

men, one from each household, were ready for the levy; the force thus raised was called in the North *here* (host), and the district *heradh* (host-district). Of course, in great emergencies for defensive purposes, a *full levy*—the whole male population between sixteen and sixty, and all horses over two years old—might be called out, but such occasions were rare. In general the ordinary *levy* sufficed for all offensive or defensive purposes. The men composing it were armed with sword and spear, and such as had metal head-pieces or mail-coats wore them. The axe was carried more for work than for war, the sword being the chief weapon in close fight; the bow is spoken of in the poems, but more as a weapon of the enemy than of the Northman. The spear-shaft was ash, the sword iron or bronze, the shield wood or wicker strengthened with metal and leather, the bow of yew or elm. Stones were greatly used in warfare, and as a boat's ballast was largely made up of stones, they were to hand in such sea fights as Hafrsfirth, c. 890.

Any one who knows one of our larger fishing ports will have a better idea of the organisation, composition, and character of a wicking fleet than aught else could give him. The preparation of gear, clothes, stores; the overhauling of the craft, hull, sails, rigging; the making up of the crews, the final sailing with a fair breeze, the whole place emptied of its young and middle-aged men for the two or three months that the cruise lasts; the home-coming, the rejoicing, the burst of trade, the influx of riches, won