day ; but Finn. *armas* = Goth, *arms,* poor). On the other hand, in all essential matters it is much earlier in character than the language of contemporary Gothic manuscripts, and no doubt approaches more nearly than any Germanic idiom the primitive form of the Germanic tongue. For the sake of comparison, we give a Gothic translation of one of the oldest of the primitive Scandinavian inscriptions, that on the golden horn of *Gallehus,* found on the Danish- German frontier, and dating from about 400 a.d. :—

Scand.: ek hlewagasti*R* holtinga*R*. horna. tawido ; Goth.: *ik hliugasts. hultiggs. haurn. tawida;*

Engl.: I, HlewagastiR, son of Holta, made the horn ; as well as the inscription on the stone-monument of *Järsbärg* in western Sweden, which is at least a hundred years later:—

Scand. : UBA.*R* HITE. HARABANA.*R* WIT IAH EK ERILA*R* RUNO*R* waritu ;

Goth. : *ufar hita, hrabns wit jah ik airils rûnôs writu;*

Engl. : In memory of HitaR. We both, HarabanaR and I ErrlaR, wrote the runes.

Although very brief, and not yet thoroughly inter­preted, @@1 these primitive Scandinavian inscriptions are nevertheless sufficient to enable us to determine with some certainty the relation which the language in which they are written bears to other languages. Thus it is proved that it belongs to the Germanic family of the Indo-Euro­pean stock of languages, of which it constitutes an inde­pendent and individual branch. Its nearest relation being the Gothic, these two branches are sometimes taken together under the general denomination *Eastern Germanic,* as opposed to the other Germanic idioms (German, English, Dutch, &c.), which are then called *Western Germanic.* The most essential point of correspondence between the Gothic and Scandinavian branches is the insertion in certain cases of *gg* before *w* and *j (ggj* in Gothic was changed into *ddj),* as in gen. plur. O. H. G. *zweiio,* O. Engl, *tivega* (two), compared with O. Icel., 0. Norw. *tveggja,* O. Sw., O. Dan. *tviggjse,* Goth, *twaddje;* and, still, in Germ, *treu,* Engl, *true,* compared with Sw., Norw., Dan. *trygg,* Icel. *tryggr,* Goth, *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—Goth. nom. sing, ending in -a corresponds to primitive Scandinavian -ar, *-iR* (as Goth, *dags,* day, *gasts,* 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. *kume)*; Goth. 1st pers. sing. pret. in *-da* to Scand. *-do* (as Goth, *taurida,* did = Scand. *tawido).*

As early as the beginning of the so-called later Iron Age (about 700 a.d.) 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—

AFATR HARIWULAFA HAPUWULAFR HAERUWULAFIR waRAIT RUNA.R pAIA.R ;

Engl.: In memory of HariwulfR, HaJrawulfR, son of HeruwulfK, wrote these runes.

Here, *e.g.,* we find nom. sing. in -ar changed into *-r (cf. hapuwulafs* with *holtingas* on the golden horn), and the plural ending -or into -*a*r *(cf. runas* with *runos* on the Järsbärg-stone). At the beginning of the so-called Viking Period (about 800 a.d.) the Scandinavian language seems to have undergone an extraordinarily rapid development, which in a comparatively short time 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 *kvoeði* for *kwáði,* poem, and “ Brechung”, as *healpa* instead of *helpa,* to help), different assimilations of conson­ants (as *ll, nn* for *l*p, *np; ll, nn, rr,* and ss for *ls, ns, rs,* and sr), dropping of *w* before *o* and *u* (as *orið, ulfr* for *worð* word, *wulfs,* wolf), simplified inflexion of the verbs, a new passive formed by means of affixing the reflexive pronoun *sik* to the active form (as *kalla-sk,* 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 next two centuries 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* and *Björketorp,* both from southern Sweden, probably dating from the 10th century, and being the longest inscriptions yet found with the old runic alphabet. On the other hand, inscrip­tions have come down to us dating from about the middle of the 9th century, 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 unimportant, and the Scandinavians still considered their language as one and the same throughout Scandinavia, and named it *Donsk tunga,* Danish tongue. But when Iceland was colonized at the end of the 9th and the beginning of the 10th century, 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 introduction of Christianity (about 1000 a.d.) 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, *Norrϕnt mál,* 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 *vári,* W. Scand. *vaeri,* were *; land,* W. Scand. *lond* (from *landu),* lands; (2) E. Scand. “Brechung” of *i* into *iu* (or to) before *ng(w), nk(w),* as *siungse,* W. Scand. *syngva* (from *singwa),* to sing; (3) in E. Scand. *mp, nk, nt* are in many cases not assimilated into *pp, kk, tt,* as *krumpen,* W. Scand. *kroppenn,* shrunken ; a*enkiae,* W. Scand. *ekkja,* widow; *bant,* W. Scand. *bait,* he bound; (4) in E. Scand. the dative of the definite plural ends in *-omen* instead of W. Scand. *-onom,* as in *handomen, hondonom,* (to) the hands; (5) in E. Scand. the simplification of the verbal inflexional endings is far further advanced, and the passive ends in -s for *-sk,* as in *kallaes,* 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, as may be seen in the

@@@1 For the interpretations we are principally indebted to Prof. S. Bugge’s ingenious investigations, who in 1865 satisfactorily suc- ceeded in deciphering the inscription of the golden horn, and by this means gained a fixed starting-point for further researches. A short review of their most important results is given by F. Burg, *Die alteren Nordischen Runeninschriften,* 1885.