

yards, and crosses made of the wood were commonly worn.

Their spells were vain. The hags returned
To the queen in sorrowful mood,
Crying that witches have no power
Where there is rowan tree wood.
(*The Laidley Worm of Spindleston Heughs.*)

MYRTLE. Some northern nations use it instead of hops. The catkins, boiled in water, throw up a waxy scum, of which candles are made by Dutch boers. Hottentots (according to Thunberg) make a cheese of it. Myrtle tan is good for tanning calf-skins.

Laid under a bed, it keeps off fleas and moths.

COLUMBUS AND HIS BONES.

The Spanish it seems are anxious that the dust of the Italian Colon, whom we know best by the Latinized form, Columbus, of his name, should not pass with the rest of the soil of Cuba into the hands of an English-speaking race. They need not be so particular; when we get the Cubans once to washing themselves, American fashion, we shall restore not that quantity, but whole acres, of good earth to legitimate agricultural uses; but are we especially interested in the relics of that explorer? He was not one of our race; an Italian is no more akin to the Americans than a Turk or a Malay; he was not the first European to discover America; and he was not looking for America when he did come to it, but on the contrary was trying to steer clear of it.

The beginners of the America in whose future we believe, were those English men and women, who, after a sojourn in Holland, brought the mixed fruits of those countries across the ocean in 1620 and the years following; but in the matter of discovery, those same Scandinavians to whom so many lines lead us back were before Columbus by 500 years. In the lake-front park in Milwaukee stands a statue of a Norse pirate; he has his back to Lake Michigan, as if, like a true Scandinavian, he suspected there was something more to his taste than water in the neighborhood; he is Leif, son of Eirik the Red, who in the year 1000 or 1001 sailed from the Norwegian settlements in Greenland to find a country his father's friends had told him of, and built a camp, there is hardly room to doubt, on the coast of Massachusetts; which camp was visited occasionally for years thereafter by Norwegian parties, and at least one child was born there, from whom the sculptor Thorvaldsen claimed descent.

Nothing came of this, for the reason apparently that the Norwegians saw no profit in sailing to such a place as New England, where nothing but furs, timber and wild fruits could be got from the natives, at a time when their kinsfolk were taking possession of rich countries like Normandy and the British Isles. But their knowledge was not hidden under a bushel; it was no doubt com-

mon information to the seamen of the day, though no written testimony to that effect seems to remain; and it is reasonably certain that Columbus visited Iceland in 1477, when he could hardly have failed to learn what there was to be learned on the subject.

When Columbus sailed from Cadiz in 1492, he was simply in search of Japan, which an Italian scientist had convinced him he could reach, as appears by a map still in existence; the course he took was intended to carry him well to the south of the savage land the Northmen had told him of; and he would no doubt have been greatly disappointed if he had known that it was that same land that he found lying across his path.

After him came the Spanish; continent, islands and ocean were all Spain's for a time, and nothing more was heard of the Norsemen until their English-speaking descendants began their restless movement. If they had only smelt out the rich lands that lay to the southward, they would not have stopped with Massachusetts, and the face of the world would be different today.

It is not generally known that the roundness of the earth, with its consequences, were matter of common rumor among sea-faring men long before Columbus' day. A century and a half before him, an English traveler, Sir John Maundeville, set down in the book of his adventures how, having been so far north that the "Lode S'erre" rose to the altitude of 62 degrees, and so far south that the "Sterre Antartyk" was 33 degrees high, he argued that he had seen more than three-quarters of the firmament, which must therefore, with the earth beneath it, be round; and he takes much pains to refute the natural objection, that if this were so, men on the under side would fall off.

He also tells the following most curious story, which he says he had heard when he was young; about the year 1300, therefore; and which we give, with few changes, in his own 500-year old English, which is by no means hard to understand:

"A worthi man departed somtyme from oure Contrees, for to go serche the World. And so he passed Ynde (India) and the Yles beyonde Ynde, where ben mo than 5000 Yles; and so longe he wente be See and Lond, and so envi-round the World be many seysons, that he found an Yle, where he herde speke his owne Langage, callynge on Oxen in the Plowghe, suche Wordes as men speken to Bestes in his owne Contree: whereof he hadde gret Mervayle: for he knewe not how it myghte be. But I seye, that he had gon so longe, be Londe and be See, that he had envyround alle the Erthe, that he was comen ayen goynge aboute unto his owne Marches, yif he wolde have passed forthe. But he turned ayen from thens, from whens he was come fro; and so he lost moche peynefulle labour, as him selfe seyde, a

gret while aftre that he was comen hom. For it befelle aftre, that he wente in to Norweye; and there Tempest of the See toke him; and he arrived in an Yle, and when he was in that Yle, he knew well, that it was the Yle, where he had herde speak his owne Langage before, and the callynge of the Oxen at the Plowghe: and that was possible thinge."

A French scientist has formulated a plan for extending the American system of "standard time" throughout the world. The editor of the Literary Digest, commenting on this idea, says "our trial of the plan in this country has relieved us of such a vast amount of confusion that, so far as we know, it has not a single opponent among us."

Unless it has lately changed again, the state of Michigan is still in the enjoyment of multiple standards of time, each town going by that of its own meridian. The Michigan legislature made "central standard" legal time when the system was first generally adopted, about 1884; but after a trial of a year or two it rescinded this action and went back to first principles. It was a curious thing to see. People thought it all right for the railroads to use uniform time if they chose, but could see no reason for changing their own clocks to correspond; and many laboring-men believed it a scheme to defraud them of a half hour's labor. So that, while in other parts of the country young people have already grown up without knowing of any such thing as difference in time, in Michigan you must still change your watch a second for every three hundred yards you go eastward or westward.

Our new city of Santiago is only one of many Santiagos which the pious Spanish adventurers of the sixteenth century left scattered over the map. Saint Jago is no other than Saint James, whose name in the oldest writings appears as Iakobos, and the Spanish form has held closer to it than the English. There is nothing in the Bible to indicate that he was other than a most peaceable saint, but it appears that during the middle ages he had quite a taste for the slaughter of Americans. He is the patron saint of Spain, and whenever the conquistadores found themselves in a tight place, in Mexico or Peru, all at once they would see Saint James, in Spanish armor, on a white horse, with a big sword, killing natives to beat the band. Then they would win a victory, and afterwards they would name a town for the saint.

J. Sterling Morton's new paper THE CONSERVATIVE, published at Nebraska City, has made its appearance. It is for sound money and also advances other more or less sound ideas. Mr. Morton's name as editor gives assurance that THE CONSERVATIVE will be worth reading. It is an interesting publication.—Dakota County Record.