Amidst the present world crisis the people of Iceland have celebrated the septcentenary of the death of their most famous writer of all ages, SNORRI STURLUSON, killed on the 23rd of September 1241.

SNORRI was a versatile genius. He was the foremost poet of his times, and has composed a treatise on the art of poetry, the *Edda*. This unique work not only contains sections on the secrets of style and metre but also a magnificent survey of the old Northern mythology, written with an exquisite mixture of humour and grandeur. SNORRI may also with certainty be regarded as the author of *Egil's saga*, one of the greatest Icelandic family sagas, where his gifts as a creative artist perhaps reach their highest level. And finally there is the *Heimskringla*, the sagas of old Swedish and Norwegian kings from Odin down to 1177, a classic among the historical works of the Middle Ages, comparable to the greatest Greek and Roman histories. SNORRI here builds on the noble tradition of previous Icelandic saga-writing, but surpasses all his predecessors in the balancing of keen criticism of earlier sources and his art of story-telling and delineation of character. Especially as a pragmatic historian he has no equal among the saga-writers, not only owing to his gifts and learning but also to his experience in life. Although he received a learned education, both clerical and secular, as well national as European, he was no secluded scholar, but above all a man of the world, a mighty and wealthy chief who played a prominent part in politics and even aspired to a leading position in the Icelandic commonwealth. Like some other literary geniuses of a similar type, e.g. Cicero and Lord Bacon, he was not quite successful in his striving for political power. The age was unruly and SNORRI was both unwilling and unfit to use violence. He succumbed at last to a surprise attack by one of his rivals. We must not however forget that his political activity did not only lead to his tragic end, but had also born fruits in his writings which are imbued with his rich and varied experiences at home and abroad; and they still survive, both as sources for antiquarians and delightful stories for young and old which no age can wither.