of horns as drinking-cups, formerly so universal among the Gothic nations, see Wormius's learned treatise on the golden horn in the King of Denmark's collection (*Danica Monumenta*, fol. Hafn. 1643), where many examples are engraved. See also a representation of them in Saxon times, in MS. Cott. Claud. B. iv. f. 32 b. Strutt's *Horda*, vol. i. pl. 16. These horns are not uncommon in England, witness the horn at York Cathedral (*Archæolog.* i. 168), the Pusey Horn (*Ib.* iii. 3, 9, 13), the horn at Queen's College, Oxford (engraved in Haslewood's edit. of *Barnabæ Itinerarium*), &c. In the *Archæologia*, vol. xi. App. p. 429, is an engraving of one, probably Danish, found in Ireland. Horns were also sometimes used to keep money in, as appears from a passage in the Edda, where it is said that Ursa, wife of Adil, King of Sweden, gave a horn filled with gold to her son Hrolf Kraka, King of Denmark, to induce him to renew his friendship with her.—Wormius, p. 384. To those who may not think it becoming in a queen to hold a horn of ale in her hand, the latter mode of accounting for its introduction may appear preferable.

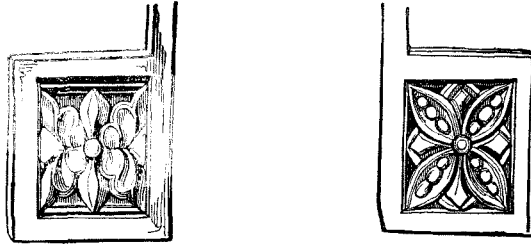
No. 3.—This figure is of inferior execution to the two former. The mantle or cloak has a wavy border round it, and beneath is a vestment falling in a pointed fold, a little below the knees, displaying underneath a striped petticoat. The feet are here visible, which are covered in the other instances, and the hood at the back of the head is arranged in a somewhat different manner. On the chair is another example of the intersected round arch, represented in Pl. XLIX. fig. 4, and the other small ornaments are given beneath.



No. 4.—This and the next figure evidently belong to the same set, and match with No. 4 of the Kings. The crowns of both are of a different form from the rest, and the hood terminates very gracefully in a border, thus :



The larger decoration of the chair is in Pl. XLIX, fig. 5, and the two smaller ones follow.

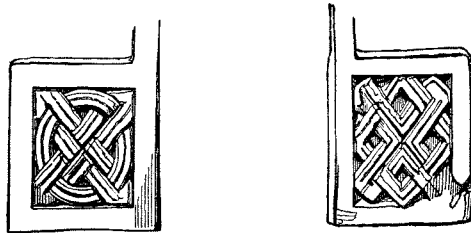


This figure is one of the *red* set, and still preserves the colour very deeply.

No. 5.—The general character of this piece much resembles the last, but the attitude of the arms is different. The right arm supports the head, as before, but the left rests on her knee, and holds a sort of handkerchief, as here represented.



The back of her chair appears in Pl. XLIX. fig. 12, and represents two nondescript animals intertwined with scrolls, very tastefully disposed. Two lesser designs are on the sides, which follow :



From the above pieces we are enabled to speak confidently as to the very early appearance of the Queen in the European chess-board, and consequently to reject the fictions of those writers who have ascribed it, at a comparatively recent period, to the French, from some fancied similarity of sound between *Fierce* or *Fers*, the old Norman and English term for

the Queen (corrupted from the Arabic *فرز* *Pherz*, Persian *فرزین* *Pherzîn*, a councillor, or vizier) and the French, *Vierge*. The same fact is proved by the set of chess-men belonging to Charlemagne, of the eighth or beginning of the ninth century. It is to the Greeks, consequently, we should ascribe the merit or blame of metamorphosing the minister into the Queen, and by that means introducing so strange an anomaly as the promotion of a foot-soldier to be a lady. Freret and Le Grand have attributed this innovation to the "galanterie chevaleresque" of the middle ages, which subsequently rendered the Queen the most important piece on the board; but, in truth, this change must have been nearly coeval with the first appearance of the game in Europe, and the restricted move of the *Fierce*, or Queen, to one square, certainly continued to be observed till the beginning of the sixteenth century.

Further evidence of the Chess-Queen having existed in the twelfth century, may be found in a Latin poem of that age in the Bodleian library.<sup>y</sup>

Rex paratus ad pugnandum, primum locum teneat,  
Ejus atque dextrum latus *Regina* possideat.

\* \* \* \* \*

Nam *Regina* non valebit impedire alteram;  
Suo *Regi* deputata, velut pro custodia,  
Circumquaque per transversum binas regat tabulas.  
Cum *Pedester* usque summam venerit ad tabulam,  
Nomen ejus hinc mutetur, appelletur *Ferzia*;  
Ejus interim *Reginæ* gratiam obtineat.

It will here not fail to be remarked, that the terms both of *Ferzia* and *Regina* are used synonymously, which is also the case in the *Moralitas de Scaccario*, improperly ascribed to Pope Innocent III.<sup>z</sup>; and in a Latin poem

<sup>y</sup> MS. Bodl. 799, f. 110 b. It is printed by Hyde, but very incorrectly, p. 179.

<sup>z</sup> "*Regina* que dicitur *Ferce*, vadit oblique, et capit indirecte, quia cum avarissimum sit genus mulierum, nichil capit (nisi merè detur ex gratia) nisi rapina et injusticia." MS. Harl. 2253, f. 135 b (written temp. Edw. II.); MS. Bodl. 52, f. 59 b; MS. Reg. 12 E. xxi. f. 99 b. This tract was printed by Dr. Prideaux, in his *Hypomneumata Logica*, 8vo. and translated by Twiss, vol. ii. p. 4. Cf. with MS. Sloan. 4029, f. 36 b; and see Hyde, p. 179.

of uncertain age, but probably of the 13th century.<sup>a</sup> In another poem of considerable antiquity, supposed to have been written by Pamphilus Maurilianus, but which has been falsely attributed to Ovid, the Queen is called *Virgo*; and Mr. Douce has pointed out to us the title of *Regina*, applied to this piece in the *Gesta Romanorum*, compiled at the beginning of the 13th century.<sup>b</sup> The names both of *Reyne* and *Ferce* occur in a very curious metrical Anglo-Norman treatise on the game, composed by an English author in the time of Edward I.<sup>c</sup>, and also in some English illustrations of chess positions about the reign of Edward IV.<sup>d</sup> To all this evidence may be added that of the popular work of Jacobus de Cessolis, a Dominican friar of

<sup>a</sup> MSS. Coll. Arm. E. D. N. No. 11, ad calc. MS. Bodl. 487, f. 62. It is printed in Hyde, p. 181, from an inaccurate transcript of a copy at Daventer, in Holland. Compare also a similar poem in MS. Reg. 12 E. xxi. f. 99, and the *New Monthly Mag.* vol. V. p. 127, 1822.—In the Hebrew treatise of Aben-Jachia, published by Hyde, this piece is also considered as a female; but in the earlier composition of Aben-Ezra, who died about A.D. 1174, the term of פֶּרֶז Pherz only is used. Hyde makes a mistake in translating some lines relative to the move of this piece, which may here be corrected. Aben-Ezra says of the Elephant,—

כמו פֶּרֶז הליכחו אבל יש  
לזה יתרון למה שהוא משלש

Sicut τὴ Pherz est incessus ejus, nisi quod sit  
Huic præcellentia, eo quod ille sit tantum trifarius.

Hyde was not aware that the superiority lay on the side of the Elephant or Bishop, which could move over three squares diagonally, including the one on which it stood; whereas the Queen or Pherz could only move one square at a time. We should therefore omit the word *tantum*, and translate as follows: “Its move is like that of the Pherz (diagonal), except that it has over this (the Pherz) a superiority, by its having the power to pass over three squares at a move.”

<sup>b</sup> Dissert. in *Archæolog.* vol. xi. p. 400; Twiss, vol. ii. p. 255.

<sup>c</sup> MS. Cott. Cleop. B. ix. A later copy of this work, considerably augmented, occurs in MS. Reg. 12 E. xxi. Both are illustrated with diagrams. From the former of these MSS. Strutt engraved (incorrectly) the forms of the men, and a round chess-board (*Sports*, p. 276, 2d ed.); but he was unable to understand the text. A more ample account of the MS. is given by Mr. Allen in the *New Monthly Mag.* vol. iv. pp. 499-501; but his translation is very faulty. It is my intention, at no very distant period, to publish both these treatises, with a variety of other documents relating to chess, collected from the MS. libraries in England and on the Continent.

<sup>d</sup> I am indebted for the use of this MS. to John Baker, Esq. It belongs to his uncle, the talented historian of Northamptonshire.



Cessoles, near the frontiers of Picardy,<sup>e</sup> who wrote about the year 1290, which was translated into nearly all the languages of Europe. In it the Queen is thus described, to use the words of Caxton's version, 2d Ed. [1474]:—"Thus ought the quene be maad. She ought to be a fayr lady, sittynge in a chayer, and crowned with a corone on her heed, and cladde with a cloth of gold, and above furrid with ermynes."<sup>f</sup> It evidently, therefore, results from the above passages, that, although the term of *Fierge*, *Fierce*, *Ferz*, or *Fers*, seems to have been more usually employed than that of Queen, from the 12th to the 15th century, both in France and England; <sup>g</sup> yet that the title of Queen was never wholly laid aside, and was finally resumed in England in the reign of Henry the Eighth.<sup>h</sup>

III. THE BISHOPS.—Five of these are represented sitting in ornamented chairs, like the King and Queen; but the remaining eight are in a standing posture. Their dress is of two descriptions. All of the sitting figures, and four of the standing ones, wear the chasuble,<sup>i</sup> dalmatic, stole, and tunic, of the form anciently prescribed, and corresponding with representations of much greater antiquity. The remainder have a cope instead of a chasuble, but omit the stole and dalmatic. On the back both of the chasuble and stole are various crosses or ornaments. The mitres are very low, and in some instances quite plain, but have the double band or *infulæ* attached behind. The hair is cut short round the head. They hold a crosier with one, or with both hands; and, in the former instances, the other hand holds a book, or is raised in the attitude of benediction. The engraving of No. 1 in Pl. XLVII. fig. 1, 2, will exemplify the sitting figures.

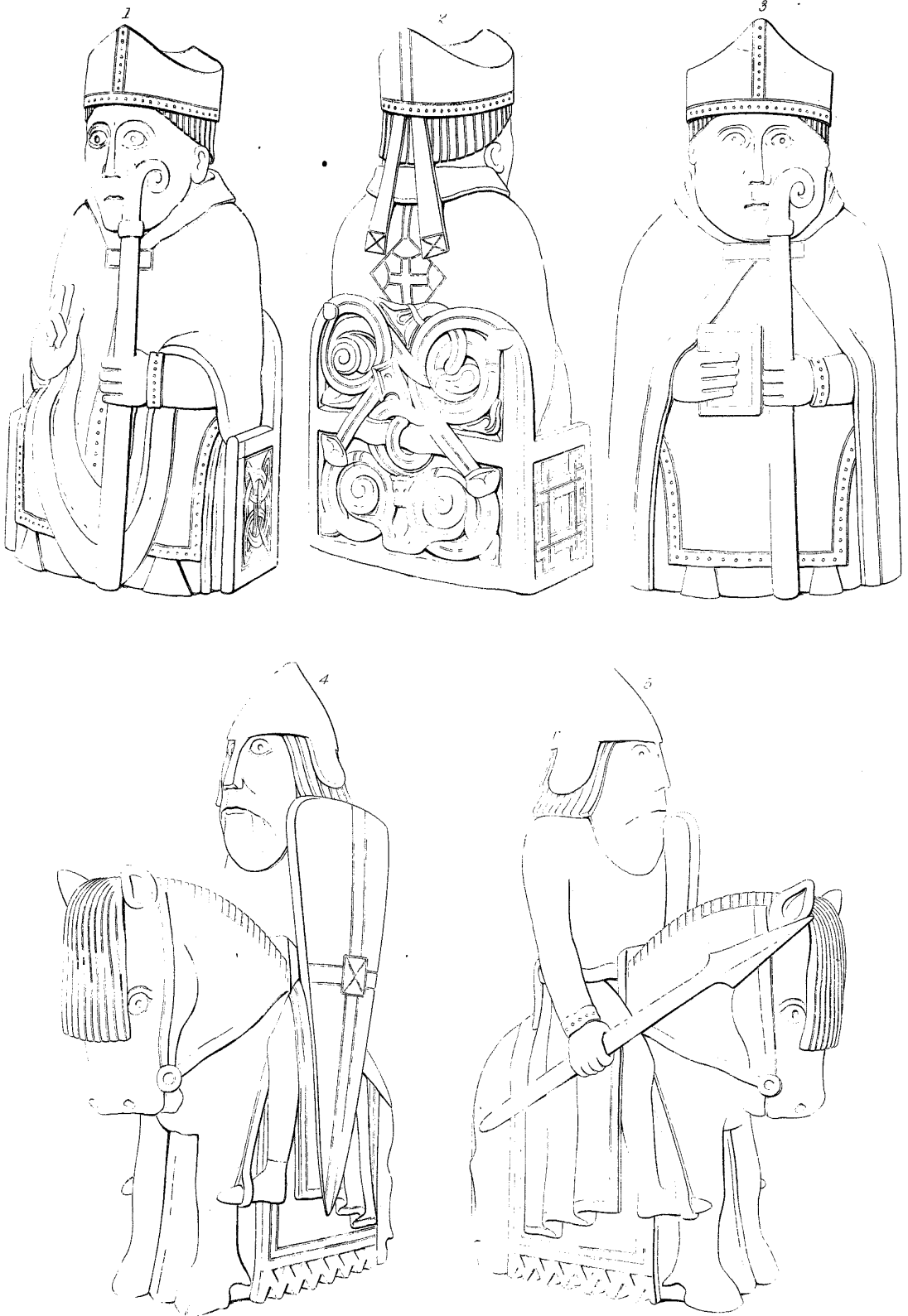
<sup>e</sup> See Marchand's Dict. Historique, i. 179. Dibdin's Ames, i. 52 n.

<sup>f</sup> "Super solium collocata est domina quædam pulchra cum corona in capite, vestimento deaurato, et clamyde circumamicta varietate" (*sic*). MS. Reg. 12 B. xxiii.; 12 E. xxii.; MS. Harl. 3238.

<sup>g</sup> See Roman d'Alexandre, MS. Bodl. 264, f. 129; Roman de la Rose, v. 6688, 6701, 6735; Chaucer's Book of the Duchess, v. 654; Lydgate ap. Hyde, proleg. (b).

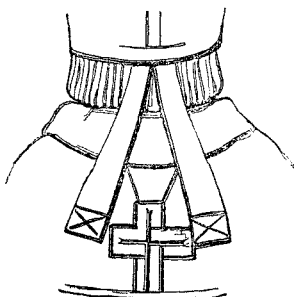
<sup>h</sup> Horman's Vulgaria, 4to, Lond. 1519.

<sup>i</sup> For an explanation of these terms, see Mr. Gage's valuable communication in the present volume, p. 33.

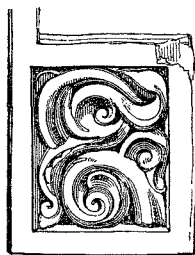
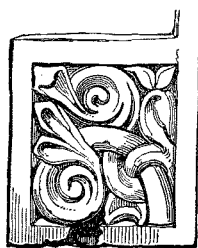


*Ancient Chys-men, found in the Isle of Lewis.*

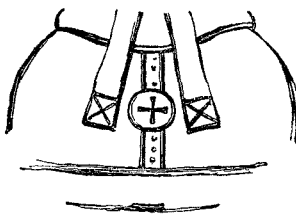
No. 2.—Resembles the former; but the crosier is held in the right hand, and in the left, which rests on the knee, is an Evangelistarium, or volume of the Gospels. On the back of the chasuble is a cross of a different shape; thus—



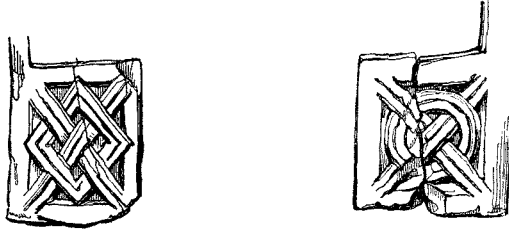
The larger ornament on the chair is given in Pl. XLIX. fig. 7, and those on the sides appear below :



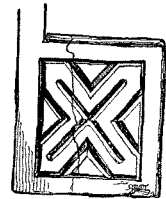
No. 3.—The position is exactly that of No. 1; but the crosier has been broken off by accident, and the figure is otherwise damaged. The mitre and dalmatic are quite plain, and on the back of the chasuble is this ornament,—



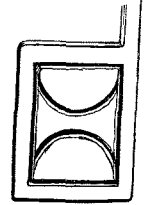
The decoration of the chair appears in Pl. XLIX. fig. 2, and the smaller patterns are subjoined :



No. 4.—Holds in the right hand a book, and a crosier in the left. The mitre and back of the chasuble are plain. On the chair appears another curious illustration of the intersected round arch, as shewn in Pl. XLIX. fig. 1. The smaller ornaments are both alike. This piece has originally been coloured *red*.

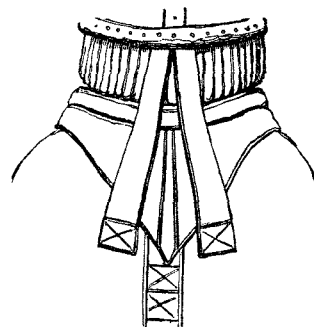


No. 5.—The crosier here appears in the right, the book in the left hand. On the back of the chasuble is a cross nearly resembling that on No. 3. The chair is represented in Pl. XLIX. fig. 6, and on the sides is the following device. This piece has likewise belonged to the *red* set, and still retains the colour very deeply.



No. 6.—Is in an upright or standing posture ; but the dress is the same as No. 1, and the position of the arms resembles No. 5. On the back of the chasuble is a plain ornament of four stripes.

No. 7.—Holds the book in the right, the crosier in the left hand. We have in this the first instance of the *capa* or cope, which, instead of inclosing the body as the chasuble, opens in front, and shews the dalmatic, stole, and tunic more distinctly, as appears in Pl. XLVII. fig. 3. The form of the collar and ornament on the back will best appear by the wood-cut annexed.



No. 8.—Holds the crosier in both hands, and wears only the cope and tunic. This is the case also with Nos. 9, 11, and 12. Probably this piece was originally *red*.

No. 9.—The disposition of the book and crosier is as in No. 5. The mitre is more pointed than we have hitherto seen it, and has no infulæ attached; it is also shaped differently in front, as here represented.



No. 10.—Same attitude as the last, and belonged, probably, as well as No. 11, to the same set. The mitre is like No. 5. We have here again the chasuble instead of the cope. On the back is the same ornament as No. 9, but the cope has a straight instead of a pointed collar. This piece is of the *red* set.

No. 11.—Holds the crosier with both hands, as No. 8. The mitre is pointed as No. 9. The ornament on the cope nearly resembles No. 7.

No. 12.—Same attitude as the last. The ornament is, like No. 8, composed of four stripes, with bars across.

No. 13.—Same attitude, but wears the chasuble, and the stole in addition. From its size this figure probably belonged to No. 6 of the Kings. On the back is an ornament very like that on No. 3.

Here again, as in the preceding instance of the Queen, we learn with certainty the introduction of the Bishop into the game of chess at so early a period as the middle of the twelfth century. The original name of this piece among the Persians and Arabs was *پیل* *Pil*, or *فيل* *Phil*, an Elephant, under the form of which it was represented by the orientals, and Dr. Hyde and Mr. Douce have satisfactorily proved that hence, with the addition of the article *al*, have been derived the various names of *alfil*, *arfil*, *alferez*, *alphilus*, *alfino*, *alphino*, *alfiere*, *aufin*, *alfyn*, *awfyn*, *alphyn*, *alfyn*, as used by the early Spanish, Italian, French, and English writers.<sup>j</sup> Aben-

<sup>j</sup> Hyde, p. 95. Douce, in *Archæol.* xi. pp. 400—404. Allen, in *New Monthly Mag.* p. 128, vol. v. 1822.

Ezra, in the twelfth century, retains the original term of פִּיל *Phil*, but in the *Roman d'Alexandre*, composed before the year 1200, we find it in the form of *auffin*; and from the French Romances it was borrowed by the English. With regard to the period when the Bishop first took the place of the Elephant, authors are silent, nor has any evidence occurred to determine. But that such a change is of great antiquity not only is apparent from the figures before us, but from the Latin poem before quoted of the twelfth century, in which the piece is termed *Calvus*, an evident allusion to the monkish character.

“ Juxta illam [Reginam] *Calvum* pone, quasi pro custodia.”

And again :

“ Cedit *Calvus* per transversum, tertiam ad tabulam.”

So also in the poem attributed to Pamphilus Maurilianus :

“ Rex est Sol, pedes est Saturnus, Mars quoque miles,  
Regia virgo Venus, *Alphinus Episcopus* ipse est  
Juppiter, et Roccus discurrens Luna.”<sup>k</sup>

And in the *Moralitas de Scaccario*, we read, “ *Alphini sunt Episcopi*, non ut Moyses, ex colloquio divino, sed potius regio imperio, prece, vel precio sublimati, et sic promoti. Isti *Alphini* oblique currunt, et tres punctos pertranseunt,” &c. MS. Harl. 2253. f. 135 b. A later copy in MS. Reg. 12, E. xxi. has this remarkable variation : “ *Alphini prelati sunt ecclesiis proprii, scilicet archiepiscopi et episcopi cornuti.*”

In the old French writers we meet also with decided traces of such a piece as the Bishop. Thus, in the *Roman d'Alexandre*, as quoted by Charpentier, in his additions to Du Cange :

“ Roy, fierce, cheualier, auffin, roc, et *cornu*<sup>l</sup>  
Furent fet de saphir——”

<sup>k</sup> Vide Fabric. Bibl. Med. et Inf. Lat. v. 556. The poem was printed by Goldastus, in 8vo. 1610, with other pieces ; but, as the volume is not in the Museum, I am obliged to quote from second hand.

<sup>l</sup> There is some little difficulty here, and it would read better thus : “ *Roc et auffin cornu.*” These lines do not occur in the magnificent copy of this Romance preserved in the Bodleian library, No. 264, but are replaced by the following :

And in the MS. treatise on Chess, in the Cottonian library, Cleop. E. ix. f. 4 b.

“ Al neofisme vient auaunt li Cornuz,  
Si li mostre ses *corns aguz*;  
Si compainz comenca la medlée,  
I cist Cornu corne la menée.

At the ninth move [the king] comes before the *Cornute*,  
Who shews to him his pointed horns :  
His companion began the contest,  
And this *Cornute* finishes it.”


And again, f. 7 :

“ Ore uient le giu des *alfins*,  
Ke n'est pas poure ne srarins.  
Tut seit iceo qu'il seit *cornuz*,  
Ne deit estre pur *fol* tenuz ;  
Kar mult par ad grant mestir  
Li *aufins* en l'eschekier.

Now comes the game of the *Alfins*,  
Which is neither poor nor ..... ?  
Every body knows that he is a *Cornute*,  
And ought not to be taken for a *Fool*,  
For the *Alfin* on the chess-board  
Possesses very great power.”

The allusion is here made to the *cornuted* or forked heads of the mitred chess-man, which served as an epitome of the Bishop, and this form has been retained down to the present day.<sup>m</sup> Mr. Douce believed, that the earliest instance of the use of the term *Bishop* in English writers, occurred

“ Li eschec de saphirs, le roi Assueru,  
Et de riches topasses, a toute lor vertu,  
Pigmalyun les fist, li fiex [fils] Candeolu.”

<sup>m</sup> In MS. Cott. Cleop. E. ix. and in Von Manesse's MS. of the Minnesingers, in the Bibliothèque du Roi, of nearly the same age, the Bishop is represented of this shape.  In Caxton's translation of De Cessolis, the forked head is very apparent, (but falsely appropriated by Hyde to the Rook,) and in the German treatise of Jacob Mennel, 4to. Franck. 1536, (where this piece is termed *Alt*, as it is also in Conrad von Ammenhusen's translation of De Cessolis, in 1337), are two curious forms engraven, both exhibiting the bi-furcated head.

so late as the time of Charles the First, in Arthur Saul's "Famous Game of Chesse Play."<sup>u</sup> But it was certainly used as the usual form in England in the time of Elizabeth, as appears from Rowbotham's "Pleasaunt and wittie Playe of the Cheasts renewed," 12mo, Lond. 1562.<sup>v</sup> He says of it: "The *Bishoppes* some name Alphins, some fooles, and some name them Princes: other some call them Archers, and thei are fashioned accordinge to the wyll of the workemen:" and again, *Of the Bishop or Archer*: "In the auncient tyme the Frenchmen named him Foole, whiche seemeth vnto me an improper name. The Spaniardes named him Prince, with some reason, and some name him Archer;" and of its form among the English, he tells us: "The Bishoppe is made with a sharpe toppe and cloven in the midst, not muche vnlyke to a bishops myter." And in a MS. belonging to John Gage, Esq. of the time of James the First, is the following passage, apparently taken from an earlier writer: "In primâ acie collocatur peditatus; his proximus est equitatus. Hos vero sequuntur Satellites, qui à formâ mitræ episcopalis *Episcopi* nominantur."

Among the northern nations we find, that the Russians and Swedes retain the original appellation of Elephant, (but Weickmann, in his work *Die grosse Schach Spiel*, fol. 1664, terms it *Gaistlicher*, i. e. homo spiritualis); the Germans call it *Läufer*, the Leaper, from the ancient mode of taking over an intervening piece, and the Poles *Póp*, Papa, or Priest. But it is particularly deserving of remark, that among the Icelanders and Danes this piece, from the most ancient times, has always been termed *Biskup*, Bishop, and this may assist us hereafter in determining the locality of the figures we are describing.<sup>p</sup>

<sup>u</sup> Mr. Douce supposed the first edition of this book to have appeared in 1640, but in the King's library is an edition dated 1614, 12mo, dedicated to Lucy, the wife of Edward third Earl of Bedford; and another copy is in the Bodleian.

<sup>v</sup> Rowbotham's description of all the pieces is copied nearly verbatim in the introduction to a poem, entitled, "Ludus Scacchiæ. By G. B." 4to. Lond. 1597.

<sup>p</sup> This history of this piece is rendered still more singular from its having undergone two other transformations, a brief account of which is here annexed:

1. In the set of chess-men which belonged to Charlemagne, the form is said to be that of an Archer, ready to shoot. This term of Archer is adopted by Rabelais, in 1550. We meet with it also in the Duke of Lunenburg's work, fol. Lips. 1617, c. 8, where an engraving is given repre-



IV. The KNIGHTS. These are whole-length figures, mounted on horse-back, and are, perhaps, the most interesting portion of the whole. They are habited in long coats or gambesons, which hang in folds as low as the feet, and the sleeves terminate with a cuff or border at the wrist. The leg has apparently a covering of some sort down to the ankle, where it is met by a species of half-boot, without spur. Their helmets, with a few exceptions, are of a conical shape, and mostly with nasals, and round flaps to protect the ears and neck. A long kite-form shield, suspended from the neck, hangs on the left side of each, ornamented with various devices, approaching in some instances very closely to heraldic distinctions. Beneath the shield appears the sword, which is fastened round the waist by a belt, and in the right-hand each knight carries a massive spear. All the figures have large beards and moustaches, and the hair is cut round, a little below the ears. The horses are caparisoned in high saddles, plain or ornamented; saddle cloths, curiously bordered, stirrups, and bridles. The mane is cut short, and the hair suffered to grow down on the forehead. No. 1, engraven in Plate XLVII. fig. 4, 5, will best illustrate the above general description.

No. 2. The beard of this figure is divided into three forks, instead of

senting a *Schütze*, or Archer. It has occurred above in Rowbotham; and in Beale's translation of *Biochimo*, published in 1656, he writes, p. 2, "Next to the King's other side place a *Bishop* or *Archer*, who is commonly figured with his head cloven." Vida in his poem (composed in 1540) combines the Archer with the Centaur, and terms these pieces "*Sagittiferi Centauri*."

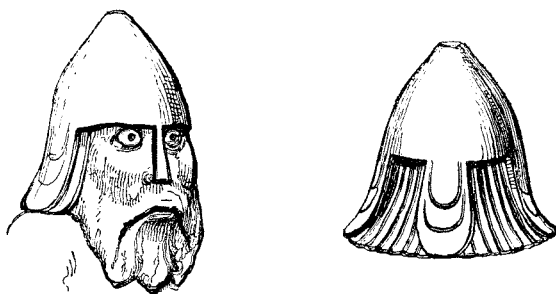
2. The French at an early period corrupted the oriental term *Phil* or *Fil* into *Fol*, and hence represented this piece under the form of a Jester, or court Fool; which designation is still retained in France in preference to that of *prêtre*. The term occurs in the *Roman d'Alexandre*, and in the *Roman de la Rose* (in both of which it is also termed *aufin*), *Archæolog.* xi. p. 401, and is alluded to in the Anglo-Norman poem quoted above. So also in the Latin poem of the 13th century, printed inaccurately by Hyde:

"Rex et Regina, *Stolidorum* corpora bina,"——

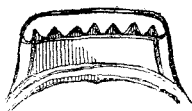
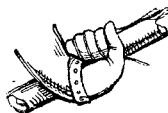
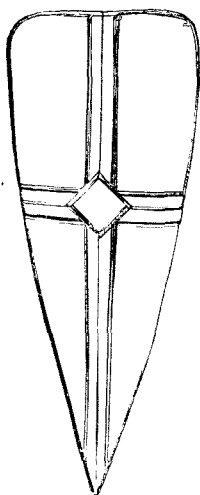
"*Stultus Saltator* trivius [*al. trinus*] quasi fur speculator,  
Si rubus in primo, nunquam candeat in imo."

In the early copy, in the Coll. of Arms, a gloss is added above, *li aufins*, and it is rather singular to trace in this one line the *Fou* of the French, the *Läuffer* of the Germans, and the *Aufin* of the French, Italians, and English.

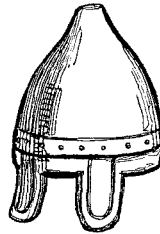
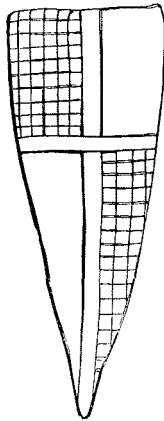
being round like the rest, and the flaps of the helmet are longer. These peculiarities, with the mode of wearing the hair behind, may be seen in the following representation :



The shield has a cross of a different form on it, suspended as before. The position of the right hand is also singular, as is the case likewise with Nos. 3, 4, and 12, and may serve to shew how far the skill of the artist extended. The saddle is ornamented behind, and is a fair specimen of the equipment.

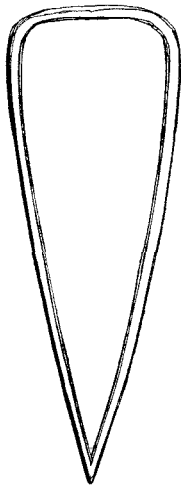


No. 3. The helmet has a border, and no nasal, as exhibited below, together with the shield, which presents a bearing very similar to what in heraldry would be termed quarterly of two colours. No shoulder belt is visible, but the sword belt is very clearly defined.

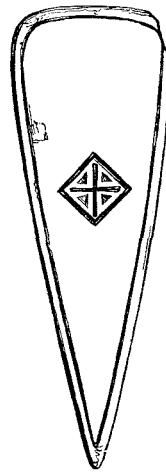


No. 4. The shield is quite plain, and more rounded at the top. The saddle is also plain, as the last.

No. 5. The helmet is as No. 1, but a little flattened on the top, and the shield bears an indented lozenge:

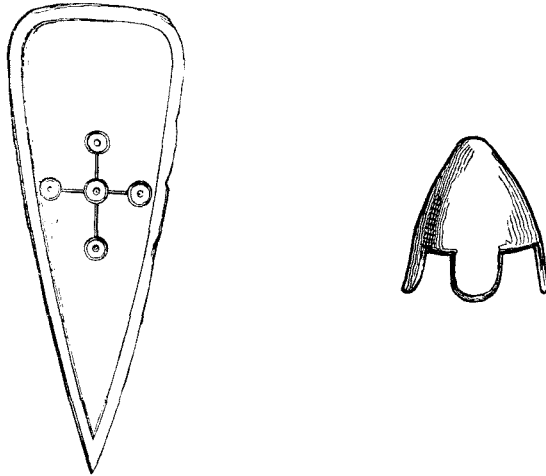


*No. 4.*

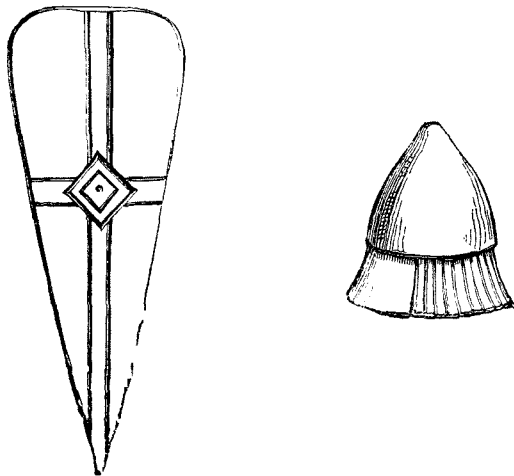


*No. 5.*

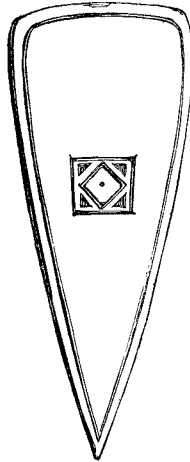
No 6—Very similar to the last, but has neither shoulder nor sword belt. The helmet is like No. 1, but smaller, and on the shield is a species of cross. The right foreleg of the horse has been broken off.



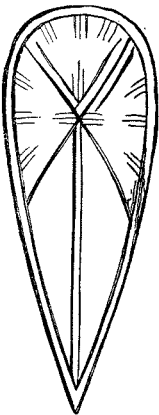
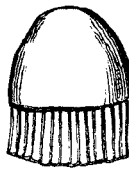
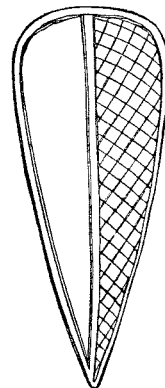
No. 7—The helmet is here a plain cone, without either nasal or flaps. By the negligence of the sculptor, one side of the hair has been left unfinished. The shield bears a cross approaching in form to No. 2.



No. 8.—Is remarkable for its fine condition, and the high polish it still bears. The helmet resembles No. 7, and the beard and moustaches are strongly marked. On the shield is a lozenge within an indented square.

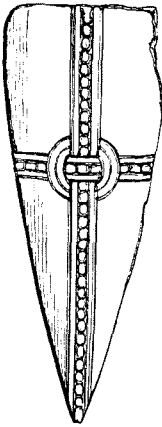


No. 9—Is of rather different character. The helmet is a plain round scull-cap or morion, and the beard and hair are worn short. The shield is more rounded, and the saddle much lower. There is no shoulder-belt. The horse's mane is also differently disposed. On the whole, it is of inferior execution to those which have preceded. The device on the shield approaches very closely that on the flag called the Union Jack :

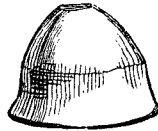
*No. 9.**No. 9**No. 10.*

No. 10—In the style of the last. The helmet is the same, but with a rim to it, and the shield is divided into what would now be termed, in heraldic phrase, party per pale.

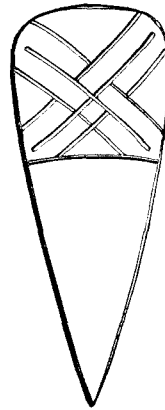
No. 11—This piece has been damaged. A fracture extends from the head to the waist, and a portion of the saddle cloth is broken off on the left side. The helmet is of a singular shape, and has no nasal, and the shield bears a cross elegantly engraved. No sword-belt is visible. The beard and hair are quite short:



No. 11.



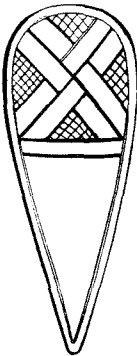
No. 11.



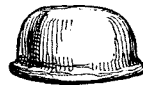
No. 12.

No. 12—Has a plain conic helmet without nasal, resembling No. 5 of the Warders. The saddle resembles No. 2. No sword-belt. On the shield is a saltire on a chief, if I may be permitted to adapt heraldic terms to such an ornament.

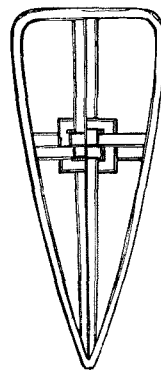
No. 13—Is similar to Nos. 9, 10; but not so tall. The cap is flatter. The bearing on the shield is very similar to the last. This piece belonged to the *red* set.



No. 13.




No. 13.



No. 14.

No. 14—Resembles No. 1, but is of smaller dimensions. The helmet has pendant flaps to protect the ears and neck, but no nasal. No waist-belt is visible, and the shield bears a cross intersected in the centre by a square.

There is but little to remark on the history of the chess-Knight, since its name and move have always remained pretty much the same.<sup>q</sup> On the chess-boards of the 13th century it appears of this form  which, in truth, is a rude representation of the head of a horse, intended as an epitome of the whole figure, in the same manner as the mitre represented the Bishop. In Caxton a very similar, but clumsier, form is given. Hence the name of *Horse* bestowed on this piece by the Russians, Swedes, and some other nations. Hence, also, the peculiar form often given to the modern Knight, which is as early as the time of Queen Elizabeth, or earlier, since Rowbotham speaks of the Knight as having "his top cut asloope, as though beyng dubbed knight."<sup>r</sup> Among Charlemagne's chess-men, if Dr. Hyde is to be depended on, it is represented under the form of a Centaur.

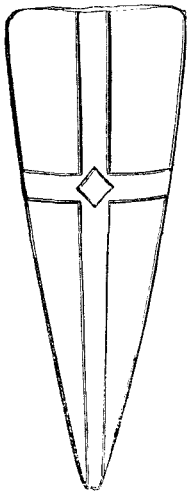
V. The **WARDERS**. These are armed warriors (*Hrokr*, in Icelandic) which here take the place of the Rook or Castle. They are represented in a standing attitude, attired in helmets of various shapes, but chiefly conical, with or without flaps, and wanting the nasal. The coat or gambeson which most of them wear, descends to the feet, but in lieu of this others have a coat of mail, with a hood which covers the head. They all hold a shield in one hand and a sword in the other, but the position is varied, either in front, or at the side. The shields all bear distinctive marks, like those of the Knights, but some of them are of a much broader shape, and less elongated.

<sup>q</sup> It is called by the modern Germans *Springer*, by the Swedes *Lopare*, from the nature of its move.

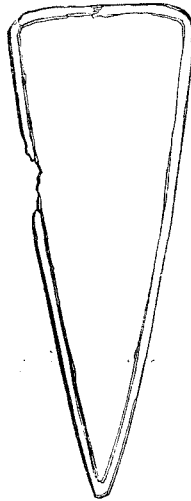
<sup>r</sup> 12mo, Lond. 1562, Cf. *Archæolog.* xi. p. 405. In Jacob Mennel's treatise, 1507, the Knight has two forms, more or less varying from the prototype.

No. 1. engraved in Plate XLVIII. fig. 1. exhibits the general appearance of the first five pieces. The helmet is similar to that of the Knight, No. 1, but without the nasal. On the back of the figure appears the shoulder belt, and the coat descends in loose folds.

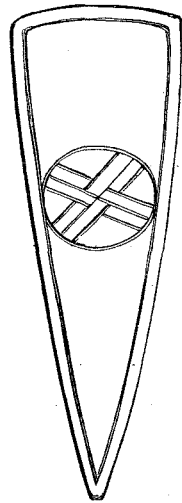
Nos. 2, 3, resemble the former in every respect, excepting the shields, which are here copied, and which are held on the left side of each.



No. 2.



No. 3.

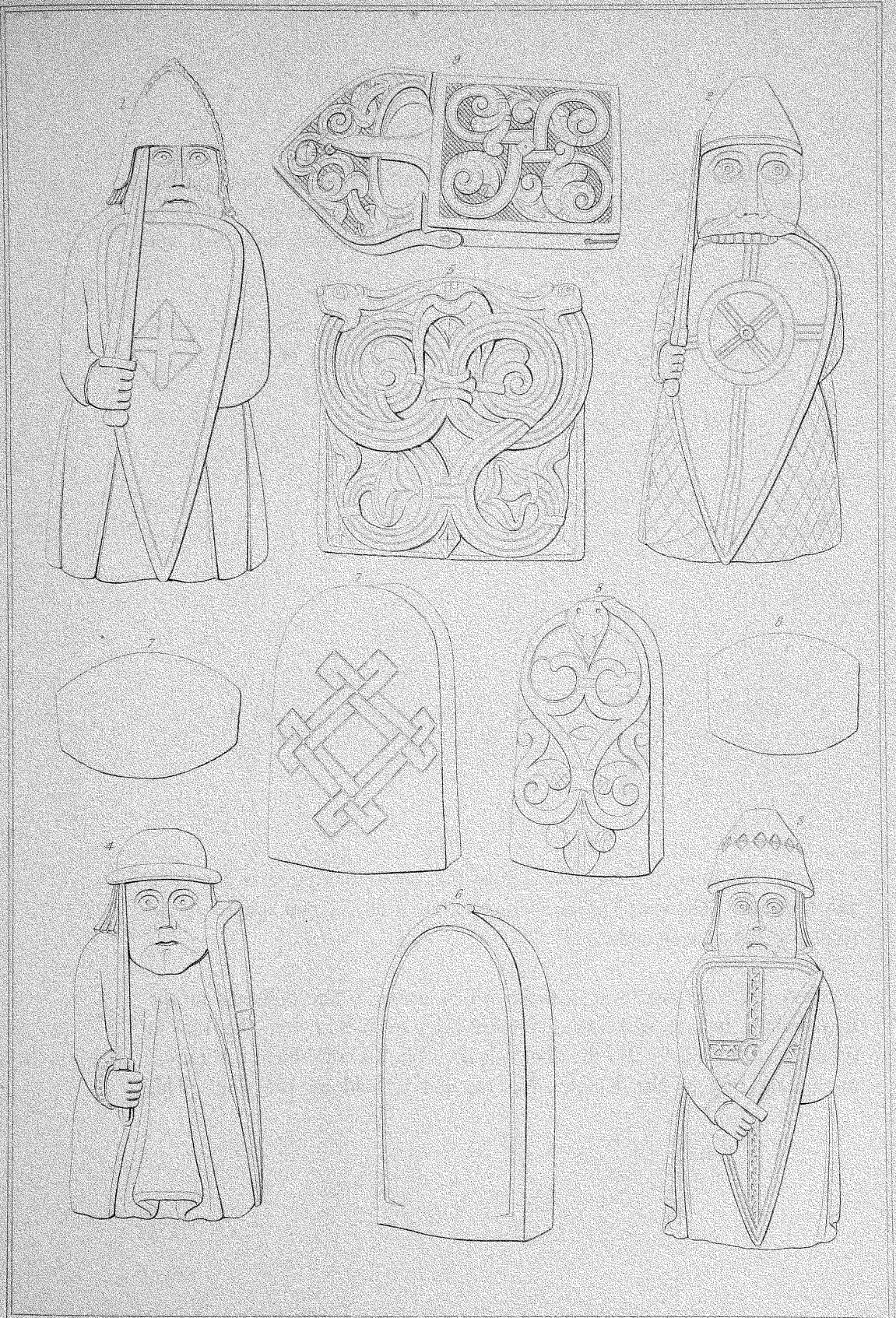


No. 4.

No. 4. The same, but the helmet is of the same description as No. 14 of the Knights. The shield bears a cross within a circle, and is held at the side. There is no shoulder belt.

No. 5. Of the same form as those which precede, but differing in the shape of the helmet, which has a vertical ridge extending from the front to the back of the head. No shoulder belt is visible, and the shield has a cross resembling that of the Knight, No. 14, and is held on the side. This

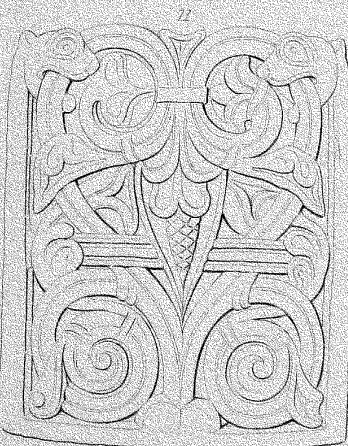
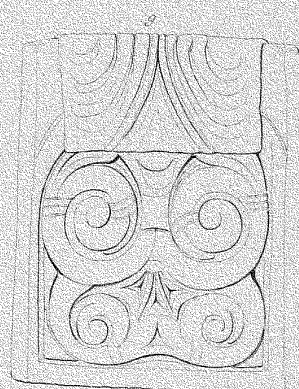
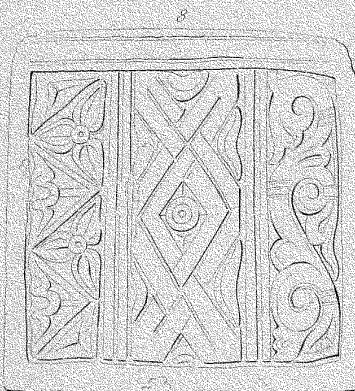
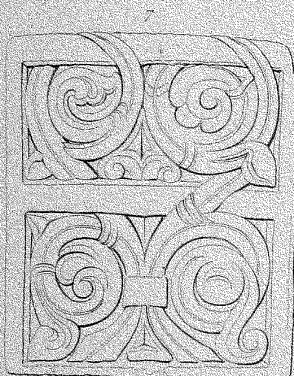
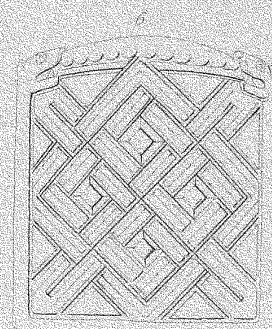
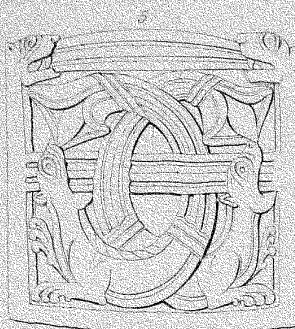
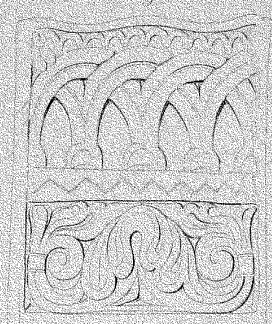
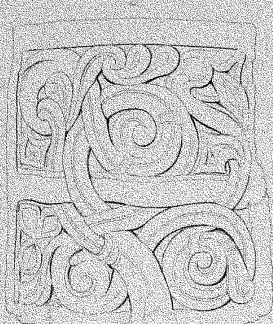
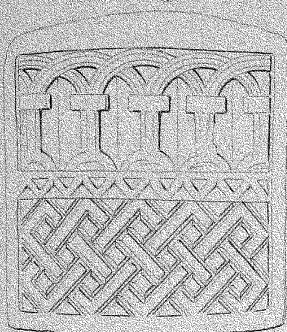




After the del. & scale

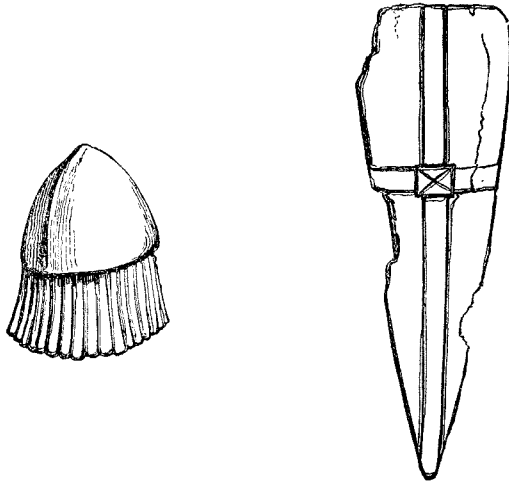
*Ancient Chefs men &c found in the Isle of Lewis*





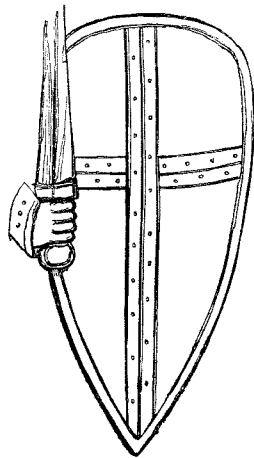
Ornaments on the Ancient Clasp-men, found in the Isle of Lewis.

figure is damaged, and the sword, which is held across the breast, has been broken off.

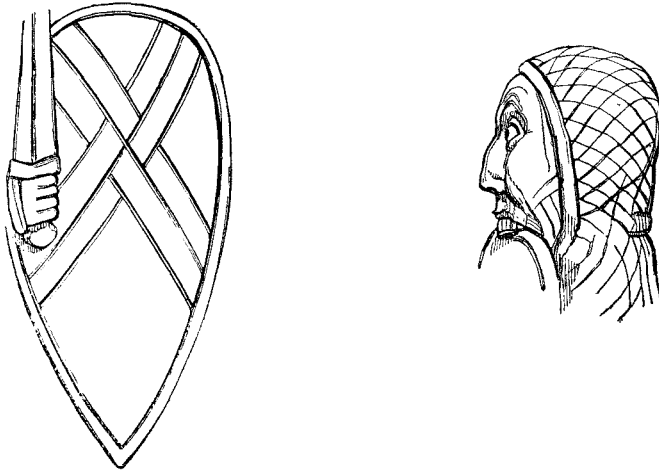


No. 6. Engraven in Plate XLVIII. fig. 2, and exhibits a specimen of the mail or *hringed-byrne*, which covered the figure from head to foot. For additional security, a plain conical helmet is worn over it. The scabbard of the sword appears from under the left arm, and in this, as well as in the two next figures, seems to have been fastened to the wearer, by passing through an aperture in the mail; as represented very distinctly in some French illuminations of the twelfth century, in MS. Cott. Nero, c. iv. f. 7, and in Strutt's Dresses, i. 43. The peculiarity observable in the distorted features of this and the two succeeding pieces, who are all represented biting their shields, will be illustrated in another part of these remarks.

No. 7. Resembles the last, but the mail has no hood, and terminates at the neck, so that the hair is suffered to appear. On the shield is a cross, thus depicted :



No. 8. Is also similar in general character, but here the hood covers the head, without any other protection. The mail forms a sort of fold at the back of the neck, which may be occasioned by a band fastening it within. The shield and head are exhibited below. This piece seems to have belonged to the *red* set.



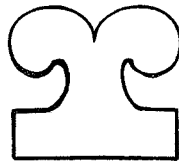
No. 9. May be referred to in Plate XLVIII. fig. 3. The dress is nearly the same as that of No. 1, excepting the helmet, which is of a peculiar shape. The back of the figure is quite plain, and the coat or gambeson has its folds disposed on the sides.

No. 10. This, which is the smallest of the pieces, is also engraven, Plate XLVIII. fig. 4, and exhibits a character dissimilar from the rest. The helmet is a sort of round morion, and forms a striking contrast with the high cone-shaped caps and mail hoods of its companions. Some additional observations on the armour of all these figures will be submitted, when I come to consider the costume more particularly with regard to the period when I believe them to have been executed.

Mr. Douce's curious collections on the name and form of this piece,<sup>s</sup> scarcely leave me any thing to add. But, in regard to its shape, I am enabled to point out earlier instances than Caxton's translation of Jacobus de Cessolis, referred to in Mr. Douce's Dissertation. The most ancient form after the game arrived in Europe is very uncertain, but seems to have been that of an Elephant, as shewn by the set of chess-men belonging to Charle-

<sup>s</sup> See *Archæologia*, vol. xi. pp. 406-408.

magne ; and this form, with or without a tower on the back, has been retained by the modern Germans, Russians, and Danes.<sup>t</sup> The Spaniards, Italians, French, and English, in more recent times, adopted a tower or castle, as an epitome of the figure (in the same manner as they took a horse's head for the Knight) and hence arises the strange anomaly of a Castle representing the swiftest piece on the chess-board. But the earliest form offered to us in MSS. occurs in the Anglo-Norman poem, already quoted, of the 13th century,<sup>u</sup> and in the MS. of the Minnesingers ; of nearly the same age,<sup>x</sup> in both of which instances it appears thus :



From the representation of the Turkish chess-men, in Dr. Hyde's work, p. 133, it clearly appears, that this form was first given to the Rook by the Arabs, who, as followers of Mahommed, rejected the figures allowed in the Persian game ;<sup>y</sup> and from this circumstance it may probably lay claim, on the European chess-board, to equal antiquity with that of the Elephant. In the Latin poem of the twelfth century, so often referred to, we meet with the epithet of "Bifrons Rochus," which manifestly refers to the bi-parted head shewn above. The same shape is preserved on the ancient seals of those families, both in England and Germany, who bear Chess-Rooks for their arms. One instance of this I have been shewn by the kindness of our worthy Director, John Gage, Esq. attached to a deed, dated 37 Edward III. being a grant from Rosia, widow of John Saxi, of Stanefeld, co. Suffolk, to John de Rokewode and others. The seal is that of John de Rokewode,

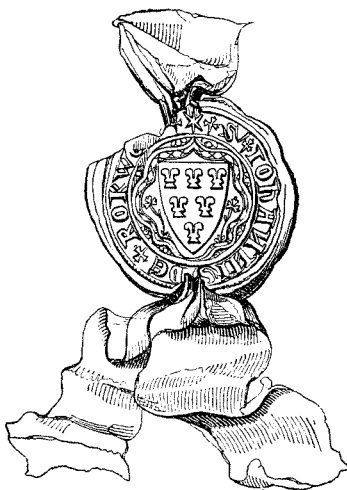
<sup>t</sup> The name of Tower in England is co-æval with that of Bishop, as is evident from Rowbotham's work, and was introduced apparently between the reigns of Henry VIII. and Queen Elizabeth. In Palsgrave's *Esclaircissement de la langue Francoyse*, fol. 1530, we only find "Roke of the chesse, roc," and "*Alfyn*, a man of ye chesse borde, aulfin." So late as the end of the seventeenth century, we read in Olyoke's Dictionary, fol. 1677, "Rook at chess, *Elephante*."

<sup>u</sup> MS. Cott. Cleop. B. ix. Strutt's Sports, pl. xxx.

<sup>x</sup> Willemin, "Monumens François," fol. and "Lays of the Minnesingers," 12mo. 1829.

<sup>y</sup> Sale's Prel. Disc. to the Koran, pp. 166-168.

bearing six Chess-Rooks, as exhibited beneath;<sup>z</sup> and this ancient form is shewn also on the font of Staningfield church, erected in the time of Henry VII. belonging to the Rookwoods,<sup>a</sup> and is still preserved by the representatives of this honourable family.



Various other examples of the chess-rook, as borne in the arms of English and foreign families,<sup>b</sup> may be seen in Randle Holme's unpublished portion of his "Academy of Armory," in MSS. Harl. 2033 and 5955, lib. iii. chap. 16, pl. 1, 2, and they will be found to be but slight variations from the earlier form, as given in MSS. of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and followed by Caxton, in his translation of the popular work of De Cessolis.

One more singularity remains to be noticed with respect to the Rook, and, as regards my theory, of greater importance. I allude to the figure of an armed soldier or *Warder*, presented to us by the chess-men I am describing. It is almost certain, that this form will be found in none of the descriptions of the game as played in the south of Europe, nor has it occurred in any MSS. I have had an opportunity of consulting. But among the Ice-

<sup>z</sup> Another impression of this seal, but broken, I find among the Harleian collection of Charters in the British Museum, 49 D. 37, attached to a Deed dated 1 Hen. V. On the same label is the seal of William Rokewode, bearing also six chess-rooks, but with an annulet for difference.

<sup>a</sup> Archæolog. xi. p. 406.

<sup>b</sup> In Mennel's treatise, 1507, the *Rach* or Rook is figured with four round or sharp corners, something in the shape of a flower, but these are only fanciful corruptions of the original form.

landers we find this piece actually so represented, and this is so remarkable a fact, that it will go some way, in my opinion, towards the proof of the locality of these pieces. La Peyrere, in a letter written from Copenhagen to M. La Mothe le Vayer, in 1644,<sup>c</sup> says: "The differences between the chess-men of the Icelanders and our own are these: Our *Fools* are with them *Bishops*, since they hold it right that the ecclesiastics should occupy the situation near the Kings. Their Rooks are little Captains, which the Icelandic scholars here call *Centurions*. They are represented with swords by their sides, and with puffed-out checks blowing a horn, which they hold in both hands." Without entering further at present into the peculiarities here noticed, it will be sufficient to observe, that the Icelandic term for this piece is *Hrókr*, which signifies a brave warrior or hero,<sup>d</sup> and is evidently intended to represent the original Eastern term given to this piece. What then is this term? are we with Sir William Jones to go to the Hindu *Roth*, an armed chariot, or with Hyde to the Persian, *Ruch*, a dromedary, or with others, to the oriental name of the fabulous bird called *Ruch*, which makes a figure in the Tales of the Arabian Nights? My own conviction is, that all these derivations are false or doubtful, and that for the real meaning of the word, we must look to the ancient Persian *Rokh*, which, according to D'Herbelot, signifies a hero, or military adventurer.<sup>e</sup> Should this be correct, we must conclude that the Icelanders alone, of all the European nations, have preserved the genuine and original form of this piece, the antiquity of which, from the figures before us, will not admit of a doubt. Whether any trace of the same form is to be detected in the Cyclopean heroes of Vida, is left to the judgment of others. His lines are:

"Extremis bini, referant qui vasta *Cyclopum*  
Corpora, considunt in sulcis, agmina utrinque  
Claudentes sua quisque, altis proque *arcibus* astant.<sup>f</sup>

<sup>c</sup> Published at Paris, 12mo. 1663. "La difference qu'il y a de leurs pièces aux nôtres, est, que nos *Fous* sont des *Evesques* parmy eux, et qu'ils tiennent que les Ecclesiastiques doivent estre près de la personne des Rois. Leurs *Rocs* sont de petits Capitaines, que les escoliers Islandois que sont icy apelent *Centurions*. Ils sont representez, l'espee au costé, les joues enflés, et sonnans du cor, qu'ils tiennent des deux mains." p. 56.

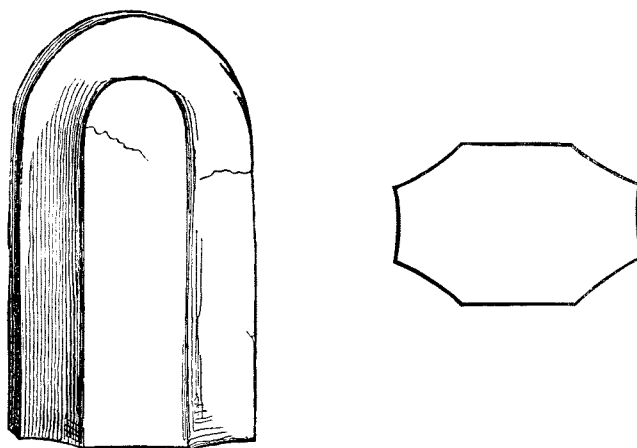
<sup>d</sup> *Hrókr*, vir fortis et grandis: *en stor og stark mand*. Longurio, latrunculorum satelles, *Brikke* i *Skakspil*. Haldorson. "*Hrókr*, gloriosus, thraso. In ludo latrunculorum *Skák* vulgo dicto, miles *hrókr* appellatur, elatus quippe superbusque." Index to the *Orkneyinga Saga*.

<sup>e</sup> "*Rokh*. Ce mot signifie dans la langue des anciens Persans un vaillant homme, qui cherche

But in the MS. already cited, in the possession of Mr. Gage, is a singular passage, which would seem to indicate similar figures to those mentioned by La Peyrere. The words are: “At the ends of the board stand the *Centurions*, which in English are called *Rooks*. These are soldiers of the reserved guard, and depended on as the bravest defenders of the Royal personage. Should the King be attacked, they immediately advance to meet the danger, and inclose the monarch, as it were within a citadel. They are placed, moreover, in the wings of the army, that they may guard least the enemy should fall upon the King in his rear.”<sup>g</sup>

VI. The PAWNS. These are of various shapes and sizes, but chiefly octagonal. Two of them are ornamented, but the rest plain.

In Pl. XLVIII. fig. 6, is engraved the largest, No. 1, and in the same plate, fig. 7, 8, are views of the two ornamented Pawns, Nos. 5 and 6, with the form of the base of each. On the reverse of either is a similar ornament, somewhat varied. Of the remaining Pawns, three (Nos. 2, 3, 4.) are nearly alike, and are represented beneath. They are octagonal, and the sides at the angles are hollowed or channelled out.



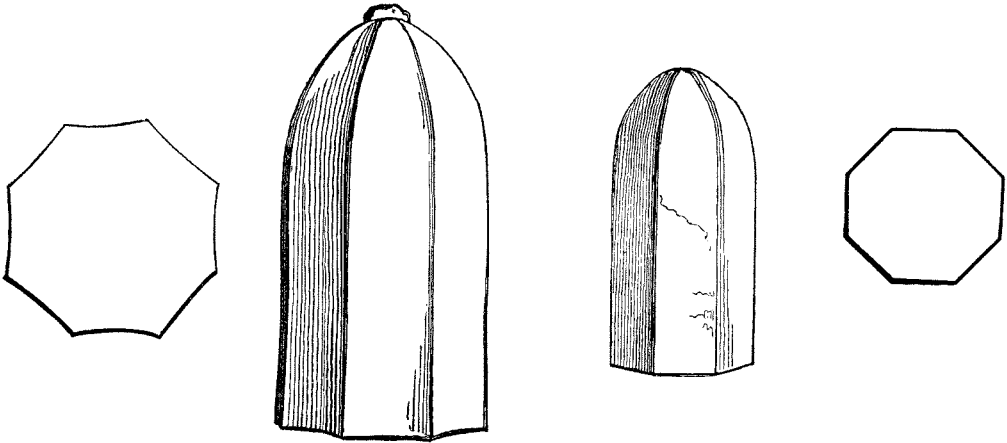
des aventures de guerre, un heros, et ce qu'on appelloit autrefois dans nos romans, un preux, et un chevalier errant. C'est d'où vient le nom de *Roch*, dans les Echecs, dont le jeu est venu de Perse jusques à nous." *Bibl. Orient.* tom. iii. p. 129. ed. 4to. La Haye, 1778. He then proceeds to cite some passages, in explaining which Dr. Hyde has made a great mistake. Cf. *Shahilud.* p. 120, 123.

<sup>f</sup> MS. Harl. 6518. f. 3.

<sup>g</sup> "In extremo agmine sunt *Centuriones*, Anglice *Rookes*. Sunt enim hii quasi milites triarii,



No. 7, is not so broad as the preceding, and is of a pyramidal shape of eight sides, similarly channelled, as shewn below. The rest, from No. 8 to 19, resemble it precisely, except that they vary in size, and have no knob at the top. The smallest of the whole is copied, by way of contrast to the larger. Several of these Pawns have originally been coloured *red*.



Having thus described in detail the whole of these curious figures, so as to afford the Society as complete a notion of them as can be learnt by ought short of ocular examination; and having hitherto considered them in connexion with the early history of the game of Chess in Europe, I shall now proceed to develop the result of my inquiries in respect to the place where, and the period when these chess-men were, in all probability, manufactured. I shall draw my inferences from three separate subjects of consideration; the material of which they are made, the costume in which they appear, and the historical passages to be found in the ancient writings of Scandinavia; and from each I shall endeavour to prove, that these pieces were executed about the middle of the twelfth century, by the same extraordinary race of people, who at an earlier period of time, under the general name of *North-*

fortissimaque Regis propugnacula. Si quando Rex periclitatur, locum mutant, seque periculo opponunt, Regem vero quasi in *arce* includunt. Collocantur enim in cornu exercitus, seu in extrema ala, ut prospiciant ne hostis a tergo Regem adoriatur." The Rook is also termed a *Duke* by Arthur Saul, in 1614.

men, overran the greater part of Europe, and whose language and manners are still preserved among their genuine descendants in Iceland.

And first, with regard to their material, it is assumed on evidence almost amounting to mathematical demonstration, that they are formed out of the tusks of the animal called in Icelandic *Rostungr* or *Rosmar*, and in other parts of Europe by the names of Morse, Walrus, or Sea-horse.<sup>h</sup> These tusks grow from one to three feet in length, and in circumference at the lower end, from six to nine inches; but, according to Pennant, they are but rarely found of the largest size, except on the coasts of the Frozen Sea. The outer surface of the tusk, which is nearly of as fine a grain as ivory, does not exceed half an inch, and the interior is filled with an ossified secretion, which becomes very apparent on a longitudinal section of the tooth being made. At the root of the tusk, where it joins to the scull, appear cavities not wholly filled by this ossified substance, which are more or less hollow, probably according to the age of the animal.<sup>i</sup> These peculiarities of structure are shewn in a remarkable manner throughout the entire series of the chess-men before us, and most unequivocally so in the draught-men, which were necessarily cut transversely through the tusk.<sup>k</sup> We are able also to trace in them

<sup>h</sup> *Rosmarus*, Jonst. Pisc. t. 44. *Le Morse*, Buff. 13, p. 358. *Arctic Walrus*, Pennant, Quadr. 2. 266. *Trichechus Rosmarus*, Linn. p. 59. *Trichechus Walrus*, Shaw, vol. i. pt. i. p. 234, 4to. 1800.

<sup>i</sup> In the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons may be found various specimens of the tusk of this animal, together with a section of one, exhibiting the formation above described, and a skeleton of the animal itself. I have to express my thanks to Mr. Clift, Conservator of the Museum, for his obliging permission to examine these interesting specimens. The tusks of those Walruses which inhabit the icy coasts of the American continent are much longer, thinner, and far more sharp-pointed, and have a sub-spiral curvature towards the point (Shaw, vol. i. p. 234). One of this description, procured by Captain Beechey from the natives of Point Hope, in Beering's Straits, is in the British Museum. It measures  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet long, by  $5\frac{1}{4}$  inches in circumference at the root. Tusks are said to have been found in Kamschatka weighing from 20 to 40 lbs. *Gmelin*, iii. p. 164. See Crantz's *Hist. of Greenland*, i. p. 113, 4to. 1820. *Museum Wormianum*, fol. 1655, p. 289. *Museum Regium*, fol. pt. i. § III. 8, 9. ed. Lauerentzen. Einersens' *Notes on the Speculum Regale*, 4to. Sorøe, 1768, p. 178, and Bussæus on the *Periplus Ohtheri*, § 5, 4to. Havn. 1733.

<sup>k</sup> A portion of the chess-men exhibit appearances distinct from the rest, and are of a lighter colour, and less heavy, and most of them are fractured. From these circumstances, and from the bone being adhesive to the tongue, it has been suggested that these figures are in a fossil state. Whether this fossilisation took place before or after the pieces were worked is a curious subject of inquiry to the naturalist.

the economy of the artist in fashioning his figures according to the portions of the teeth best calculated to serve his purpose. The pieces of largest circumference are almost wholly cut from that part of the tusk nearest the scull, and exhibit the cavities in various states. In one instance, No. 6 of the Knights, the right front leg of the horse has been broken off, owing to the thinness of the bone at this part. The Bishops and Warders<sup>1</sup> are chiefly cut either from the middle or end of the teeth. In Plate XLVIII. fig. 1, this interior ossified substance may be easily discerned making its appearance on the head of the figure, and forming the apex of its helmet. These animals at present are chiefly found within the arctic circle, between Davis's Straits and Nova Zembla, and but rarely venture into a more southern latitude than the Gulph of St. Lawrence, between lat. 47-48. In the Add. MSS. of the British Museum, No. 5261, fol. 167, is a spirited drawing by Albert Durer of the head of a Morse, stated to have been taken in the Zuyder Zee, in the year 1521. Walruses are met with also in great numbers on the coasts of Spitsbergen<sup>m</sup> and Greenland, and are wafted on the ice from thence to Iceland.<sup>n</sup> Pennant speaks doubtfully respecting the latter place, and remarks that they rarely appeared in his time in the seas of Norway,<sup>o</sup> but in ancient times were so numerous in the northern parts, as to become objects of chase.

<sup>1</sup> No. 4 of the Warders is a singular instance among these chess-men of a piece cut from a whale's tooth, and exhibits a different internal structure of an oval shape.

<sup>m</sup> Shaw, p. 235.

<sup>n</sup> In the voyages made by Stephen Bennet in 1603 and succeeding years (which were the origin of the English whale fishery), they found the Walruses in such numbers on Cherry Island, lying between the North Cape and Spitsbergen, that they killed from 700 to 1000 of them in six or seven hours. See Purchas, iii. 560, 565. Pennant, i. p. lxxxi.

<sup>o</sup> Foster, in his notes on the Saxon Orosius, says, "in all the ocean near Norway and Lapland no Walruses are ever seen, still less in the Baltic." p. 243. The former part of this assertion is not, perhaps, to be received literally. Arngrim Jonas, in his account of Greenland, published in Icelandic, 4to. Skalholt, 1688, after describing the Rostungr, says of it, "This animal is common both to Greenland and *Iceland*." cap. 2. A Latin inedited translation of his work is in MSS. Add. 5207. So also Pontoppidan writes: "The Valrus or Rosmul, and in our old Norwegian, Rostungr, Rosmar, the Walrus or Sea-horse, is seen *sometimes* on this coast, but not so frequently as about *Iceland* or Spitsbergen, where, according to Marten's Travels, ch. iv. they are found in incredible numbers." Nat. Hist. Norway, fol. Lond. 1755, p. 257.

In the reign of King Alfred, about A. D. 890, Ohtere, the Norwegian, visited England, and gave an account to the king of his voyage in pursuit of these animals, chiefly on account of their teeth, which were even at that remote period esteemed of considerable value. His simple narrative is inserted by the monarch in the Saxon translation of Orosius, and has been illustrated by the notes of Foster.<sup>p</sup> Ohtere sailed from Heligoland, the most northern point of Norway (N. lat. 65), and in three days arrived at the extreme limit frequented by the whale-fishers. He proceeded onwards three days more, doubled the North Cape, and entered the Cwen Sea, or White Sea, the coasts of which were inhabited on the one side by the Scrick-finnas, or Laplanders, and on the other by the Beormas. He here found the walrus, which was the principal object of his voyage, as he himself related to Alfred. "He went the rather," says the royal historian, "and shaped his course to each of these countries, on account of the *horse-whales*, because they have very excellent bone in their teeth; some of which he brought to the king; and their hides are very good for ship-ropes."<sup>q</sup> The estimation in which these teeth were held by the northern nations, rendered them a present worthy of royalty, and this circumstance is confirmed by a tradition preserved in the curious Saga of Kröka Ref, or Kröka the Crafty, who lived in the tenth century.<sup>r</sup> It is there related, that Gunner, Prefect of Greenland, wishing to conciliate the favour of Harald Hardraad,<sup>s</sup> King of Norway [A. D. 1046-1067], by the advice of Barder, a Norwegian merchant, sent to the King three the most precious gifts the island could pro-

<sup>p</sup> Ed. Barrington, 8vo. Lond. 1773.

<sup>q</sup> *Spriðort he for ðýðer. to eacan þær lanðer rceapunge. for þæm hopr hþælum. for þæm hi habbað rpyðe æðele ban on hýpa toðum. þa teð hý bpocon rume þæm cýninge. & hýpa hýð hrið rpyðe goð to rcp papum.* p. 22. These ropes were called by the Norwegians *Svardreip*. See Spec. Reg. p. 178, n. and Arn. Jonæ Gronlandia, cap. 2.

<sup>r</sup> Supposed by Molbech to have been composed at the end of the fourteenth or beginning of the fifteenth century. *Sagabibliothek*, vol. i. p. 357. It is printed in the 8vo collection of Marcusson, 1756, pp. 35-68, and the substance of it forms a considerable portion of Arngr. Jonas's Description of Greenland, 4to. Skalh. 1688. See also the examination of this narrative by Torfæus, in his *Gronlandia Antiqua*, cap. 25, 8vo. Havn. 1706.

<sup>s</sup> Thorkelin is mistaken in considering this to be Harald Harfager, who died in 936. Twiss, ii. p. 176. In the Saga he is expressly called *Sigurds-son*.

duce. These were, 1. a full-grown tame white bear; 2. a *chess-table*, or set of *chess-men*, exquisitely carved; 3. a scull of the *Rostungr*, with the teeth fastened in it, wonderfully sculptured, and ornamented with gold.<sup>t</sup> I shall revert again to this passage before this Paper is concluded, and introduce it here only to illustrate the presents made by Ohtere to King Alfred, which, it must be confessed, fall short of those sent to the monarch of Norway.

The author of the *Kongs-Skugg-sio*, or Speculum Regale, composed, as Einersen concludes, between the years 1154-1164, but certainly before the close of the century, takes particular notice of the Rostungr, and mentions also the circumstance of its teeth and hide being used as articles of commerce.<sup>u</sup> In the sixteenth century, Richard Chancellor enumerates the teeth of the Morse among the articles of traffic in Russia, and the price of a tusk was then estimated at a ruble.<sup>x</sup> Olaus Magnus, the worthy Archbishop of Upsala, who wrote somewhat earlier, and who derives the name of Morse, “*ab asperitate mordendi*,” tells us that these animals were taken chiefly on account of their teeth, which are held in the highest estimation by the Moscovites, and neighbouring nations, who, from the whiteness and durability of the grain, formed them into sword-handles.<sup>y</sup> So

<sup>t</sup> “Guñar sendi Haralldi Konge 3. gripe, þad var, Hviþta Biorn fulltjida, og aagiæta vel vaniñ; saa añar gripur var *Tañ-Tabl*, og geordt med miklum hagleik; þridie var Rostungs haus, med öllum toñum sijnum, hañ var allur grafiñ, og vijda rendt i gulle. Toñur voru fastar i hausnum; var þad allt hin mesta gersemi.” In the Latin translation of Arngrim Jonas’s Description of Greenland, MS. Add. 5207, p. 59. the passage is thus rendered: “Gunnerus igitur Norvego hæc tria officii gratia mittebat, 1. Ursum cicurem colore niveo; 2. *Scachiam seu latrunculos ad ludum scachia pertinentes*, ex balænarum dentibus arte formatos; 3. integrum caput vituli seu canis marini (Rostungr) sculptoria arte mirificè ornatum, cui adhuc dentes infixi erant.” Professor Thorkekin also considered the term *Tan-Tabl* in the sense of “Chess-men made of teeth of the Morse.” See Twiss on Chess, vol. ii. p. 175.

<sup>u</sup> See Spec. Reg. 4to. Sorøe, 1768, p. 178, with the authorities cited by Einersen, in his note.

<sup>x</sup> Hakluyt, i. 237, 280. At present the ivory-turners in London ask from 4s. to 20s. a pound for these tusks.

<sup>y</sup> — “Maximè propter dentes, qui pretiosi sunt apud Scythos, Moschos scilicet et Ruthenosve Tartaros (uti ebur apud Indos) ob duritiem, candorem, et gravitatem, quâ de causâ etiam framearum manubriis artificum, excellenti industria accedente, adaptantur.” Hist. Gent. Sept. lib. xxi. cap. 28. p. 789, ed. fol. 1567. (The work was written in 1555.)

also in the Description of Greenland by Arngrim Jonas, we are told that the teeth and hides of the Rostungr formed a chief object of commerce with Norway and Denmark; and there is reason to believe that this species of barter was not confined to the Baltic, but extended to the British Islands. The author of the description of the Royal Museum at Copenhagen, writes “Auro cariores olim dentes hîc exstitère. *Britanni* quippè et *Hiberni* scribuntur capulos gladiatorum suorum non auro, non argento, non ebore exornasse, sed dentibus his. Unde Solinus, c. 22. ‘Qui student cultui, dentibus mari nantium belluarum insigniunt ensium capulos; candicant enim ad eburneam claritatem.’”<sup>z</sup>

The ancient Norwegians, and more particularly the natives of Iceland, seem to have been, at a very early period, famous for their skill in carving various figures and implements in bone, and this talent was exerted chiefly in sculpturing chess-men from the tusks of the Rosmar. The passage already quoted from Kröka Ref’s Saga might easily authorise such an inference, but we have more express testimony on the subject. The archbishop of Upsala, in his antiquarian history of the northern nations, tells us, that it was usual amongst them to cut the teeth of the morse in the most artificial manner, for the purpose of making chess-men, with which game all the people of the north were well acquainted, but more especially their princes and men of rank.<sup>a</sup> And a century later, Olaus Wormius, in describing the contents of his museum, says of the Rosmar, “Out of its teeth various articles are made, such as rings against the cramp, handles of swords, javelins, and knives, because the weight of the material renders a blow from the weapon of greater force. On this account, these teeth are sent to the Turks and Tartars in traffic, by whom they are eagerly sought after. The Icelanders cut out of them very skilfully the figures used in the game of chess.”<sup>b</sup> And in another passage, he writes:—“The Icelanders, who are

<sup>z</sup> Pt. ii. §. iii. 9.

<sup>a</sup> “Morsorum sive Rosmarorum dentibus valde artificiose elaborantur in usum ludi Latrunculorum seu Schachorum, quo mire et ingeniose utuntur omnes populi Septentrionales, maxime principes et clarissimi viri.” Lib. 21, cap. 29.

<sup>b</sup> “Ex ejus dentibus varia conficiunt, annulos contra spasmodum, manubria gladiatorum, framearum

of an ingenious turn of mind, are accustomed, during the long nights of winter, to cut out, by their fire-side, various articles from whales' teeth. This is more particularly the case in regard to *chess-men* (at which game they excell); and I possess some specimens of these, distinguished by being of two colours, white and green, which are sculptured so exquisitely, that each piece expresses in features, dress, and attitude, the personage it is designed to represent."<sup>c</sup>

I think, therefore, from the preceding passages, we may infer, with considerable probability, that the chess-men discovered in the island of Lewis were sculptured by the same people among whom the material, of which they are formed, is found; and who are known, moreover, from an indefinite period of time, to have excelled in the art of cutting out similar figures, and to have been adepts in the game for which such figures were intended. But since objections might arise, on the supposition that the material, although

et cultorum, quoniam pondere suo ictus fortiores ut fiant, juvant; quo nomine ad Tartaros et Turcas mittunt, à quibus expetuntur. *Islandi icunculos ex iis affabre conficiunt, quibus in ludo Scacchico utuntur.*"—Museum Wormianum, fol. 1655, p. 290. In the Royal Museum at Copenhagen is preserved (amongst many other specimens) a groupe of figures, three inches in height, cut out of a tusk of the walrus, representing a king on horseback, holding a crescent-shaped shield. By his side stands a figure armed with a bow and spear; and behind the horse is another, with a long sword, and blowing a horn. Two other figures are introduced, one of which holds the king's stirrup, and the other bears on his left arm a long oval shield, which extends from the head to the knees, and in his right a sword. Such figures, says Jacobs, made from the teeth of the Rosmar, are by no means uncommon.—*Museum Regium*, pt. ii. § III. 81; *Mus. Worm.* p. 380. I regret no engraving should have been given of this curious groupe, for the purpose of comparison with the chess-men in the Museum.

<sup>c</sup> Islandi hyeme, cum noctes sunt longiores, ingeniosi cum sint, ex dentibus balænarum [Rosmarorum] ad focum varia conficere solent. In primis *ludi Scachici* (in quo excellunt) *latrunculos*. Quorum aliquot mihi specimina, viridi et albo colore distincta, quæ ita sunt sculpta, ut quisque suum officium habitu, vestitu, et lineamentis perpulchre exprimat."—*Mus. Worm.* p. 377. Among the Correspondence of Wormius, published in two volumes, 8vo. Hafn. 1751, are some verses from Magnus Olavius to him, dated 6 cal. Sept. 1627, sent, together with a present of some chess-men, from Iceland, vol. i. p. 356; and in a letter from Stephanus Olavius, dat. Kyrkebæ in Islandia, 15 Sept. 1648, he says he has sent him a snuff-box, cut by a young Iclander, "ex dente balænæ," and adds, "Hic juvenis pleraque artificiosa quæ oculis usurpat, imitatur, ipse sibi magister: in primis vero *latrunculos Scacchidis* affabre format, et mediocri pretio vendat." Vol. ii. p. 1072.

supplied by the Norwegians, might yet have been sculptured in another part of Europe, it will be requisite to strengthen the conclusion I have drawn, by an examination of the costume which these chess-men present to us.

To those not interested in the early history of the game, perhaps this may appear the most attractive point of view in which they can be placed, as exhibiting distinct examples of the dress of various orders of society in the twelfth century, to which period they have been unanimously assigned by the voice of many very competent judges. And although we concede, which I am by no means disposed to do, that these pieces are the work of a more recent age, in imitation of earlier prototypes, yet even then their value remains the same, in regard to the costume they illustrate.

It is unfortunate for the subject of our inquiry, that the ancient monuments of Scandinavia, whether regarded as works of art, sepulchral effigies, or MSS., do not exist in sufficient numbers to enable us to decide positively on the identity of character presented in the figures under review ; and it is in some measure from negative evidence we are obliged to argue. The general dress of these pieces was common in the twelfth century to most of the European nations, and in the cases of the king, queen, and bishop, had scarcely undergone any change for several centuries previous ; so that it will only be necessary to select such portions of the costume as may seem to require illustration, or which more particularly serve to point out a northern original.

The first peculiarity which arrests our attention in looking at the figures before us, is the singular manner in which the hair of the kings is plaited in long wreaths over their shoulders. All the nations of Gothic origin seem to have agreed in encouraging the growth of their hair and beard, but they varied from each other as well in the mode of wearing it, as in the care bestowed on its appearance. We learn from Tacitus, that it was peculiar to the Suevi, the most numerous of all the Teutonic tribes, to wreath their hair, and fasten it in a knot. Other nations, he adds, imitated them, but only those among them who had not passed their manhood, whereas among the Suevi, even to the time their locks became grey ; they were accustomed to twist a mass of hair at the back of the head, and often bound it up to the top. Their princes wore it more ornamented, and only the men of free



condition had the privilege of cultivating it.<sup>d</sup> Hence their chiefs in the time of Theodoric, were addressed, as a mark of respect, by the term 'hairy.'<sup>e</sup> The mode adopted by Theodoric himself is minutely described by Sidonius, in an Epistle to Agricola, and is too curious to be omitted. He says, that the hair of the king's head was cut round at the top, and curled upwards from the forehead, whilst over his ears, according to the fashion of his country, it hung in twisted wreaths. His beard was suffered to grow thickly around the border of his face, but not a hair permitted to encroach on the cheek, and to preserve this fashion entire, the barber of the royal person attended every morning, to pluck out with his pincers any stragglers that might have risen within the proscribed limit.<sup>f</sup> The same mode of wearing the beard prevailed in the twelfth century at the court of Norway, as we learn from the author of the *Speculum Regale*, who had himself, when younger, adopted it, and who seems to regret that a practice less elegant had been subsequently introduced.<sup>g</sup> A modern

<sup>d</sup> "Insigne gentis obliquare crinem, nodoque substringere. Sic Suevi à cæteris Germanis, sic Suevorum ingenui à servis, separantur. In aliis gentibus, seu cognatione aliquà Suevorum, seu (quod sæpe accidit) imitatione, rarum, et intra juventæ spatium; apud Suevos, usque ad canitiem, horrentem capillum retro sequuntur, ac sæpe in solo vertice religant: principes et ornatiorem habent." Germania, cap. 38.

<sup>e</sup> "Universis provincialibus et *capillatis*." Theodorici Ep. ap. Cassidor. lib. 4, 49. Cf. Edict. c. 195. So also Jornandes tells us, that Diceneus Boroista gave to the clergy the name of *pileati*, from the caps they wore—"reliquam vero gentem *capillatos* dicere jussit, quod nomen Gothi pro magno suscipientes adhuc suis cantionibus reminiscuntur." *De reb. Geticis*, cap. xi. p. 38. 12mo. Lugd. Bat. 1597.

<sup>f</sup> "Capitis apex rotundus, in quo paululum [in patulam *al.*] à planitie frontis in verticem cæsaries refuga crispatur. Geminos orbes hispidus superciliorum coronat arcus.—Aurium ligulæ, sicut mos gentis est, crinium superjacentium flagellis operiuntur.—Pilis infra narium antra fruticantibus quotidiana succisio, barba concavis hirta temporibus, quam in subditâ vultus parte surgentem, stirpitus tonsor assiduus genas ad usque, forficibus evellit." Epp. l. 1, 2. Ed. 4to. Par. 1609. Cf. Hist. Wilkinensium, cap. 14, fol. Stockh. 1715.

<sup>g</sup> P. 287, he says also, that the hair was cut round, among the courtiers, so as only to reach the ears, except in front, where it grew long; and no moustaches were worn. Of the German Goths Diodorus writes thus: "Some shave their beards, but others keep them of a moderate length. The nobles, indeed, shave their cheeks, and suffer their moustaches to grow so long that they cover the mouth."

*exclusive*, therefore, either of London or Paris, when the duties of his toilette are completed, little suspects that he has so respectable an authority for the style of his whiskers as Theodoric the Visi-Goth!

Sperlingius, in his inedited collections towards the illustration of northern customs and manners,<sup>h</sup> suspects, with great probability, that from the above passage of Sidonius may be cleared up the doubtful expression of Isidorus, when he says "Some nations adopt personal marks peculiar to themselves, as we see exhibited in the *cirros* of the Germans, the *granos* and *cinnabar* of the Goths."<sup>i</sup> The former term he thinks derived from the Goth. *gran* a pine-tree, since the long twisted locks of hair called *granr* resembled, in some measure, the sweeping branches of a pine, whilst by *cinnabar*, from the Goth. *kinna*, the cheek, and *bar*, bare, was denoted the mode of shaving the sides of the face,<sup>k</sup> *q. d.* bare-cheek.

The old German mode of wearing the hair was carried by the Franks into Gaul, and Agathias thus characterises them: "It is the custom among the Franks," he writes, "for the kings never to have their hair cut, but to nourish it from their childhood, and suffer it to spread over their shoulders and forehead; not in a squalid and negligent fashion, like the Avars, but carefully combed out, and cleaned with various medicaments. This is with them a special mark of royalty, and not permitted to the inferior classes."<sup>l</sup> It cannot fail to be remarked how well this agrees with

<sup>h</sup> MS. Add. 5184, ff. 27 b., 149, 150. Savary, the Editor of Sidonius, coincides in the above opinion.

<sup>i</sup> "Nonnullæ gentes non solum in vestibus, sed et in corpore aliqua sibi propria quasi insignia vendicant, ut videmus *cirros* Germanorum, *granos* et *cinnabar* Gothorum." Orig. l. 19, c. 23.

<sup>k</sup> By *granos* or *granr*, Vossius, Du Cange, Sicama, and others, understand moustaches. This seems to be strengthened by the modern use of the Isl. *gran*, and Belg. *graenan*. But, as appears from Verelius, it also signified the beard, and hence Odin is called *Hrosharsgrani*, from his having a beard (or as others say, a pair of moustaches) like the hair of a horse's tail. By a canon of the Gothic council of Braga, no reader in the church was allowed to wear *granos*; and by the ancient laws of Frisia, tit. 22, c. 16, 17, he who cut off an eye-brow or a *grano*, was to pay two solidi. Hence also the epithet of *Grannus* given to Apollo, from his long locks of hair. See Wachter and Ihre, who offer other derivations of the word. Loccenius agrees nearly with Sperlingius in the interpretation of *cinnabar*. Cf. Verel. in v. *Graun*.

<sup>l</sup> "Περηώρηται αὐτοῖς ἅπαντες εὖ μάλα ἐπὶ τῶν ὤμων οἱ πλόκαμοι. ἐπεὶ καὶ οἱ ἐμπρόσθιοι ἐκ τοῦ

the figures of the chess Kings before us, as compared with the Knights and Warders. The effigies also of the Frankish sovereigns, exhibited in Montfaucon,<sup>m</sup> present examples of the plaited locks of hair precisely like those before us, and this is more particularly the case in the singular monument of Duke Eticho, towards the close of the seventh century, where the wreaths of hair are seen to fall down on the shoulders very distinctly.<sup>n</sup> Whether this fashion was borrowed by the Norwegians from the Franks, may admit of a question; but it is remarkable how few specimens of the sort are to be traced elsewhere. Olaus Magnus says expressly, that the custom of the Danes and Norwegians, like that of the Goths and Suevi, was to let their hair flow over their shoulders, but to confine it by bands when they went to battle.<sup>o</sup> He adds, that they curled and poured precious ointments on it; an assertion Sperlingius will not admit, since the only ointment, he declares, these old heroes possessed was butter, and the mode of dressing their hair was by washing it, not with perfumes, but water, and drying it in the sun. Harald *Harfager*, who ascended the throne of Norway, about A. D. 866, derived his name from the length and beauty of his hair, which is said to have flowed down in thick ringlets to his girdle, and to have been like golden or silken threads.<sup>p</sup>

The Northmen, after their settlement in Neustria, abandoned this custom, and at the time of their invasion of England had wholly discontinued the use of long hair, beard, or moustaches. Hence they were described to Harold by his spies as an army of priests, rather than of warriors; and on William's return to the Continent, accompanied by several of the Saxons,

μετώπον σχιζόμενοι, ἐφ' ἑκάτερα φέρονται. Lib. i. p. 14, Ed. Par. fol. 1660. So, in Gregory of Tours, lib. 6, c. 24, we read, "Ut regum istorum moris est crinium flagellis per terga dimissis."

<sup>m</sup> Monumens de la Monarchie Francoise, vol. i. pl. 8, 17. Willemin, Monumens Francois. These statues are assigned by the former to the sixth century, but, more probably, by Willemin, to the tenth. The ancient models, however, have doubtless been preserved.

<sup>n</sup> Montf. pl. 31. Maillot, iii 32.

<sup>o</sup> "Sed alia coma erat Septentrionalium Danorum, Norvegorum, Gothorum et Sueonum, quorum crines dorsum flagellabant, ita ut vinculis coerceri deberent, cum ad pugnas aut prælia pergerent." L. 8, c. 14, p. 208. Sperlingii Collectanea, MSS. Add. 5184, f. 134.

<sup>p</sup> Torf. Hist. Norv. lib. i. cap. 13.

the courtiers of Normandy are said to have been surprised at the appearance of the "crinigeros Angliæ alumnos."<sup>q</sup> But towards the end of the eleventh century the ancient mode was resumed, and carried to such an excess as to call down the censures of the church. Ordericus Vitalis tells us that they curled their long locks like women, and the whole nation, what with their bushy heads and long beards, resembled stinking goats more than christians.<sup>r</sup> In 1095 a decree was passed by the council of Rouen against it, but without effect; for in 1104, Serlo, Bishop of Seez, in Normandy, publicly inveighed against this fashion before Henry I. of England, and when he had finished his discourse, the historian informs us, he took a pair of scissors from his sleeve, and, with Henry's consent, cut off the locks of the king and all his nobles. Their example was followed by the meaner attendants, and the ringlets just before prized so highly, says the monk, were trodden under foot, like the vilest refuse.<sup>s</sup> This custom, however, of plaiting the hair in long wreaths was certainly preserved in France in the twelfth century, as is apparent from the curious illuminations prefixed to the French Psalter of that period in MS. Cott. Nero, c. iv. where it is very visible, and in f. 4, 6, we have an instance of the tri-furcated beard, as seen in the Knight, No. 2, of the chess-men. The same mode was carried by the Northmen into Sicily, as appears from the poem of Petrus D'Ebulo, composed in the year 1196, the original MS. of which, preserved in the public library of Basle, offers to us the figure of Roger, Count of Andria, with his hair similarly disposed.<sup>t</sup> The Norwegians retained the ancient mode of their forefathers, and there is perhaps no other similar illustration extant which so completely shews the peculiarity thus maintained, as the chess Kings we are describing.

<sup>q</sup> Ord. Vital. l. 8, p. 507. ap. Du Chesne.

<sup>r</sup> "Barbaricum morem in habitu et ritu tenebant. Nam capillos à vertice in frontem discriminabant, longos crines velut mulieres nutriebant et summopere curabant.—Sincipite scalceati sunt ut fares, occipite autem prolixas nutriunt comas, ut meretrices. Crispant crines calamistro.—Nunc pæne universi populares criniti sunt et barbatuli." Ib. l. 8, p. 682.

<sup>s</sup> "Amicam dudum cæsariam ut viles quisquillas pedibus conculcarunt." Ord. Vital. l. 11, p. 816. See also Mailliot, vol. iii. p. 73.

<sup>t</sup> Petri D'Ebulo de Motibus Siculis, 4to. Bas. 1746.

I have but few remarks to make on the dress of the Bishops, which is almost the same as in the 10th century, but the forms of the crosses on the back of their chasubles will not fail to be noticed by those versed in early ecclesiastical costume. The habits here presented to us may be compared with those delineated on the seals of Stephen, A. D. 1162—1185, and of Olaus I., A. D. 1198—1200, archbishops of Upsala;<sup>u</sup> and also with the ornaments of Absalon, archbishop of Lunden and primate of Sweden, A. D. 1178—1202, preserved in the Royal Museum at Copenhagen.<sup>x</sup> The mitre and crosier of the latter will be found to agree very exactly with those of the chess-men. The former, we are told, was called by the Norwegians *Biscops-Lue*, with which the prelates were invested by the Pope, from the time of Sergius, A. D. 845.<sup>y</sup> The crosier is made of the horn of the narwal, and measures four feet and a half in length. This material was very generally employed for such a purpose in the north, and succeeded the wooden crosiers used at an earlier period.<sup>z</sup> Among the archbishop's ornaments is also a zone of leather, about the width of an inch, and fastened by a buckle made of bone, with a figure carved on it.<sup>a</sup> Such belts were worn both by the laics and clergy; and were sometimes ornamented with laminæ of bone. Wormius mentions such a one in his possession, made of silk, with square pieces of bone attached, cut out of the teeth of the walrus, one of which formed the fibula, which had a silver tongue (*toorn*). He be-

<sup>u</sup> Monumenta Ullerakerensia à Peringskiold, fol. 1719. pp. 129, 130. The monument of Henry, Bishop of Upsal, A. D. 1148—1157, in which he is represented with a tall mitre and crosier, elaborately ornamented, is evidently of a later period; as are also the paintings around the tomb of King Eric, in the cathedral at Upsal. See Peringskiold, *Attalar för Swea och Götha Konunga Hus*, fol. Stockh. 1725; *Monumenta Ullerakerensia*, p. 48; and *Monumenta Sueo-Gothica*, fol. 1710, pp. 185, 191, 203. The Frankish bishops at the end of the seventh century wore beards, as appears from the figure of S. Leger, Bishop of Autun, ap. Montf. i. pl. 31; and from Sidonius, Ep. 24. In the twelfth century they are also thus represented. See MS. Cott. Nero, c. iv; and Strutt's Dresses, vol. i. pl. 25.

<sup>x</sup> Museum Regium, pt. ii. § III. 1—13. Ed. Lauerentzen.

<sup>y</sup> Huitfeldtii Chron. Dan. pt. 25, 26.

<sup>z</sup> Mus. Reg. pt. ii. § III. 3. Archbishop Absalon also used a crosier of gilt copper, ornamented with a border, but this is not of so ancient a character as the former.

<sup>a</sup> Ib. 12. It is engraved, Tab. 1. 12.

lieves this to have been worn as a remedy against the cramp or cholic.<sup>b</sup> These notices may serve to illustrate the curious buckle discovered together with these chess-men, and engraved in Pl. XLVIII. fig. 9, the workmanship of which is peculiarly elegant. The tongue turns on a copper wire, inserted through the bone, and is, even at present, quite flexible.

The figures of the Knights and Warders present very curious examples of the military costume of the twelfth century; and it will be necessary to enter a little diffusely into the history of the armour, both offensive and defensive, used by the nations of the north, in order to show that these chess-pieces answer very well to the descriptions given by historical authorities. The warlike propensities of all the children of Odin's race are too well known, from their conquests, to be dwelt on here. In very early times their weapons probably consisted only of an axe, a sword, or a spear; and the helmet or coat of mail was but rarely used, and only by the highest in rank among them. Such is the account given us of the Franks by Agathias in the sixth century,<sup>c</sup> and it will equally apply to any other branches of the Gothic tree. But the constant warfare in which these people were engaged, and the communication opened to them with the Romans, and subsequently, with the Eastern World, by degrees caused the same means of defence to be adopted in battle, as used by more polished nations. Olaus Magnus speaks thus in general terms of the early armour in use amongst them. "Anciently," says he, "they wore heavy helmets, rudely fashioned, according to the art of the age, and thick tunics, made either of iron, leather, or felt, lined with linen and wool; also iron pieces for the arms, and gloves; they carried in their hands massive spears."<sup>d</sup> But in the 12th century various notices are to be gleaned from contemporary writers which enable us to judge more accurately of the several parts of their armour. Thus, in the ancient Laws of Helsingia, whoever had attained the age of eighteen, was obliged to possess five sorts of warlike

<sup>b</sup> Mus. Worm. p. 377.

<sup>c</sup> Lib. i. p. 40.

<sup>d</sup> "Habebant olim cassides graves, non satis politâ manu juxta rudem illam ætatem fabricatas, præterea thoraces spissos, partim ferreos, partim coriaceos, partim filtrinos, lino lanaque consuta; simili modo brachialia ferrea et manuum chirothecas. Ferebant et densas hastas."—p. 236.

equipment, viz. a sword (*suerd*), or axe (*axe*), a helmet or iron hat (*jernhatt*), a shield (*skiöld*), a tunic of mail (*bryniu*), or a wambais (*musu*). So also by the Laws of Gula, said to have been originally established by King Hacon the Good, in 940, whoever possessed the sum of six marks, besides his clothes, was required to furnish himself with a red shield of two boards in thickness (*skiöld raud tuibyrding*), a spear (*spiot*), an axe (*oxi*), or a sword; he who was worth twelve marks, in addition to the above was ordered to procure a steel cap (*stál-hufu*); whilst he who was worth eighteen marks, was obliged to have a double red shield, a helmet, a coat of mail, or gambeson, (*bryniu* or *panzar*), and all usual military weapons (*folkvopn*).<sup>e</sup> In such a state of society it may easily be inferred that the utmost attention was paid to the fabrication of various species of armour, for which the natural product of the mines in Norway and Sweden yielded such facilities, and hence the well known stories of the smith Veland (*Volundr*), and of the *Duergar*, who forged weapons for the heroes in the recesses of the earth, or in *Valhalla*.<sup>f</sup> Hence also the numerous poetical epithets occurring in the Scaldic poems of the different parts of a warrior's dress,<sup>g</sup> and the frequent descriptions of armour introduced into Snorre Sturleson, and the Sagas.

In the history of King Hacon the Good, [A. D. 937—963,] surnamed *Adelstein's Fostra*, from having been brought up in the court of King Athelstan of England, we read, cap. 28, "The King put on a tunic of mail (*brynio*); girded round him his sword called *Kuernbit* (mill-stone-biter), and set on his head his gilded helmet (*hialm gullrodinn*). He took

<sup>e</sup> V. Reenhielm's notes to *Thorstens Vikings-sons Saga*, cap. x. p. 78. 12mo. Lips. 1680, and compare with the similar Laws passed by Henry II. ap. Hoveden, sub. a<sup>o</sup>. 1181, p. 614. Ed. Francof. 1601. Previous to the introduction of christianity the people of the North, like the Germans, always carried arms about with them. But these manners were subsequently so changed, that among the Icelanders, about A. D. 1139, we read the security was such, that men no longer went with weapons to a public meeting, and scarcely more than a single helmet could be seen at a judicial assemblage. *Kristendom's Saga*, c. 14, 8vo. Hafn. 1773.

<sup>f</sup> Bartholin. *Antiq. Dan.* pp. 569, 570, 4to. Hafn. 1689.

<sup>g</sup> Compare Thorkelin's Index to Beowulf, (9th cent.) sub vv. *Arma, Clipeus, Galea, Gladius, Hasta, Lorica, Securis, Telum*.

a spear (*kesio*) in his hand, and hung his shield (*sciöll*) by his side.”<sup>h</sup> So, also, in describing the battle of Sticklastad, where King Olaf of Norway, called the *Saint*, was slain, A. D. 1030: “Olaf was armed in the following manner: he wore a golden helmet (*hiallm gullrodinn*); in one hand he bore a white shield (*hvitann skiöll*), and in the other a spear (*kesio*), which is now preserved at the Temple of Christ (at Nidros). Around him was girded his sword called *Hneytir*, the hilt of which was of gold, and the edge exceedingly trenchant. On his body he had a tunic of ring-mail (*hringa-brynio*).”<sup>i</sup> And in Magnus Barfot’s Saga, cap. 26, on the eve of the fatal contest in Ulster, where the monarch was killed, and his army defeated by the Irish, A. D. 1103, Snorre tells us, “the King was armed with a helmet (*hialm*), and a red shield (*raudan skiöll*), on which was depicted a golden lion. He was gird with a most sharp sword called *Leggbitr*, the hilt of which was made of the tooth of the Rosmar,<sup>k</sup> and ornamented with gold. He held a spear (*kesio*), in his hand, and over his tunic (*skyrto*), he had a surcoat of red silk (*silki-hiup raudan*), bearing before and behind the image of a lion, in gold.”<sup>l</sup> Nearly similar to this is a passage in King Sverrer’s Saga, [A. D. 1177-1202,] cap. 163, written by Charles, Abbot of Thingore, in Iceland, and others, from the narrative of the King himself, where Sverrer’s armour is thus described: “He was habited in a good tunic of mail (*brynio*),<sup>m</sup> above it a strong gambeson (*panzara*), and over all a red surcoat (*raudan hiup*);<sup>n</sup> with these he wore a wide helmet of steel (*vida stálhufu*), similar to those worn by the Germans; and beneath it a mail cap (*brynkollu*),<sup>o</sup> and a linen hood (*panzara-hufu*). By his side hung a sword, and a spear (*kesiu*)<sup>p</sup> was in his hand.”<sup>q</sup> But

<sup>h</sup> Heimskringla, i. 155, Ed. Schöning.

<sup>i</sup> Ib. ii. 352.

<sup>k</sup> Rothe, de Gladiis Veterum, imprimis Danorum, p. 28, 12mo. Havn. 1752. Note of Bussæus on the Periplus Ohteri, §. 5, ad calc. *Arii Sched.* 4to. Havn. 1733.

<sup>l</sup> Ib. iii. 227.

<sup>m</sup> Other copies read *harnisk*, which is synonymous with *brynio* in Spec. Reg. p. 405.

<sup>n</sup> In other copies it is added that the King’s arms were on his surcoat (*vaaben-kappe*). See note to Spec. Reg. p. 402.

<sup>o</sup> Al. *kalot*, a leather cap.

<sup>p</sup> Al. *spyd*.

<sup>q</sup> Noregs Konunga Sögor, iv. 298, fol. 1813.



as the testimony of Snorre in three of the above passages may be impugned, on the plea that his history was composed at a later date than the period referred to,<sup>r</sup> and, therefore, his descriptions are taken from the mode of his own time, I shall produce two other authorities less liable to be called in doubt; the author of the *Kongs-Skugg-sio*, or *Speculum Regale*, who certainly wrote in the latter half of the 12th century, and Giraldus Cambrensis, who was an eye-witness of the transactions of the Danes in Ireland, between the years 1170-1180. The former, in his directions to his son concerning military exercises and choice of weapons, bids him when combating on foot, to wear his heavy armour, to wit, a tunic of mail (*brynio*), or thick gambeson (*thungann pannzara*), a strong shield (*skiöld*) or buckler (*buklara*), and a heavy sword (*sverd*).<sup>s</sup> In naval actions he says the best weapons are long spears, and for defence, gambesons (*panzazarar*) made of soft and well dyed linen cloth (*af blautum lereptum ok vel svartadum*), together with good helmets (*hialmar*), pendant steel caps (*hangandi stálhufur*), and broad shields.<sup>t</sup> His directions for a knight's equipment is more minute, and is worthy particular attention, as illustrative of our subject: "Let the horseman," he writes, "use this dress; first, hose made of soft and well prepared linen cloth, which should reach to the breeches belt (*broka-belltis*); then above them good greaves of mail (*brynhosur*), of such a height that they may be fastened with a double string. Next, let him put on a good pair of breeches (*bryn-brækur*), made of strong linen, on which must be fastened caps for the knees (*knebiargir*), made of thick iron, and fixed with strong nails. The upper part of the body should first be clothed in a soft linen vest (*blautann panzara*), which should hang to the middle of the thigh; over this a good breast defence (*briost*

<sup>r</sup> Snorre was born in 1178, and died A. D. 1241; but his history is compiled from earlier and authentic sources, and with regard to the life of King Olaf Tryggvason, we possess the originals from which he drew, viz. the life of that monarch written by Oddr and Gunlaugr, monks of the monastery of Thingore, in Ireland, the former of whom died in 1200, and the latter in 1210. See the Preface to *Sverris Saga*, and Reenhielm's edition of Oddr, 4to. Ups. 1691. The text of Gunlaugr was printed at Skalholt, 4to. 1689, and has been recently republished at Copenhagen. See also Mr. Wheaton's interesting volume on the History of the Northmen, pp. 99, 109.

<sup>s</sup> Spec. Reg. p. 375.

<sup>t</sup> Ib. p. 400.

*biorg*) of iron, reaching from the bosom to the breeches-belt; above that a good tunic of mail (*brynio*), and over all a good gambeson (*panzara*), of the same length as the tunic, but without sleeves. Let him have two swords (*sverd*), one girded round him, the other suspended at his saddle-bow; and a good dagger (*bryn-knif*). He must have on his head a good helm, made of tried steel, and provided with all defence for the face (*ok buinn met allri andlitz biaurg*); and a good and thick shield suspended to his neck, especially furnished with a strong handle (*skialldarfetli*); lastly, let him have a good and pointed spear (*kesiu*), of tried steel, with a strong shaft.”<sup>u</sup>

The passage in Giraldus I refer to, is that in which he describes the descent of the Norwegians under Hasculph, to attack the city of Dublin, then defended by Milo Cogan, about the year 1172, as follows: “*A navi-bus igitur certatim erumpentibus, duce Johanne, agnomine the wode, quod Latine sonat insano vel vehementi, viri bellicosi Danico more undique ferro vestiti, alii loricis longis, alii laminis ferreis arte consutis, clipeis quoque rotundis et rubris, circulariter ferro munitis, homines tam animis ferrei quàm armis, ordinatis turmis, ad portam orientalem muros invadunt.*”<sup>x</sup> In the course of the battle he speaks of a Dane’s legs being cut off clothed on both sides with iron, “*cum panno loricæ*,” which proves that a linen gambeson or breeches were worn under the mail, as described by the author of the *Speculum*.

Keeping, therefore, these passages in view, it will perhaps be the best mode of inquiry, to take each portion of the armour worn by these figures separately, and to offer such remarks on each as may suggest themselves.

The helmets are chiefly conical, either with or without a nasal, and many of them exhibit a great peculiarity in having pendant flaps attached to protect the ears and neck (*oreillettes*), which were in all likelihood flexible. Of this form, no other instances have occurred to me

<sup>u</sup> *Ib.* pp. 405, 406.

<sup>x</sup> I quote from a very fine MS. of the time of John, in the possession of Sir Thomas Phillipps, Bart. which contains some curious illuminations of the costume of the Irish at that period, which deserve to be engraved.

in the manuscripts or monuments of France or England, but it is unquestionably of Asiatic original, and must have been brought into Europe at the period of the great Gothic invasion, or, what seems more probable, have been copied by the Northmen during their expeditions to the East. A helmet of nearly similar shape is ascribed to the ancient Sarmatians, from being found on the reverses of the coins of Marcus Aurelius and Antoninus Pius.<sup>y</sup> A passage also in Ammianus Marcellinus seems to point to the same sort of helm, when, speaking of the Persians, he says, that they so completely covered the face as to render it impossible for a dart to penetrate, except through the openings left for the sight and breath.<sup>z</sup> This fashion has been preserved to a very recent period in India and China; and in the collection of armour belonging to Llewellyn Meyrick, Esq. at Goodrich Castle, is an example of a helmet made of buffalo's hide, boiled in oil, manufactured, as is conjectured, for the Rajah of Guzerat, which shews perfectly the three appendages so strongly defined on several of the chess-figures.<sup>a</sup> Of this nature were probably the *hangandi stálhufar*, mentioned in the Speculum; and, as Einerson remarks, they were apparently provided with *kind-skiærm* or defence-pieces for the cheeks, called *kinn-biorg*. When deprived of these flaps, the conical helmet with a nasal perfectly resembles those on the Bayeux tapestry, and various other monuments of the 11th and 12th centuries, and was most frequently worn, as in the instances of the Warders, over the hood of mail.<sup>b</sup> To this conical shape the term of *ha-seimda hialma*, used in the *Lodbrokar Quida*,<sup>c</sup> seems to apply, and proves the antiquity of its use among the nations of the North. Sir Samuel Meyrick informs us that the *chapel de fer*, or plain conic helmet, was introduced into England in the time of Rufus; and that

<sup>y</sup> Mailliot, tom. ii. pp. 436, 437.

<sup>z</sup> Lips. de Mil. Rom. Opp. tom. iii. p. 140, 8vo. Vesal. 1675. Compare Meyrick's Illustrations of Armour, vol. ii. pl. 135, 140.

<sup>a</sup> Illustrations of Ancient Armour, vol. ii. pl. 141.

<sup>b</sup> See Montfauc. Monum. i. pl. 32, 50, MS. Cott. Calig. A. vii. Nero, c. iv. and Chart. Y. 6. Ured. Sigill. Com. Flandr. P. D'Ebulo de Motib. Siculis, Strutt's Dresses, pl. 43, &c.

<sup>c</sup> Ed. Johnstone, 12mo. 1783. "Then, while our tempered steel sung on the *high-seamed helm*, the wolves found a rich repast."

the nasal (called *nefbjorg*<sup>d</sup> by the Scandinavians) fell into disuse towards the middle of the 12th century.<sup>e</sup> This corresponds very well with the different shapes offered to us by the chess-men, which seems to indicate that period when the ancient and precise form of the conical helm and nasal began to be laid aside, but not wholly superseded. Some of the figures wear plain flat or round scull-caps, whilst others have a broad rim to them. All these come under the denomination of *stál-hufur*, mentioned in the *Speculum*, which were made without any defence to the face.<sup>f</sup> Such a cap is represented in the figure engraved by Reenhielm, from the ancient MS. of the Laws of Gula,<sup>g</sup> and a similar one was formerly suspended over the tomb of King Olaf of Sweden.<sup>h</sup> A figure also in the curious Roll of the Legend of St. Guthlac, of the 12th century, exhibits the union of the nasal with the flat cap;<sup>i</sup> and it is more distinctly seen on the monument of Geoffry Magnaville, Earl of Essex, in the Temple Church, who died in 1144.<sup>k</sup> But even in the 14th century the conic helmet had not been entirely discarded, as shewn by the illuminations in the celebrated book of Flatey.<sup>l</sup> One of the head-pieces worn by the Warder, No. 9, (Pl. XLVIII. fig. 3.)

<sup>d</sup> When King Magnus Barefoot of Norway, [1093—1103,] led his forces to Britain, he was opposed, opposite the Isle of Anglesea, by two Earls, Hugh the Proud, and Hugh the Fat. The King shot an arrow against the former, and at the same moment another arrow was launched in the same direction by one of his followers. The Earl was so enveloped in mail (*allbrynjathur*), that no part was exposed but his eyes, and both the arrows striking at once on the Earl's face, one of them broke his nasal (*nefbjorg hialmsins*), whilst the other perforated the eye and brain, so that he dropt down dead. *Saga Magn. Burf.* c. 11.

<sup>e</sup> Meyrick's Ancient Armour, vol. i. p. 37. In the MS. executed by order of Anselm, Abbot of St. Edmund's, who died in 1148, the English are drawn in conical helmets without nasals. The nasal was partially revived about the year 1200: see Meyrick, p. 104, and P. D'Ebulo de Motib. Siculis, 4to.

<sup>f</sup> V. Einerson's Note, *Spec. Reg.* p. 406.

<sup>g</sup> Thorstens Vikings-sons Saga, p. 85.

<sup>h</sup> Suecia Antiqua et Hodierna, tom. i. pl. 28. fol.

<sup>i</sup> Chart. Cott. Y. 6, Strutt's Dresses, pl. 43.

<sup>k</sup> Dugd. Bar. i. 203, Gough's Sepulchr. Mon. p. cv., Stothard's Monumental Effigies, pl. x. The flat or pot helmet is also very distinctly marked in the monument of William the Norman, Count of Flanders, who died in 1128, and this seems to be the earliest instance of it. *Ured. Sig. Com. Flandr.* p. 14.

<sup>l</sup> Haco's Expedition against Scotland, by Johnstone, 12mo. 1782, *Pref.*

is of a very remarkable shape, and precisely resembles the one in which King Eric of Sweden is represented, in the paintings which surround his tomb in the Cathedral of Upsala; in which likewise various other species of the *stál-hufur* appear. This monarch died in 1160, but the paintings were probably executed after his translation in 1273.<sup>m</sup> It is, indeed, highly probable that among the people of the North fewer and slower changes took place in regard to their military equipments than among the Normans or the English; and this may account for the appearance of these round or pot-caps, which were so much the fashion at a later period. In ancient times the helmets of the kings of Norway were gilt, as shewn by the poetic Edda of Sæmund,<sup>n</sup> by the Herverar Saga, cap. 19, by Nial's Saga, cap. 85, and by many passages of Snorre; sometimes, but at a later period, they bore a cross depicted on them.<sup>o</sup>

The body armour of the chess-pieces is of two descriptions, the wadded linen cloth coat or *wambais*, worn by the knights, and the tunic of mail, with or without a hood, in which some of the Warders are dressed; of the antiquity of both descriptions of these war-garments there can be no question, since we find them mentioned by Greek and Roman writers.<sup>p</sup>

The *wambeys*, *gambeson*, or *panzar*, (for they are one and the same, derived from Teutonic terms signifying the belly,) was composed of stout linen cloth, stuffed or wadded with tow or cotton, descending almost to the knees, and worn, either by itself, or together with the tunic of mail, beneath or above, according to the fashion more or less coarse in which it was made.<sup>q</sup> It seems to be scarcely distinguishable from the Hauketon, which Sir Samuel Meyrick believes to have been derived from the Saracens.<sup>r</sup> By the passage already quoted from the Speculum, it seems to have been without

<sup>m</sup> Peringskiöld, Mon. Suev.-Goth. fol. Stockh. 1710.

<sup>n</sup> Vol. ii. p. 363, Ed. 4to. Havn. 1818.

<sup>o</sup> Heimskringla, i. 764. Montfauc. Monum. i. pl. 50.

<sup>p</sup> Lips de Mil. Rom. lib. iii. dial. 6.

<sup>q</sup> See Meyrick's Dissertation on this species of armour, Archæolog. xix. p. 210, seq. in which it is to be regretted a stricter chronological arrangement of authorities has not been adopted. Wachter is certainly mistaken in explaining the *Panzar* to be of iron.

<sup>r</sup> Ancient Armour, vol. i. p. 48.

sleeves when worn over the mail; but when used by itself it certainly had sleeves, as in the instances of the chess-men, and other authorities. John of Salisbury tells us, that in the reign of Henry II. the English knights had them made so tight, that they seemed to sit on the body like the skin of the wearer.<sup>s</sup> He speaks of them either as linen or silk, which refers to the exterior facing of the garment.

Of the same materials it was fashioned among the Scandinavians, and hence it easily appears, how the *panzar*, when worn as an outer garment, became, by degrees, the armorial surcoat. Snorre, in speaking of King Olaf Tryggvason, says he was conspicuous with a gold shield and helmet, and wore a kirtle of red colour (*raudan kyrtil*) above his mail (*brynio*).<sup>t</sup> But the monk Oddr, from whom he copies, and who died in 1200, calls it a red silk kirtle (*raudum sijlki kyrtli*), which resembled a fair rose.<sup>u</sup> So, in a battle against the Vends, at *Hlyskogs heythe*, King Magnus the Good takes off his tunic of mail (*hringa-brynio*) and puts on a red silk shirt (*rautha silki skyrtta*); then, taking his battle axe, he rushes into the fight. The shirt here spoken of was evidently a gambeson, since otherwise it would have afforded no protection. This garment was sometimes called *hiup* (the *juppe* of the French), such, for instance, as was wove for Ragnar Lodbrog by Aslauga;<sup>x</sup> and a similar vest, impenetrable to the sword, was received by Orvar Oddr from a lady in Ireland.<sup>y</sup> Other examples may be found in Steenhielm's notes to Thorstein's Saga, and in Thorkelin's Fragments relating to English History. He supposes the use of silk derived by the Northmen from Constantinople. At the period of the Crusades silken and furred surcoats were generally worn, as is apparent from Albert of Aix's description of the French knights.<sup>z</sup> It may be added that, in the twelfth century, the workmanship of the North in the fabrication of body armour was in high estimation, since the author of *Sverris Saga*, after telling us that the men who guarded Stalvard's

<sup>s</sup> He says they only studied, "ut lineas suas vestesve sericas sic perstringant et torqueant, ut quasi cutem cerusatam aliis succis obnoxiam carni faciant cohærere." Polycrat. lib. 6. 3.

<sup>t</sup> Cap. 122, tom. i. p. 337. Ed. Schön. See also *Nials Saga*, cap. 85, 4to. Hafn. 1809.

<sup>u</sup> Cap. 65, p. 228. Ed. Reenh.

<sup>x</sup> Thorkelin's Fragments, p. 6.

<sup>y</sup> *Herverar Saga*, p. 31, 4to. Havn. 1785.

<sup>z</sup> *Gesta Dei per Francos*, i. 203. Cf. Mills, i. 466.

ship wore steel caps (*stálhufu*) and gambesons (*panzara*), adds that they were all of Gothic manufacture.<sup>a</sup>

Mail armour, consisting of rings or plates of iron or brass, fastened on folds of linen, seems to have been known to the inhabitants of the North long before the dawn of literature among them, and is repeatedly alluded to in the most ancient of their writings. The general term applied to the tunic of mail was *brynio*, Saxon *byrne*, which in all probability was derived from the colour of the metal of which it was composed.<sup>b</sup> In what respect the common *brynio* differed from the *hringa-brynio* or lorica annulata, is not easy to define, but it appears to have been what is termed *masclad* or *trel-lised* armour,<sup>c</sup> as exhibited in the dress of the chess-Warders. Such a defence is, perhaps, alluded to in the *Völunda-quida*, where the term “nailed byrnies”<sup>d</sup> is employed, in reference to the studs or nails which fastened the intersecting mascles or pieces of wire. Of the *hringa-brynio* a specimen is preserved in the Royal Museum at Copenhagen, which is ascribed to the eleventh century.<sup>e</sup> It covered the head, body, and arms, and descended to the knees. This was the usual shape of the *brynio*, whether masclad or ringed, and is well exemplified in several of the chess-men. Of this description was the tunic worn by Harald Hardraad, in his battle against Harald of England, in 1066. It was called *Emma*, says the historian Snorre, and was so long, that it came to the middle of the thigh, and so strong, that no weapon could penetrate it.<sup>f</sup> But it left the throat in some measure unprotected, and here it was Harald received his death wound. There is some reason to believe that the Norwegians may have borrowed this species of armour, together with their kite-shaped shields, from the Franks, who from

<sup>a</sup> Noregs Konunga Sögor, tom. iv. p. 286. We are told by Snorre, in Olaf Helga's Saga, c. 204, that Thorer caused twelve tunics to be made by the Fins, of rein-deer skins, which were so contrived by magic art, as to be stronger than mail (*hringa-brynio*) and impenetrable to a sword.

<sup>b</sup> V. Ihre, in v.

<sup>c</sup> Archæolog. xix. pp. 121, 126. Cf. Reenhielm's Notes, ubi supr. p. 88.

<sup>d</sup> *Negldar brynior*. The Editor says, “Loricas clavis sive bullis auratis ornata intelligo.” Edda Sæmund. ii. 9. Ed. 4to. 1818.

<sup>e</sup> Museum Regium, pt. ii. § ii. 95.

<sup>f</sup> Harald Hådrades Saga, cap. 94.

the eighth century were a far more polished people than the rest of their Gothic brethren. In the Bayeux tapestry the steel armour consists either of flat rings, or mascles, placed contiguously, and at the close of the eleventh century, both ringed and scaled armour were worn by the French knights, as we learn from Anna Comnena.<sup>g</sup> Examples of the mascléd tunic or hauberk, with sleeves and hood, resembling those on the Warders, may be found in the French illuminations of the twelfth century, MSS. Cott. Cal. A. vii. Nero, c. iv. in the English Roll of St. Guthlac's Miracles, Chart. Cott. Y. 6, and in D'Ebulo's poem on the conquest of Sicily by the Emperor Henry the Sixth.

There are two existing monuments in relation to the Danes, which may naturally claim a slight notice here. The first is a reliquary engraved in Strutt's *Habits of the people of England*, vol. i. pl. 24, representing the murder of Theodore, Abbot of Croyland, in 890, by Oscytel and his companions, and supposed to have been executed not long afterwards. The figures here appear bare-headed, in tunics or gambesons, which descend to the knees, and which seem to have borders of mail, or, perhaps, a shirt of mail beneath. They wear breeches and leg-guards, which are attached together, but from the engraving it is difficult to determine whether the material be of linen, leather, or iron. The other document I refer to, is a MS. formerly in the library of Mr. Towneley,<sup>i</sup> written in the time of Anselm, Abbot of St. Edmund's, who died in 1148. In this, the Danes are every where drawn bare-headed, or with conical caps; they wear a linen tunic or gambeson, which reaches to the middle of the thigh; they have no breeches, and their feet are covered by leathern galoshes, through which their toes are thrust.<sup>k</sup> On the whole, these Northmen, so depicted, bear a far greater resemblance to the "rough-fute rivelings" of Minot, than to the iron-clad and gilded heroes of the Sagas; and we may suspect that the

<sup>g</sup> P. 397. She calls the tunic *χιτὼν σιδηροῦς κρίκος ἐπικρίκῳ περιπεπλεγμένος*.

<sup>h</sup> Strutt, i. pp. 57, 63. Cf. Meyrick's *Ancient Armour*, i. lxix.

<sup>i</sup> Now belonging to Mr. Booth, bookseller, of Duke Street, Portland Place.

<sup>k</sup> These boots seem the same as those called *rullions* by the Scots, made from the raw hide. See Ritson's note to Minot, p. 188.



pious Abbot, or his delineator, drew them in this manner, in order to excite contemptible ideas of the murderers of St. Edmund.

The Shields of the Knights and Warders are highly curious, as presenting to us a series of devices (the immediate precursors of hereditary armorial bearings), in greater variety than is to be found on any other existing monuments. From the very earliest period the Gothic nations were accustomed to paint their shields of various colours,<sup>1</sup> and from the Romans they might easily have learned to adopt different insignia. From some passages in the *Voluspa*,<sup>m</sup> *Saxo*,<sup>n</sup> and *Egil's Saga*,<sup>o</sup> it has been assumed by many of the northern Antiquaries, that the ancient Scandanavians adorned their shields with representations of their exploits;<sup>p</sup> but Sperlingius, in his collections on the subject,<sup>q</sup> argues strongly against it, and affirms that before the twelfth century no trace of any devices on shields is to be found among them. The use of colours, however, and even gilding is admitted, and the usual pigments employed were red or white. In *Sæmund's* poetical Edda mention is made of a red shield with a golden border;<sup>r</sup> and the encomiast of Queen Emma, in describing Canute's armament, when sailing to invade England, speaks of the glittering effulgence of the shields suspended on the sides of the ships.<sup>s</sup> At the period of the first crusade it was certainly customary to ornament shields very highly. Robert of Aix, who was himself present, thus describes the European knights: "They are clothed in iron, their shields are resplendent with gold, gems, and colours, and their helms emit

<sup>1</sup> Tacitus, de Morib. Germ. cap. 6.

<sup>m</sup> Str. 18, p. 32. Ed. 4to. Havn. 1828. Cf. Edda Sæmund. part ii. pp. 79, 104, 963.

<sup>n</sup> Hist. Dan. lib. iv. pp. 56, 57, lib. vii. p. 136, fol. Soræ, 1644.

<sup>o</sup> Cap. 81, p. 698, 4to. Havn. 1809.

<sup>p</sup> Bartholinus, p. 149. Torfæus, Hist. Norv. Prolegom.

<sup>q</sup> MS. Add. 5183, f. 22, sq. in v. *Arma*.

<sup>r</sup> *Helga-Quida*, st. 30. In the *Scalda*, or collection of eddaic epithets attached to the Edda of Snorre, we are told that it was usual to paint the exterior circle of the ancient shields, which was called *Baug*, and hence shields were also poetically termed *Baug*. Ed. Resen. 4to. Havn. 1665. V. *Egils Saga*, p. 697.

<sup>s</sup> "Erant ibi scutorum tot genera, ut crederes adesse omnium populorum agmina. Si quando sol illis jubar immiscerit radiorum, hinc resplenduit fulgor armorum, illinc vero flamma dependentium scutorum." Ap. du Chesne, p. 168.

rays like sun-beams. In their hands they bear ashen spears, which seem like huge beams, headed at the extremity with a sharp iron spike.”<sup>t</sup> The only device on shields noticed by Snorre, is that of a cross, which Sperlingius conjectures was first introduced by King Olaf the Saint, at the commencement of the eleventh century. This is founded on a passage, thus given by Sperlingius from a MS. “King Olaf had for the defence of his ship one hundred men, armed with tunics of ring-mail (*hringa-brynior*) and French helmets (*Valska hialma*). Many of his soldiers carried white shields (*hvita skiöldo*), distinguished by crosses of gold, or of colours, red and blue. The King ordered all his troops to make a cross also on their helmets with chalk.”<sup>u</sup> Most of the shields depicted in the Bayeux tapestry bear crosses of different shapes, and this is likewise the case with those of the chess-figures. The æra of the general adoption of armorial bearings in Europe is fixed with sufficient exactness to the end of the twelfth century; but the existence of certain distinctive badges or figures is, unquestionably, to be referred to an earlier period.<sup>x</sup> The shields on the Bayeux tapestry exhibit not only crosses, but a species of dragon, and on the seal of Robert the Frisian, Earl of Flanders, attached to a charter dated in 1072, is represented a lion rampant.<sup>y</sup> There is a passage also in the Nials-Saga, written at the commencement of the twelfth century, which expressly notices the insignia adopted by Kari, son of Solmund, a native of the Hebrides, and Helgo, son of Nial, about A. D. 998. “Skarphedin,” says the writer, “went first, clad in a kirtle of blue, and bearing a shield of the kind called *targe* (*törguskiöld*) and an axe on his shoulder. He was followed by Helgo, who wore a helmet and a red tunic, and carried a purple shield, on which was depicted a stag. Next came Kari, dressed in a silken tunic, with a gilded helmet, and a shield bearing the figure of a lion on it.”<sup>z</sup> The instances of armorial bearings on

<sup>t</sup> “Horum ferreæ vestes, clypei auro et gemmis inserti variisque coloribus depicti. Galeæ in capitibus eorum splendentes super solis splendorem coruscant. Hastæ fraxineæ in manibus eorum ferro acutissimo præfixæ sunt, quasi grandes perticæ.” p. 241, ap. Bongars.

<sup>u</sup> MS. Add. 5183, f. 22.

<sup>x</sup> Dallaway on Heraldry, 4to. 1793.

<sup>y</sup> Uredus, p. 6.

<sup>z</sup> *Nials-Saga*, cap. 93, p. 306. Ed. 4to. Havn. 1809. Sperlingius is mistaken in referring this Saga to the 14th century. See also Arngr. Jon. Crymog. c. ii. 663.

the shields of Richard Fitz-Hugh, Earl of Chester (ob. 1119),<sup>a</sup> of Robert the Norman, Earl of Flanders (ob. 1128),<sup>b</sup> of Geoffrey Magnaville, Earl of Essex (ob. 1144),<sup>c</sup> of Geoffroi le Bel, Comte du Mans (ob. 1150),<sup>d</sup> and on the banner of Waleran, Earl of Worcester (ob. 1166),<sup>e</sup> may likewise be adduced as evidence of the adoption of individual badges about the middle of the twelfth century. With these may be compared the shields engraven in Willemin, and those painted in MS. Cott. Nero, C. iv. all of which are of the same period. There is no reason, therefore, to refer the bearings on the shields of the chess-men to a later æra than the one we have chosen.

The shape of these shields is also worthy attention, since the Northmen are generally supposed to have used them of a round or lunated form; whereas these exhibit precisely the kite-shaped Norman shield, as shewn in the Bayeux tapestry, and in other monuments of the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Sir S. Meyrick conjectures that the Normans may have adopted them from the Sicilians; but this appears questionable, since in very ancient times the shield of the Northern warriors was of sufficient length to serve for their bier,<sup>f</sup> and, consequently, must have been of a form approaching to the long oval or heater figure. It is not at all improbable, however, that this peculiar form may have been learnt from the Franks.

We find traces in the poetical Edda of the early estimation in which the Frankish armour was held, where Gunnar, one of the *reguli* of Germany, says to the messenger of Attila, King of the Huns: "Seven chests have I filled with swords; each of them has a hilt of gold; my weapon is exceedingly sharp; my bow is worthy of the bench it graces; my tunics of mail are golden; my helmet and white shield came from the hall of Kiars."<sup>g</sup> Frequent mention is made in the Sagas of French swords, French helmets,

<sup>a</sup> Meyrick's Ancient Armour, i. 35.

<sup>b</sup> Ured. Sig. Com. Flandr. p. 14.

<sup>c</sup> Gough's Sep. Mon. p. cv.

<sup>d</sup> Montfaucon, Mon. Franç. tom. ii. pl. 12.

<sup>e</sup> Meyrick, i. 36. In Henry the Second's time, it was the fashion to paint and gild the shield very highly. Joh. Sarisb. Policrat. lib. 6. c. 3. Nicolas, son of Sigurd Ran, says Snorre, used a red shield, ornamented with stars (circ. 1175). *Magnus Erlingsons Saga*, cap. 40, tom. iii. p. 455.

<sup>f</sup> *Nials-Saga*, cap. 63, p. 199.

<sup>g</sup> *Atla-Quida*, vol. ii. p. 370. This Kiars was a regulus of Gaul, who lived in the 6th century. Cf. *Volunda Quida*, and Suhm's Hist. Krit. Tom. ix. pp. 88, 425.

and French coats of mail;<sup>h</sup> and Wace in the *Roman de Rou*, says that Rollo and his companions :

Chevals quistrent et armes à la guise franchoise,  
Quer lor semblout è plus riche è plus cortoise.<sup>i</sup>

At the end of the 11th century these shields are thus minutely described by Anna Comnena, in speaking of the French knights. “For defence they bear an impenetrable shield, not of a round, but of an oblong shape, broad at the upper part, and terminating in a point (οὐ περιφερὴς ἀλλὰ θυρεὸς ἀπὸ πλατυτάτου ἀρξάμενος καὶ εἰς ὄξυ καταλήγων). The surface is not flat but convex, so as to embrace the person of the wearer; and the exterior face is of metal so highly polished by frequent rubbing, with an umbo of shining brass in the middle, as to dazzle the eyes of the beholder.”<sup>k</sup>

An ancient shield of this description is preserved in the Royal Museum at Copenhagen, which was excavated at Rödäl, near Hardangr, in Norway. Its length is four feet, by two in width, and it is composed of two layers of boards (*tuibyrding*), each half an inch in thickness, the outermost placed longitudinally, the innermost horizontally. The surface is protected by a covering of leather, slightly figured, and in the interior are three handles of the same material, fastened by iron nails, the heads of which appear on the outside. This shield is convex, and gradually decreases in width towards the lower end. Olaus Wormius, to whom it once belonged, mentions another similar to it, which was sent him from Ireland, as a relic of Danish antiquity. The author of the *Museum Regium* supposes it might have been brought by the Northmen from France, after their conquests there; but remarks, that a similar shield was used by Earl Skute of Norway, about the year 1239.<sup>l</sup> In Abbot Anselm's MS. before referred to, the Danes are likewise represented with kite-shaped shields, on which are various figures.

<sup>h</sup> Cf. Snorre, 1, 95, and Index to Orkneyinga Saga, p. 283, in v. *Valska*.

<sup>i</sup> Vol. i. p. 65.

<sup>k</sup> Alexiad. lib. 13, p. 314. In the *Herverar Saga*, Arngrim is said to have had a shield of large size, strengthened with plates of iron (*storum járnolám*), cap. 3.

<sup>l</sup> Mus. Reg. pt. ii. §. III. 23. Cf. Mus. Worm. p. 370, and *Saga Hakonar konung Hákonar-sonar*, cap. 238, 242.

This kite-shaped shield became by degrees wider at the top, as may be seen in the cases of some of the Warders, and towards the close of the 12th century became considerably shortened, an instance of which is afforded on the seal of Earl Magnus, son of Benedict, about A. D. 1196.<sup>m</sup>

One peculiarity, with regard to these figures of the Warders, (Nos. 6, 7, 8,) and which serves to confirm in no small degree my belief that they are of Norwegian or Icelandic workmanship, is the singular manner in which they are represented *biting their shields*. Now this was a characteristic of the Scandinavian *Berserker*, who were unarmed warriors subject to fits of madness on the eve of battle, under the influence of which they performed the most extraordinary feats. Snorre Sturleson, in his *Heimkringla*, thus describes them : “ The soldiers of Odin went forth to the combat without armour, raging like dogs or wolves, biting their shields, and in strength equal to furious bulls or bears. Their enemies they laid prostrate at their feet ; neither fire nor weapon harmed them ; this frenzy was called *Berserksgangr*.”<sup>n</sup> So also the historian Saxo, in speaking of the sons of Syvald, writes : This man had seven sons, so expert in the art of magic, “ ut sæpe subitis furoris viribus instincti, solerent ore torvum infremere, *scuta morsibus attrectare*, torridas fauce prunas absumere, extructa quævis incendia penetrare : nec posset conceptus dementiæ motus alio remedii genere quàm aut vinculorum injuriis aut cædis humanæ piaculo temperari.”<sup>o</sup> And in another passage, where Hartben Helsing sees his champions defied by Haldan, in a fit of madness he bites furiously the edge of his shield.<sup>p</sup> The same feat is practised in the *Herverar Saga* by the sons of Arngrim, when preparing to fight with Hialmar and Oddr Vinforla.<sup>q</sup> From these authorities it is evident, that, although the sculptor of the chess-men did not, from obvious reasons, fashion these pieces without armour, as was strictly

<sup>m</sup> Peringskiöld, *Attälur for Swea och Götha Konunga Hus*, p. 72.

<sup>n</sup> *Ynglinga Saga*, cap. 6, Tom. i. p. 11. Cf. Barthol. *Antiq. Dan.* p. 345 ; Verelii *Index Ling. Scytho-Scand.* in v. *Berserkr* ; and the Annotations *De Berserkis* at the end of *Kristni-Saga*, p. 142, 4to. Hafn. 1773.

<sup>o</sup> *Hist. Dan. lib. vii.* p. 123.

<sup>p</sup> *Ib. lib. vii.* p. 124.

<sup>q</sup> P. 25, Ed. 4to. Hafn. 1785, cf. p. 35.

the case with the race of men called *Berserkar*, (whence their name, qu. *Bare-shirt*, is derived,) yet that he evidently intended by retaining one of the principal symptoms which always accompanied these ancient fits of war-like frenzy, to designate the impetuosity and valour of the champions on the mimic field of battle, which the chess-board was supposed to represent.

On the swords and spears of the chess-figures it will be unnecessary to dwell long. They are known to have been used by all the Gothic nations, and were very long and heavy. They had, besides, a shorter sword, which was termed *sax*.<sup>r</sup> In Egils Saga a Northern warrior's arms, who fought in the battle of Brunanburg, A. D. 926, on the side of Athelstane, are thus described: "Thorolf had a wide and thick shield, and a strong helmet on his head; he was gird with a sword called *Lang*, a mickle weapon and good. In his hand he carried a spear (*kesiu*), the head of which was two ells in length, terminating in a four-edged point, and broader at the upper part; the part connecting the head with the staff was of iron, long and thick, and the staff itself in length a cubit, bound strongly with iron. This kind of spear is called *Brynthvarar* (the darkness of byrnies)."<sup>s</sup> The spear of Arnliot Gellin was of such thickness that it quite filled his grasp (literally, was a *hand-full*), and was covered with gold.<sup>t</sup> Their swords were often ornamented very highly, as will appear from citations already made, and the value of one may be learnt from Torfæus, lib. 5, cap. 13, where the sword given by Hacon Adelstein to Hoskuld, is estimated at half a pound of gold, equal to 128 dollars in Danish money.<sup>u</sup>

It results, therefore, from the above inquiry, that the general military costume of the chess-men, will accord as well with what we know of the

<sup>r</sup> V. Notas Reenhielmi ad Thorstens Vikings-sons Saga, p. 85, and the collections of Sperlingius, MS. Add. 5183, f. 56.

<sup>s</sup> Cap. 53, p. 285, Ed. 4to. Havn. 1809. Bartholinus gives an engraving of this spear, p. 149.

<sup>t</sup> Saga af Olafi hinom Helga, cap. 227, Tom. ii. p. 354. Compare the description of Grettur's spear in *Grettar Saga*, ap. Bartholin, p. 364.

<sup>u</sup> Sperlingius, ubi supr. Cf. the account of Otger's sword preserved formerly in the monastery of Pharon, Act. Benedict. sæc. 4, p. 1.; Bartholin, p. 579; and Rothe's Treatise "De Gladiis Veterum, imprimis Danorum," 12mo. Havn. 1752.

armour of the ancient Norwegians as with that of any other nation; and that, in several particulars, its character is more appropriate to the Northern than to the Southern or Eastern style of dress.

But the strongest argument perhaps in favour of our hypothesis, is that which rests on the testimonies, ancient and modern, of the fondness of the Scandinavians for the game of Chess, which they seem to have cultivated from a remote period. Whether they derived their knowledge of the game from their intercourse with the Franks in the ninth and tenth centuries, or from Constantinople, may admit of a doubt; but the latter seems, on various accounts, more probable.

As early as the beginning of the ninth century, Ragnar Lodbrog is reported to have visited the Hellespont, and before the middle of the eleventh century the expedition of Harald Hardraad to the East, his amour with the Empress Zoe, and his escape from prison by means of the Varangian guards, are matters of historical record. The early establishment of these Varangians as the Imperial Guard, (who were, undoubtedly, Scandinavians, and who play so principal a part in Sir Walter Scott's recent novel of Count Robert,) would of itself argue an intimate connexion between the Greeks and Northmen, and this is corroborated by perpetual notices in the Sagas.<sup>x</sup> The share also taken by the Northmen in the first Crusade, is an additional argument of their acquaintance with the oriental world. But as the game of chess certainly passed from Asia to Europe, and probably through more channels than one, it is of very minor importance to inquire more minutely from what quarter the inhabitants of the North received it.<sup>y</sup> In proof of the ancient usage of chess among them, I shall therefore content myself by adducing such passages of the old northern writers as have occurred to me in this inquiry. In the Saga of Ragnar Lodbrog, printed in Björner's collection,<sup>z</sup> and in an ancient account of the Danish invasions of Northumberland in the ninth century, intituled *Nordymbra*,<sup>a</sup> it is stated, that after the death of Ragnar, messengers were sent to his sons in Denmark by King

<sup>x</sup> V. Pontoppidan, *Gesta Danorum extra Daniam*, tom. i. cap. 1. 8vo. Lips. 1740.

<sup>y</sup> V. Loccenii *Antiq. Goth. lib. iii. c. 3. p. 124*, 4to. Francf. 1676.

<sup>z</sup> Cap. 18, fol. Stockh. 1737.

<sup>a</sup> Thorkelin's *Fragments of Engl. and Irish Hist.* p. 13, 4to. Lond. 1788.

Ælla, to communicate the intelligence, and to mark their behaviour when they received it. They were found thus occupied : “ Sigurd Snake’s-eye played at chess (*sitia at hnef-tabli*)<sup>b</sup> with Huitserk the Bold ; but Biorn Ironside was polishing the shaft of a spear in the middle of the hall. As the messengers proceeded with their story, Huitserk and Sigurd dropped their game (*lata thegar falla nithr taflit*), and listened to what was said with great attention ; Ivar put various questions ; and Biorn leant on the spear he was furnishing. But when the messengers came to the death of the chief, and told his expiring words, that the young boars would gnash their tusks (literally, grunt) if they knew their parent’s fate, Biorn grasped the handle of his spear so tight, with emotion, that the marks of his fingers remained on it, and when the tale was finished, dashed it in pieces. Huitserk compressed a chessman he had taken so forcibly with his fingers, that the blood started forth from each ;<sup>c</sup> whilst Sigurd Snake’s-eye, paring his nails with a knife, was so wrapt up in attention, that he cut himself to the bone without feeling it.” So, also, in the Herverar Saga, which refers to very ancient traditions of scaldic poetry, Hervora, daughter of Angantyr, goes to the court of Godmund, King of Jotunheim, in male disguise, and assumes the name of Hervardr. One day, as the old King was playing at chess (*lek at skáktafli*) it happened that he had the worst of the game, and was on the point of being mated (*ok buit vid máti*). The King asked if any one could assist him with advice at the game (*vid tablinu*). Then Hervardr went up to him, and so played, that in a short time the game was restored, and Godmund had the advantage, which made him very joyful.<sup>d</sup>

In the same Saga, cap. 15, among the ænigmata or riddles proposed by Odin, under the form of Gest the Blind, to King Heidrek, occur three which

<sup>b</sup> *Hnef-tafl*, *Lusus latrunculorum*, *Skakspel*. Verelius. So termed from *Hnefi*, the hand or fist, by which the pieces were moved, qu. *Hand-play*.

<sup>c</sup> “ Hellt *tauflo* einni er han hafthi drepit, oc hann kreisti hana sua fast, at blod stauck undan huerum nagli.” The Latin version in Biörner reads, “*captivum quendam calculum tantisper manu tenens, mox duriter adeo torsit, ut sanguis ex unoquoque erumperet digito,*” and in Thorkelin, “*Latrunculum quem ceperat tam fortiter inter digitos compressit, ut singuli sanguinem mitterent.*” This Saga is supposed to have been written at the beginning of the 13th century. See Müller’s *Saga-Bibliothek*, vol. ii.

<sup>d</sup> Herverar Saga, cap. 7, p. 74. Ed. 4to. Hafn. 1785.



refer to the game of chess,<sup>e</sup> and prove how familiar it must have been at a period of remote antiquity.

Gest asks the monarch :

Hverier ró þegnar  
er ríða þingi at,  
sáttir allir saman,  
líða sína senda þeir  
lönd yfir,  
at byggja bólstadi?  
Heidrekr kongr,  
hygg þu at gátu.

Who are those lords,  
who ride in company,  
all together in amity;  
who send out their people,  
over the lands,  
to acquire habitations?  
O king Heidrek,  
attend to the riddle!

Heidrek answers :

God er gáta þin  
Gestr blindi,  
getit er þeirrar :  
Itrecr ok Aundótrr  
om aldr daga  
tefla teitr skák ;  
sátt er þeim lid allt  
er i siod kiemr,  
enn á reitum reitt.

Easy is thy riddle,  
O Gest the Blind,  
this is the solution :  
Itrec and Aundott  
every day  
play blithely at chess ;  
all their people are in amity  
when they come into the bag,  
but at enmity when in the field.

Gest again inquires :

Hveriar ró þær drosir<sup>f</sup>  
er sinn drottinn  
vapnlausann vega ;  
enar dauckvari<sup>g</sup> hlífa  
úm alla daga,  
enn enar fegri fara?  
Heidrekr kongr, &c.

Who are those ladies,  
who their lords  
slay without weapons ;  
the dark-coloured defend  
throughout the day,  
but the fair-hued kill?  
O king Heidrek, &c.

<sup>e</sup> Pp. 146, 148, 152.

<sup>f</sup> Al. *brudir*, brides.

<sup>g</sup> Al. *jarpari*, the brown.

Heidrek replies :

God er gáta	Easy is the riddle
Gestr blindi,	O Gest the Blind,
getit er þeirrar :	thus it is solved :
duga hnefa taublör	the dark-coloured chess-pieces
dauckvari í tabli,	defend on the board,
enn hvítar heria a mót.	but the white destroy. <sup>h</sup>

A third time Gest asks :

Hvert er þat dyra	What is that animal,
er drepr fe manna,	which slays men's cattle,
ok er jarni	and is with iron
allr urinn í kring ;	all about clad :
horn hefir átte,	sides it has eight,
enn höfut ecki,	but no head,
oc filgia því margir meök ?	and many run after it ?
Heidrekr kongr, &c.	O king Heidrek, &c.

Heidrek answers :

God er gáta þin	Easy is thy riddle,
Gestr blindi,	O Gest the Blind,
getit er þeirrar :	this is the solution :
húni <sup>i</sup> man sia vera	It is a chess-man
í hnefa tabli	on the table-board,
frekr ok flár til fear.	bold and crafty to acquire fee.

It is sufficiently obvious, that the first of these ænigmata relates to the chess-knight, the second to the chess-queen, and the last to the chess-pawn, but the third receives unusual illustration by a view of the pawns which form part of the set discovered in the Isle of Lewis, which present to us the octagonal shape alluded to by Gest, and this adds a col-

<sup>h</sup> See the note of Verelius to this obscure passage, in his edition of the *Herverar Saga*, fol. Ups. 1672.

<sup>i</sup> Al. *Hnottafi* er, a draught-man.

lateral proof in support of their Northern manufacture. From the above citation as well as from the *Gunnlaugi Saga*, it would seem as if not only men but women were accustomed to play at chess; which was the case also in France and England, as proved by various authorities I might produce. Olaus Magnus says that all the Northern people were acquainted with the game, and more particularly the men of birth among them, who made use of it as a means to ascertain the temper and abilities of their daughters' suitors before marriage.<sup>k</sup> The Northern warriors considered a proficiency in chess one of the requisites of liberal education, and ranked it with the art of engraving magic runes, skating on the snow, or composing Scaldic lays. In the old metrical story of Karl and Grymr, which became so popular in the North of Sweden as to be chaunted in the form of a ballad, the exercises in which the youth of Grymr was engaged, in order to gain the affections of the fair Ingegerdis, daughter of Karl, are thus described:

Wex hann upp og vandist bratt, vigra leyk ad efla,  
Rioda sverd i randa þate, renna biarg, og tefla,  
Stunda tafl, og stiornu list, steine langt ad varpa,  
Aungra hefur hann menta mist, er meta pryder garpa.

i. e. he was, as he grew up, accustomed to make his sword ruddy in the warlike play of shields; to climb up the ice-burks; to wrestle; to play well at the game of chess; to study the science of the stars; to throw the stone; and to practice other sports which were held in estimation.<sup>l</sup> Corresponding to this we find an Earl of the Orkneys, Kali, the son of Kolr, at the beginning of the 12th century, thus boasting of his accomplishments: "I know," says he, "nine several arts; I am expert at the game of chess; I can engrave runic letters; I am assiduous at my book; I know how to handle the tools of the smith; I can traverse the snow on wooden scates;

<sup>k</sup> Lib. xv. cap. 12, lib. xxi. cap. 28.

<sup>l</sup> The translation of Biörner is subjoined: "Hunc cita extulit ætas mavortiis ludis sedulò nutritum; ensibus puta scutatorum percussione cruentandis; montibus scandendis decurrendisque; luctationibus et *latrunculorum ludis* rite edendis; astris cognoscendis; saxis longè projiciendis; aliisque artibus quibus quidem heroica parare perpolireque pectora antiquius consuevit ævum."

I excel in shooting with the bow ; I use the oar with facility ; I can sing to the harp ; and I compose verses.”<sup>m</sup> It is doubtful whether a line in the ancient Scaldic poem entitled *Voluspá* refers to chess or draughts, since the term *table* or *table-play* includes both, but more usually the former.<sup>n</sup> The same may be said of the *Gunnlaugi Saga*, composed at the end of the 12th century, where Gunnlaugr and Helga are said to have often amused themselves at tables (*at tabli*),<sup>o</sup> Pinkerton understood it in the usual signification, and writes: “Chess was the favourite amusement of the Gothic nations, and known among them in the earliest times, and in all their most barbaric possessions. In Iceland chess was general and in the 11th century we find Gunlaug the Scald, playing at chess with the beautiful Helga, whose love so excited him and Rafen, another Scald, that they fought, and fell by mutual wounds.”<sup>p</sup> But the high antiquity of this game in the North may be inferred from a magic figure or rune by which the player might win at chess, preserved among Finn Magnúsen’s MSS. in the Bodleian Library ; which is directed to be engraven on wood and held in the hand.<sup>q</sup> It is of the form shown in the margin.



I have already quoted the *Saga of Kröka Ref*, an Icelander of the tenth century, in which a present of a chess-board and set of men, made of the teeth of the Walrus, was sent from Greenland to King Harald Hardraad. When this gift was laid before the King, the bearer, Bardur, thus accosted him: “Here is a chess-table (*tafl*), lord, which the most noble person in Greenland sends to you, and desires no-

<sup>m</sup> Orkneyinga Saga, p. 150, 4to. Hafn. 1780. Ol. Worm. Lit. Dan. p. 129, 4to. Hafn. 1636. Bartholin, p. 420. Torf. Hist. Orcad. cap. 21, p. 94, fol. Havn. 1697. “*Tafl em ec aurr at efla*,” &c.

<sup>n</sup> “*Tefidu i tune teitur voru*,” i. e. “They (the Gods) played at tables in the area (or board), and were joyous.” Resenius has this note on the passage: “*Tefidu, Tafl*, N. G. significat omne ludicrum inventum, veluti sunt Tali, jactus Talorum, nucum, &c. *Alea Latrunculi* seu *Scachia* Skák usitatissimè *Tafl* appellatur, hinc illud verbum *ad tefla*, id est, latrunculis ludere invicim.” Philosoph. Antiq. Norv. Dan. p. 20, 4to. Hafn. 1673. Cf. Gloss. in *Edda Sæmundar*, 4to. Hafn. 1828, in v. *Tafl, Tabl*; and *Ihre, Lex. Suio. Goth. in vv. Tafwel, Tafwelbord, Tæfla*.

<sup>o</sup> *Sagan af Gunnlaugi Ormstungu*, p. 52, 4to. Havn. 1775.

<sup>p</sup> Hist. Scotl. i. 396.

<sup>q</sup> No. 93. “*Ad vína skak rist a eik and haf i hendiñi*.”

thing in return but your friendship and wise counsel." It was, adds the writer of the Saga, both a nut-table and a chess-table (*þad var bæde hnot-tafl oc skaktafl*), and calculated to play at both games;<sup>r</sup> which will prove that the *nut-table* was not backgammon, but the modern game of draughts. In the Saga of *Samsone Fagra*, a fabulous son of King Arthur, the hero goes to *Bretland* (Britain) to seek the hand of Ingina, daughter of Earl Finlog, in marriage. She is affianced to him, but their nuptials are delayed till the summer. In the mean time King Garlant of Ireland and his court are asked to the ceremony, who embark for that purpose; but, putting into a haven remote from the Earl's house, they pitched their tents, and remained there till the wedding-day should arrive; amusing themselves in the interval with the sports of chess (*tafl*), racing, throwing the spear, and wrestling.<sup>s</sup> And again, in the mythic Saga of *Fridthiofe Frækna*, Hring, King of Hringariki, in Norway, sends messengers to the sons of Bela, King of Sognia, another district of the same country, to exact tribute, and threaten war in case of refusal. In this emergency they send a trusty servant, named Hilding, to Fridthiof, son of Thorstein Vikingson, to request his aid. When Hilding arrived, he found Fridthiof playing at chess (*sat at hnefa tabli*), and thus addressed him: "Our kings greet you, and bid you come to help them in battle against King Hring, who has unjustly endeavoured to invade their territories." To this Fridthiof answered nothing, but said to Biorn, with whom he was playing (*er hann teflpi við*), "A vacant space is now left on the board, my brother, nor shall you change the order of the pieces, (I, however, prefer the fair-colored or red,) and await the fortune that is to happen." Hilding spoke again to him: "The King Helgi sends thee this message, either to assist him in the war, or to suffer a hard penalty when it is finished." Then Biorn said: "The game is two-fold, my brother, and there are two modes of playing (*tvö vega frá at tefla*)."<sup>r</sup> Fridthiof replied: "Therefore it will be better to bring the royal piece first into the field (*þa mun rað at sitia fyrst at hnefanum*), for then the two-fold condition will be less requisite." Hilding, when he could obtain no other answer, returned to his lords without delay, and having told what had

<sup>r</sup> Ap. Marcusson, p. 54, 8vo. 1756.

<sup>s</sup> Ap. Biörner, cap. 8, p. 13.

passed, the kings inquired what meaning could be elicited from the words of Fridthiof. Hilding replied, "When Fridthiof spoke of a vacant space, he seemed to intimate a delay, in order to deliberate whether he should assist you in battle; and when he pretended to choose the fair-colored pieces (*fogru tablinu*), he referred, in my opinion, to your sister Yngibiarg, whom therefore you must guard carefully; but when I threatened him with your anger, and Biorn seemed to be between two ways, and Fridthiof advised that the royal piece should be first moved (*at hnefanum munþi verþa fyrst lagt*), he appeared to me to allude to King Hring and his attack upon yourselves."†

Snorre Sturleson relates an anecdote of King Canute which would prove that monarch to have been a great lover of the game. About the year 1028, whilst engaged in his warfare against the kings of Norway and Sweden, Canute rode over to Roskild, to visit Earl Ulfr, the husband of his sister. An entertainment was prepared for their guest, but the King was out of spirits and did not enjoy it. The Earl attempted to restore his cheerfulness by conversation, but without success. At length, the Earl challenged the king to play at chess (*at leika at skaktafli*), which was accepted, and, the chess-table being brought, they sat down to their game (*toko þeir þa skaktafl oc leko*). After they had played awhile, the King made a false move, in consequence of which Ulfr captured one of his opponent's knights (*einn riddara*). But the King would not allow it, and replacing his piece (*tafl*), bade the Earl play differently. On this, the Earl (who was of a hasty disposition) waxing angry, overturned the chess-board (*tafl bordino*), and left the room. The King called after him, saying: "Ulfr, thou coward, dost thou thus flee?" The Earl returned to the door, and said "You would have taken a longer flight in the river Helga, had I not come to your assistance, when the Swedes beat you like a dog—you did not then call me

† Ap. Biörner, cap. 3. The whole is very obscure, and I have chiefly followed the Latin and Swedish versions supplied by the editor. His translation of *tygkostur eru þarna* by "*tesseræ in bivio vel in dubio sunt*," is erroneous; since dice are not mentioned, and were not used either at chess or draughts. This Saga was, probably, composed at the end of the 13th century. V. Müller's Sagabibliothek.

coward." He then retired, and some days afterwards was murdered by the King's orders.<sup>u</sup> This anecdote is corroborated by a passage in the anonymous history of the monastery of Ramsey, composed, probably, about the time of Henry I. where we are told, that Bishop Etheric coming one night at a late hour on urgent business to King Canute, found the monarch and his courtiers amusing themselves at the games of chess and dice.<sup>v</sup> Nothing indeed is more probable than the introduction of the game of chess into England by the Danes, and we cannot refer it to a more suitable period than the reign of Canute himself. The tradition of this game having been brought from the North certainly existed, and is mentioned by Gaimar, who wrote about the year 1150, when speaking of the mission of Edelwoth from King Edgar to the castle of Earl Orgar, in Devonshire, to verify the reports of his daughter Elstrueth's beauty. When he arrived at the mansion :

" Orgar juout à un esches,  
Un giu k'il aprist des Daneis ;  
Od lui juout Elstruet la bele,  
Suz ciel n'out donc tele damesele."

MS. Reg. 13 A. xxi. f. 133. c. 1.

" Orgar was playing at the Chess,  
A game he had learnt of the Danes ;  
With him played the fair Elstrueth,  
A fairer maiden was not under heaven."

Whether we may receive on Gaimar's authority the inference, that chess was introduced among the Saxons so early as the middle of the tenth century, seems dubious. Strutt,<sup>x</sup> indeed, Henry, and a few other writers, who thought it easier to make assertions than researches, state in round terms that the Saxons were well acquainted with the game. But the only passage they refer to is the one in the Ramsey Chronicle above quoted, which does not sufficiently bear them out. Lye may, however, have contributed to their error, in translating "*Tæfl*, Ludus latrunculorum," "*Tæfel stan*, La-

<sup>u</sup> *Saga af Olafi hinom Helga*, capp. 162, 163, tom. ii. p. 275, 276. The sister of this Ulfr was wife to Earl Godwin, and mother of Harold, King of England.

<sup>v</sup> "Ipse [Æthericus] quoque mannum, curiam aditurus, ascendens, ipsumque calcaribus urgens, Regem adhuc tesserarum vel *scacorum* ludo longioris tædia noctis relevantem invenit." Hist. Rames. ap. Gale, vol. i. p. 442.

<sup>x</sup> Sports and Pastimes, Pref. p. iv. He speaks more correctly at p. 232.

trunculus," and "*Tæfl-mon*, Latro, sc. ad ludum latrunculorum, a chess-man." He cites a poem in the Exeter MS. but on consulting that valuable and interesting volume, I find that the game there mentioned cannot be chess, but must be more nearly allied to backgammon, since the use of dice is mentioned in it.<sup>y</sup> There are a few other general allusions to the table-game in the same MS.; but, as far as I am acquainted with Saxon remains, there is no specific notice of chess in them, nor is the northern term of *skaktafl* ever made use of. Dr. Hyde was of opinion, that the English were indebted to the Normans for the game, subsequent to the Conquest, but this is refuted by what has been previously advanced. But, in either case, the general belief of chess having been first known in Europe after the crusade at the end of the eleventh century, is shewn to be ill-founded.<sup>z</sup> William the Conqueror is, by tradition, believed to have played at chess, and, according to Wace, it was well known at the court of his father Robert [1029—1035].

<sup>y</sup> The passage is here subjoined. It is, like the greater part of the volume, very obscurely written, and I am indebted to Mr. Price for his help in making any thing of it.

Hy twegan sceolon	They two shall together
tæfle ymb sittan,	at the table-game sit,
þenden him hyra   torn to glide,	whilst their anger glides away,
forgietan þara   geocran gesceafte ;	shall forget the anxious cares of life ;
habban him gomen on borde,	they shall have game on the board,
idle hond æmet,	with idle hand unoccupied,
lange neah tæfles monnes	long near the table-men
þonne teoselum weorpeð.	shall they throw the dice ( <i>tessellæ</i> ).

<sup>z</sup> It must at the same time be admitted, that the crusades may have contributed to render the game more generally known. Robert the Monk of St. Remy, who accompanied the first adventurers in 1095, mentions the game of chess (*scaci*) among the amusements of the Prince of Babylon and his troops, but does not speak of it as a diversion that was new to him. Ap. Bongars, vol. i. l. 5, p. 51. Fouche de Chartres, another contemporary and eye-witness, introduces Corbagath the Soudan playing at chess (*scacis*) on the approach of the French host. *Ib.* vol. i. p. 393, from whom William of Malmesbury copies the passage. When Richard I. was in Palestine, he captured a caravan going from Babylon to Jerusalem laden with silks, &c. and among other things "utres et *scaccaria*." Brompton, col. 1245. And in 1235, King Louis IX. of France had a present sent to him from the *Old Man of the Mountain*, or Sheik of the Hassassins, of a set of chess-men made of chrystal and gold, which, I have reason to believe, are still in existence in the Museum of M. Dusomarard, of Paris. See Joinville, p. 86, fol. Par. 1668, and note to the *Roman de la Rose*, tom. ii. p. 122. Ed. Méon.



Li Ducs ama gieus covenables,  
Deduit d'esches è de tables.

MS. Reg. 4 C. xi. f. 252. c. 2.

The same writer attributes great skill at the game to Richard I. son of William Longsword [942—996] great-grandfather of the Conqueror :

De tables è d'eschez sout compaignon mater.<sup>a</sup>

The ancient family of Rokewode, who bear for their arms, Argent, six Chess Rooks sable, refer the origin of this coat to the skill of their ancestor in playing with William. It is thus mentioned in a treatise compiled by one of the family about the time of James the First: "And so came these 6 towers or Chesse Rookes, *quasi de Rupe Lignea*, w<sup>c</sup> some do affirme were originarely geven to the firste bearer of this coate for his excellent skyll in this exercyse, of in this respecte playenge w<sup>t</sup> the Conqueror at his firste entery into this Lande. But whith<sup>r</sup> yt was assumed primarely for allusion to his name, or whither yt was originarely conferred for his extraordinary vnderstandinge in that game; or rath<sup>r</sup>, as is more probable, for the experience of his g<sup>t</sup> fidellytie, & excellent service of his Sovereigne, w<sup>t</sup> the defence of the cōmon weale in all tymes of danger, I wyll not curiously defyne."<sup>b</sup> The same species of tradition is preserved in the family of Bunbury, who bear, Argent, on a bend sable, three Chess-Rooks of the field. "It is reported," says Randle Holme, "that the ancestor of this family was a great lover of the game, and often exercised himself with William the Conqueror, who, in memory of his excellency therein, gave him three chesse rooks, as above said, for his coat-armour."<sup>c</sup> We are bound therefore to believe what Gerard Legh tells us in his "Accedens of Armory," 4to. 1568, when speaking of the game of chess, he writes: "This pastime did that valiaunt prince King William the Conqueror so much use, that some time he lost whole lordshippes thereat; as in Lincolnshire and elswhere, I think the auncient evidences therof can declare."<sup>d</sup> Not having been fortunate enough to meet with any of these "auncient evidences," I am compelled to leave the further discussion of the Conqueror's knowledge of the game to

<sup>a</sup> Roman de Rou, tom. i. p. 127. Ed. Pluquet.

<sup>b</sup> MS. penes John Gage, Esq. f. 3 b.

<sup>c</sup> Academy of Armoury, pt. ii. book 2, c. 14, xxxii. fol. Chester, 1688. The original MS. is in the Harleian collection, No. 2033.

<sup>d</sup> I quote at second hand (Twiss, i. 106) as the book is not in the Museum.

the descendants of the Norman barons who had the honour of winning his lordships. But there is certainly nothing improbable in the supposition that William played at chess. In the eleventh century the game was well known; and in Henry the Second's time, Gervase of Tilbury, nephew of that monarch, assures us that the Exchequer took its name from the chequered cloth spread in the Court, resembling the chess-board.<sup>e</sup>

But to return from this digression to the people of the North. As early as the thirteenth century a treatise was written in Icelandic on the game of chess, entitled *Utskiring Tafl-listarennar*, which is quoted in the *Sturlunga Saga*, composed before 1300, as we learn from Paul Widalin's Commentaries on the Laws of Iceland.<sup>f</sup> And from some similar work on chess, or vocabulary, Verelius quotes various chess terms, as the Rook-mate (*Rogsmatt*), Pawn-mate (*Pedmatt*), and a mate called *Fretstertumat*.<sup>g</sup> The proficiency of the Norse-men

<sup>e</sup> "Disc. Quæ est ratio Nominis? Mag. Nulla mihi verior ad præsens occurrit, quàm quod *Scaccarii lusilis* similem habet formam." Dialog. de Scaccario, ap. Madox, fol. 1711.

<sup>f</sup> Twiss on Chess, vol. ii. p. 175. In the Brit. Mus. MSS. Add. 6719—6721, is a fine copy of Widalin's work (which has never been edited) purchased of Professor Thorkelin by Walter Calverley Trevelyan, Esq. who presented it to the Museum. I have not been able to find the passage in it referred to, and the *Sturlunga*, although printed, has not yet found its way to the library of the Museum.

<sup>g</sup> "Tafl, Herwar. S. 7, 15, Latrunculi, Skafatflor. *Reisa tafl*, Cod. Orm. 54, 61, Latrunculorum ludum instruere. *Preyta tafl*, idem, 60, Ludere latrunculis.

*Taflbord*, Ol. S. 156, Alveus latrunculorum, Bráspæl, skafspæl, Cod. Orm. 60.

*Taflbrogd*, Cod. Orm. p. 61, List och konst att spela Skack i Bråde, Viles [artes?] et stratagemata in lusu latrunculorum. *Han hefr engi sin hin stauri taflbrogd i framhaft*.

*Taflspeki*, Cod. Orm. p. 59, Ars ludendi latrunculis, Konst att spela Skack.

*Tafl fe*, Cod. Orm. p. 60, Skotsülfr, Spelpenningar. Pecunia pro ludo latrunculorum. *Tefla, kaplaust*, Cod. Orm. 60, Spela och inthet sáttia nogra penningar. *Þa sparar þu litit af taflinu*, Cod. Orm. p. 61, Du lefer med alfvär. Vocabula quibus inferior lusor incessi sole. *Ek fai mat fyri pier*, Cod. Orm. *Þag tapar skamligen spelet*. Inde Ital. *matto*, stolidus. *Hrakligastur i taflinu*, Cod. Orm. 54.

*Fretstertumat*, Cod. Orm. p. 54. Est terminus et locutio ludentium latrunculis. *Fretstertumat fallas*, når den Bonden som står mitt mot Kongen i skafatflet, kommer honom så når, att han skafar, eller stänger honom, och fijs för nåsan på honom. Cod. Orm. *Keisari fekk rogsmat, pedmat, oc fretstertumat*.

*Ped*, latrunculus lusorius, Cod. Orm. *Pedmat*, Exprobratio imperitiæ in collocandis et promovendis latrunculis. Ol. *Verelii Index linguae Scytho-Scandicæ*, fol. Ups. 1691."

at this or an earlier period in the game, may be illustrated by a curious passage in the Romance of Sir Tristrem, written about the year 1290, but perhaps taken from a French original of much greater antiquity, in which the captain of a Norwegian vessel is introduced as challenging any one to play at chess with him for a stake of twenty shillings :

“ Ther com a schip of Norway,  
To Sir Rohandes hold,  
With haukes white and grey,  
And panes<sup>h</sup> fair y fold:  
Tristrem herd it say,  
On his playing he wold  
Twenti schilling to lay;  
Sir Rohand him told  
And taught:  
For hauke silver he yold,<sup>i</sup>  
The fairest men him raught.<sup>k</sup>

A cheker<sup>i</sup> he fond bi a cheire,  
He asked who wold play;  
The mariner spac bonair,<sup>m</sup>  
“ Child, what wiltow lay?—  
“ Ogain an hauke of noble air,  
Twenti schillinges to say;  
Whether so mates other fair,  
Bere hem bothe oway,”—  
With wille,  
The mariner swore his faye,<sup>n</sup>  
For sothe ich held ther tille.

Now bothe her wedde<sup>o</sup> lys,  
And play thai bi ginne;  
And sett he hath the *long asise*,  
And endred<sup>p</sup> beth ther inne:  
The play beginneth to arise,  
Trisrem<sup>q</sup> deleth atuinne;  
He dede als so the wise,  
He gaf has<sup>r</sup> he gan winne,  
In raf;<sup>s</sup>  
Of playe ar he wald blinne  
Sex haukes he gat and gaf.

Rohand toke leue to ga,  
His sones he cleped oway;  
The fairest hauke he gan ta,<sup>t</sup>  
That Tristrem wan that day;  
With him he left ma  
Pans for to play;  
The mariner swore also,  
That pans wold he lay,  
An stounde:<sup>u</sup>  
Tristrem wan that day,  
Of him an hundred pound.”<sup>x</sup>

It would appear from this not to have been an unusual practice at that

<sup>h</sup> Pence.

<sup>i</sup> Yielded.

<sup>k</sup> Reached.

<sup>l</sup> Chess-board.

<sup>m</sup> Courteously.

<sup>n</sup> Faith.

<sup>o</sup> Pledge, stake.

<sup>p</sup> Entered.

<sup>q</sup> Playeth to win, (Icel. *at vinna* ?)

<sup>r</sup> As.

<sup>s</sup> Liberally.

<sup>t</sup> Take.

<sup>u</sup> At that time.

<sup>x</sup> Fytte i. st. 28-31, p. 25, ed. 8vo. 1806.

time to play for money ; a custom which in modern times has almost universally at this game been abolished. The particular game played by the Norwegian and Sir Tristrem, here called the *long assise*, appears in the old Anglo-Norman treatises on the game, under the title of *Covenant lei veint*, and is played with the condition annexed, that mate is to be given in a certain number of moves, provided the red king is not moved unless forced by check, and none of the red pieces, unless they are in danger of being taken.

“ De le *long asise* ceste guy est,

Sy pust estre jué de quel part ke wus plest.”<sup>y</sup>

It is one of those numerous fictitious positions, which in the thirteenth century were so much in vogue, but which, at present, afford but little interest to the chess-player.

The testimonies of more modern writers in regard to the fondness of the northern nations, and more particularly the Icelanders, for chess, are numerous, and confirm in all points what has been before advanced. Olaus Magnus leads the van of these writers, and has already been quoted. After him comes Dithmar Blefken, who visited Iceland in 1562, and who says of the inhabitants: “ In the winter time they keep in their beds for many days in succession, and amuse themselves with the game of chess, whilst their food is brought to them by their servants.”<sup>z</sup> This Blefken is the same writer who told the ludicrous story relative to the Icelandic mode of giving an entertainment, which (with other similar reports) drew down on him the indignation of Arngrim Jonas. The correspondence of Wormius in 1627 and 1648, establishes the fact mentioned by Olaus Magnus, of the skill of the Icelanders in carving chess-men out of bone, and this is confirmed in the letter from M. La Peyrere to M. La Mothe le Vayer, in 1644, where giving an account of the same people, he writes: “ J’obmetois de vous dire une particularité de l’esprit des Islandois, qui n’est pas à mespriser. C’est qu’ils sont

<sup>y</sup> MS. Reg. 13 A. xviii. f. 190 b. MS. Cott. Cleop. B. ix. f. 5.

<sup>z</sup> Hyberno vero tempore ad multos dies lecto se continent, atque ludo scaccorum, quorum inventum Xerxi philosopho debetur, exercent : interim famuli cibum illis præparatum ad lectum deferunt.” *Islandia*, p. 38, 12mo. Lugd. Bat. 1607. The passage is copied into Purchas’s Pilgrimage, vol. iv. fol. 1625.

tous joueurs d'eschets, et qu'il n'est point de si chetif paisan en Islande, qui n'ait chez luy son jeu d'eschets, faits de sa main, et d'os de poisson, taillé à la point de son couteau." <sup>a</sup> He adds (but I know not on what authority, since I find it not in Snorre or Torfæus), "The chess-game is not only of ancient standing, and generally used in Iceland, but all over the North. The Norwegian Chronicle tells us, that Drofen the giant, foster-father of Harald Hårfager, having heard of the famous actions of his pupil, then king of Norway, sent him among other presents, a very fine and rich chess-table. This Harald reigned about A. D. 870." Horrebow, in his Natural History of Iceland, published originally in 1750, informs us: "The Icelanders divert themselves a little at chess, as also at cards, but in a more particular manner at the former, in which they are very expert, though not such great masters of it, as, in all probability, their forefathers were." <sup>b</sup> So also Dr. Von Troil, in his Letters on Iceland, 1774, says, "They are famous at playing at chess, and had formerly two sorts of this game, one of which was called *jungfrus schach* (Ladies' chess), and the other *riddare schach* (Knights' chess): at present only the last is customary." <sup>c</sup> And in 1778, Professor Thorkelin writes: "Etenim tessera, latrunculi, schachicusque ludus seculis x. xi. et xii. principibus in deliciis erant; qui ludus in Islandia ab incolis multa cum dexterritate hodie dum exerceatur." <sup>d</sup> But the fullest account of the Icelandic game of chess I am acquainted with, occurs in the travels of MM. Olafsen and Povelsen, who, during the years 1752-1757, took a statistical view of the island by order of the King of Denmark. <sup>e</sup> Of the Southern Division of Ice-

<sup>a</sup> Relation de Islande, p. 56. He afterwards describes a set of enamelled gold chess-men with which he played with the Countess Ulfeld, natural daughter of the King of Denmark. The Kings and Queens were represented crowned, sitting on thrones; the Bishops in their mitres and pontificals; the Knights on horses richly caparisoned; the Rooks were elephants with towers on their backs; and the Pawns, musqueteers. Ib. p. 63.

<sup>b</sup> Cap. 109, p. 139, fol. Lond. 1758.

<sup>c</sup> Letters on Iceland, p. 93. Svo. Lond. 1780.

<sup>d</sup> Fragments, &c. p. 52.

<sup>e</sup> The original work was published in Danish, 2 vols. 4to. Sorøe, 1772, and a translation in French by Gauthier de la Peyronie, appeared in five tom. 8vo. Par. 1802.

land, or district of Kiosar, they write : “ The natives of this part of the island, like the rest, play at different games, and take considerable interest in them. They amuse themselves much at chess, and also at draughts, which they call *Kotra* ; but in the latter are various modes of play unknown to strangers, as for instance, their *mylna*, *færingar-tafl*, *goda-tafl*, and others, which are very commonly used.”<sup>f</sup> And of the Western Division, or district of Borgarfjord : “ The people amuse themselves at chess, cards, and draughts. The two last are played most frequently. They have also a particular game at draughts called *saint Olafs tavl* ; which is played blindfold, whilst they recite an old ballad, which must be learnt by heart. The spectators during the game observe perfect silence.”<sup>g</sup> And again : “ The Icelanders have been familiar with the game of chess for many centuries ; and among them are found players of astonishing skill. The inhabitants of the west division chiefly excell, and there are even simple countrymen who have the reputation of being great masters of the game. The essential rules of this game are nearly the same with them as every where else, with some few exceptions. They have retained the ancient names given to the pieces by the Danes and other northern people. Thus, the principal pieces they call *Menn* and *Skakmenn* ; the King, *Konungr* ; the Queen, *Fru* and *Drottning* ; the Bishop, *Biskup* ; the Knight, *Riddare* ; the Castle or Elephant, *Hrokur* ; and the Pawns, *Ped*. Check-mate they express by *Skaka* and *Maata*.”<sup>h</sup> Then follow minuter details of various positions or mates as played by the Icelanders, such as *Fuldt Bert*, *Litla Bert*, *Heimamat* (Fool’s-mate), *Pedrifur* (Pawn’s-mate), *Blod-sott* (Knight’s-mate), *Utkomumat*, *Fruarmat*

<sup>f</sup> Vol. i. p. 50. orig. Ed. Tom. i. p. 95, French transl.

<sup>g</sup> Vol. i. p. 186, orig. Tom. i. p. 370, transl. Cf. Von Troil, p. 93.

<sup>h</sup> Tom. i. p. 462, orig. Tom. iii. p. 72, transl.—“ Matadorer eller Officiererne kaldes *Menn* og *Skakmenn* ; *Konungr*, Kongen ; *Fru* og *Drottning*, Damen ; *Biskup*, Bispren eller Löberer ; *Riddare*, Springerer ; *Hrokur* (en Kiæmpe eller Fribytter) ligesom i det Franske sprog, Taarnat eller Elephanten. Knegeterne kaldes *Ped* ; *Skaaka* og *Maata* at sælge Skak og mat.” The French translation makes some confusion in this passage by transferring the name of the Bishop (*fou*) to the Knight, and vice versa.

(Queen's-mate), &c. but as these games differ in great measure from the mode of playing the game in the rest of Europe, it is unnecessary to repeat them here; but these are considered by the writers as the most ancient forms of the game in Iceland.

The above passages illustrate not only the chess-men as connected with Iceland, but also the ancient draught-men found with them, which are plain round pieces cut also out of Rosmars' teeth, but which it does not fall within my present plan more particularly to notice.

The spot on which these figures were found, in all respects favours the hypothesis I have adopted. It is well known that the Hebrides, or Southern Isles (*Sudureyar* or *Sud öer*) as they were called by Icelandic writers, were subject to the invasions of the *Vikingr* from the end of the eighth century, and during the reign of Harald Hårfager, about the year 875, were rendered tributary to the throne of Norway. The outer range of these Islands, in which the Lewis is comprehended, was chiefly peopled by the Scandinavians, and they continued to have princes of their own until the period of King Magnus Barefoot's expedition in 1096, who ravaged the Isle of Lewis with fire and sword, and added the Hebrides to his own dominions, to be governed by a dependent Lord.<sup>i</sup> It is related of this monarch, that to shew his power, he sent to Muirheard, King of Ireland, a pair of his old shoes, with orders that he should carry them through his palace on Christmas Day, in the presence of the messengers. The courtiers of the Hibernian sovereign were highly exasperated at this insolent proceeding, but Muirheard, who was probably unwilling to provoke hostilities with the Norwegian force then collected off his coasts, declared he would not only carry the shoes, but *eat* them, rather than Magnus should destroy any province of Ireland.<sup>k</sup> These Islands remained under the seignory of the Kings of Norway until the year 1266, when they were formally ceded to Alexander III. of Scotland by

<sup>i</sup> See Chalmer's *Caledonia*, vol. i. 266; Pennant's *Tour*, 1772, vol. ii. p. 233; *Antiq. Celt. Scand.* p. 231, and the *Saga af Magnusi Berfætta*, Tom. iii. p. 209.

<sup>k</sup> *Antiq. Celto. Norm.* p. 11, 4to. Copenh. 1786.

Magnus IV. in consideration of the yearly payment of 100 marks, and an additional sum of 4,000 marks, payable within four years.<sup>1</sup>

From very early times the closest intercourse existed between the North and Ireland, as well as with the Scottish Islands and the western coast of Scotland.<sup>m</sup> During the long reign of Olaf son of Godred over the Isles, from 1102 to 1142, the greatest tranquillity prevailed, and mutual friendship between the Kings of Norway, Ireland, and Scotland. But on his death his son Godred went to the Norwegian court to perform homage for the sovereignty of the Isles, and from this period their history becomes a series of discord and bloodshed. As the communication with the North was kept up in small vessels called *byrdinga* by the Islanders, the chances of shipwreck were great, in case of a storm, and we accordingly find several instances of the destruction of ships coming from Norway to the Isles.<sup>n</sup>

It would appear most probable, therefore, that the chess-men and draught-men discovered in the Isle of Lewis, formed part of the stock of an Icelandic *kaup-mann*<sup>o</sup> or merchant, who carried these articles to the Hebrides or Ireland for the sake of traffic; and the ship in which they were conveyed being wrecked, these figures were swept by the waves on shore, and buried beneath the sand-bank, which for the space of near seven centuries continued to accumulate, before the fortunate discovery took place, which restored them to light. The number of the sets forbids us to regard them in the light of a present, or otherwise we might not unaptly believe them to have been sent by Inga, King of Norway (1136-1161), as a gift to Godred Olafson, whose reign over the Isles continued thirty-three years, from 1154 to 1187, and whose power was so great as to cause him to be elected King of Dublin. But the former is, on various accounts, the more reasonable supposition.

<sup>1</sup> Torf. Hist. Orcad. p. 198, fol. Havn. 1715. Antiq. Celt. Norm. p. 52.

<sup>m</sup> Torf. iii. 461, Spec. Regale, Pref. xx. Fragments of English and Irish History, from the *Laxdæla Saga*.

<sup>n</sup> In 1248, Harald, King of the Isles, returning from Norway with his bride Cecilia, daughter of the Norwegian monarch, a violent tempest arose, and the whole fleet perished in the waves. Chron. of Man. ap. Johnstone, Antiq. Celt. Norm. p. 36.

<sup>o</sup> See *Harallds Saga ens Harfagra*, cap. 38, Tom. i. 115.



Here then I shall conclude these Remarks, which I fear have extended to too great a length, but which seemed requisite towards the fair illustration of these very curious chess-pieces. The material they are composed of, the peculiar forms of some of the figures, the costume, and the locality, all conspire to point towards the North as their birth-place; and when we find these circumstances corroborated by the testimonies of numerous writers in ancient and modern times, touching the existence of the game of Chess in Scandinavia, and the skill of the natives in carving similar figures—we cannot, I imagine, from all this evidence, hesitate in assenting to the proposition I have endeavoured to establish, viz. that the chess-men before us were executed in Iceland about the middle of the twelfth century.

I remain, my dear Sir,

Yours very faithfully,

FREDERIC MADDEN.

To HENRY ELLIS, Esq. F.R.S.  
Secretary S. A. &c. &c. &c.