THE DANISH DIALECT OF BORNHOLM.

BY JOHN DYNELEY PRINCE.

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INTRODUCTION.

The Island of Bornholm lies in the Baltic Sea, 115 miles east of Copenhagen, about 22 miles south of the Swedish coast, and 50 miles north of the German island of Rügen. The total area of the island, which also includes the little group of isles known as Christiansø, is 225 square miles, with a population of over 43,000.

Bornholm (ON.1 Borgundarholmur) was the habitat in prehistoric times of an early Nordic race and there are still a number of stone circles, many so-called bautarsteinar 2 and other primitive remains on the island, especially in the neighborhood of Almindingen and Gudhjem. The population developed later into predatory Vikings, who were long notorious for their marauding proclivities. In the twelfth century, Bornholm became a fief of the Archbishop of Lund, under which sway the island remained until 1510, when it was seized by the Hanseatic League, but was captured by the Danes in 1522, and returned by them to the City of Lübeck in 1526. The Swedes took the island in 1625, and their domination was assented to by Denmark in 1658 by the Peace of Roskilde. The Bornholmers, however, desired to be Danish and themselves expelled the Swedish garrison in 1660, since which date Bornholm has been an integral part of Denmark. The curious round churches built in tower-shape and completely circular, with walls often six feet thick, form one of the most interesting features of the island. These buildings, which date from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, were undoubtedly used at an early date for purposes of defence.

The Bornholmers have always had their distinct speech, which, although popularly regarded by the other Danes as a Swedish dialect, is really the modern representative of the old East Danish

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1 Old Norse: Borgundarholmur; Icel. -holmur, a term which in a modified form, Borgunderholm, was used until quite recently in Danish.

2 bautarsteinar memorial stones.

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linguistic group to which south Scandian, now in Sweden, also belongs. Bornholmsk shows only a superficial resemblance to true Swedish.

The distinctively Danish dialects may be classified as follows: (1) West Danish, comprising the several idioms of Jutland, whose chief peculiarity is the complete rejection of the ON. ending -a; (2) Island Danish, comprising the dialects of Fyen-Langeland; north and south Sjaelland, including the city idiom of Copenhagen, a refined form of which has become the standard Danish (Rigs-sprog), and the almost uniform speech of Lolland-Falster, all which variants substitute -e for the ON. -a; (3) East Danish: Bornholmsk and southern Scandian (skånsk) in Sweden, shading towards the north into real Swedish; both groups retain the ON. -a, in distinction from the other divisions.

Similarly to the linguistic movement on the Faeroes, there exists a less organized action on Bornholm to lay stress on the local dialect which they call a “language,” because it is unintelligible to other Danes, and many purists on the island strongly resent the constantly increasing introduction of Danisms from the standard tongue. They are equally annoyed at the statement that Bornholmsk is a Swedish patois, pointing out that so different is their language from Swedish that, when Swedes come to settle on Bornholm, they never learn to speak the dialect correctly. This is perfectly true, as no real Swede can pronounce the palatalized consonants which distinguish Bornholmsk (see below) from most other Germanic idioms. The Frisian of Sylt is distinctly palatal and the ordinary soft l of modern Icel. is practically a palatal lingual. The B. n (palatal gn) is, however, rare in Germanic dialects, appearing however in certain other Danish variants, as in Jutland and Fyen.

There are, so far as I know, no societies devoted to the preservation of Bornholmsk, for which reason the dialect will in the course of time be crowded out by the Standard Danish of the government schools, a process which has already begun in the towns, particularly in Rönne, the capital of the island. The most striking popular defence of the local idiom is that of P. Möller, a landscape gardener, who in his “Bornholm Language” 3 laments the

3 Det Bornholmske Sprog af P. Möller, Havearkitekt og Landskabsgartner, Rönne, 1918.
decay of the old words and forms and inveighs against the "snobbish" desire of the younger people to assimilate their beautiful speech to the harsh and monotonous phonetics of Copenhagen. Möller's description of the dialect is, however, not scientific and, therefore, not so valuable for the purpose of record as the highly accurate phonetic treatise of Prof. Vilhelm Thomsen and that of Prof. Ludvig F. A. Wimmer on the Bornholmsk grammar, both included in J. C. S. Esersen's "Bornholm Dictionary." It should be added that Bornholmsk has had two poets of considerable merit; viz., Esersen himself and J. P. Möller (d. 1891) who, although only a baker in Allinge, was a highly gifted and many-sided genius. Some of the poems of both these writers are given in the edition of the dictionary in question. There is also a very good collection of Bornholm melodies assembled by H. Johansen, which gives a large number of characteristic native folksongs, with words and music.

The material for the present sketch, which, so far as known, is the first description in English of Bornholmsk, was obtained during a visit to the Island from a number of personal sources, especially from natives resident at some distance from the towns. The best speaker of the dialect whom I heard was a Mrs. Jespersen, the custodian of one of the most ancient of the round churches, who was able to speak both Danish and Bornholmsk without confusion. This material has been amplified and confirmed by the above mentioned works.

Phonetics.

The Bornholmsk phonetics are rather complicated and the difficulty of recording the dialect is greatly magnified by the accepted method of writing, which, in at least one important respect, is inaccurate, as the combination -jn is used throughout for two

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2 *See* *Bornholmsk Ordbog*, pp. 150-169.
3 *Viser i Bornholmsk Mundart, samlede af H. Johansen*, Rønne, 1911.
4 The following abbreviations have been used: B. = Bornholmsk; conj. = conjunction; D. = Danish; def. = definite; Eng. = English; Germ. = German; Icel. = modern Icelandic; indef. = indefinite; n. = note; OD. = Old Danish; ON. = Old Norse; pl. = plural; sg. = singular; Sw. = Swedish; Wimmer = article in Introduction to Esersen's *Ordbog Bornholmsk* (n. 4).
different sounds; viz., for ng as in singing and for the palatal gn as in French signe (= ñ). The system dates from Espersen's manuscript prepared in the early half of the nineteenth century, but corrected to a certain extent, as indicated above, by Prof. Thomsen. It should be noted, however, that some of the modern writers in the dialect now distinguish between the soft ng-sound and the palatal ñ, using ng for the former and jn only for the latter vocable.

The rules for the pronunciation of Bornholmsk may be tabulated as follows: a, flat, as in hat; a or ð, as ah; aa = D. long aa, like Eng. o in lone; b, as in Eng.; never soft as medial or final, as in D.; d = hard d as initial, but nearly as dh (= th in this) as medial or final, except that medial dd is always pronounced hard and with emphasis (final d is sometimes omitted, as in vad 'what,' but it is usually omitted in writing in such cases); e = e in met; ë = ee in Germ. Seele; f as in Eng., often omitted in pronunciation as a medial, as ætte = efter = 'after'—öta = ofta 'often,' etc.; g, as Eng. hard g; gj or ã is the palatalized g, an approximation between dy and soft Eng. j; h, as in Eng.; i = short i in pin; ì = ee in feel; j = Eng. consonantal y, when B. j is used consonantally (but see just below); jì = d' = palatalized d (dh); jl = l' = palatalized l, as Span. ll; jn = ñ, as in French signe, but in some texts = ng as in singing (see above); k as in Eng.; kj = č, palatalized ch as Pol. ċ; l, almost like the American l in well (not so hard as the Eng. pronunciation); m and n as in Eng.; o = obscure Sw. o, almost oo in good; õ = Eng. oh; p, as in Eng.; r, always trilled on the tip of the tongue (never gutturalized as in D.); s, as initial = s in sad—as medial or final = Eng. s in rose (= s) and is usually indicated by z in such cases; sj = i, a palatalized sh like Polish ś and often a trifle rougher, like an obscure Eng. sh; skj and stj = šč; viz., s with palatal č; t, as in Eng.; t' = č; u = oo in soot; ù = Sw. long u, like the Magyar ú (not Germ. û); v, hard and never slurred as in D.; w occurs chiefly in the combination aw = ou in house, sometimes written au (or ou); y (always a vowel) = D. y or Magyar ù; ã = Eng. o in mortal (aa is used for the long vowel); ã, diphthong of ã and short ì; aei, when short, almost = ã in kat; ãei = Eng. a in care; aej diphthong of ãei and short ì; aew, diphthong
of æ and short u; ð = i in bird and sometimes short Germ. ú, as in D. kød 'meat.'

INTONATION AND ACCENT.

Bornholmsk has no glottal catch, so frequent in standard Danish and Juttish, but, like the Danish dialects of Lolland-Falster and Fyen-Langeland, uses the glided vowel exclusively. Unlike Sw., B. has no distinct musical tones, although there exists in B. a recognized rather monotonous musical intonation, which causes the Copenhageners to assert that the Bornholmers "sing." This intonation is more agreeable than the "sobbing" cadence used by the vulgar Copenhageners. There is, therefore, in B. no tonal differentiation in meaning, as, for ex., in Sw. between æxel 'axle' and æxel 'shoulder,' pronounced respectively æxel (two tones) and æxel (one tone). The word is ðusel in B. for both senses, which must be determined by context. Wimmer points out (pp. 66-67) that the stress-accent in B. differs very slightly from that of the standard D., and that, when it does differ, the stress resembles Sw. or else is entirely distinct, as in nouns ending in -i such as eskeri, where the accent may rest on the first or the last syllable indifferently; thus, feskeri means 'fishery' in general, but fêskeri = 'fishing.'

It is doubtful whether Bornholmers will ever learn to pronounce D. after the standard fashion, as even the young children find the glottal catch an impossibility. Danish spoken without this unpleasing peculiarity always indicates an "outsider"; viz., either a foreigner or a rural person.

It should be noted that, when consonants are doubled in B., they must be dwelt upon in the same manner as in Italian, a phenomenon unknown in Danish, but usual in Swedish.

The following extracts, the first in the accepted spelling with the literal Danish and Swedish equivalent text, the second in the accepted spelling with Wimmer's phonetic version and Danish translation, and the third in phonetic rendering as heard by me with Danish equivalent, will serve to illustrate the dialect.
Bårrijnhålmarna, därr nu i många Aar hä (1) arbäjad hen te å fua (2) därna Bornholmerner, der nu i mange Aar har arbejdet hen til at fua deres Bornholmarna, som nu i många år ha arbejdet for att få sitt

Språg satt paa Moalen, hä, foruden då färna (3) här i Bagen omtalde Språg satt paa Moalen, har, foruden de fua her i Bagen omtalte språk satt på model, ha, förutom de få här i boken omtalte

Maaderarna, åv tad (4) däejn smpla Framgangsmoadan te Jaelp, lásjefram å (5) Maaderne, også laget den simple Fremskogsmade til Hjaelp, ligesom at metoder, också tagit det enkla tilltægsgende till hjälp, rent av at

kassera en Maegndt Úr, som ha syjnts dom' å vara for bårrijnhålmnska, kassera en Maengde Ord, som syntes dem å være for bornholmske, kassera en stor del ord, som syntes dem att vara for bornholmska,

æje som, me åvra (6) Úr, ha vad (4) dom for mäjed forsjafla fraa åt danske. eller som, med andre Ord, har saeret dem allfor forskellige fra de danske. eller som, med andra ord, ha variat dem allför skilda från de danska.

Nu här vara Språg ju i ajl ärenne Tid våd å räj (7) Språg, så vi køjne (8) Nu har vara Språg ju fra Arilds Tid været et rigt Språg, såa at vi kan Nu har vårt språk ju fra uråldrige tider varit ett rikt språk, så att vi kunne

säjas (9) ejnvaria iu Haaven Úr å (3) livael hâ nok te Håbruk.

sagens undværa en Masse Ord og alligevel have nok til Hustrag. verkligen undvarea många Ord och likväl ha ha nog til husbruk.

Men ser (10) iu tvåt nåjera åttie (11), blir iu svårt vår (12), åi de(d) ejkje naar Men ser man litit nötagere efter, blir man snart opmærksom på, at de ikke naar Men ser man lite nogere efter, blir man snart omdåksam på, att de icke

altid åt Orn som vi buet køjne ejnvaria (13), åt ha kasseret (14), men å åtid er de Ord som vi bedst kan undvære, de har kasseret, men at de åtid åro de ord som vi kan have bruk for og som neppe kan erstattas mycket ofta åro ord som vi kunna ha bruk for och som knappt kunna ersättas

me åenkla danska Úr. ±ta å de(dh) ed Or som däer ska flera danska Úr å å med enkelte danske Ord. Ofte är det et Ord som der skal flere danske Ord til at med enkla danske ord. Ofte är det ett ord som det behöver flera danska ord till att

forklara å för många å dom ska däer ejnasa så gåled helu Saetninger te å forklara och för mange af dem skal der endog findes hele Saetningar till at forklara och för många av dem skola även användas hela sätningar till at

*Det Bornholmske Språg, p. 71 (n. 3). The numerals refer to the commentary below.
forklara. Dette er så forarjelit, at man kan blive helt vred på det, forklare. Dette er saa forargeligt, at man kan blive helt vred på det,

naar man tænker sig, at det er vore egne Landsmaend som—i

naar man tænker sig, at det er våre egne landsmænd som—i

ren Forblivelse—har børret dem så ganske galt ad. Men det er ogsaa

ren Forblindelse—har baaret dem så ganske galt ad. Men det er også

forarjelit, a di hii kasser!

forarjelit, a di hæ kassert sådanne Ord, for, selv om disse kan udtrykke

Menijnen, så hii alri komma te å passa i vårt Sprog, men vil støda

Betydningen, saa kan de aldrig komma til at passe i vårt Sprog, men vil støde

betydelsen, så kunna de aldrig komma till att vara passande i vårt språk, men skola

stå

å skåra i Örn å gjärna vaart aejlans så näetta hårriehålmska Språg styggjara.

og hakka Örene och göra vårt annars så behagliga bornholmska Språg grimmere.

LITERAL TRANSLATION.

The Bornholmers, who now for many years have worked to get
their language made fashionable, have, in addition to the few
methods mentioned in this book, also adopted (taken) the simple
procedure of rejecting a great many words which seemed to them
to be too Bornholmsk or, in other words, which
have seemed (been) to them too different from the Danish (words). Now, our
language has been from time immemorial a rich language, so that
we really can do without a lot of words and at the same time have
enough left over for household use. But if one examines the case
a little more closely (exactly), one will at once (soon) be aware
that it is not by any means always those words which we can best
dispense with that they have rejected, but that these are very
often words which we could have use for and which scarcely can
be replaced by single Danish words. Often it is a word which it
takes several Danish words to explain and, for many of them,
even whole sentences must be used to explain (them). This is so
annoying that one can get very angry at it, when one considers that
it is our own countrymen who, in sheer blindness, have behaved
(themselves) so stupidly. But it is also annoying that they have rejected such words, because (= for), even if these (i.e., the new words chosen) can express the sense, they can never come to be suitable in our language, but will shock and irritate (= cut) (our) ears and make our otherwise so agreeable Bornholmsk language (much) more ugly.

II.8

God austed, liden Elna Gods fred!
Good evening, little Elna, God's peace!
God austed, min dejliia rosa!
Good evening my beautiful rose!
ad gubban højn vili freja, jà vold,
That the old man will court you I know,
Men toastsrije vasti jø lasa.
But if you took him, you would be a foolish lass.
Te efrøl de'dh lakkar vell snarara, Du!
To funeral ale it is drawing near (for him), do you see?
En konna—de'dh bler nok for sjilja,
A wife—it is much too late (for that),
Men jà gør å sjirmnar på piblana nu,
But I am going to peep at the girls now,
Por jà e þà nà nu sà sjilja.
For I am almost ready (to marry).
Hvad, liden Elna! Hvad min dejliia rosa!
What, little Elna! What my beautiful rose!

III.9

Colloquial Phrases.

Se här va jà hær te dæj; þraustik vi hæruda å jà fšó de(d) udá (22) hannóm.
See here what I have for you; the priest was out there and I got it from him.

Maa jànte (23) gaa te ÿæterta? Ja, maen hør va jà sfjjer dæj; kom snart åjen te bælana (24).
May I not go to church now? Yes, but listen to what I tell you; come back soon to the children.

8 See Bornholmsk Ordbog, p. 150 (n. 4).
Hon fik ed åsted sit å føde mær (25) jemn. Han fikre-na (26) mø saj.
Hun ændrede sin Mening og fulgte med ham hjem. Han førte hende med sig.
She changed her mind and went home with him. He took her with him.

Roserne tåa dårre blå nü. Vieleri kommer.
Roserne tabe deres Blade nu. Vinteren kommer.
The roses are losing their petals now. Winter is coming.

Han hår til lidt horro (27) å to piblo (28). Han hår tær hællo.
Han har en lille Dreng og to Piger. Han har tre Børn.
He has one little boy and two little girls. He has three children.

Horrin fik pryl (29) å boni som han måtte paa saa.
Drenge fik Prygl fra Bonden som han møtte paa Vejen.
The boy got a beating (a cudgel) from the peasant whom he met on the road.

Det var ikke nødvendigt at göre.
It was not necessary to do that.

Kom hår, good venner, å tår jorr en råal!
Kom her, good Venner, og drik Nogel (tag Jer en Rus = ‘get drunk’!)
Come here, good friends, and have a drink (with us)!

Han tænkte paa å gefa saj å fik lte ud å fråjja å saa møta han en pålja (30) dør aelshadii (31) møjed.
Han tænkte paa at give sig og saa gik han ud at frie og traf en Pige der elskede ham meget.
He thought of getting married and so he went out and met a girl who loved him very much.

E dør væn (32) udi étan (33)? Ja, men de(d) maa dante (34) faa. De(d) skå hestana hå.
Er der Vand i Spanden? Ja, men det maa Du ikke faa. Det skal Hestene have.
Is there water in the pail? Yes, but you can't have that. The horses must have it.

Løkk dørn op å läh (35) goa ud.
Lukk Dørren op og lad ham goa ud.
Open the door and let him go out.

Vår e piblan nu? Hon fann horrii å træ mær (25) jemn.
Hvor er Pigebarnet nu? Hun fandt Drenge og irak hjem med ham.
Where is the little girl now? She found the boy and went home with him.

Han spurgte mig, om jeg vil give Jer en bornholmsk Sang (36), men det kan jeg ikke göre, for jeg har glemt det Hele.
He asked me to give you a Bornholm song, but I cannot, for I have forgotten everything.
COMMENTARY ON THE TEXTS.

(1) arbøjad 'worked'; also written arbejad and arbejad.

(2) døbra 'their'; used in B., as in D. as the 3 p. possessive reflexive, which in Sw. is always sin (m. and f.), sit (n.); pl. sina, used for both sg. and pl.

(3) fær'few'; note -rr- and the redundant pl. -a (cf. Icel. færir).

(4) tæd, contraction for tæged 'taken'; cf. vánd for vánd 'been' (other examples below).

(5) dårra 'their'; used in B., as in D. as the 3 p. possessive reflexive, which in Sw. is always sin (m. and f.), sitt (n.); pl. sina, used for both sg. and pl.

(7) The k is completely elided from the original kt = -k, plus neuter -t: raekt (D. rigt) and the subsequent palatalization of the t to ď (n. 9).

(8) kojne = kone; pres. pl. kunne, as Sw. kunna, but lost in D. = ban for both numbers.

(9) sajtas = sač(as) = D. sagtens 'really'; note elision of g (original gt) and palatalization of t to ď, and total disappearance of -n (cf. n. 7).

(10) jsn = in = D. een 'one,' used in B. for the D. and Germ. indef. man (Fr. on). The indef. man is never used in true B.

(11) atte = D. after 'after' and ON. æpir. Here there is no palatalization as in nn. 7 and 9. Note also B. ñta = D. ofte, with compensative long o for loss of -f-

(12) väär 'aware' = D. and Norse var (not in use in colloquial D.) = Germ. gewähr.

(13) ofvunaere 'dispense with'; a Danism: undvare in D. is a Germanism like undvara in Sw. = Germ. entbehren. It should really be undvarra in B., as the verb 'to be,' on whose analogy the word is made, is varra. Note also B. ærstaltas = D. erstalles, also a Germanism, from erstatten.

(14) kassirt 'rejected'; observe the absence of the vowel (a) before the participial t (D. kasseret; Sw. kasserat).

(15) hårme 'angry'; cf. Sw. harmen 'angry' and D. Harme 'indignation.

(16) rystoppena galed 'exceedingly stupidly'; used in B. only with galed; OD. ryskgalen 'very angry' (rysker means 'mad' in B.). Toppena = Dalicarian tuppande (Espersen, 279) 'one who is excessive,' probably cognate with Germ. toben 'rage' (thus Espersen).

(17) galed 'stupid' = Sw. galet.

(18) soddena 'such,' pl. Note ð for D. short as, pron. like short Eng. as; D. soadane, but Sw. sàdan, with long ð.

(19) tautsið 'tookst thou him' = 'if thou didst take him' = OD. togst Du ham.

(20) nåk 'enough,' pron. almost like short nok, as in D.; cf. Sw. någ.

(21) stigmaer 'stare'; cogn. with Eng. stare more than with D. stirre. The expression pànd = D. naisten 'almost' is purely B., and now almost obsolete. Pànd is probably a translation of Germ. beinaue (cf. Frisian binsi; Sylt.).

(22) súd honnöm 'lit. "out of him' (see n. 5) = D. udof in the same sense (cf. New York slang: of'n him 'from him').

(23) jante = ja inte 'I not.'

(24) baella 'children.' This stem is probably not bål 'bellows,' from the pot bellies of small children, but the same as in south Germ. bålli, dim. of bube.
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‘boy.’ It is seen also in Scotch billy ‘boy, lad.’ It is probable that the Amer. slang Bill, used in address for any name at all, contains the forgotten sense boy.

The sg. in B. is baell with the masc. article baellin ‘the child.’

(25) mědī = mědih ‘with him’; D. med’en = med ham.

(26) før-en = fere haende ‘he took her.’

(27) horra ‘boy’; a difficult word and purely B., thought by some to be cogn. with herre in Smålandsk olherre ‘castle-boy’ (Espinren, 134), but this herre is probably a variant of Sw. herde, seen in færherde shepherd; D. Hyrde; Germ. Hirt and scarcely connected with B. Note that the form hork ‘boy’ is used in North Jutland and also in Jutland for boy in an opprobrious sense. With this latter use, cf. Scotch hawkie ‘clumsy lad.’ These latter forms may be diminutives of the original stem of B. horra.

(28) pībola, pl. of pībel ‘small girl,’ undoubtedly a combination of pī(g) ‘girl’ and baell ‘child’ and exactly equivalent to D. Pigeborn ‘little girl.’ A grown girl in B. is pajja (see n. 30).

(29) prygl ‘cudgel, beating’ = D. Prygl.

(30) pajja ‘grown girl’ = D. Pige; Sw. piga ‘maid’; in distinction from pībel ‘girl-child.’

(31) aelskadin ‘loved him’; D. colloquial: elskede-en (ham).

(32) vann ‘water’ = D. Vand, for ON. vatn, Sw. vatten. The form vann is still used in Scandia for vatten.

(33) kjita ‘pail, bucket’; also written hjīta; cogn. with Eng. kit ‘tub’ and probably also with kettle. Kit in the sense ‘outfit’ is still used in the Amer. slang phrase: whole kit and boodle (caboodle, a cowboy word from Span. capital stock, property).

(34) dūnte = du inte thou not.

(35) laā = la-in ‘let him’ = D. lad’en (pron. colloquially la-en = lad ham).

(36) Note the direct oration peculiar to primitive idioms.

GRAMMATICAL SKETCH.

Article and Noun.

The grammar of B. is much more complicated than that of either Danish or Swedish, the chief reason being that in B. a distinction is made between the masc. and fem. genders, whereas in both Danish and Swedish this distinction has long passed away, the two genders having completely coalesced in Danish and also in all Swedish except the most antiquated style, which, even in church writings, is rapidly going out of use. Thus, it is unusual to-day to find the masc. e-form of the def. adjective as distinct from the fem. and neuter form. All Swedes say and write at the present day min kāra vān ‘my dear friend’ (masc.) instead of the more correct older form kāre for masc., while kāra was used for fem. and neuter definites. A similar blending of the masc. and fem. genders has all but taken place in modern Dutch, where one says ik zie de
man 'I see the man,' instead of *ik zie den man,* and this, in spite of the efforts of the purist school, who are striving to retain the older form, at least in writing. B. is one of the few living Scandinavian idioms, not excepting Icelandic and Faeroese, in which both the definite and indefinite articles distinguish the masc. from the fem. It is true that in Icel. and Faeroese a distinction is still made in writing; viz., masc. *hinn,* fem. *hín* 'the,' but the pronunciation is the same for both genders. B. has both an indef. and def. article different for all three genders; viz., indef. *ín man* 'a man'; *en kánnna* 'a woman'; *ed hús* 'a house,' a peculiarity paralleled chiefly in the Juttish of Vensyssel and to some extent on Fyen. In B., the def. article is *daen,* *daen,* *det* for the prefixed form, which is, however, not so common as the suffixed definite, whose forms are masc. *-n,* *-en,* fem. *-n,* *en,* neut. *-d,* *-ed*; pl. *-na* for masc. and fem., and *-n,* *-en* for neuters. It will be observed that the masc. sg. is distinguished by the palatal *-n.*

The following paradigm will illustrate the method of using the def. suffixes:

**Strong Nouns.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masc.</th>
<th>Pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>árm, má, dá, sag, brá, á, hús, trú</strong></td>
<td><strong>mánna</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ármanna</strong></td>
<td><strong>dána</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ság, sága, ságrana</strong></td>
<td><strong>bró, bróarna</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ságrarna</strong></td>
<td><strong>órna</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>húsen</strong></td>
<td><strong>trúen</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Weak Nouns.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masc.</th>
<th>Pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>tíma, bárrjar, kánnn, éga, cárra, fárstd(e)ls, óra, aebbla, rúðje</strong></td>
<td><strong>tímana</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>tímana</strong></td>
<td><strong>bárrjarna</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ágan</strong></td>
<td><strong>cárrlsan</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ágarna</strong></td>
<td><strong>fárstd(e)lsarna</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>arád</strong></td>
<td><strong>aebblad</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>órn</strong></td>
<td><strong>aebblen</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are certain rules indicating variations of the connecting vowel between the noun and the def. articles, which need not be entered into here.
It should be noted, however, that *hørra* or *hørra* 'boy' makes its def. *hørrin* 'the boy'; pl. *hørrana* 'the boys,' like *bærjara* (see above). Like *øra* 'ear,' only the neut. *øjja* 'eye' occurs, pl. *øjjen* 'the eyes,' but def. sg. *øjjed* 'the eye,' probably a Danism resembling D. *øiet* 'the eye' (pr. *øjedh*), for the earlier B. *øjjad*.

It will be observed that in these forms, as well as in the following examples of inflection, B. resembles modern Sw. more than the standard D. This is especially noticeable in the neuters; cf. Sw. *øra*-t 'the ear,' pl. *øron-en*, in which word there is no distinction in B. between the indef. and def. pl., i.e., both = *ørn*. The same principle applies to the Sw. *øppe*- 'apple,' pl. *øpplen*, but def. pl. *øpplena*. On the other hand, B. *høs* 'house,' pl. *høs*; but def. pl. *husen* 'the houses' is exactly like the Sw.: *hus*, pl. *hus*; def. pl. *husen*.

**Noun Inflection.**

So far as nouns and adjectives are concerned there is no case inflection such as appears in Faeroese or Icelandic, but the system of forming the plural (indef.) of nouns should be briefly illustrated. The resemblance is closest to the Sw., although the B. forms themselves are not directly derived from Sw., but are a normal development of OD.

It will be observed from the following examples (a) that the strong and weak masc. groups incline to the pure *a*-plural, with the exception of a few instances; (b) that the strong and weak feminines both incline to the *-er* (*r*)-ending, and (c) that the strong neuters have generally no pl. ending, while the weak neuters incline to *-n*, or also have no ending.

### Strong Nouns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ørm</td>
<td>ørma</td>
<td>ønda</td>
<td>ønda</td>
<td>høs</td>
<td>høs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arm</td>
<td>arma</td>
<td>sada</td>
<td>sada</td>
<td>høs</td>
<td>høs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ødel</td>
<td>ødla</td>
<td>åwœl</td>
<td>åwœl</td>
<td>høsen</td>
<td>høsen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ødel</td>
<td>ødla</td>
<td>åwœl</td>
<td>åwœl</td>
<td>høsen</td>
<td>høsen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ødel</td>
<td>ødla</td>
<td>åwœl</td>
<td>åwœl</td>
<td>høsen</td>
<td>høsen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ødel</td>
<td>ødla</td>
<td>åwœl</td>
<td>åwœl</td>
<td>høsen</td>
<td>høsen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ødel</td>
<td>ødla</td>
<td>åwœl</td>
<td>åwœl</td>
<td>høsen</td>
<td>høsen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ødel</td>
<td>ødla</td>
<td>åwœl</td>
<td>åwœl</td>
<td>høsen</td>
<td>høsen</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

**Note:** The table above provides a representation of noun inflection in the Danish dialect of Bornholm, illustrating the differences and similarities with modern Swedish (Sw.) and Old Danish (OD).
Weak Nouns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Masc.</td>
<td>timå 'hour'</td>
<td>bàrrjara 'citizen'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pl.</td>
<td>timå</td>
<td>bàrrjara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fem.</td>
<td>öga 'week'</td>
<td>öser (öserka) 'church'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pl.</td>
<td>öger</td>
<td>öserer (öserker)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neut.</td>
<td>öra 'ear'</td>
<td>aebbla 'apple'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pl.</td>
<td>öra</td>
<td>aebbla</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above divisions are easily understood. It will be observed that the class represented by då 'day' (masc.) does not change for the pl. It is a model for such words as stà 'place' = ON. 'stáðhr.' Only practice can teach the learner when nouns ending in a vowel take the -a in the pl. like mô-a. In the strong fem. nouns, the class represented by näl 'needle' is very small. Sæn 'bed' (f.) belongs to it, as does aen 'meadow.' The pl. of pibe 'little girl' is pibla, as the second component element is baell 'child,' pl. baella. Of the strong neutrals, some neutrals of foreign origin belong to the harred-class (pl. -er), as best 'beast,' pl. bêster; insekt, pl. insekter, etc. Of the weak masculines, the timå-class represents the old i-masculines, as ON. timi 'hour.' Many nouns belong to the öga-öserka-class. The weak neutrals comprise (a) a small group in -a = the ON. neutrals in -a; (b) some neutrals in -e = the ON. neutrals in i. Note that for åjjà 'eye' = ON. auga, one of the few B. nouns inflected like öra, there is an old B. form tøa 'eye,' pl. tøen. Jætta 'heart' has pl. jætta. A very large class is inflected like aebble and ræje. The ending u is seen in vinnu 'wind' (sg. and pl.) and vørnu 'business' (cf. Icel. verslun), but B. kæmunu 'honey' is used only in the sg. = OD. hunugh.

Adjectives.

The indef. adjective in B., like that in ON. and modern Icel. and Faeroese, distinguishes between all three genders; viz., masc. gøër 'good,' fem. gø, neut. gøti, pl. gøa (all genders)

- fattier 'poor'
- vider 'wide'

The rule is that the indef. must end in -er in the masc., the fem. has no ending, while the neuter adds -t which frequently modifies the preceding syllable. The indef. pl. ends in -a for all genders.
No such distinction is made in the def. adjectival form followed by the definite noun:

Masc.  
goe ‘(the) good’  
Fem.  
Neut.  

;jattia ‘(the) poor’  
;vidia ‘(the) wide’  

The def. sg. of all genders ends in -a (there is no masc. def. -e, as in old Sw.), while the pl. ending for all genders is -e, a distinctive Bornholmism based on D. -e, def. pl. and sg.

Adjectives form their comparative by -ara (more often now -ere, following D.) and the superlative by -ast, def. -esta. Thus brun ‘brown,’ bråburger, brånest; but def., brånesta; pl. bråneste. The same irregularities appear as in the other Scandinavian idioms; læger ‘long’—laenger—laenest; gøer ‘good’—baere—baest, etc. The superlative has no differentiation for gender and number in the indef., but has both, as just shown, for the definite.

**Numerals.**

The numerals up to ten cardinals and ordinals are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Masc.</th>
<th>Fem.</th>
<th>Neut.</th>
<th>Danish</th>
<th>Danish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>en</td>
<td>en</td>
<td>en</td>
<td>ed</td>
<td>ed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to</td>
<td>to</td>
<td>to</td>
<td>two</td>
<td>two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tre</td>
<td>tre</td>
<td>tre</td>
<td>three</td>
<td>three</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fir(a)</td>
<td>fir</td>
<td>fir</td>
<td>four</td>
<td>four</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faem</td>
<td>faem</td>
<td>faem</td>
<td>five</td>
<td>five</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sajs</td>
<td>sajs</td>
<td>sajs</td>
<td>six</td>
<td>six</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sju</td>
<td>sju</td>
<td>sju</td>
<td>seven</td>
<td>seven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>al(a)</td>
<td>al</td>
<td>al</td>
<td>eight</td>
<td>eight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ni</td>
<td>ni</td>
<td>ni</td>
<td>nine</td>
<td>nine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ti</td>
<td>ti</td>
<td>ti</td>
<td>ten</td>
<td>ten</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It should be observed that the numerals 'fifty' to 'ninety,' incl., are not formed as in Sw. and Norse faemti, seksi, etc., but as in D., by the addition of hall- and the suffix sensive; viz., hall-trösensive 'fifty,' D. halvtredsinstitve, etc. This method of reckoning is peculiarly Danish, and resembles the Celtic system, still used in Welsh, and appearing in French.
### Pronouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B.</th>
<th>D.</th>
<th>Sw.</th>
<th>B.</th>
<th>D.</th>
<th>Sw.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ja</td>
<td>'I'</td>
<td>jeg</td>
<td>òà</td>
<td>'he'</td>
<td>han</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maj</td>
<td>'me'</td>
<td>mig</td>
<td>mig</td>
<td>hannum</td>
<td>'him'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ef, vi</td>
<td>'we'</td>
<td>vi</td>
<td>vi</td>
<td>haene</td>
<td>'her'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ed, wi</td>
<td>'us'</td>
<td>os</td>
<td>os</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ë, wi</td>
<td>'you'</td>
<td>ë</td>
<td>ë</td>
<td>ë</td>
<td>'they'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jau, jarr</td>
<td>'you' (acc.)</td>
<td>jér</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The possessives are respectively min, min, met 'my'; pl. mina; din, din, det; pl. dina; refl. sin, sin, set; pl. sina, declined like indef. adjectives; hans 'his'; haene 'her' indecl.; var (vares and rare, varesa), neut. vårt; pl. våra; jaer, neut. jaert 'your'; pl. jaera, declined like adjectives and dårre 'their,' indecl. The relatives are simply the indeclinable daer (nom. only) and såm 'who, which, what.' The interr. is vekki, vekken, vekked; pl. vekkene, a pronominal indef. adjective.

### Verbs

The B. verb, like that of the other Scandinavian dialects, has only two pure tenses; viz., the present and preterite, making the future and past definite by means of auxiliaries. B., unlike D., distinguishes between the sg. and pl. of the pres. tense by omitting the -r from the sg. and in most instances by using -a in the pl. In the pret., as in Sw., B. sometimes has a distinctive pl. form, which, as in colloquial Sw., is dying out in ordinary usage.

The following examples of both strong and weak verbs will suffice to show the formation: å binda 'to bind'; ja binder 'I bind'; vi binda 'we bind'; ja bändt 'I bound,' vi bohe 'we bound'; ja hår bone 'I have bound' = D. at binda, jeg binder, vi binder, jeg bindt, vi bindt; jeg har bundet; Sw. att binda, jag binder, vi binda; jag band, vi bundum; jag har bundit. Ablaut is as common in B. as in its sister idioms; thus, gër 'gives'; gä 'gave,' but gäd 'given'; før 'drives'; jör 'drove'; jord 'driven,' etc. The verb 'to go' requires special mention; å gå 'to go'; ja går, vi gå; já gíll, vi gíll; já e gåd. In Gudhjem, this verb still has the half weak form gánna; gánna, gánna; gánna; gánna.

The weak verbs form the pret. by -de, -t and the past parte. by masc. -der; fem. -t, neut. -t, which neuter form is used with the auxiliary ha 'have' to form the pure past definite. Thus, å ria
'to ride'; ja rier, vi ria; jâ, vi ride ('rode'); jâ hâr rî; â taella 'to count'; jâ taeller, vi taella; jâ, vi talde, jâ hâr tålt; â vilâ 'to rest'; jâ vîler, vi vilâ; jâ, vi vilâda; jâ hâr vilad.

The auxiliaries are konna 'to be able'; jâ kañ 'I can'; vi koñe 'we can'; jâ, vi koñe 'we could'; jâ hâr koñnad; jâ ska 'I shall'; skol'l'e 'should'; past partic. skolad; vel'l'a 'to will'; jâ vel, pl. vi vella; jâ, vi vel'l'a 'would'; jâ hâr vellad 'I have wished.' The verb 'to have' is å hava, jâ hâr, vi há, jâ, vi hâde, jâ hâr hâd.

The middle passive in -s appears, as in D. and Sw., as saetos 'to be put' and the -s is suffixed to all the tenses, including the past partic. satts. The direct use of the -s has disappeared in D. with the past participle, where the -s is suffixed as a rule to the pret. -de and the tense construed with the verb vaere 'to be' as det er lykkedes; but Sw. det har lyckats 'it has succeeded.'

Finally, the following forms should be noted: gak, imper. of gâ 'go'; êstu 'art thou'; wöstu 'wert thou'; sâstu 'sawest thou'; tâwstu 'tookst thou,' etc. The old gerundive in -s also occurs in B. drikkenes = D. drikkende 'drinking,' etc.

MUSIC.

The Bornholmers have preserved a wealth of folk-songs, many of them of real value and excelling those of any part of Denmark in beauty, although none of the D. folk-songs are equal to the Sw. in pure melody and musical form. The Danes have of late years begun to discard their old folk-music for modern European productions and, in their desire not to be "Scandinavian," are inclined to look upon anything essentially old Danish as "vulgar" and belonging to the "servant" classes. This, however, is not the case on Bornholm, where a genuine pride is felt in the old airs.

The following specimen, giving the melody 10 of the song recorded above (II.), is a very characteristic Bornholm air. It will be noted that the old Scandinavian influence lingers in the musical phraseology, a phenomenon which is apparent in many of the island songs, where, of course, the Scandian influence predominates, although some few of the refrain-songs show German contact.

LEGATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
COPENHAGEN.

VIser i Bornholmsk Mundart, p. 134 (n. 6).
Liden Aelva

Go åvæma liðen Ael- na godhe frëdh Go åvæma min daghe

rø-øa a gølma hoi velt frøja jæ vøll, men tawsturi vøstu jø

tø-øa to efrøl dei lakxor vøl snaarø, du en kæm de' bæinat før

sil'-la men jø gør a sånaa pø pil-ærøa nu før jø e pø-

nø nu sø vil'-la vø liðen aelva vø min daghe røga!