

### *An Incident on the English Coast*

horizontal rows of circular medallions. Above each medallion is the name of the sign, and below it the name of the month, commencing with *Sol in Aquaria* (sic) and *Januarius*, and ending with *Sol in Capricornu* and *Desembr*.<sup>\*</sup> The part of the chair beneath the seat forms a box, having a hinged lid in the middle of the seat. On the front panels of the box incised carving is introduced with good effect, to produce a contrast with the rest of the carving, which is in relief.

The other chair on the right is from Grund Church, and measures 3 ft. 3 in. high by 2 ft. 6½ in. wide, by 1 ft. 5 in. deep. Its general design resembles that of the one first described. The large knobs ornamented with plaitwork on the vertical bars of the back remind one of the handles of a Scottish dirk, and suggest an affinity between the art of Scandinavia and the Highlands of Scotland in mediæval times.

### **A** N INCIDENT ON THE ENGLISH COAST. WITH SKETCHES BY E. W. CHARLTON.

THERE are the warnings of a storm, warnings to be read on land and sea, foretold with a truth which refuses to be disregarded. The watchers on shore must be ready to act; those with knowledge to take the lead, the inexperienced to help, for maybe a vessel is plunging this way out of all control and courage will be demanded. Not that the unskilled can be expected to do very much in these critical moments, though the strength of man is needed, and welcome help is obtained when a hand is ready at a hawser here or a shoulder to the lifeboat there.

And soon the rain is whirling by, driving aslant, lashing down the foam as it rises white and is scared away into the fast increasing gloom. The wind abandons its first lament, and hurries on to anger. It chases the waves and hounds them on and whips them into frenzy, and then sweeps across the land, with desolation following and havoc to the fore. And the sea, maddened as the tempest howls above it, is ever on the alert for destruction. Its jaws are wide, and it roars in its strength, a strength that knows no mercy. From the dark horizon it rolls in its wrath till it thunders on the shore; the seething surf in its ebb and flow worrying the

<sup>\*</sup> These readings are taken from an engraving in I. J. A. Worsaae's "Nordiske Oldsager," of the Copenhagen Museum, p. 157.

shingle, while the spray in a thick, white, drenching mist, is carried far up overhead and flies away affrighted.

It is difficult to stand alone, it is not easy to see or hear, yet there is a great fascination to watch it all. For the sight is grand, and there is majesty in the gale. I, with many another, was witnessing such a scene on an autumn morning last year. I, too, had been glorying in the grandeur of the gale, noting it, studying it.

Suddenly a long thin line of light shoots into the sky, seeming far off in such a turbulence. Then another, with now and again a stifled boom borne towards the shore. And all the magnificence is gone at once, the majesty of the scene is quenched, for fatality may be close at hand, with much to be done to avert it. Later on, when first one barque and then a second drove ashore, all thought of wind and cloud and sea, all effect, departed.

To watch two noble vessels beaten by the seas till every seam gaped wide and every plank was splintered, to know they were conquered and *must* perish, was distressing enough, and to see the exhausted crews helpless amidst such danger was absolutely painful. As each wave struck and poured its flood high over the mangled hulls, obliterating everything, one could but expect to find some gone when the spray was spent. Yet every time till the rescue came the men stood bravely there, and at last a line was thrown aboard and a mighty cheer was given, for every one knew there was hope then that the sailors would be saved. They escaped the masts as they went by the board, they avoided the falling spars, and they answered the cheers sent up from the shore till every man was landed.

It was on Folkestone beach that this happened, and it was curious to note that both vessels were Norwegian barques laden with timber; that both struck the shore about the same time within a few hundred yards of one another; that each carried a crew of ten, and that the last man of each was brought on land at almost the same moment. But neither ship was bound from or to the same port. The trouble began off Dungeness about the hour of dawn. No time was lost. The lifeboat soon was speeding on its way right in the teeth of the gale. She struck some rocks, the rudder broke and six of the oars were snapped, yet on the men went and reached the ship, but could only take off four of the crew, and even then they had to jump into the water first. Other lifeboats had been called out. I saw the gallant men from Hythe: Dover and Romney had sent theirs too, but the wrecks were