

Thursday, August 24th. In the same place.

A COLD raw morning when I went out to bathe in Snorri's Bath, so that I felt grateful for the hot water up to my middle. The said bath is a round one sunk in the earth some twelve feet diameter, lined & paved with smooth cut stones cemented with bitumen; there is a groove cut from it to the hot-spring [Skrifla] which is some hundred yards off, and can be turned off by a single dam into another channel, so that you can have the water as hot or as cool as you will: all the water for the house comes from this hot-spring, by the way, and smells evilly of sulphuretted hydrogen, but smell and taste go off when it has been boiled again; and we made very good tea with it last night. The bath is a few yards from the stead, and close by it rises a steepartificial grassy mound, which is Snorri's castle. I wandered about the mound a bit and then in to breakfast; after which befell a counsel as to whether we should go on or not; we had intended to go to Brunnar where we had camped before, this day, and Thingvellir the next; but the day was so cold and raw and we in good quarters, so we felt disinclined to move, and the end of it was we agreed to go on next day all the way

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to Thingvellir, and so coolly sat down to whist now; at which we played, with an interval for dinner, till about five in the afternoon, when C. J. F. and I wandered out, and down to the river where we talked about when we should be home again, and then, after an interval of making ducks and drakes in the water, back to the stead again, taking the hot-spring on our way; a sloppy and untidy piece of boggy land lay all about it, but the spring was a queer one, always playing about two feet high. Evans, by the way, as he came from Stafholt, had seen a strange hot-spring in this valley, one rising out of the midst of a cold river with an accretion of flinty deposit all about it.

So back to supper in the stead, more whist (if one must tell the truth) and to bed as before.