

of will and passion, by its fierce, untamed energy, by its patient endurance, by its undaunted heroism. In Iceland in the tenth century it was only healthy children that were allowed to live. As soon as it was born the infant was laid upon the bare ground, and until the father came and looked at it, heard and saw that it was strong in lung and limbs, its fate hung in the balance. That danger over, it was duly washed,



THE VIKING CHIEF OF THE NINTH CENTURY.



THE VIKING'S WIFE OF THE NINTH CENTURY.

signed with the Thunderer's holy hammer—the symbol of all manliness and strength—and solemnly received into the family as the faithful champion of the ancient gods. After the child was named, he was often put out to foster with some neighbour, and there he grew up with the children of the house, and contracted those friendships and affections which were reckoned better and more binding than the ties of blood. A man was of age as soon as he was fit to do man's work, as soon as he could brandish his father's sword and bend his bow.