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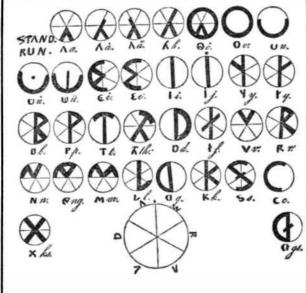
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THE OERA LINDA LETTERS AND FIGURES.

The scheme of letters and figures given herewith is a reduced facsimile of a page of that remarkable Frisian manuscript, lately come to light and called the Oera Linda Book, after the family in which it has been an heirloom from time immemorial. The present owner is C. Oera de Linda, chief superintendent of the royal dockyard at the Helder, in Friesland, North Holland. In obedience to a family tradition, the book has been religiously preserved through many generations, though no one knew whence it came or what it contained, both the language and the writing being unknown.

A Frisian scholar, Dr. Verweijs, heard of the work not long ago, obtained permission to examine it, and at once discovered it to be written in a more ancient form of Fries than that which appears in the book of ancient Fries laws, hitherto the oldest known literary monument of that people. The tradition to which the book is indebted for its preservation was found to rest upon two endorsements, the later, by Hiddo, surnamed Oera Linda, being dated the 3,449th year after Atland was submerged: that is, according to Christian reckoning, the year 1,256: the earlier, by Liko Oera Linda, was written in the year 803. Hiddo describes the work as a history of his family and of the Fries people, and earnestly directs his son to preserve it with body and soul; and relates that he had just copied it upon "foreign paper" to prevent its perishing in consequence of a wetting it had got during a local flood. Liko quite as earnestly enjoins his successors to keep the work from the eyes of the monks, who spoke 'sweet words," but underhandedly sought to destroy everything relating to the Fries.





The book consists of several parts, differing widely from each other, and of dates very far apart. The writer of the first part calls herself Adela, wife of Apol, chief man of the Linda country. The first date mentioned in it is the year 1602 after the disappearance of Atland, or B. C. 591. The writing was begun thirty-two years later, or B. C. 559. The account is continued by Adela's son Adelbrost and his sister Apollonia. Some two hundred and fifty years later, another book was begun by Frethorik, to which additions were afterward made by his widow, by their sons, and by their grandson. The page which we have reproduced appears in the portion written by Adela, upwards of twenty-four centuries ago: or about the time of Solon, Confucius, the prophet Daniel, Pythagoras, and shortly after the destruction of the first temple at Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar.

According to Adela's account, this portion of her book was copied from an inscription on the walls of Waraburgt. The divided circle, with the letters w r a l d a around it, is the Jol-wheel, the first symbol of the Almighty, also of the beginning from which time is derived: "this is the Kroder, which must always go round with the Jol." According to this model, Frya (the primal priestess, the first daughter of Earth) formed the set hand which she used to write her Tex. When Fasta was chief mother, she made a running hand out of it. The sea king, Godfried the Old, made numbers for sources of hundreds of employers, and the corsequent enthe set hand and for the runic hand. "It is therefore not forced idleness of thousands of workmen, within a period toe too much," says the Waraburgt inscription, "that we celebrate it once a year. We may be eternally thankful to Wr-alda that he allowed his spirit to exercise such an influence over our forefathers."

The Tex of Frya was what we may term the Magna Charta of the Frisian people. Fasta was the first Eremæder or chief priestess, appointed by Frya, some time in the happy period before the dispersion of the Frisians by the sinking of their country beneath the waters of the North Sea. The Jol feast was the midwinter festival, now called Christmas.

The Waraburgt inscription further narrates that Finda's people, that is, the yellow race, whose surviving remnant in Northern Europe is the Finns, also had a system of writing; but it was so difficult and full of flourishes that they lost the meaning of it. Subsequently, the Finda people, including the Thyria and the Krekalanders (Tyrians and Greeks) learned the Frisian text, but corrupted it so that it lost its legibility.

Touching this reference to the Greek alphabet, the learned translator of the Oera Linda book calls attention to the acknowledgment of the Greeks that their writing was not their

own invention. They attributed the introduction of it to Kadmus, a Phœnecian. The names of their oldest letters, from alpha to tau, agree so exactly with the names of the Hebrew letters, with which the Phœnecian was closely connected, that there can be little doubt of their source. But the forms of their letters differ so entirely from those of the Phœnecian and Hebrew writing, that in that particular no connection can be thought of between then. Whence, then, did the Greeks derive the forms of their letters?

The book of Adela's followers shows that, at the time Kadmus is said to have lived, a brisk trade was carried on between the Frisians and the Phoenecians, whom they called Khadmar, or coast people, a name too closely resembling Kadmus to escape a suspicion of identity.

The same book also describes, at length, the founding of Athens by a Frisian colony, whose priestess was Min erva, and the subsequent deification of Min-erva by Grecian priests, who sadly corrupted the pure religion she had introduced. This, in connection with the Waraburgt inscription above described, makes it very clear how it came to pass that the earliest Greek letters had, to a marked degree, the forms of the Fries letters, with the names of the letters of Finda's people.

It is even more surprising to find our current figures existing, in so perfect a form, from such remote antiquity. The scheme is suspiciously perfect: still, the internal evi dence of the genuineness of this remarkable record of a civilization in Western Europe, antedating Athens and the Trojan war, is too cogent to be lightly set aside.

The single circumstance that the writers of the record were perfectly familiar with the pile dwellers of Switzerland, whom they call Marsaten and describe at considerable length, is proof enough that the book is either as ancient as it purports to be, or else is a very recent forgery. Previous to 1853, when the first remains of that people were accidentally discovered, there was no other record of their existence. We usually call our figures Arabian, but it is well known that the art of expressing all numbers by means of ten signs was unknown to the Arabs of the East. It was learned in the West. Perhaps, if a few more records of Friesland had been kept from the monks, the matter would not be under such a cloud. Our figures are also called Indian, and their currency in the East is quite consistent with the story of this book, since a considerable part of it is devoted to the fortunes of a Frisian colony in the Punjab (established B. C. 1551), from which a knowledge of the numerals, as based on the lines of the Jol, may have been communicated to the surrounding nations. No names of places in this colony are given; but it is narrated how the Frieslanders first established themselves on the east of the Punjab, and afterwards moved to the west of the rivers, in both of which localities the sun was directly overhead, at midday, in summer time. Confirmation of this account is found in Herodotus and Strabo, who speak of a people then called Germans; in the writings of the historians of Alexander's expedition, who speak of an Indian colony from the distant unknown North: and Ptolemy, who mentions two places called Minnagara, one 24° north, on the west side of the Indus, the other 6° to the eastward, and in north latitude 22°. The name is pure Fries, and comes from Minna, chief master at the time the exhibition sailed.

WORK AND WAGES IN NEW YORK CITY.

The New York Times has recently published some elaborate and suggestive statistical information relative to the present condition of labor and wages in this city. The principal result and indeed the most striking one adduced is the marked falling-off in the numbers of the trades' union members. These societies have lost fully two thirds of their strength since 1873, and a membership of 48,180 in that year is now reduced to less than 18,000. It needs no especial discernment to see the reason of this; it is the logical effect of the disastrous strike of 1872, succeeded by the financial crisis of 1873. The one demonstrated the fallacy of trade union domination, the hollowness of the promises of those men who provoked the agitation and urged and compelled others to join in it, and the misery and privation which must inevitably follow a struggle where the strength and union and staying power of those sought to be coerced is in marked contrast to the disorder and weakness of those who assume the aggressive. It cannot be denied that the results of that uprising dealt the cause of the unions a terrible blow, and it only needed the sudden collapse of the pecuniary reshort for a complete recovery from the effects of the strike, to reduce the trade societies in this city from a great, to a comparatively insignificant power in the labor market.

Few can adequately realize how sudden and vast a change in the condition of labor took place when the financial panic swept over the country. Perhaps this can best be gleaned by a short retrospect of the condition of affairs in 1872, when the great strike occurred, and a comparison of matters then with matters now. At that time the total number of workmen employed when the shops were full was 82,938, out of which aggregate 61,050 men joined in the strike. As this last mentioned total is obtained from trade union records, it follows that the balance were non-society men; so that in 1872 there appeared but 20,888 men outside the unions, or, in other words, the membership of the latter was in the proportion to outsiders of about three to one. At the present time the total number of workmen is 76,350,of whom 18,000 are society men. The proportion now is exactly the other way, the non-union men having a majority of over four to one

Now the strike of 1872 was based on the very obvious