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*** START OF THIS PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK HACO'S EXPEDITION ***

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THE

NORWEGIAN ACCOUNT

OF

HACO'S EXPEDITION

AGAINST

SCOTLAND;

A.D. MCCLXIII.

LITERALLY TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL ISLANDIC
OF THE FLATEYAN AND FRISIAN MSS.

WITH NOTES.

BY THE

REV. JAMES JOHNSTONE, A.M.

CHAPLAIN TO HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S ENVOY EXTRAORDINARY AT
THE COURT OF DENMARK.

Originally Printed for the Author in 1782.

EDINBURGH

WILLIAM BROWN, 149 PRINCES STREET.

1882

TO

ARCHIBALD MACDONALD, ESQ.,

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

FOR

NEWCASTLE UNDER LINE;

THIS FRAGMENT OF ANCIENT SCOTTISH HISTORY,
CONTAINING SEVERAL ANECDOTES
OF HIS

ANCESTORS

THE
LORDS OF THE HEBRIDES
IS
INSCRIBED.

[vi]

Exactly one hundred years ago this Translation of the Norwegian Account of Haco's Invasion of Scotland first issued from the press.

Since then, amid much literature upon the subject, it has always held a most important place in the eyes of the student of early Scottish History.

As an authentic source of information it has been eagerly sought after, but it has an additional attraction in the graphic pictures which it presents of the various perils by land and sea encountered by the hardy Norsemen.

The translator's valuable notes are given *in extenso*, and for easier reference are transferred from the end of the work and printed on the pages to which they belong.

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PREFACE.

(1782.)

The editor, from some particular advantages he enjoyed, was encouraged to collect such inedited fragments as might elucidate antient history. He, lately, published "Anecdotes of Olave the Black, king of Man;" and now lays before the learned the Norwegian account of Haco's celebrated expedition against Scotland.

It was the editor's intention to have given a succinct detail of the descents made by the northern nations upon the British isles, but an increase of materials induced him to reserve that subject for a future work. At present, therefore, he thinks it sufficient to premise that [viii] the Æbudæ were, long, the cause of much dispute between various kingdoms. They seemed naturally connected with Scotland; but the superior navies of Lochlin rendered them liable to impressions from that quarter.

The situation of the Kings of the Isles was peculiarly delicate; for, though their territories were extensive, yet they were by no means a match for the neighbouring states. On this account, allegiance was extorted from them by different Sovereigns. The Hebridian Princes considered this involuntary homage, as, at least, implying protection: and, when that was not

afforded, they thought themselves justified in forming new connexions more conducive to their safety.

[ix]

The Alexanders of Scotland having united Galloway, then a powerful maritime state, to their dominions, began to think of measures for obtaining a permanent possession of the Hebrides by expelling the Norwegians. The preparatory steps they took were first to secure the Somerled family, and next to gain over the insular chieftains. Haco was no less earnest to attach every person of consequence to his party. He gave his daughter in marriage to Harold King of Man; and, on different occasions, entertained at his court King John, Gilchrist, Dugall the son of Rudri, Magnus Earl of Orkney, Simon bishop of the Sudoreys, and the abbot of Icolmkil.

All this, however, did not effectually conciliate the Somerlidian tribe. The Norwegian Monarch, disappointed in his negotiations, had recourse to the sword, and sailed with a fleet, which both the^[x]Sturlunga-saga, and the Flateyan annals represent as the most formidable that ever left the ports of Norway.

It would be improper for the editor to draw any comparison between the Scottish and Norwegian narratives; he, therefore, leaves it to the discernment of the reader to fix what medium he thinks reasonable.

The Flateyan and Frisian are the principal MSS. now extant, that contain the life of Haco the aged. The first belongs to the library of His Danish Majesty, the latter is deposited in the Magnæan collection. Of them the editor obtained copies; and by the help of the one was enabled, reciprocally, to supply the imperfections of the other. He has since examined the originals themselves.

[xi]

The Fr. MS. relates the following anecdote of Missel, at the coronation of Prince Magnus A.D. 1261. During Mass Missel the Knight stood up in the middle of the Choir, and wondered greatly at some ceremonies, unusual at the coronation of Scottish Kings. And when King Magnus was robed, and King Haco and the Archbishop touched him with the sword of state, the Scottish knight said, "It was told me, that there were no knights dubbed in this land; but I never beheld any knight created with so much solemnity as him whom ten (f. two) noble lords have now invested with the Sword."

The conjectures, in my note on page 42 are confirmed by the following passage in the Fl. MS. Then came there from the western seas John the son of Duncan, and Dugall the son of Rudra; and both of them solicited^[xii]that King Haco would give them the title of King over the northern part of the Sudoreys. They were with the King all summer.

Antiquarians may be desirous of knowing something of the MSS. from which this work hath been taken, therefore, it was judged not improper to subjoin the following account of them. The Frisian MS. is a vellum quarto of the largest size, in a beautiful hand, and the character resembles that which prevailed in the end of the 13 century. The book of Flatey is a very large vellum volume in folio, and appears to have been compiled in the 14. age. It contains a collection of poems; excerpts from Adam Bremensis; a dissertation on the first inhabitants of Norway; the life of Eric the Traveller; of Olave Trygvason; of St^[xiii]Olave; of the earls of Orkney; of Suerir; of Haco the Aged; of his son Magnus; of Magnus the Good; of Harald the Imperious; of Einar Sockason of Greenland; and of Ölver the Mischievous; it contains also a general chronology down to A.D. 1394, the year in which the MS. was completed. The work,

from the life of Eric the Traveller to the end of St Olave's history, inclusive, was written by John Thordrson the priest; the rest by Magnus Thorvaldson also a clergyman.

The initial letters, in some places, are ornamented with historical miniature paintings. In page 35, there is a representation of the birth of Trygvason; and, at the bottom of the leaf, there is a unicorn and a lion. 217. An archer shooting. 272. Orme Storolfson carrying off a hay-cock. 295. Haldan the Black beheading the Norwegian princes; one of them is represented on his knees, dressed in a red cap, a short[xiv]doublet, and in red trousers reaching down to the middle of his legs. 310. Three men armed with swords, and battle axes, dispatching St Olave at Sticklestad; at the bottom of the page a man killing a boar, and another fighting with a mermaid. 650. Haco creating Sculi a Duke. Sculi is drawn with a garland, or coronet, and receiving a sword, together with a book by which he is to swear. Most of the figures, in these paintings, are depicted in armour or mail; their helmets are sometimes conical, sometimes like a broad-brimmed hat; their defensive armour is generally a round target, and a two-handed sword. This venerable volume, the noblest treasure of northern literature now existing, though wrote in a very small character, and much abbreviated, consists of 960 columns, two to every page.

[1]

THE

HISTORY

OF THE

NORWEGIAN EXPEDITION

AGAINST

SCOTLAND,

MCCLXIII.

At the time that King Haco ruled over Norway, Alexander, the son of William King of Scotland, was then King of Scotland. He was a great Prince, and very ambitious of this world's praise. He sent, from Scotland in the Western sea, two Bishops to King Haco. At first they begged to know if King Haco would give up those territories in the Hebrides,^[1] which King Magnus Bare-foot had unjustly wrested from Malcolm, Predecessor to the Scottish King. The King said that Magnus had settled with Malcolm, what districts the Norwegians should have in Scotland, or in the Islands which lay near it. He affirmed,^[2] however, that the King of Scotland had no sovereignty in the Hebrides at the time when King Magnus won them from King Godred,^[2] and also that King Magnus only asserted his Birthright. The

commissioners then said, that the King of Scotland was willing to purchase all the Hebrides from King Haco, and entreated him to value them in fine silver. The King replied, he knew no such urgent want of money as would oblige him to sell his inheritance. With that answer the messengers departed. From this cause some misunderstanding arose between the Kings. The Scottish Monarch, however, frequently renewed the negotiation, and sent many proposals; but the Scots received no other explanation than what is here related.

[3]

MCCXLIX.

Alexander King of Scotland, wished much for possession of the Hebrides. He had often sent to Norway to redeem them with money, and he did so this summer. But when he could not purchase those territories of King Haco, he took other measures in hand, which were not princely. Collecting forces throughout all Scotland, he prepared for a voyage to the Hebrides, and determined to subdue those islands under his dominion. He made it manifest before his subjects, that he would not desist till he had set his standard east on the cliffs of Thurso,^[3] and had reduced under himself all the provinces which the Norwegian Monarch possessed ^[4] to the westward of the German Ocean.^[4]

King Alexander sent word to John King of the isles that he wished to see him. But King John would not meet the Scottish King till four Earls of Scotland had pledged their honour, that he should return in safety, whether any agreement was made or not. When the Kings met, the Scottish Monarch besought King John, that he would give up Kiarnaburgh^[5] into his power, and three other Castles which he held of King Haco; as also the other lands which ^[5]King Haco had conferred upon him. The Scottish King added, that, if he would join him in good earnest, he would reward him with many greater estates in Scotland, together with his confidence and favour. All King John's Relations and Friends pressed him to assent. But he behaved well, and uprightly; and declared that he would not break his oath to King Haco. On this King John went away, and stopped not at any place till he came quite north to Lewes.^[6]

King Alexander, then lying in Kiararey-sound,^[7] dreamed a dream, and^[6]thought three men came to him. He thought one of them was in royal robes, but very stern, ruddy in countenance, somewhat thick, and of middling size. Another seemed of a slender make, but active, and of all men the most engaging, and majestic. The third again, was of very great stature, but his features were distorted, and of all the rest he was the most unsightly. They addressed their speech to the King, and enquired whether he meant to invade the Hebrides. Alexander thought he answered that he certainly proposed to subject the islands. The Genius of the vision bade him go back; and told him no other measure would turn out to his advantage. The King related his dream; and many advised him to return. But the King would not; and a little after he was seized with a disorder, and died. The Scottish army then broke up; and they removed ^[7]the King's body to Scotland. The Hebridians say that the men whom the King saw in his sleep were St Olave King of Norway, St Magnus Earl of Orkney, and St Columba.

The Scotch took for their King Alexander the son of King Alexander. He afterwards married the daughter of Henry King of England, and became a great prince.

MCCLXI.

In summer there came, from Scotland in the west, an Archdeacon, and a knight called Missel,^[8] as Envoys from Alexander King of Scotland. They shewed more fair language than truth, as seemed to King Haco.^[8] They set out so abruptly on their return, that none wist till they were under sail. The King dispatched Briniolf Johnson in pursuit, and he detained them with him. The King declared that they should remain that winter in Norway, because they had gone away without taking leave, contrary to what other Envoys did.

MCCLXII.

In summer there came letters from the Kings of the Hebrides in the western seas. They complain'd much of the hostilities which the Earl of Ross,^[9] Kiarnach, the son of Mac-camal, and other Scots committed^[9] in the Hebrides when they went out to Sky.^[10] They burned villages, and churches, and they killed great numbers both of men and women. They affirmed, that the Scotch had even taken the small children and raising them on the points of their spears shook them till they fell down to their hands, when they threw them away lifeless on the^[10] ground.^[11]

They said also, that the Scottish King purposed to subdue all the Hebrides, if life was granted him.

When King Haco heard these tidings they gave him much uneasiness, and he laid the case before his council. Whatever objections were made, the resolution was then taken, that King Haco should in winter, about Christmas,^[12] issue an edict through all Norway, and order out both what troops and provisions he thought his dominions could possibly supply for an expedition. He commanded all his forces to meet him at Bergen, about the beginning of spring.

[11]

MCCLXIII.

Near the middle of Lent King Haco travelled from Drontheim^[13] to Orkadal, thence east through the mountains to Bahus,^[14] and so eastwards to Elfar^[15] to see Earl Birger,^[16] according to an appointment that they should meet at Liodhus in Easter week. But when King Haco came to Liodhus^[17] the Earl was already gone away, and so the King returned north to Bahus.

King Haco arrived at Bergen on the day of the invention of the [\[12\]Cross](#).[\[18\]](#) He remained there during the spring, and proceeded in his preparations with great diligence. Prince Magnus, having given the necessary directions through Rygiafulke [\[19\]](#) concerning the expedition and the equipment of the fleet, went to join King Haco. After that a great number of Barons, and officers, and vassals, and a vast many soldiers flocked in daily to the Capital.

King Haco held a general council near Bergen at Backa.[\[20\]](#) There the numerous host was assembled together. The King then declared, concerning the expedition, that this whole army was intended against Scotland in the western seas, and to revenge the inroads which the [\[13\]Scotch](#) had made into his dominions. Prince Magnus begged to command this expedition instead of King Haco, who should remain at home. He thanked him in many courteous words; but he observed, that he himself was older, and had longer acquaintance with the western lands, and that, therefore, he himself would go this voyage. He, however, gave Prince Magnus full power to rule the nation in his absence. At this Council he settled many regulations respecting the internal government of the Country; and he granted to the yeomanry, that, while he was away, no Sheriff should decide on any cause, unless such cause was of the greatest necessity.

During this voyage King Haco had that great vessel which he had caused to be constructed at Bergen. It was built entirely of oak, and [\[14\]](#)contained twenty-seven banks of oars.[\[21\]](#) It was ornamented with heads and necks of dragons beautifully overlaid with gold. He had also many other well-appointed ships.

In the spring King Haco sent John-Langlife-son and Henry Scot west to the Orkneys, to procure pilots for Shetland. From thence John sailed to the Hebrides and told King Dugal that he might expect an army from the East. It had been rumoured that the Scots would plunder in the islands that summer. King Dugal, therefore, spread abroad a report that forty ships were coming from Norway. And by this means he prevented the Scotch from making a descent.

Some time before the King himself was ready, he sent eight ships to [\[15\]](#)the westward. The Captains of these were Ronald Urka, Erling Ivarson, Andrew Nicolson, and Halvard Red. They continued some days out in the road, as the wind did not favour them.

When the King had prepared his ship, he removed all his army from the capital to Eidsvags;[\[22\]](#) afterwards he himself returned to the city, where he remained some nights, and then set out for Herlover.[\[23\]](#) Here all the troops, both from the Northern and Southern districts, assembled, as is described in the Ravens-ode, which Sturla [\[24\]](#) sung.

[\[16\]](#)

1.

From the recesses of Finland, [\[25\]](#) bands, keen for battle, sought the potent Ruler of the storm of Javelins. The boisterous deep, that girds this earth, bore the ships of the Protector of thrones west from the streams of Gotelfa.

King Haco mustered all his force at Herlover. It was a mighty and splendid armament. The King had many large and well-appointed ships, as is thus described.

2.

No terrifier of dragons, [\[26\]](#) guardians of the hoarded treasure, [\[27\]](#) e'er in one place beheld more numerous hosts. The stainer of the [\[17\]](#) sea-fowl's beak, [\[28\]](#) resolved to scour the main, far distant shores connected by swift fleets.

3.

A glare of light blazed from the powerful, far-famed monarch while, carried by the sea-borne wooden coursers^[29] of Gestils,^[30] he broke to the roaring waves. The swelling sails, of keels that ride the surge, reflected the beams of the unsullied sun around the umpire of wars.

Some nights after King Haco had arrived at Herlover, Ronald and Erling sailed out of the bay with their squadron. Ronald was separated from^[18]the rest at sea, and made for the Orkneys with some of the ships. But, Erling, and Andrew, and Halvard steered south before Shetland, and so to the west of Tharey-fiord;^[31] and they saw no land; except Sulna-stapa^[32] west of the Orkneys. Afterwards they sailed in to Scotland under Dyrness.^[33] They went up into the country and destroyed a castle, but the garrison had fled. They burned more than twenty hamlets. Next they steered for the Hebrides, and found there Magnus King of Man.

Three nights before the Selian vigils^[34] King Haco set sail for the German sea with all his fleet. He had now been King of Norway six and^[19]forty winters.^[35] He had a favourable breeze; the weather was fair and the armament beautiful to behold, as Sturlas relates.

4.

The Abyss returned the flaming gleam of war, darted from the bright glittering concave shields of the Goddesses of battle.^[36] This voyage, by the bands of the Troubler of peace, through the sea that streams around the world, was unwelcome to the foe—they dreaded the exactor of rings.^[37]

[20]

King Haco had a company, particularly selected for his own ship. There were on the quarter-deck Thorlife abbot of Holm,^[38] Sir Askatin,^[39]four priests chaplains to the King, Andrew of Thissisey, Aslac Guss the King's master of the Horse, Andrew Hawardson, Guthorm Gillason and Thorstein his brother, Eirek Scot Gautson, with many others. There were on the main deck Aslack Dagson, Steinar Herka, Klomit Langi,^[21]Andrew Gums, Eirek Dugalson,^[40] the father of King Dugal,^[41]

Einar Lang-bard, Arnbiörn Suela, Sigvat Bodvarson,^[42] Hoskuld Oddson, John Hoglif, Arni Stinkar. On the fore-deck there were, Sigurd the son of Ivar Rofu, Ivar Helgason of Lofloc, Erlend Scolbein, Dag of Southeim, Briniolf Johnson, Gudleik Sneis, and most of the King's Chamberlains, with Andrew Plytt the King's treasurer. There were in the fore-castle, Eirek Skifa, Thorfin Sigvald, Kari Endridson, Gudbrand Johnson and many of the Cup-bearers. In general, there were four men on every half rowers' seat. With King Haco, Magnus Earl of Orkney left Bergen; and the King gave him a good galley. These Barons were also with the King, Briniolf Johnson, Fin Gautson, Erling Alfson, Erlend Red, Bard of Hestby, Eilif of Naustadale, Andrew Pott, Ogmund^[22]Krækidants, Erling Ivarson, John Drotning. Gaut of Meli, and Nicholas of Giska were behind with Prince Magnus at Bergen, as were several other sea officers who had not been ready. Many approved commanders were however with King Haco, and of whom mention hath been made.

King Haco having got a gentle breeze, was two nights at sea, when he reached that Harbour of Shetland called Breydeyiar-sound, with a great part of his navy, as Sturlas sings.

5.

The Leader of his people unmoored the ploughers of the Ocean,^[43]and raised aloft the expanded wings^[44] of his sky-blue doves.^[45]Our Sovereign, rich in the spoils of the sea-

snakes den,[\[46\]](#) viewed[\[23\]](#)the retiring haven from the stern of his snorting steed[\[47\]](#)adorned with ruddy gold.

King Haco remained in Breydeyar-sound near half a month, and from thence sailed to the Orkneys, and continued some time at Elidarwic which is near Kirkwall.[\[48\]](#) There he declared before his men, that he would divide his forces, and send one part south to the Firth of Forth[\[49\]](#) to plunder. But he himself wished to remain in the Orkneys with the largest ships and greater part of the army. The vassals and retainers, however, spoke against this scheme, and made it evident that they would go nowhere unless with the King himself; so this proposed expedition was dropt.

[\[24\]](#)

After St Olave's wake[\[50\]](#) King Haco, leaving Elidarwic, sailed south before the Mull[\[51\]](#) of Ronaldsha with all his navy. At this place King Haco was joined by Ronald from the Orkneys, with the ships that had followed him. King Haco next led the whole armament into Ronaldsvo, and lay there for some space. He then sent men over to Cathness[\[52\]](#) to levy contribution. He, on the one hand, proposed peace if the inhabitants would yield, but otherwise heavy punishment. The[\[25\]](#)Cathnesians submitted to the tax, and King Haco appointed collectors to receive it, as is here intimated.

6.

First our wise Sovereign, the Bestower of peace, and Defender of the Northern Thrones, imposed tribute, the ransom of life, on the dwellers of the Ness.[\[53\]](#) All its tribes were terrified by the steel-clad exactor of rings,[\[54\]](#) and panic-struck at his mighty power.

While King Haco lay in Ronaldsvo a great darkness drew over the sun, so that only a little ring was bright round the sun, and it continued so for some hours.[\[55\]](#)

[\[26\]](#)

On the day of St Laurence's wake[\[56\]](#) King Haco, having ordered the Orkney-men to follow him as soon as they were ready, sailed over Pentland-Firth,[\[57\]](#) Earl Magnus, however, staid behind. He was here informed that John Drotning,[\[58\]](#) and Kolbein Aslacson, with the ships expected from the east, but which had been accidentally detained, were arrived in the Islands. King Haco then sailed with all his forces to a haven that is called Asleifarvic,[\[59\]](#) from that to Lewes, so on to Raasa, and, from thence to that place, in Sky-sound, which is called Callachstane.[\[60\]](#)[\[27\]](#)Here he was joined by Magnus King of Man, and the relations Erling Ivarson, Andrew Nicolson, and Halvard. He next proceeded to the Sound of Mull,[\[61\]](#) and then to Kiararey where King Dugal and the other Hebridians were assembled with all their troops. King Haco had now above an hundred vessels, for the most part large, and all of them well provided both with men and arms.

While King Haco remained at Kiararey he divided his forces, and sent fifty ships south to the Mull of Kintire[\[62\]](#) to plunder. The captains[\[28\]](#)appointed over them were King Dugal, Magnus King of Man, Bryniolf Johnson, Ronald Urka, Andrew Pott, Ogmund Krækidants, Vigeic Priestson. He also ordered five ships for Bute; these were under the command of Erlend Red, Andrew Nicolson, Simon Stutt, Ivar Ungi Eyfari, and Gutthorm the Hebridian, each in his own ship.

King Haco sailed afterwards south to Gudey[\[63\]](#) before Kintire where he anchored. There King John met him; he came in the ship with Bishop Thorgil. King Haco desired him to follow his banner as he should do. But King John excused himself. He said he had sworn an

oath to the^[29]Scottish King, and held of him more lands than of the Norwegian Monarch; he therefore entreated King Haco to dispose of all those estates which he had conferred upon him. King Haco kept him with him some time, and endeavoured to incline his mind to fidelity. Many laid imputations to his charge. King Haco indeed had before received bad accounts of him from the Hebrides; for John Langlife-son came to the King, while he was sailing west from Shetland, and told him the news that John King of the Hebrides, breaking his faith, had turned to the Scottish Monarch. King Haco, however, would not believe this till he had found it so.

During King Haco's stay at Gudey an Abbot of a monastery of Greyfriars waited on him, begging protection for their dwelling, and Holy Church: and this the King granted them in writing.

[30]

Friar Simon had lain sick for some time. He died at Gudey. His corpse was afterwards carried up to Kintire where the Greyfriars interred him in their Church. They spread a fringed pall over his grave, and called him a Saint.

About this time men came from King Dugal, and said that the Lords of Kintire, Margad,^[64] and Angus,^[65] (also proprietor of Ila), were willing to surrender the lands which they held to King Haco; and to order their dependants to join him. The King answered, that he would^[31]not lay waste the peninsula, if they submitted on the following day before noon; if not he gave them to understand he would ravage it. The messengers returned. Next morning Margad came and gave up every thing into the King's power; a little after Angus arrived and likewise did the same. The King then said, that, if they would enter into articles with him, he would reconcile them with the King of Scotland. On this they took an oath to King Haco, and delivered hostages. The King laid a fine of a thousand head of cattle on their estates. Angus yielded up Ila also to the King; and the King returned Ila to Angus, upon the same terms that the other Barons in the Hebrides enjoyed their lands; this is recorded in the Ravens-ode.

7.

Our Sovereign, sage in Council, the imposer of tribute, and^[32]brandisher of the keen Falchion directed his long galleys thro' the Hebrides. He bestowed Ila, taken by his troops, on the valiant Angus the generous distributor of the beauteous ornaments of the hand.^[66]

8.

Our daring King that rules the monsters of the deep,^[67] struck excessive terror into all the regions of the western ocean. Princes bowed their heads in subjection to the cleaver of the battered helm; he often dismissed the suppliants in peace, and dispelled their apprehensions of the wasteful tribes.

South in Kintire there was a Castle held by a Knight who came to wait on King Haco, and surrendered the fortress into his hands. The King conferred this Castle upon Guthorm Backakolf.

[33]

We must next speak of that detachment of the Army, which the King had sent towards the Mull of Kintire to pillage. The Norwegians made a descent there. They burnt the hamlets that were before them, and took all the effects that they could find. They killed some of the inhabitants; the rest fled where they could. But, when they were proceeding to the greater

villages, letters arrived from King Haco forbidding them to plunder. Afterwards they sailed for Gudey to rejoin King Haco, as is here said.

9.

The openers of gushing wounds, undaunted of soul, proceeded in the paths[68] of the famed Getis,[69] from the south round Kintire. Our heroes, rousers of the thundering tempest of swords, glutted the[34]swift, sable-clad birds of prey in Scotland.

The wind was not favourable, King Haco, however, made Andrew Pott go before him south to Bute, with some small vessels, to join those he had already sent thither. News was soon received that they had won a fortress, the garrison of which had capitulated, and accepted terms of the Norwegians. There was with the Norwegians a sea-officer, called Rudri.[70] He considered Bute as his Birthright; and because he had[35]not received the Island of the Scotch he committed many ravages, and killed many people; and for that he was outlawed by the Scottish King. He came to King Haco, and took the oaths to him; and with two of his brothers became his subjects. As soon as the garrison, after having delivered up the strong-hold, were gone away from the Norwegians, Rudri killed nine of them, because he thought that he owed them no good will. Afterwards King Haco reduced the island, as is here said.

10.

The wide-extended Bute was won from the forlorn wearers[71] of rings by the renowned and invincible troops of the promoter of conquest,—they wielded the two-edged sword—the foes of our Ruler dropt, and the Raven from his fields of slaughter, winged his[36]flight for the Hebrides.

The Norwegians who had been in Bute went to Scotland, where they burned many houses, and several towns. Rudri, proceeding a great way, did all the mischief that he could, as is here described.

11.

The habitations of men, the dwellings of the wretched, flamed. Fire, the devourer of halls, glowed in their granaries. The hapless throwers of the dart[72] fell near the swan-frequented plain,[73]while south from our floating pines[74] marched a host of warriors.

While King Haco was in the Hebrides, deputies came to him from Ireland[37]intimating that the Irish[75] Ostmen would submit to his power, if he would secure them from the encroachments of the English, who possessed all the best towns along the sea-coast. King Haco accordingly sent Sigurd the Hebridian, with some fast-sailing vessels,[38]to examine on what terms the Irish invited him thither.

After this King Haco sailed south before the Mull of Kintire with all his fleet, and anchored for some time in Arran-sound. Then, there came often Predicant, or Barefooted friars, from the Scottish Monarch, to King Haco, to sound him about a pacification between the two Sovereigns. At this juncture also King Haco set King John at liberty; and bidding him go in peace, wherever he would, gave him several rich presents. He promised King Haco, to do everything in his power to effectuate a peace between him and the Scottish King; and that he would immediately return to King Haco whenever he desired him. Soon after King Haco sent Gilbert Bishop of Hamar, Henry Bishop of Orkney, Andrew Nicolson, Andrew Plytt, and Paul Soor as envoys to treat about[39]a peace with the King of Scotland. They went to the Scottish Monarch, and laid before him their overtures. He received them honourably, seemed inclined to a compromise, and said that such terms of accommodation as he would consent to,

would be transmitted to King Haco. The commissioners departed; and the Scottish envoys arrived soon after. King Haco had ordered that all the Islands to the west of Scotland, which he called his, should be wrote down. The King of Scotland again had named all such as he would not relinquish. These were Bute, Arran, and the two Cumbras;^[76] as to other matters there was very little dispute between the Sovereigns; but however no agreement took place.^[40]The Scotch purposely declined any accommodation, because summer was drawing to a period, and the weather was becoming bad. Finding this, Haco sailed in, with all his forces, past the Cumbras.

Afterwards an interview in Scotland was agreed upon for a reconciliation. King Haco sent thither a Bishop and a Baron; and to meet them came some Knights and Monks. They spoke much about an accommodation, but, at last, things ended the same way as formerly. Towards the conclusion of the day a greater number of Scots convened from the country than the Norwegians thought were to be trusted. They therefore, retiring to the ships, waited on the King, and told him their opinion. The generality advised him to declare that the truce^[41] was now ended, and to give orders to plunder, as the army was very short of provisions.

King Haco, however, sent one of his courtiers, called Kolbein Rich, to the Scottish Monarch. He carried with him the Articles of pacification which the Scottish King had sent to King Haco, and was commanded to bring back the proposals which King Haco had sent to the King of Scotland. He was besides to propose that the Sovereigns should meet with all their forces and treat about a peace. If that, by the grace of God, took place, it was very well; but if it should turn out otherwise, then Haco proposed to the King of Scotland to fight, with their whole armies, and let him conquer whom God pleased. The Scottish Monarch seem'd not unwilling to fight, but he gave no explanation. Kolbein, therefore, returned back to his Sovereign, who appeared but^[42] little satisfied with his message; as is mentioned in the Ravens-ode.

12.

The Eastern Hero great in command, and ennobled by Victory, repeatedly offered the decisive conflict of Javelins to the enemy. The strangers, distrustful of their strength, risked not the combat against our magnanimous Prince, wielder of the gleaming blade.

The truce was now declared to be totally ended. The King accordingly sent sixty ships in to Loch-Long.^[77] They were commanded by Magnus King of Man, King Dugal,^[78] and Allan his brother, Angus, Margad,^[43] Vigeik Priestson and Ivar Holm. When they came into the inlet they took their boats, and drew them^[79] up to a great lake which is called Loch-Lomond. On the far side round the lake was an Earldom called Lennox.^[80] In the lake there were a^[44] great many islands well inhabited;^[81] these islands the Norwegians wasted with fire. They also burned all the buildings about the lake, and made great devastation, as Sturlas relates.

13.

The persevering shielded warriors of the thrower of the whizzing spear^[82] drew their boats across the broad isthmus. Our fearless troops, the exactors of contribution, with flaming brands wasted the populous islands in the lake, and the mansions around its winding bays.

Allan the brother of King Dugal, marched far over into Scotland, and killed great numbers of the inhabitants. He took many hundred head of^[45] cattle, and made vast havoc, as is here described.

14.

Our veterans fierce of Soul, feeders of wolves, hastened their wasteful course through the spacious districts of the mountains. Allan, the bravest of mortals, at the fell interview of battle, often wreaked his fatal vengeance on the expiring foe.

Afterwards the Norwegians retired to their fleet, and met with so violent a storm that it dashed in pieces about ten of their ships in Loch-Long. At this time Ivar Holm was seized with an acute disease, which occasioned his death.

King Haco, as was before written, still lay in the Hebrides. Michaelmas fell on a Saturday; and, on the Monday night after, there came a great tempest with hailstones and rain. The watch on the^[46]fore-castle of the King's ship called out, and said that a transport vessel was driving full against their cable. The sailors immediately sprung upon deck; but the rigging of the transport getting entangled in the King's ship, carried away its beak. The transport then fell aboard in such a manner, that the anchor grappled the cordage of the King's ship, which then began to drag its anchors. The King, therefore, ordered the cable of the transport to be cut, which was accordingly done. It then drove out to sea, but the King's ship remained steadfast, and continued uncovered^[83] till daylight. On the morning, the transport floated with the tide, and, together with a galley, was cast ashore on Scotland. The wind gradually increasing, the crew of the King's ship got more cables, and dropt a fifth anchor. The King himself then took to his long-boat, and rowing out to^[47]the islands, ordered mass to be sung. The fleet in the meantime was forced up the channel; and the tempest that day was so furious that some vessels cut away their masts, others ran aground. The King's ship also drove into the sound, tho' seven anchors, including that taken from the transport, had been used. They then let go an eighth, which was the sheet anchor; the ship still drove, but the anchors at length took fast hold. Five vessels were cast ashore. So great was this storm that people said it was raised by the power of Magic, and the quantity of rain was prodigious, as is thus described.

15.

Now our deep-enquiring Sovereign encounter'd the horrid powers of enchantment, and the abominations of an impious race. The troubled flood tore many fair gallies from their moorings and swept them anchorless before its waves.

[48]

16.

A magic-raised watery tempest blew upon our warriors, ambitious of conquest, and against the floating habitations^[84] of the brave. The roaring billows and stormy blast threw shielded companies of our adventurous nation on the Scottish strand.

When the Scotch saw that the vessels had run aground, they assembled together, and advancing against the Norwegians, attacked them with missile weapons. They, however, defended themselves gallantly under cover of their ships; the Scotch made several attempts, at different times, but killed few, tho' many were wounded. King Haco, as the wind was now somewhat abated, sent in some boats with a reinforcement, as is here mentioned.

[49]

17.

The victorious breaker of gleaming weapons, attentive of soul, then sent his bands to the hard-fought field, where breast-plates rang. Our troops, by the slaughter of the suspicious foe, established their Monarch's fame, vilified by the dwellers of the vallies.^[85]

Afterwards the Sovereign himself, attended by Thorlaug Bosa, set sail in a barge belonging to the Masters of the Lights.^[86] As soon as the King's men approached the land the Scotch retired; and the Norwegians continued ashore all night. The Scotch, however, during the darkness,^[50] entered the transport,^[87] and carried off as much of the lading as they could. On the morning, the King with a numerous reinforcement came on shore; and he ordered the transport to be lightened, and towed out to the ships.

In a little time, they descried the Scottish army, and it was so numerous that they supposed the King of Scotland was present. Ogmund Krækidants with his company was stationed on a hill. The Scottish van skirmished with his men; and, their main body coming on, the Norwegians entreated the King, as they were anxious for his safety, to row to his fleet and to send them help. The King insisted on remaining on shore; but they would not assent to his continuing any longer so exposed; he, therefore, sailed out in a barge to his ships at the Cumbras. The following Barons remained on land, Lord Andrew Nicolson, Ogmund Krækidants, Erling Alfson,^[51] Andrew Pott, Ronald Urka, Thorlaug Bosi, Paul Soor. The whole number of soldiers with them was eight or nine hundred. Two hundred men were upon the rising-ground with Ogmund; but the rest of the troops were posted down upon the beach.

The Scottish army now advanced, and it was conjectured to consist of near fifteen hundred knights.^[88] All their horses had breast-plates; and there were many Spanish steeds in complete armour. The Scottish King had, besides, a numerous army of foot soldiers, well accoutred. They generally had bows and spears.

The Norwegians on the hill, apprehensive of being surrounded, began to retire in scattered parties towards the sea. Andrew Nicolson, observing this, came up to the rising ground, and desired Ogmund to^[52] draw off his men towards the beach, but not to retreat so precipitately as if he fled. The Scotch at this time attacked them furiously with darts and stones. Showers of weapons were poured upon the Norwegians, who defended themselves, and retired in good order. But when they approached the sea, each one hurrying faster than another, those on the beach imagined they were routed. Some therefore leaped into their boats, and pushed off from the land, others jumped into the transport. Their companions called upon them to return, and some returned, tho' few. Andrew Pott leaped over two boats, and into a third, and so escaped from land. Many boats went down, and some men were lost, and the rest of the Norwegians at last wheeled about towards the sea.

Here Haco of Steini, one of King Haco's household, fell. The^[53] Norwegians were then driven south from the transport, and were headed by Andrew Nicolson, Ogmund Krækidants, Thorlaug Bosi, and Paul Soor. There soon began a severe contest, tho' very unequal, as ten Scots fought against each Norwegian. Among the Scotch there was a young knight called Ferash,^[89] equally distinguished for his birth and fortune. He wore a helmet plaited with gold, and set with precious stones, and the rest of his armour was of a piece with it. He rode gallantly up to the Norwegians, but no other ventured. He galloped frequently along the Norwegian line, and then back to his own followers. Andrew Nicolson had now reached the Scottish van. He encountered this illustrious knight, and struck at his thigh with such force that he cut it off,^[90] through the armour, with his sword, which penetrated to the saddle. The Norwegians stript him of his^[54] beautiful belt.^[91] The hardest conflict then commenced. Many fell on both sides, but more of the Scotch, as Sturlas sings.

18.

Where cuirasses rung, our generous youths, formed in a circle, prostrated the illustrious givers of bracelets. The birds of prey were gluttonously filled with lifeless limbs. What great chieftain shall avenge the fate of the renowned wearer of the Belt?

During the battle there was so great a tempest that King Haco saw no possibility of bringing the army ashore. Ronald, and Eilif of Naustadale, however, with some men, rowed to land, and greatly distinguished themselves; as did those troops who had before gone out in their boats. Ronald, in the end, was repulsed to his ships; but Eilif behaved most heroically. The Norwegians now began to form themselves anew; and the Scotch took possession of the rising ground. There were continued skirmishes with stones and missile weapons; but^[56]towards evening the Norwegians made a desperate charge against the Scotch on the hill, as is here recorded.

19.

The champions of Nordmæra's^[92] Lord saluted the stout, harnassed Barons, with the rough music of battle. The train of the supporter of thrones, courageous, and clad in steel, marched to the din of clashing swords.

20.

At the conflict of corselets on the blood-red hill, the damasked blade hewed the mail of hostile tribes, ere the Scot, nimble as the hound, would leave the field to the followers of our all-conquering king.

The Scotch then left the eminence, and fled, where they could, away to^[57]their mountains. The Norwegians, perceiving this, retired to their boats, and rowing out to their ships, luckily escaped the storm. On the morning they came back in search of the bodies of those who had dropt. Among the dead were Haco of Steini, and Thorgisl Gloppa, both belonging to King Haco's household. There fell also a worthy vassal called Karlhoved, from Drontheim, and another vassal named Halkel, from Fiorde. Besides, there died three Masters of the Lights, Thorstein Bat, John Ballhoved, and Halvard Buniard. It was impossible for the Norwegians to tell how many were killed of the Scotch, because those who dropt were taken up and removed to the woods. King Haco ordered his dead to be carried to a church.

Five days after, King Haco commanded his men to weigh anchor and to^[58]bring his ship close under the Cumbras. **He was soon joined by the squadron which had been in Loch-long.** On the fast day following, the weather was good, and the King sent some retainers ashore to burn the vessels which had been stranded; that same day the King sailed past Cumbra to Melansey,^[93] where he lay some nights. Here he was met by the Commissioners he had sent to Ireland, who assured him that the Irish Ostmen would willingly engage to maintain his army till he freed them from the dominion of the English. King Haco was extremely desirous of sailing for Ireland, and, as the wind was not favourable, he held a Council on the subject, but the whole army was against this plan. He, therefore, told them that as he was short of provisions he would steer for the Hebrides. The King then ordered the body of Ivar^[59]Holm to be carried to Bute, where it was interred.

Afterwards King Haco sailed past Melansey and lay some nights near Arran, then proceeded to Sandey and so to the Mull of Kintire, and at night he arrived north at Gudey; next he sailed out to Ila-sound, where he remained two nights. King Haco laid a contribution, rated at three

hundred head of cattle, on the island, but part was to be paid in meal, part in cheese. Haco set sail again on the first Sunday of winter, and met a fog and a storm so violent that few of the ships could carry their sails. The king, therefore, made for Kiararey, and about this time messengers passed between him and King John, but to little purpose. Here the King was informed that his troops had made depredations in Mull, and that some of the Mull-men,[60]with two or three Norwegians, had been killed.

King Haco next sailed in to the Calf of Mull,[94] where he stayed some nights. There King Dugal and Allan his brother took leave of the King, who gave them those estates which King John formerly possessed—Magnus King of Man and other Hebridians had returned home before. He gave Bute to Rudri, and Arran to Margad. To King Dugal he gave the Castle in Kintire which Guthorm Backa-kolf had besieged and taken during the summer. In this expedition King Haco regained all those provinces which King Magnus Barefoot had acquired, and conquered from the Scotch and Hebridians, as is here narrated.

[61]

21.

The Lord of Egda[95] soon recovered all those territories on the continent which had been subjected by the Scottish tribes. In the western regions none durst contend with the offspring of Ingui.[96]His army, like a gathering tempest, indicated desolation to the dominions of his imperious adversary.

King Haco, leaving the calf of Mull, sailed to Rauney. Here he overtook Balti a vassal of Shetland, with those who had been sent to the Orkneys, and to whom a permission had been given of returning to Norway. King Haco from Rauney steered northwards. The wind being unfavourable, he made for Westerford in Sky, and ordered the islanders to supply him with provisions. Next he sailed past Cape Wrath,[97] and[62]arriving at Dyrness, there happened a calm, for which reason the King ordered the fleet to be steered into Gia-ford.[98] This was done on the feast of the two apostles, Simon and Jude,[99] which fell on a Sunday. The King spent the night there. On this festival, after mass had been sung, some Scots, whom the Norwegians had taken prisoners, were presented to the King. The King detained one as a hostage, and sent the others up the country, at liberty, on giving a promise that they would return with cattle. On the same day it happened that nine men belonging to Andrew Biusa's ship went ashore to procure water, and an outcry was soon heard from the mainland. The crew, therefore, immediately setting off from their ships, found two men swimming, though badly wounded, and took them on board; the other seven,[63]unarmed, and incapable of making any defence, remained by their boat (which was left aground by the tide) and were killed by the Scotch. The Norwegians landing, carried away their dead; and the Scotch, in the meantime, fled to a wood. On the Monday, King Haco sailed from Gia-ford after having liberated the Scottish hostage, and sent him ashore. The King in the evening reached the Orkneys, and anchored in a certain sound, to the north of Asmundsvo,[100] from whence he, with the greatest part of his fleet, steered for Ronaldsvo. In passing over Pentland Firth, a terrible whirlpool appeared, and in which a ship from Rygia-fylke, with all on board, perished. John of Hestby was driven through the straits, and was very near being swallowed up in the gulf; but, by the mercy of God, his ship was forced east to the[64]ocean, and he made for Norway.

While King Haco remained in the Orkneys the most part of his troops sailed to Norway; some went with the King's permission, but others took leave for themselves. King Haco, on his arrival at the islands, had at first given out that he would return immediately to Norway; but,

as it was a long time before the wind favoured him, he determined to winter in the Orkneys. He, therefore, named twenty ships that were to remain with him, and dismissed the rest. All the vassals stayed with him, except Eilif of Naustdale; he sailed home. Most of the gentry, however, continued with their Sovereign. The King then despatched letters to Norway, concerning the necessaries he should want. After All Saints Day, the King steered for Medalland harbour; but spent one day at Ronaldsha.

On the Saturday before Martinmas King Haco rode to the port of Medalland, and after mass he was taken very ill. He was aboard his ship during the night; but, on the morning, he ordered mass to be sung on shore. He afterwards held a council to deliberate where the vessels should be laid up; and ordered his men to be attentive, and see after their respective ships. Upon this each captain took the charge of his own galley. Some were laid up in the harbour of Medalland, and others at Skalpeid.

Next King Haco proceeded to Skalpeid, and then rode to Kirkwall. He, with such officers as dined at his table, lodged in the Bishop's palace. Here the King and the Bishop kept separate tables in the halls, each for his own retinue; but the King dined in the upper story. He ordered certain districts to furnish his nobility and household with provisions. Andrew Plytt had the inspection of the King's table, and delivered out to the courtiers, retainers, masters of the Lights, and other attendants their usual allowance. After the proper arrangements were taken concerning the disposal of the fleet, the different captains went whither their ships were laid up. The Barons who remained at Kirkwall were Briniolf Johnston, Erling Alfson, Ronald Urka, Erling of Birkey, John Drotning, and Erlend Red. The other Barons repaired to their proper districts.

King Haco had spent the summer in much watchfulness and anxiety. Being often called to deliberate with his captains, he had enjoyed little rest, and when he arrived at Kirkwall, he was confined to his bed by his disorder. Having lain for some nights, the illness abated, and he was on foot for three days. On the first day he walked about in his apartments; on the second, he attended at the Bishop's chapel to hear mass; and on the third he went to Magnus's Church, and walked round the shrine of St Magnus, Earl of Orkney. He then ordered a bath to be prepared, and got himself shaved. Some nights after he relapsed, and took again to his bed. During his sickness, he ordered the Bible and Latin authors to be read to him. But finding his spirits were too much fatigued by reflecting on what he had heard, he desired Norwegian books might be read to him night and day; first the lives of Saints, and, when they were ended, he made his attendants read the Chronicles of our Kings from Haldan the Black, and so of all the Norwegian Monarchs in succession, one after the other. The King still found his disorder increasing. He, therefore, took into consideration the pay to be given to his troops, and commanded that a mark of fine silver should be given to each courtier, and half a mark to each of the masters of the lights, chamberlains, and other attendants on his person. He ordered all the ungilt plate belonging to his table to be weighed, and to be distributed if his plain silver fell short. At this time also letters were wrote to Prince Magnus concerning the government of the nation, and some things which the King wanted to have settled respecting the army. King Haco received extreme unction on the night before the festival of St Lucia. Thorgisl, Bishop of Stavanger, Gilbert Bishop of Hamar, Henry Bishop of Orkney, Abbot Thorleif, and many other learned men were present; and before the unction, all present bade the King farewell with a kiss. He still spoke distinctly; and his particular favourites asked him if he left behind him any other son than Prince Magnus, or any other heirs that should share in the kingdom, but he uniformly persisted that he had no other heirs in the male or female line, than what were publicly known.

When the histories of all the Kings down to Suerer had been recited, he ordered the life of that Prince to be read, and to be continued night and day, whenever he found himself indisposed to sleep.

The festival of the Virgin St. Lucia happened on a Thursday, and on^[70]the Saturday after, the King's disorder increased to such a degree that he lost the use of his speech; and at midnight Almighty God called King Haco out of this mortal life. This was matter of great grief to all those who attended, and to most of those who heard of the event. The following Barons were present at the death of the King, Briniolf Johnson, Erling Alfson, John Drottning, Ronald Urka, and some domestics who had been near the King's person during his illness. Immediately on the decease of the King, Bishops, and learned men were sent for to sing mass. Afterwards all the company went out except Bishop Thorgisl, Briniolf Johnson and two other persons, who watched by the body, and performed all the services due to so illustrious a Lord and Prince as King Haco had been. On Sunday the royal corpse was carried to the upper hall, and laid on a bier. The body was clothed in^[71]a rich garb, with a garland on the head, and dressed out as became a crowned monarch. The masters of the lights stood with tapers in their hands, and the whole hall was illuminated. All the people came to see the body, which appeared beautiful and animated, and the King's countenance was as fair and ruddy as while he was alive. It was some alleviation of the deep sorrow of the beholders to see the corpse of their departed Sovereign so decorated. High mass was then sung for the deceased. The Nobility kept watch by the body during the night. On Monday the remains of King Haco were carried to St. Magnus's church, where they lay in state that night. On Tuesday the royal corpse was put into a coffin, and buried in the Choir of St. Magnus's Church, near the steps leading to the shrine of St. Magnus Earl of Orkney. The^[72]tomb was then closed, and a canopy was spread over it. It was also determined that watch should be kept over the King's grave all winter. At Christmas the Bishop and Andrew Plytt furnished entertainments, as the King had directed, and good presents were given to all the soldiers.

King Haco had given orders that his remains should be carried east to Norway, and buried near his Father and relations. Towards the end of winter, therefore, that great vessel which he had had in the west was launched, and soon got ready. On Ash-Wednesday the corpse of King Haco was taken out of the ground; this happened on the third of the nones of March. The Courtiers followed the corpse to Skalpeid where the ship lay, and which was chiefly under the direction of Bishop Thorgisl, and^[73]Andrew Plytt. They put to sea on the first Saturday in Lent; but meeting with hard weather, they steered for Silavog.^[104] From this place they wrote letters to Prince Magnus acquainting him with the news, and then set sail for Bergen. They arrived at Laxavog^[105]before the festival of St. Benedict.^[106] On that day Prince Magnus rowed out to meet the corpse. The ship was brought near to the King's palace; and the body was carried up to a summer house. Next morning the corpse was removed to Christ-church, and was attended by Prince Magnus, the two Queens, the Courtiers, and the town's people. The body was then interred in the Choir of Christ-church; and Prince Magnus addressed a long and gracious speech to those who attended the funeral procession. All the multitude present expressed great sorrow of mind as Sturlas says.

[74]

22.

Three nights did the brave warriors, the flower of chivalry, continue at Bergen, ere they entombed their wise and glorious Prince. The breakers of temper'd metals, stood crowding around the grave of the ruler of the nation, while in their swimming eyes appear'd no look of joy.—Then commenced those bloody feuds which till our days have reigned.

King Haco was buried three nights before the festival of the annunciation of the Virgin Mary; and after the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ one thousand two hundred and sixty three years.[\[107\]](#)

FINIS.

FOOTNOTES:

[\[1\]](#) Sudr-eyiar, (*orig.*). The Hebrides or southern division of the Scottish islands, so called in contradistinction to the Orkneys.

[\[2\]](#) Godred, Chrou-ban, *i.e.* the white handed, King of Man.

[\[3\]](#) Thursa sker (*orig.*) *i.e.* the giants' rocks, Thurso.

[\[4\]](#) Solunder-haf, (*orig.*) the Northern ocean. So called from the Soloe islands near that promontory of Norway called Stad. That species of sea fowl which frequent the Bass, probably received their name from being more commonly found in the Solund isles.

[\[5\]](#) Kiarna-borg, (*orig.*), *Fl. Ms.* Kianaborg, from the Irish *carn* a rock, and the *Is. borg* a castle. This castle was situated on a rocky islet near Mul. Fordun calls it Carnborg.

[\[6\]](#) Liod-hus, *i.e.* The residence of Liot. It is not unlikely that the isle of Lewes, & the family of M^cLeod were so named from Liod earl of Orkney.

[\[7\]](#) Kiarareyiar, in the *Mss.* Kiarbareyiar, the island Kiararey where Alexander died, suddenly, Jul. 8th. 1249.

[\[8\]](#) Perhaps the Author means Frissel afterwards Bishop of St Andrews; or Michael *viz.* de Weymyss, who was ambassador to Norway, A. D. 1290.

[\[9\]](#) Jarlin af Ros ok Kiarnakr son Makamals (*orig.*). The text here is much vitiated. The author might have read in some Irish accounts, Jarl na Ross (William) M^cKerchar, M^cCalom, *i.e.*, the Earl of Ross (William) the son of Ferchar, the son of Malcolm. This William Mac Erchart was a young Hero, and is corruptly called Macentagart by the Scottish historians. Or perhaps, three persons may be alluded to, *viz.*, the Earl of Ross, Kinneach-son (of Kintail), and a MacCamal of Lochaw, all powerful chieftains on the west coast of Scotland. It is, however, not impossible that Kiarnak was some ancient chieftain from whom a branch of the Grants was called Clan-Chiarnach. The *Fl. Ms.* for Makamals reads Machamals.

[\[10\]](#) I Skid (*orig.*). In the *Fl. Ms.* ístrid *e.* to war.

[\[11\]](#) The inhuman practice here described was common in those times. From the *Landnamaboc* we learn that Olver first discouraged this custom. We read, Olver did not permit tossing infants from spear to spear as was usual among pirates, and was therefore surnamed Barna-kall or the protector of Infants.

[\[12\]](#) Jol (*orig.*). The great brumal festival among the Scandinavians. Hence the Scotch word Yule, *i.e.*, Christmas.

[\[13\]](#) Nid-ar-os (*orig.*), *i.e.*, the mouth of the river Nid, now Drontheim.

[\[14\]](#) Vikor (*orig.*), now Bahus in Sweden.

[\[15\]](#) Elfa, the river at Gottenburg.

[\[16\]](#) An Earl of Sweden and father-in-law to Haco the younger.

[\[17\]](#) Liodhusa, a town of Sweden demolished A.D. 1268.

[18] May 3.

[19] *i.e.*, the hilly country. Harald Harfager divided his kingdom into several counties, each of which was to fit out a squadron of ships on an emergency. The counties were again divided into *skipreidor*, or smaller districts, each of which furnished a single vessel properly equipped.

[20] *i.e.*, an eminence, near Bergen.

[21] By banks of oars we are only to understand benches for the rowers.

[22] *i.e.*, Cape-bay, near Bergen.

[23] An island and excellent harbour near Bergen.

[24] A celebrated poet, uncle to Sigvat Bodvarson, who attended Haco in this expedition, and from whom Sturla probably had his information of facts.

[25] The most northerly province of Norway.

[26] *i.e.*, no warrior.

[27] The Scandinavian Scalds and Mythologists often represented treasures as guarded by monsters, dragons, sea snakes, &c. This notion probably originated from the fabulous tales of those who traded to the Indies. An ancient author, speaking of Scythia, says, "nam qvum in plerisque locis auro & gemmis affluent, Gryphorum immanitate, accessus hominum rarus est."

[28] *i.e.*, Haco.

[29] *i.e.*, ships.

[30] Gestil, a famous sea king or pirate.

[31] *Thareyiar-fiörd* (*orig.*), perhaps a mistake for *Faroeiyar-fiörd*. Torfæus read it *Barreyiarfiord*.

[32] *i.e.*, the column of pillars, perhaps the island Staffa.

[33] *i.e.*, the promontory of deer, now Durnish.

[34] 7th of July.

[35] The Norwegians computed by winters: the Scotch did the same, as we see by Winton's chronicle: "Thretty winters and four thanEdan regnyd Max Gowran."

[36] *Val-drosar* (*orig.*), the Goddesses of Fate, or Valkyriæ, to whom armour was supposed sacred.

[37] *i.e.*, Tribute—*Ringa elldingom*, (*orig.*), bright rings: *Ringa* signify not only rings, or bracelets, but also money; for before the introduction of coinage into the North, very thick spiral gold wires were worn round the wrists of great men, who distributed bits to those who performed any signal service; and such a wire is still to be seen in the Royal Museum at Copenhagen. It is not always easy to discern when by *ringa* is understood ornaments for the fingers, bracelets, rings of investiture, or the current money of the times.

[38] *i.e.*, the islet, a monastery near Bergen.

[39] Afterwards chancellor of Norway.

[40] Probably the son of Dugal, the son of Somerled.

[41] The father of King Dugal was Rory, I suppose. See notes on pages 34 and 42.

[42] Nephew to Sturla author of the Ravens-ode. He attended Haco in this expedition.

[43] *i.e.* ships.

[44] *i.e.* sails.

[45] Bla-dufor (*orig.*), *i.e.* Blue pigeons. The Scalds frequently compared ships under sail to birds, horses, and other animals in motion.

[46] *i.e.* gold.

[47] *i.e.* ship.

[48] Kirkio-vog (*orig.*) *i.e.* Church-bay. Kirkwall.

[49] Breida-fiardar (*orig.*), *i.e.* Broad bay. The firth of Forth.

[50] St Olave's day, July 29.

[51] Mula in Irish and Icelandic signifies a cape or beak.

[52] Kata-nes (*orig.*), *i.e.* the promontory of Cadnav or Cathness. Cathness was particularly exposed to the inroads of the Norwegians. On this account great numbers of the inhabitants retired into Murray and the adjacent counties, where they were afterwards known by the name of Clan-Chattan.

[53] *i.e.*, the promontory, or Cathness.

[54] Baug-gerdar (*orig.*), *i.e.* imposer of rings. *Baug* signifies anything circular, therefore, in compounded words, it is not easy to discern when it denotes rings or shields, &c. See note on *ringa*, p. 19.

[55] This eclipse happened on the 5th of August 1263.

[56] St Laurence's wake or vigil, 9th of Aug.

[57] Cathness by the ancient Britons was called Pentâr, *i.e.* the headland, whence the neighbouring firth had its name.

[58] *i.e.* John the Queen, perhaps the ancestor of the M^cQueens.

[59] Asleifarvik (*orig.*). Fl. MS., Hals-eyiar-vic.

[60] *i.e.* The old woman's rock. *Cailleach* in Irish, and *kerling* in Icelandic signify an old woman.

[61] *i.e.* The promontory. This island was so called because, from its propinquity to the opposite shore, it appeared like a cape. The old Venetian edition of Pliny has "Mella xxv mill. pass. amplior proditur;" in the other copies it is "Reliquarum nulla" &c. Hence the true reading appears to be Reliquarum Mulla &c.

[62] Ken-târ, *i.e.* the promontory, a Peninsula in Scotland, Kintire.

[63] *i.e.* God's-Island. I take this to be Giga, or, as Fordon calls it, Gia, compounded of the Gaelic *Dhia*, God, and the Islandic *ey*, an island.

[64] Who this Margad was does not appear from history, I believe.

[65] Angus, Lord of Kintire and Ila, was grandson & heir of Reginald king of the isles. His posterity succeeded to the county of Ross, & John, the second Earl, A.D. 1449, gave to his Brother Hugh the Barony of Slate &c. Lord M^cDonald Baron of Slate, is the direct male representative of Reginald.

[66] *i.e.*, rings or bracelets.

[67] *i.e.*, ships.

[68] *i.e.* the sea.

[69] A celebrated adventurer or sea king.

[70] Rudri or Ruari is the Irish abbreviation of Roderic. The person here meant is, no doubt, the second son of King Reginald, & the same who in a donation to the abbey of Sandale, is stiled Rodericus de Kintire filius Reginaldi. This Roderic, it seems, besides Allan & Dougal, had another son Angus M^cRorie, Lord of Bute, whose daughter and heiress Jean was married to Alexander sixth Lord High Steward, Grand father to Robert II. King of Scotland. Robert, A.D. 1400., gave Bute to his son John from whom the present family of Bute is lineally descended.

[71] *i.e.* the Scotch.

[72] *i.e.* the Scotch.

[73] *i.e.* sea.

[74] *i.e.* ships.

[75] Irar. (*orig.*), *i.e.* Irish. As the native Irish had suffer'd so much from the Scandinavians it is improbable they would apply for assistance to the *Siol Lochlin na beum*. We may therefore reasonably conclude that the People here mentioned were the descendants of those Norwegians or Ostmen, who long inhabited the eastern coast of Ireland and founded some of its best towns. A. D. 1201 those Ostmen or Easterlings were still so considerable that, at a recognition taken of the diocese of Limerick, the arbitrators consisted of 12 English, 12 Irish, & 12 Ostmen. Edw. I. gave Gilchrist, William, & John Gilmorys, with other Ostmen in the County of Waterford, peculiar privileges; &, by the rolls of Edw. II. they evidently subsisted, as a distinct people, during the reign of that prince.

[76] Kumr-eyiar (*orig.*), *i.e.* the Islands of the Cumbrians, two small islands to the West of Scotland.

[77] Skipa-fiörd in Islandic, and Loch-Lhong, in Gaelic, signifies the Bay of Ships.

[78] Allan & Dougal his brother were, I imagine, the sons of Rudri (see the note on page 34.) This Allan we may suppose to be the same who, in Rymer's *Fœdera*, is called "Alanus filius Rotherici," & who A. D. 1284 was one of the Barons that engaged to support Margaret of Norway's title to the crown of Scotland. Dugal was probably the predecessor of M^cDougal of Dunoly *i.e.* Olave's tower. The place might receive this name, from having been the residence of Olave, the youngest Son of Somerled thane of Argyle.

[79] To avoid long, or dangerous circumnavigations, it was usual for the antients to draw their light canoes over isthmuses. Among the Greeks such places were termed *διολχοι* *i.e.* dragging-places, and there was a very remarkable one near Corinth. By the Scotch they were called Tarbats, from the Gaelic *tarn* to draw, and *baat* a boat. There was a Tarbat between Loch-Lomond and Loch-Long.

[80] Alwin M^cArkel, as appears from the Chartulary of Glasgow, was created Earl of Levnach by Maol-Coluim III., A. D. 1153.

[81] No doubt the neighbouring inhabitants retired to the isles of Loch-Lomond in times of danger.

[82] *i.e.* Haco.

[83] *i.e.* without an awning.

[84] *i.e.* ships.

[85] *i.e.*, the Scotch.

[86] Kerti-sveina (*orig.*), *i.e.* Inspectors of the Lights, who were to see that the Norwegian palace was properly illuminated. The office corresponded exactly to the Canhowllyd of the Welsh Princes.

[87] In the Fl. Ms. the Norwegians are said to have entered the transport.

[88] Fl. MS., Five hundred.

[89] Perus or Pherus (*orig.*), probably Fergus.

[90] A quotation from Giraldus's account of the Irish will both illustrate this passage & the ancient method of fighting. "Utuntur—securibus quoque amplis, fabrili diligentia optimè chalybatis, quas a Norwegiensibus & Oustmannis sunt mutuati. Unâ tantum manu, & non ambabus, securi percutiunt, pollice desuper manubrium in longum extenso ictu regente, a quo nec galea, caput, in conum erecta, nec reliquum corpus ferrea loricae tricatura tuetur. Unde & in nostris contigit temporibus totam militis coxam ferro utcunque fideliter vestitam, uno securis ictu præcisam fuisse, ex unâ equi parte coxâ cum tibiâ, ex altera verò, corpore cadente moribundo. Lapidibus quoque pugillares, cum alia arma defecerint, hostibus in conflictu damnosissimos, præ alia gente promptius, & expeditius ad manum habent."

[91] Knights at their creation were invested with belts ornamented with gems. See Malmsb., book 2, chap. 6.

[92] A district of Norway.

[93] Melanzeiar (*orig.*). Fl. Ms. Melas eyiar, perhaps the island of Lamlash or Alisa.

[94] Mylar-Kalf (*orig.*). Among the Norwegians a small island adjoining to a greater was called its calf, as the calf of Mull, the calf of Man, &c.

[95] A subdivision of Norway.

[96] Yngua (*orig.*), one of Haco's predecessors.

[97] Hvarf, (*orig.*), signifies an intervening ridge that intercepts the prospect—Farohead.

[98] Gíafiörd (*orig.*) Fl. Ms. Goa-fiörd.

[99] October 28.

[100] Asmundar-vogi (*orig.*), *i.e.*, Asmund's Bay.

[101] Probably some harbour of the Mainland, one of the Orkneys.

[102] A cape of Pomona.

[103] December 13.

[104] *i.e.* Herring bay.

[105] *i.e.* Salmon bay.

[106] March 21.

[107] Here it must be observed that the Norwegian year commenced March 25. So that, according to our reckoning, Haco died in March 1264