



PONIES LADEN WITH DRY FISH.

CHAPTER IX.

THE NORTH-WEST PENINSULA.

THE North-west Peninsula has been happily compared in shape to the fingers of an outstretched hand, of which the Snæfells horn will represent the thumb. It is, indeed, 'almost an island,' for although eighty miles across in its widest part, the wrist uniting it to the rest of Iceland is only seven miles in width. This isthmus is a boggy valley, down which flows, in an easterly direction, a stream that rises in some inconsiderable hills, within a mile of the western shore. 'A troll,' says Mr. Metcalfe, 'once formed the laudable design of driving a canal through, in a single night. He set lustily to work; and the innumerable islets in Breithjörthr are due to the muck shovelled out by this intrepid navy. The enterprise, however, failed—*opera interrupta manebant*—the sun rising upon him un-awares, and sending him the way of all troll flesh not under cover at daybreak, viz., into stone.'

Hardly less fanciful is the suggestion that 'ancient glaciers meeting the Greenland icebergs,' have jagged the great divisions of the peninsula into a saw-blade of minor indentations. The statement of the result is excellent, but for origin it is quite unnecessary to go beyond the great upheaval which thrust the splintering mass from the ocean depths. Slight modifications in