

seems to me that our priesthood will be best looked after by being longest in thy hands ; and I should like no one better to have it than thee, for thou hast many things to make thee a man above all of us brothers, whereas I have not made up my mind as to what I shall do with myself as at this time. Thou knowest, kinsman, that I have meddled in few things since I came to Iceland. I shall see what my counsels are held worth, for now I have pleaded this cause all I can at present. May be that Thorkell Leppr may come forward hereafter in such a manner as that his words may be held of greater account." Thorgeirr answered : " I see now, kinsman, how the matter stands, that thou art not pleased, which I cannot bear to think of, so we will lend these men our assistance if it be thy will, whatsoever end the affair may have." Thorkell answered : " Therefore I asked that it is my pleasure that the request be granted." " What do these men consider themselves able to do ? " says Thorgeirr, " so that thereby the success of their case may be better insured ? " " As I said before to-day," said Sámr, " we want the assistance of chieftains, but the pleading of the case is in my hand." Thorgeirr said that it was then for him to show what he was good for : " And now the thing to be done is to start the suit in the most correct manner. But methinks it is Thorkell's will that you come to meet him before judgment fall ; and then ye will have something for your pertinacity—either some comfort, or otherwise a humiliation still greater than before, and grief and heartburn. Now go ye home and be merry, for if ye are to strive with Hrafnkell it behoves you to bear yourselves well and straightly for a while. But let no man be told that we have promised you any support." Now they went home to their booth and bore themselves right merrily. People wondered much at this, how they had so suddenly come to change their mind, seeing how down-cast they were when they went away. And now they sit quietly until the time when judgments were to be passed. Then Sámr called together his men and went to the Mount of Laws, where the court was set. Then Sámr came boldly forth to the court ; calling witnesses forthwith, he pleaded his cause in a manner good in law against Hrafnkell the priest, without making mistakes and with a frank and fearless manner of pleading. Then came up the sons of Thjóstar with a large following of men, all men from the west country joining them, whereby it was seen how well befriended the sons of Thjóstar were. Sámr pleaded the cause unto judgment, until Hrafnkell was called upon to defend, or then he who should be there present who should come forward to keep up law defence for him, according as might be good and right in law. Sámr's pleading was received with good cheer, and the question was put whether no one would bring forward a lawful defence on behalf of Hrafnkell. People rushed to the booth of Hrafnkell and told him what was doing. He started quickly, calling together his men, and went to the court, thinking that there would be but a poor " defence of the coast," and thinking in his mind how he should make small men loth to set up cases against him ; and was minded to