

and vast industry served him well; the Dane, Steenstrup, whose scientific method and trained skill and patience have helped him to unravel many an enigma that puzzled his predecessors; Freeman, the Englishman, who has taught a generation of his countrymen the way to learn what may be learnt from the past; and the Icelander, Gudbrand Vigfusson, who, possessing an unrivalled knowledge of Icelandic MSS., and giving unflinching devotion to his work, has been able in every branch of old Northern learning, from chronology to metric, to do more to advance our knowledge of this great Scandinavian exodus than any man of his time.

Among other historical workers who have attacked various sides of the subject, and who should justly be referred to here, are—Dr. Jessen, Dr. Storm, Mr. [Sir H.] Howorth, the historian of the Mongols, and J. R. Green, who gave the last few hours of his short life to an eager and undaunted study of the subject which he never lived to complete, but which remains as a piece of suggestive, if necessarily imperfect work.

Such being the materials upon which this little book is based, it remains to fix its scope and aims. Beginning with a sketch of the conditions amid which the migrations took place, and an endeavour to grasp their character and origin, it will then seek if possible to follow the several phases and phenomena of the various migrations and settlements that affected the British Islands, and finally try to weigh the results and effects of those settlements.