

Forfatter: Grundtvig, N. F. S.

Titel: Udrag fra History of the Northmen, or Danes and Normans, from the Earliest Times to the Conquest of England by William of Normandy

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Notwithstanding these observations, and slight differences of opinion, we are assured of Mr. Wheaton's cheerful recognition of us as fellow-labourers in the field he has been so advantageously exploring; and in which we are equally desirous of planting friendship, and of gathering truth. The few inaccuracies we have discovered, we speak of without hesitation; for they are few indeed, and most insignificant, compared with the errors, not only of French and English, but even of German historians, who have been occupied by the same subject. If Mr. Wheaton is misled, it is under the guidance of some literary name. He has followed Suhm and Munter, where they have led him astray, and if he had sought *their* leaders, they would nowhere have been found, except in some ancient legend, some old woman's tales, which pleased their fancy and occupied their pen. Thus when Munter speaks, as quoted by Mr. Wheaton, of the "female skalds, or poetesses, whose lays sometimes breathed the harsh notes of war, and celebrated the achievements of conquering heroes, and at others sang the prophetic mysteries of religion," he merely pours forth fancies, without the least historic foundation, unless we call it a foundation that Snorro cites a pair of unmeaning lines of a single skaldic maid, and that the *Völuspa* of the ancient skald is placed in the mouth of a *spæ*-woman. Such again is the relation of Suhm [p. 51] of a skald, who was raised to the vacant Juttish throne, on the decease of Frode III, in the fourth century of the Christian æra; for however exact all this may sound, it is quite certain that it refers to nothing but the old Hiarne skald, who, according to a popular legend in Saxo, was immediately after the birth of Christ, made king over the whole of Denmark, as a reward for his elegy on the celebrated and beloved Frode Fredegod. Somewhat similar is the relation [p. 174] respecting Thorkild Adelfar, who, about the year 730, embraced the Christian belief, "and whose conversion was probably attended with the less difficulty, as he already belonged to a heathen sect which adhered to the gods or demons, enemies of the Aser;" for this Thorkild is neither more nor less than the hero of a beautiful fiction in Saxo, derived probably from an Anglo-Saxon skald, who cared so little about chronology, that he made Thorkild an Icelander long before Iceland had any inhabitants, so that all the historian can say about the matter is, that he is well paired with Holger the Dane (the hero of Norman Romance), whose conversion is also confidently related [p. 175].