

their death" says the *Landnámabók*, "but their families did not always retain the faith, for some of their sons erected temples and offered sacrifices, and the land was wholly heathen for nearly one hundred and twenty years."¹

In the transition from heathenism to Christianity opposing beliefs were sometimes held at the same time; the Viking continued to have recourse to Thor even after he had been baptized. Helgi the Lean, son of Eyvindr the Easterner, and Rafarta, daughter of King Cearbhall of Ossory, "was very mixed in his faith; he believed in Christ, but he invoked Thor for seafaring and brave deeds. When he came in sight of Iceland he asked Thor where he should settle down;" and when he had built his house, "he made a large fire near every lake and river, thus sanctifying all the land between. . . . Helgi believed in Christ, and therefore named his house after Him."² We also read that "Örlygr the Old and his family trusted in Columba,"³ but whether they abandoned all other belief in the Christian faith and fell into Paganism is not quite clear. Again, in the account of the naval battle between Danes and Norsemen in Carlingford Lough (A.D. 852) the annalist describes how "Lord Horn," leader of the Danish forces, advised his men to "pray fervently" to St. Patrick, "the archbishop and head of the saints of Erin," whose churches and monasteries the Norsemen had plundered and burned. So the Danes put themselves under the protection of the saint: "Let our protector," they cried, "be the holy Patrick and the God who is lord over him also, and let our spoils and our wealth be given to his church." After the battle ambassadors from the *árd-ví* found the Danes seated round a great fire, cooking their food in cauldrons—which

¹ *Landnámabók*, V., ch. 15.

² *Ib.*, III., ch. 12.

³ *Ib.*, I., ch. 12.