

III. THE WICKING FLEETS

Thou Sea that pickest and cullest the race in time, and unitest nations,
Suckled by thee, old husky nurse, embodying thee
Indomitable, untamed as thee.

THE development of national life in Norway, consequent on the increase of trade and population, by the end of the eighth century is shown by the growth of tribal leagues, and by the increased appreciation of common laws and common peace over large areas that rendered possible the career of the lawyer king, Halfdan the Black, who succeeded in establishing a kind of imperial sway over a broad territory, hitherto parcelled out under small tribal kings. But for our present purpose the points to dwell on are the *improvement of the ship and war organisation.*

The earlier Swedish graven stones, and earlier boat-shaped, stone-marked graves, show that, as Tacitus tells from the report of some Teuton traveller or captive of his day, the *Suiones* [Swedes] had fleets of boats, with prows at either end, but without sails or regular row of oars. These were long canoes probably shaped of wood and skin-covered wattle, and moved by paddles. But the Ueneti of Brittany, at least as early as 60 B.C., had already, helped no doubt by seeing some foreign models (possibly Carthaginian galleys), got to building vessels that would stand the rough weather of the Atlantic, and