*triggws.* However, even in the primitive Scandinavian age the difference between Gothic and Scandinavian is more clearly marked than the resemblance; thus, for example—just to hint only at some of the oldest and most essential differences--Gotb. nom. sing. ending in -*s* corresponds to primitive Scandinavian -αR, -ír (as Goth, *dags,* day, *easts,* guest =Scand. *dagaR, gastiR);* Goth. gen. sing. in *-is* to Scand. *-as* (as Goth. *dagis,* day’s =Scand. *dagas);* Goth. dat. sing. in *-a* to Scand. *-e* (as Goth. *kaurna,* corn = Scand. *kurne);* Goth. 1st pers. sing. pret. in *-da* to Scand. *-do* (as Goth. *tawida,* did = Scand. *tawido).*

Already before the beginning of the so-called Viking period (since about a.d. 800) the primitive Scandinavian language had undergone a considerable transformation, as is proved, for example, by the remarkable runic stone at Istaby in the south of Sweden, with the inscription (about

a.d. 650) :—

afAtr hariwulAfA haPUwulAfR haeruwulAfiR w£rait t RUNaR hAIAK;

Engl.: In memory of HariwulfR, HapuwulfR, son of HeruwulfR, wrote these runes.

Here, *e.g.* we find nom. sing. in -*a*R changed into -r (cf. *hαpuwulafR* with *holtingaR* on the golden horn), and the plural ending -or into -*a*R (cf. *runaR* with *runoR* on the Järsberg-stone). At the beginning of the Viking period the Scandinavian language seems to have under­gone an extraordinarily rapid development, which almost com­pletely transformed its character. This change is especially noticeable in the dropping of unaccented vowels, and in the introduction of a certain vowel harmony of different kinds ( *Umlaut,* vowel changes, caused by a following *i* (j) or *u* (w), as *kwctäi* for *kwäiïi,* poem, and “ Brechung,” as *healpa* instead of *helpa* to help), different assimila­tions of consonants (as *ll, nn* for *lp,* *np*; *ll, nn, rr* and *ss* for *lR, nR, rR* and sr), dropping of *w* before *o* and *u* (as *or$, ulfr* for *wor8,* word, *wulfR,* wolf)( simplified inflection of the verbs, a new passive formed by means of affixing the reflexive pronoun *sik* or *seR* to the active form (as *kalla-sk, kalla-ss,* to call one's self, to be called), &c.

At this epoch, therefore, the primitive Scandinavian language must be considered as no longer existing. The centuries a.d. 700-1000 form a period of transition as regards the language as well as the alphabet which it employed. We possess some inscriptions belonging to this period in which the old runic alphabet of twenty-four characters is still used, and the language of which closely resembles that of the primitive Scandinavian monuments, as, for example, those on the stones of Stentoften (about 700) and Björketorp (about 750), both from southern Sweden, being the longest inscriptions yet found with the old runic alphabet. On the other hand, inscriptions have come down to us dating from about a.d. 800, in which the later and exclusively Scandinavian alphabet of sixteen characters has almost completely superseded the earlier alphabet from which it was developed, while the language not only differs widely from the original Scandinavian, but also exhibits dialectical peculiarities suggesting the existence of a Danish-Swedish language as opposed to Norwegian, as the form *ruulf* on the stone at *Flemlöse* in Denmark, which in a Norwegian inscription would have been written *hruulf* corresponding to *Hrolf* in Old Norwegian literature. These differences, however, are still unimportant, and the Scandinavians still considered their language as one and the same throughout Scandinavia, and named it *Dqnsk tunga,* Danish tongue. But when Iceland was colonized (c. 900), chiefly from western Norway, a separate (western) Norwegian dialect gradually sprang up, at first of course only differing slightly from the mother-tongue. It was not until the definitive introduction of Christianity (about a.d. 10∞) that the language was so far differentiated as to enable us to distinguish, in runic inscriptions and in the literature which was then arising, four different dialects, which have ever since existed as the four literary languages—Icelandic, Norwegian, Swedish and Danish. Of these the latter two, often comprehended within the name of *Eastern Scandinavian,* as well as the former two, *Western Scandinavian,* or, to use the Old Scandinavians’ own name, *Norrßnt mäl,* Northern tongue, are very nearly related to each other. The most important differences between the two branches, as seen in the oldest preserved documents, are the following: (1) In. E. Scand. far fewer cases of “ Umlaut,” as *väre,* W. Scand. voére, were; *land,* W. Scand. *land* (from *landu),* lands; (2) E. Scand. “ Brechung ” of *y* into *iu* (or *io)* before

ng (w), n*k (w),* as *siunga,* W. Scand. *syngua* (from *singwa),* to sing; (3) in E. Scand. *mp, nk, nt* are in many cases not assimilated into *pp, kk, tt,* as *krumpin,* W. Scand. *kroppenn,* shrunken; oe*nkia,* W. Scand. *ekkìa,* widow; *bant,* W. Scand. *batt,* he bound; (4) in E. Scand. the dative of the definite plural ends in *-umin* instead of W. Scand. *-onom,* as in *handumin, hqndonom,* (to) the hands; (5) in. E. Scand. the simplification of the verbal inflectional endings is far further advanced, and the passive ends in *-s(s)* for *-sk,* as in *kallas(s),* W. Scand. *kallask,* to be called. In several of these points, and indeed generally speaking, the Western Scandinavian languages have preserved the more primitive forms, which also are found in the oldest Eastern Scandinavian runic inscriptions, dating from a period before the beginning of the literature, as well as in many modern Eastern Scandinavian dialects. For, having regard to the Scandinavian dialects generally, we must adopt quite a different classification from that indicated by the dialects which are represented in the literature. We now pass on to review the latter and their history.

I. Icelandic.—In ancient times Icelandic was by far the most important of the Scandinavian languages, in form as well as in literature. To avoid ambiguity, the language before the Reformation (about 1530) is often called Old Icelandic.

I. *Old Icelandic* was spoken not only in Iceland, but also in Greenland, where, as already mentioned, Icelandic colonists lived for a lengthened period. Our knowledge of its character is almost exclusively derived from the remarkably voluminous literature,@@1 dating from the first half of the 12th century, and written in the Latin alphabet, adapted to the special requirements of this language. No traces are found of any older runic literature. Indeed, Old Icelandic possesses only very few runic monuments (about forty-five), all of them almost worthless from a philological point of view. The oldest, the inscriptions on the church door of Valpjófstaîíur, and that of a tombstone at HjarSarholt, date from the beginning of the 13th century, and they are consequently later than the oldest preserved manuscripts@@2 in the Latin alphabet, some of whiçh are as old as the last half of the 12th century. A small fragment (Cod. AM. 237, fob) of a *Book of Homilies* (of which a short specimen is given below) is considered the oldest of all. About contemporary with this is the oldest part of an inventory entitled *Reykfaholts mdldagi.* From the end of the 12th century we possess a fragment (Cod. Reg. old sign. 1812) of the only existing Old lcelandic *glossary,* and from the first years of the 13th century the *Stockholm Book of Homilies* (Cod. Holm. 15, 4to), which from a philological point of view is of the greatest importance, chiefly on account of its very accurate orthography, which is especially noticeable in the indication of quantity; from the early part of the same century comes the fragment (Cod. AM. 325, *2,*4to) entitled *Ágríp* (“ abridgment ” of the history of Norway), probably a copy of a Norwegian original, also orthographically important. Among later manuscripts we may mention, as philologically interesting, the *Annales Regii* (Cod. Reg. 2087) from the beginning of the 14th century, orthographically of great value; the rich manuscript of miscellanies,*Hauksbok* (Codd. AM. 371,544,675,4to), a great part of which is written with Haukr Erlendsson’s (d. 1334) own hand; and, above all, three short essays, in which some Icelanders have tried to write a grammatical and orthographical treatise on their own mother-tongue, all three appearing as an appendix to the manuscripts of the *Prose Edda.* The oldest and most important of these essays (preserved in the Cod. Worm. from the last half of the 14th century) is by an unknown author of about 1140, the second (the oldest known manuscript of which is preserved in the Cod. Uρs., *c.* 1300) is by an unknown author of about 1250; the third (the oldest manuscript in Cod. AM. 748, 4to, of the beginning of the 14th century) is by Snorri’s nephew Olafr Hvítaskáld (d. 1259), and is no doubt based partly upon a lost work of the first grammarian of lceland, póroddr Rúnameistarî (who flourished at the beginning of the 12th century), partly and chiefly upon Priscian and Donatus.@@3

@@@1 A complete catalogue of the literature edited hitherto is given by Th. Möbius, *Catalogue Librorum Islandicorum et Norvegicorum Aetatis Mediae* (1856), and *Verzeichniss der . . . altisländischen und altnorwegischen . . . von 1855 bis 1870 erschienenen Schriften* (1880). Cf. ICELAND.

@@@2 An account of the oldest Icelandic manuscripts (to about 1230) is given by J. Hoffory in the *Gött. Gel. Anz.* (1884), p. 478 sq.

@@@3 A short review of the most important Old Icelandic manuscripts (and their editions), classed according to subjects, is given by O. Brenner, *Altnordisches Handbuch,* pp. 13 sq. The principal collections of manuscripts are—(1) the Arnamagnaean (AM.) in Copenhagen, founded by Arni Magnússon (d. 1730) ; (2) the collection of the Royal Library (Reg.) in Copenhagen, founded by T. Torfaeus