

refused all assistance to them, even those upon whose help they had counted most.

It so fell early one morning, that the old carl Thorbjörn was awake ; he roused Sámr from his sleep and bade him stand up, "for now it behoves not to slumber." Sámr stood up and put on his raiment. They went abroad, walking down to Öxará below the bridge, where they washed themselves. Thorbjörn spake to Sámr, "It is my counsel now, that thou cause our horses to be driven up, and that we get ready to return home, for it is easy to see that here nothing is awaiting us but utter shame." Sámr answered : "That is well enough, since thou wouldst hear of nothing but striving with Hrafnkell, and didst not choose to accept offers that many a man, who had lost a near kinsman, would have been fain to take. With hard reproaches thou didst egg on my mind, doing the same to others, who were not willing to enter the case with thee. But as for me I shall never give in, until I deem that all hope is past of my ever being able to bring things further about." This came so close home to Thorbjörn, that he wept. Then they saw how, on the western side of the river, only a bit further down than where they were sitting, five men walk together out of a certain booth. He who was at the head of them, and walked abreast of them, was a tall man, not of a stout build to look at, arrayed in a leaf-green kirtle, in his hand a sword ornamented ; a straight-faced man he was, and ruddy of hue, and of a goodly presence, light-auburn of hair, which was fast growing hoary. This was a man easy to know, as he had a light lock in his hair on the left side. Then Sámr spake : "Stand we up, and go we west across the river to meet these men." Now they went down along the river, and the leader of those men is the first to greet them, asking them who they were, to which they answered as asked. Sámr asked this man for his name ; he said he was named Thorkell, and was the son of Thjostar. Sámr asked where his family was, and where he had got a home. The other said he was a West-firther by kin and origin, and that his abode was in Thorskafjörðr. Questioned Sámr : "Art thou a man of a priesthood ?" "Far from it," said the other. "Art thou a bonder then ?" said Sámr. He said that was not so. Sámr asked : "What of a man art thou then ?" He answered : "I am only a country tramp. I came out here last summer, having been for seven winters abroad, having fared all the way to Constantinople, being now a henchman of the King of the Greeks, and at this time staying with my brother, whose name is Thorgeirr." "Is he a man of a priesthood ?" said Sámr. Thorkell answered : "A man of a priesthood he is indeed, both in Thorskafjörðr and wide about elsewhere in the West-firths." "Is he here at the Þing ?" said Sámr. "To be sure," said Thorkell. "How many men has he got with him ?" said Sámr. "About seventy men," said Thorkell. "Are there more of ye brothers ?" said Sámr. "A third one still," says Thorkell. "Who is he ?" says Sámr. "He is hight Thormóðr," says Thorkell, "and dwells at Garðar on