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## Scandinavian Britain

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and *Annales Cambriæ*, and by stray facts and names from other Welsh sources. To these must be added the Latin *Chronicle of Man*.

First at the head of *Scandinavian* authorities stands Are the historian, whose works—the *Book of the Settlements in Iceland*,<sup>1</sup> the *Libellus Islandorum* (a sketch of early Icelandic history), and *Book of the Kings of Norway* (which we have as edited by Snorre Sturlason in the thirteenth century), with many memoranda from other of his writings no longer extant—give the best and fullest information on the condition of heathen Norway, and on the fortunes and deeds of such of the emigrants therefrom, as finally, after years of foray and conquest in the British Islands, passed on to the new-found and uninhabited shores of the Faroes, Iceland, and Greenland. The history of King Half and some of the family Sagas of Iceland, give what is probably independent information. But on this side we should get an incomplete notion of those wickings, or sea-rovers, whose exploits helped to make our history, without the help of the so-called Eddic poems, a series of epic and dramatic lays, chiefly of the ninth and tenth centuries, many of which were, we may confidently hold, composed within the four seas, and no doubt reflect accurately the spirit of the very men that first made and heard them, the conquering Scandinavian settlers in Great Britain or Gaul. Among these there are found in the MS. that has luckily preserved much of them to us, a poem or two, the earliest, that we may ascribe to the

<sup>1</sup> See *Origines Islandicæ*, Vigfusson and Powell [1906].