

On leaving Bjarnanes, my guide led off in a westerly direction towards a large sheet of water, which on the map appears to be an arm of the sea. We went not only towards, but actually straight into the water. I soon perceived that in reality it is a river, the Hornafjót, three miles wide, flowing at an inconsiderable speed from the vast ice-fields of the Heinabergs Glacier. Its waters are thickly charged with a whitish mud. Its depth rarely exceeds a yard, the average would not amount to half as much, especially as here and there we came to banks which appeared above the surface. The general direction through this waste of waters is marked by a line of posts driven into the river's bed; and how necessary they are



CROSSING AN ICELANDIC RIVER.

became strikingly evident when a heavy fog settled down upon us, and we experienced the strange and peculiar sensation of riding through these waters entirely out of sight of land, with nothing to direct us but the shadowy outline of a distant post. To add to the uncanniness of the situation, our horses occasionally floundered into a quicksand, stirring up a cloud of black mud, if such an expression is permissible. Fortunately, however, these were never deep, and an Icelandic pony may be trusted to keep his feet, if any animal on earth can do so. The whole was, undoubtedly, a novel experience, but in Iceland the unexpected is of frequent occurrence.

The passage occupied an hour, and on leaving the river we found ourselves among some dismal marshes. Away to the north lie the columnar rocks of Rauthaberg, of which Henderson says: 'I almost fancied myself