

Scandinavian Relations with Ireland during the Viking Period.

CHAPTER I.

THE VIKINGS IN IRELAND (795-1014).

THE Vikings made their first appearance¹ on the Irish coasts in 795 A.D., when they plundered and burned the church on Recru, or Lambay Island, near Dublin. During the next ten or twelve years Ireland seems to have been almost free from further attacks, but in 807 they descended on Inis Murray, off the Sligo coast, and from there made their way inland to Roscommon.² After that the raids ceased for a few years, then began again with renewed vigour on Connacht and Munster, on some of the inland counties of Leinster, and on several places along the east coast.³

The arrival of Turgeis⁴ (O.N. Thorgestr) in Armagh, about 832, marks a new phase of the invasions. Hitherto the Vikings had come in isolated parties solely for purposes

¹ Zimmer was of the opinion that the Norsemen made their way to Ireland as early as the seventh century. He bases his theory on an entry in the *Annals of Ulster* and in certain other Irish annals (under the year 617) recording "the devastation of Tory Island by a marine fleet." (*über die frühesten Berührungen der Iren mit den Nordgermanen*, p. 279 ff. in *Sitzungsberichte der kgl. preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften*. 1891. Bd. I., pp. 279-317.) But this attack is likely to have been due to Saxon or Pictish raiders rather than to the Norsemen.

² *Annals of the Four Masters*, A.D. 807.

³ *Annals of Ulster*, A.D. 811, 820-824, 827, 830.

⁴ Some writers would identify Turgeis with Thorgils, son of Harold Fairhair, who with his brother Frothi went on a viking expedition to Ireland. They captured Dublin, and Thorgils reigned there for a long time as king. In the end, however, he was betrayed by the