

from Norway. Ten of them died on the voyage, but from the three that lived have come the vast herds that now roam over the island. The people, however, have made no attempt to domesticate them, and they are considered as more of a nuisance than otherwise, as they eat the moss which the peasant would prefer to save for his own use. The principle domestic animals, and chief wealth of the Islander, are a small kind of horse, sheep, and cattle. The sheep and cattle are housed and fed during the winter; but the horses are turned loose to browse on such roots and moss as they may be able to grub up from under the snow.

But while Iceland has only a few native species of animals, it has over a hundred species of birds. Of these, the eider duck is the most numerous and valuable. Its favorite places of resort are the numerous small islands along the shores of the mainland, where it gathers to build its nest, which it lines with a soft down from its own body. This down is worth from twelve to fifteen shillings per pound, and forms a most valuable article for exportation. Besides the eider-duck, some of the most numerous kinds of birds are the wild-swan, raven, plover and jyr-falcon. The cod, maddock, herring, and salmon fisheries constitute the chief wealth of Iceland. For they not only furnish the chief article of exportation, and occupy the attention of one-half the male population, but also annually attract three and four hundred foreign vessels to the island.

The mineral kingdom contributes little to the prosperity of the country. Sulphur is found, but in too limited quantities for profitable working, and but very little is exported.

The only considerable town of the island is Reykjavik, the capital. This place has a population of about 14,000, and owes its present prosperity to its excellent harbor and the fisheries in its vicinity. An annual fair is held here in the month of July, when the inhabitants from the surrounding country flock to the town to ex-

hibit their wares and barter with Danish merchants. A public library consisting of 12,000 volumes was established at this place. Books from this library are lent out, often for many months, to the inhabitants of remote districts who may be too poor to purchase them for themselves. The Icelanders are fond of literature, and as a race are as highly cultured as any other people. They are especially fond of the classics, and it not unfrequently happens that the traveller is addressed in Latin by his host, or even his peasant guide. Too poor to be constantly increasing his own stock of books, the Icelanders has resorted to a method by which he may obtain for a time those of his neighbors. When he goes to church on Sunday morning he takes a few of his own choice volumes under his arm, and from those which his neighbors bring he makes his selections and then exchanges. If in this way he gets a volume which he deems particularly valuable, he copies the entire work, and thus not only adds to his own library, but to his own mental discipline and culture.

After the fair at Reykjavik is over, the farmer sets about hay-making, which with him is the most important business of the year. This work is carried on when the weather will permit, during the whole twenty-four hours of the day. After it is cut, it is bound up, loaded on the backs of ponies, and carried to rude earthen houses, where it is stored away for winter use. When the hay crop has been taken care of, the farmer treats his family and laborers to a festive supper, and a day is spent in jollity and sport. There is little after this to be done out of doors: for dreary winter soon sets in with his storms and darkness, and the Icelanders are obliged to pass a large part of his time in his hut—a rude structure of earth and stone, and very poorly lighted and ventilated. Dark covered passages connect it with the smithy, storeroom, cow-shed and other out door buildings, whose filthy odors render the atmosphere of this subterranean