

all kinds of amusements, such as dancing, wrestling and story-telling. . . . Hrólfr of Skalmarnes told a story about Hrongvithr the Viking, and Olaf 'the sailor's king,' and about the rifling of the barrow of Thrainn the berserkr, and about Hrómundr Gripsson, and he included many verses in his story. King Sverrir used to be entertained with this story, and he declared that fictitious stories like these were the most entertaining of any ; and yet there are men who can trace their ancestry to Hrómundr Gripsson. Hrólfr had put this saga together. Ingimundr the priest told the story of Ormr, the poet of Barrey and included many verses in it, besides a good poem which Ingimundr had composed, therefore many learned men regard this saga as true."¹

The former of these stories is the *Hrómundra Saga* which belongs to the class commonly called *Fornaldar Sögur*.²

Still further back in the reign of Harald Hardradith (1047-1066) we have a most important allusion to the art of story-telling. According to the saga³ a young Icelander came one summer to King Harald seeking his protection. The king received him into his court on the understanding that he should entertain the household during the winter. He soon became very popular, and received gifts from members of the household and from the king himself. Just before Christmas the king noticed that the Icelander seemed dejected, and he asked the reason. The Icelander replied that it was because of his 'uncertain temper.'

"That is not so," said the king. . . . "I think your stock of sagas must be exhausted, because you have entertained us all through the winter, whenever you were called upon

¹ *Thorgil's Saga ok Hafliitha (Sturlunga Saga, Vol. I., p. 19).*

² *Fornaldar Sögur, Vol. II., p. 323.*

³ *Harald's Hardrada Saga, ch. 99 (Fornmanna Sögur, VI., pp. 354-356).*