

and whortleberries, in autumn. The latter grow everywhere, and an Icelandic dinner is often followed by a dessert, in which they are served in a dish of milk, or *skyr*, with sugar; and this, with the pancakes, coffee, and *kleinur*, serves to redeem Icelandic cookery.

The first springs reached are those of Uxahver, so named from a wondrous story of an ox boiled alive therein! The largest no longer provides eruptions, like those which Henderson saw; the earthquake of 1872 put a stop to them, yet the temperature remains exceedingly high. Spirtings and bubblings go on incessantly, and columns of steam blow off through the seething pools—from which streams of scalding water continually escape—while on the hillside above are the sulphur beds of Theistareykir, an



AN ICELANDIC COUNTRY CHURCH.

earnest of more to follow. Crossing a sandy desert, the track soon strikes more recent lava, especially the famous streams of 1724-1730, which, pouring from Krafa and Leirnukr, destroyed the parsonage of Reykjahlth, and threatened the church as well, but, dividing, spared it. The largest of these was nine miles long and three wide. Metcalfe relates the experience of an eye-witness who 'states that in his day a blue sulphureous flame hung over the stream. At night it was all of a red glow, dyeing the heavens the same colour. At times the torrent relaxed; when its surface became covered with a solidified rind some two feet in thickness. Anon, the fiery tide flowed again, and pressing on the hardening mass, split the epidermis, just as I have seen the water-flood burst the ice encasing the bosom of the mighty Danube; and the masses of stone were swept along by it, just like the lumps of disrupted ice on the water.'