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ENGLISH LITERATURE BEFORE
CHAUCER

ENGLISH LITERATURE BEFORE CHAUCER

BY

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IN THE UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

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P R E F A C E

In the following pages an attempt has been made to supply an adequate basis for the study of pre-Chaucerian literature.

The author has spared no effort to keep himself in touch with the results of modern research, but it would be impossible to indicate all the writers—English, American, or German—to whom he has been, from time to time, indebted.

It will, perhaps, suffice to mention, among English scholars, Professors Skeat, Gollancz, Saintsbury, Ker, and Chambers, and, from the other side of the water, Professors Bruce, Klaeber, Lawrence, Schofield, and Wells, the latter of whom has been largely followed in the difficult matter of nomenclature.

Further, a general indebtedness to the writings of Ten Brink, Brandl, Sarrazin and Sieper must be acknowledged, as well as to the *Cambridge History of English Literature*, and the recently published *Histoire de la littérature française* of Bedier and Hazard.

A bibliography of Early English literature is accessible in the *Cambridge History*.

LONDON,

September, 1924.

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PA RT I
THE ANGLO-SAXON PERIOD

I. ORIGINS

An investigation into the sources of English literature will carry us back into the period before the Norman Conquest, and, if we pursue the quest far enough, into that continental period, which ante-dates the settlement of the Germanic tribes in England. The time has gone by, in which it was possible to speak of Chaucer as the "father of English poetry." Even Cynewulf, a discovery of the nineteenth century, is far removed from the period of origins, while Old English literature, in general, is a product of an advanced civilisation.

The English belong by blood-relationship to the great Germanic stock, represented by the Goths, Scandinavians, and West Germanic peoples. For centuries, this stock was engaged in a fierce struggle with Rome, which ended in the downfall of the Empire. We are not left in complete doubt as to the character of the Germanic tribes during this primitive period,—a *catena* of authorities, Caesar, Tacitus, Pliny the elder, Ammianus Marcellinus, Procopius, and Jordanes, come to our rescue, and provide us, at the same time, with valuable geographical data.

The most considerable of these authorities, Tacitus, speaks of Tuisco, Mannus, Nerthus, and Woden as deities worshipped by the Germans during his day, and speculation has extended the list. He refers to the custom of farming land, to great feasts, in which the tribes participated, to dwellings constructed partly above, partly beneath the ground, to decorated halls, to the games that were indulged in, such as dice-playing and chequers.

It has been suspected that the Roman historian's picture of Germanic civilisation is somewhat highly coloured, but there must be a large measure of truth in his account of the social order, and in the stress he lays on their observance of chastity. The institutions of the folk-moot, of the *wergild*, and of cremation appear, likewise, to date back into primitive times. A noteworthy feature of early Germanic society was the position accorded to women. If deeds were the function of men, wisdom was that of women, and later Germanic literature reflects this division of functions fairly clearly.

In the first and second centuries of the Christian era, the ancestors of the English people, the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes, appear to have been located to the east of the Elbe, though their relative situation has not been exactly determined, there being difficulties with regard to the Jutes. Under pressure from without and as a result, possibly, of internal feuds, they began, at the end of the fourth, or the beginning of the fifth, century, to migrate to Britain, where, for several centuries, they were occupied with the tasks of fusion and settlement.

II. OLD ENGLISH POETIC STYLE

The poetry of the Anglo-Saxon period has several characteristics, which serve to differentiate it from that of later English. From a formal point of view, its metre and diction present peculiarities.

Compared with Romance, Old English poetry was accentual rather than syllabic. Every *verse* (or line) is divided into two parts, known as *hemistichs*, the construction of which has been exactly determined. Of the normal

hemistich there are five main varieties, types A, B, C, D, E, illustrated by the following examples:

- A. Wide warodas
- B. ponon Eomær woc
- C. pone selestān
- D. Sige-Scyldingūm
- E. edwenden cwom

Two hemistichs are joined together by *alliteration* to form a verse, the alliteration being attached to stressed syllables only. Any vowel may alliterate with any other, but a consonant only with itself. The laws of consonantal alliteration vary somewhat at different periods. In *Beowulf*, the combinations sp, st, sc alliterate only with themselves, while palatal and guttural 3 appear to be kept apart in late West Saxon poetry. The stressed syllables are represented, in the first place, by nouns and adjectives, infinitives and participles, but finite verbs, adverbs, and even pronouns, prepositions, and conjunctions may fall under the stress. The sub-stress (indicated by the grave accent) falls upon the second syllable (usually long) of trisyllabic words, or upon monosyllables, subordinated to a preceding stressed monosyllable, but not sufficiently weak to fall into the *sinking*, or unstressed element of the foot. The main stress must fall upon a long syllable, i.e. a syllable containing a long vowel or diphthong, or a short vowel or diphthong, followed by two consonants (two short syllables may be made equivalent to one long by *resolution*). In type C, however, the second stress may fall upon a short syllable. The closed character of the syllable is, as a matter of fact, the important matter, not the length of the vowel nor the occurrence of two succeeding consonants. In the following hemistich, a sub-variety of B, the second stress falls quite legitimately upon *wees* :

pā him ālumpen wæs.

Double alliteration in the first hemistich depends upon the nature of the stressed syllables : in the second hemi-

stich this does not occur normally. In *Beowulf*, and particularly in later poems, cross alliteration is sometimes employed; e.g. :

B. Ic de frymda God, and frofre Gæst. B.

Rhyme, as a link between verses, occurs only sporadically, and then, mainly, in suffixes. Leonine rhyme is found as early as *Beowulf*:

D. Ðode yrre-mod ; him of eagum stod B.

Traces of stanzaic division, possibly accidental, have been detected in O.E. epic, for example, in the four-line arrangement of *Beowulf* (ll. 312-19, etc.). The use of the refrain,

That passed over, this likewise may,

in *Dear's Complaint*, makes it certain that some kind of stanzaic division was adopted in early times by elegiac poets. The so-called *First Riddle*, again, shows clear traces of stanzaic arrangement, and is, probably, to be classed as a dramatic lyric. But there is nothing approaching the drama proper in the pre-Conquest period; the dominant types are the epic and the lyric.

Every language, in its primitive stages, displays a poetic vocabulary in marked contrast to that of its prose, and this is true, though to a less extent, of the later stages of languages. Old English poetic diction, like Greek or Sanskrit, was rich in synonyms, not always capable of being differentiated from one another. For example, the word " sea " was represented, both in prose and poetry, by *see*, but poetry can draw upon a host of other terms, *brim*, *wcer*, *hcern*, *sce-streamas*, *swanrdd*, *holma begang*, *here-strceta*, *hwceles edel*, *yda gewealc*, *fisces bced*, *sce-beorgas*, *hwcel-mere*, *gdrsecg*, *holmweg*, *drwela*, etc. Periphrastic expressions, such as *fisces bced*, " bath of the fish," known technically as *kennings*, are characteristic of early Germanic poetry, in general. Some of these were directly based on Latinisms, e.g. *drihten wereda* = dominus exercitum, Lord of hosts, and *celda barn* = filii hominum, sons of men.

Side by side with the native, there was a large Latin element in the Old English vocabulary. Of the latter, prose provides the bulk of the instances, but words like *deofol*, *serifan*, *draca* penetrated into poetry. It is particularly interesting to observe how ideas represented by classical words found expression in native elements, "sacrifice" being rendered by *onsegednes*, "Saviour" by *Hælend*, "disciple" by *gingra*, "devil" by *grynsmid*, "angel" by *ærend-gast*, and so on.

A striking characteristic of Old English poetic style was *parallelism*, the repetition of an idea in a variety of expressions. In the following lines from *Ccedmon's hymn*, the words and phrases italicised stand for a single idea, that of "God," but the series of metaphors serves to enrich that idea in accordance with poetic requirements :

Nu scylun hergan	<i>hefcenricæs</i>	<i>ward</i>
<i>Metudces</i> msecti		end his modgidanc,
uerc <i>uuldurfadur</i> ;		sue he uundra gihuæs,
<i>eci Dryctin</i> ,		or astelidæ.

Apart from merely formal characteristics, Old English poetry is characterised by a note of lofty seriousness. "Death is better than a life of reproach," exclaims Wiglaf towards the end of the *Beowulf epic*, and the same thought finds an echo in *Maldon*. Seriousness and didacticism go hand in hand, and the tendency to instruct finds expression in concise gnomic lines, embedded in epic and lyric alike, e.g.:

A man ought to control his strong spirit and hold it with constancy, and be pure in his relations with wise men (*Seafarer*, ll. 109-10).

The elegy was naturally a favourite form with a race so prone to subjectivity as the Anglo-Saxon, and a sense of regret for days gone by is apparent in most of the shorter poems, like the *Wanderer*, the *Seafarer*, and the *Ruin*. Humour, if we may take it as such, assumes somewhat grotesque forms. Compare the following :

A chief of the Geats severed one of them from its life, from its conflict with the waves, so that the hard war-arrow stuck in its heart: it was the slower in swimming in the wave, since death took it off. (*Beoivulf*, ll. 1432-36.)

III. ANGLO-SAXON KINGDOMS AND THEIR DIALECTS

The Germanic invaders, who began to come over to Britain about the end of the fourth century, consisted of many tribes, most of whom were absorbed into the greater stocks of Angles, Saxons, and Jutes. According to the *A.S. Chronicle*, Hengest and Horsa landed in 449 A.D. at Ebbsfleet in Thanet, at that period an island, separated from the mainland by the river Wantsum. In 477, the South Saxons landed near Selsea Bill, giving its future name to the district of Sussex. The Germanic invaders, as a whole, had taken as their point of attack the old *litus Saxonicum* or Saxon shore, extending from the Wash to Southampton Water. For a long period, it seemed likely that geographical conditions would prevent their advance into the heart of the country. Not until the West Saxons and the northernmost section of the Angles discovered vital points was the defence of the Celts to prove hopeless.

The unity of Britain was arrived at only after a prolonged struggle between the separate tribes of invaders. The Jutish settlement of Kent was the first to rise to prominence under Æthelbert. According to Bede, Æthelbert had established his lordship over the kings south of the Humber, by 597.

He was the third of the English kings that had the

sovereignty of all the southern provinces that are divided from the northern by the river Humber and the borders contiguous to the same. (*Ecclesiastical History*, II, 5.)

Æthelbert's marriage with Bertha, daughter of the Frankish king, Charibert, brought him into contact with the mainland, and, in consequence, with the Christian faith. Kent was christianised in 597, and from Kent missionaries went forth to renew the face of Britain.

The rise of Northumbria is associated with the name of Æthelfrith. To crush the remnants of the rival house of Deira, who had fled into N. Wales, Æthelfrith advanced against the Welsh, and, as a result of a victory at Chester, c. 615, succeeded in establishing his supremacy from the Irish to the North Seas. During the reign of Eadwine, Æthelfrith's successor, Northumbria entered into relationship with Kent, and came under the influence of the new faith. Under Penda, the son of Wibba, Mercia rose for a time to the headship. The greatest warrior of his age, Penda was, at the same time, the typical representative of heathendom. He strengthened himself by defeating the West Saxons at Cirencester, after which he turned upon Northumbria. Two Northern kings, Eadwine and Oswald, fell in conflict with Penda, but, in the battle of Winwaed, the Mercian king himself was slain, and his kingdom was reduced to her ancient boundaries.

The peaceful years of Northumbrian history followed upon the fall of Ecgrith at Nectansmere towards the close of the seventh century, and, for a time, Northumbria became the "literary centre of Western Europe." In the second half of the eighth century, Mercia rose to prominence once more under Offa, her last great king, but, with the beginning of the ninth century, Wessex under Ecgrberht acquired the headship, and, henceforward, it was the peculiar task of her rulers to secure the unification of Britain.

The eighth century was the flourishing period of Old English poetry, the development of which is associated

with the districts of Northumbria and Mercia. But, after the rise of Wessex to supremacy among the kingdoms, the Northern poems were transcribed into West-Saxon, and have come down to us in that dialect. The North was the true home of poetry during the pre-conquest period, though she was robbed of her inheritance. The specimens of the Northumbrian and Mercian dialects, which have been preserved, are of philological rather than literary interest.

To the very beginning of the eighth century belong the *Epinal*, the *Erfurt*, and the *Leiden glosses*, the earliest specimens of the Mercian dialect. The earliest specimens of Northumbrian are *Ccedmon's hymn* and *Bede's death-song*, of the first half of the eighth century. Some of the *Kentish charters* have been assigned to the seventh century. The chief example of ninth-century Mercian is to be found in MS. *Vespasian A 1* : of ninth-century Kentish in the *Charters*. To the tenth-century belong the *Durham Book* and the interlinear translation of the *Gospels of Mark, Luke and John* (Rushworth²), both representative of Northumbrian. A tenth-century specimen of Mercian occurs in the translation of the *Gospel of Matthew* (Rushworth¹) : Kentish of the same period is represented by the *Kentish Hymn* and *Psalm*.

IV. CÆN AND HIS SCHOOL

Caedmon is the first of the Old English poets, whose name has come down to us. In Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, Book 4, will be found the oft-quoted account of how the poet came to acquire his art. It would appear that the lives of Caedmon and Bede over-

lapped, since Bede was born in 673 and Caedmon's death is assigned to 700. It is, therefore, probable that Bede's account of Caedmon may be relied upon. A specimen of the poet's work, in the Northumbrian dialect, is provided in the Moore MS. of Bede's *History*, with the accompanying note, "Primo cantavit Caedmon istud carmen." The text of the hymn is as follows :

Nu scylun hergan	hefænricæs uard
Metudaes maecti	end his modgidanc,
uerc uuldurfadur ;	sue he uundra gihuaes,
eci Dryctin,	or astehdæ.
He ierist sc5p	selda barnum
heben til hrofe,	haleg scepen.
Tha middungeard,	monncynnæs uard,
eci Dryctin,	aefter tiadse,
firum foldu,	Frea allmectig.

It is probable that this version was written down during the first half of the eighth century, so that we are brought near to Caedmon's period. Nothing else can be assigned with certainty to his authorship. There is, however, a mass of poetry preserved in MS. Junius XI, which it was once customary to regard as Caedmon's work. The MS. owes its name to Junius, who printed the contents in 1655. Modern research has shown that the manuscript consists of two parts, — the first containing the so-called *Genesis*, *Exodus*, and *Daniel*, the second *Christ and Satan*. Junius had no hesitation in assigning the whole of this work to Caedmon, in view of the following statement made by Bede :

Canebat autem de creatione mundi et origine humani generis et tota genesis historia, de egressu Israel ex Ægypto et ingressu in terrain repromissionis, de aliis plurimis sacrae ecripturao historiis, de incarnatione dominica, passione, resurrectione et ascensione in caelum, de spiritus sancti adventu et apostolorum doctrina. Item de terrore futuri iudicii et horrore poenae gehennalis ac dulcedine regni caelestis multa carmina faciebat ; sed et alia perplura de beneficiis et iudiciis divinis, in quibus cunctis homines ab amore scele-

rum abstrahere, ad dilectionem vero et solertiam bonae actionis excitare curabat.

The contents of the Junian MS. agree in large measure with this description, but it is impossible, on internal evidence, to assign the whole to one or even two authors. It is quite possible that Caedmon wrote a number of poems similar in style to the Northumbrian hymn, and that these were used by other authors as a basis for such work as has come down to us.

Genesis, the first poem in the MS., consists of two parts, *Genesis A* and *Genesis B*, which have been proved to be of separate authorship. In 1875, Sievers showed that ll. 235-851 (*Genesis B*) differ from the rest of the poem in language, style, and metre, and that this part of the poem is closely related to the Old Saxon *Heliand*. Some twenty years later, a number of Old Saxon verses were discovered in the Vatican library, one of which corresponded with that particular passage in the Old English *Genesis*, which had aroused Sievers' suspicions. The brilliant hypothesis was, thus, converted into a fact, and, though there is difference of opinion as to whether the poems were translated from Old Saxon or were the work of a Saxon, resident in England, it has been impossible ever since to maintain the unity of *Genesis*.

Genesis A (ll. 1-234 and ll. 852 to the close) opens with a eulogy of the Creator, which reminds us of *Cædmon's hymn*. It is, therefore, possible that the author of this section based his poem on material, derived from the poet of Whitby, but now lost. An account of Satan's revolt follows, which theme was afterwards developed by the author of *Genesis B*. The author of *Genesis A* follows the text of scripture fairly closely, though there is some extraneous matter. He is no mere paraphraser, as the descriptions of chaos, of the Flood and of Chedorlaomer's attack on Sodom and Gomorrah prove. But the narrative is not sustained at these levels throughout, and

there can be no question as to the intellectual superiority of the author of *Genesis B*.

The conception of Satan and the dramatic force of the presentment constitute the chief merits of *Genesis B*. The sympathetic treatment of Eve is also noteworthy, and, altogether, *Genesis B* is one of the most remarkable products of Old English poetry. There has been much controversy as to whether Milton was acquainted with the Old English *Genesis*, since it appears from a letter written by Isaac Vossius, Junius' nephew, that Milton and his uncle were on friendly terms. The theory is that Junius acquainted Milton with the contents of the Csedmonian MS., parallels like the following being cited in proof :

Is pes aenga stedic ungelic swide pam odrum pe we ser cudon
(*Gen. B.* 356)

alongside of

O how unlike the place from whence they fell. (*Paradise Lost*, I, 75.)

But it is certain that two poets, writing on the same theme, will have material in common, and it is difficult to realise how Milton, who became blind in 1662, could have made himself minutely acquainted with the contents of an Old English MS., which did not come into Junius' possession until 1651.

The literary qualities of the *Exodus* suggest a third poet. The theme is limited to an episode, and contrasts with the expansive narrative of *Genesis*. The treatment of scripture is very free, with the consequence that an imaginative handling is made possible. The passage dealing with Noah and Abraham (ll. 362-445) has sometimes been regarded as an interpolation, but this view cannot be maintained with certainty.

Daniel is a close rendering of the first five chapters of the *Book of Daniel*, and prosaic in quality. An interesting problem arises in connection with ll. 279-408, which

correspond, more or less closely, with the poem in the Exeter Book, known as *Azarias*. This section appears to be of later date than its context, and has been labelled *Daniel B*.

The second part of the Junian MS. contains the poem, which Grein entitled *Christ and Satan*. This section of the MS. is distinct from the first, and, apparently, the work of three new scribes. It is probable that we have to deal with three distinct poems, concerned with (a) The Fallen Angels (ll. 1-365), (b) The Harrowing of Hell and the Ascension (ll. 366-664), (c) The Temptation (ll. 665-733). On metrical grounds, these have been assigned to the second half of the eighth century : they appear to have been written under the influence of Cynewulf.

V. OLD ENGLISH EPIC

Many elements contributed to the making of the popular epic. Starting, as a rule, from an historical foundation, the epic grew by accretion. The heroic poem, which served as its nucleus, expanded under the influence of other heroic poems, until the lines of the original story were transformed, or confused. The full-grown epic, while retaining the heroic character of its original, differed therefrom in its choice of a narrative method, but the problem as to how the border-line between the two was crossed has not been completely solved. The differences between the Old Norse heroic poems, on the one hand, and *Beowulf*, on the other, may perhaps be taken as illustrating epic-formation at its different stages.

The epic is distinguished by the heroic character of the

deeds and events 'described. The narrative centres round prominent personages of the past, whose achievements, much idealised and even perverted, are held up for the admiration of a later age. Historical facts may supply the basis of the expanded narrative, but accuracy of fact is no part of the poem's qualification. The heroes of *Germania* had become the common property of the separate tribes, and lived in their imaginations as embodiments of heroic qualities. Limitations of country, or of date, were easily over-stepped, with the result that, in one and the same poem, Ermanaric (fourth century), Attila (fifth century), and Alboin (sixth century) are introduced in juxtaposition, while *Beowulf* selects its characters, systematically, from abroad.

The heroic character and the heroic exploit necessitated a style in keeping: hence the stately and dignified tone of the epic, which tends, at its best, towards that ideal of simplicity and directness, demanded of the highest forms of poetry. Further, the range of the epic permitted of a large episodic element, whereby it came to differ radically from tragedy. There is, however, a concise type of epic, exemplified by the *Hildebrandslied*, in which episode is dispensed with, and the tragic note forced into prominence.

The oldest examples of Germanic epic are of popular origin, born of the beliefs and traditions of the people. Despite the changes they underwent at the hands of courtly poets, they retain traces of their origin, and continue to make a universal appeal. The epic of a later date, *Paradise Lost*, for example, is further removed from popular sympathies, more sophisticated, more clearly the work of an individual author, but, nevertheless, heroic, ideal, and didactic, like its predecessor.

Beowulf, *Finnsburg*, and *Waldere* represent all that remains of Old English popular epic. Of these, *Beowulf* is much the most considerable, and deserves the first attention. The poem is preserved in a unique MS., Cotton Vitellius A, XV (British Museum). It was known

to Wanley, though his description of the contents suggests inadequate knowledge :

In hoc libro, qui Poeseos Anglo-Saxonicae egregium est exemplum, descripta videntur bella quae Beowulfus quidam Danus ex Regis Scyldingorum stirpe ortus, gessit contra Sueciae regulos.

The Cottonian library was founded by Sir Kobert Bruce Cotton, who died in 1631. It was sold to the nation by the fourth baronet, Sir John Cotton, in 1700. While lodged at Ashburnham House, the library was damaged by a fire, which broke out in 1731. Over 100 volumes are said to have been burnt, or spoiled, and some 98 rendered defective. The *Beowulf* MS. suffered damage, and a number of the edges, being rendered brittle, ultimately broke off. In 1786, a Danish scholar, Thorkelin, travelled to England, and made a copy of the MS., to which he added a Latin translation. He also arranged for a second copy by another hand. These transcripts, which often throw light on passages obscured by the process of time, are preserved at Copenhagen, and known as *Thorkelin A* and *B*. The date of the MS. is generally regarded as late tenth century. The hands of two scribes are distinguishable, the first ending at *scyran* (l. 1939). It should be observed that the lines of the MS. do not correspond with the verse-lines of the poem, as arranged by modern editors.

Beowulf consists of two parts, (a) *Beowulf* at Heorot, (6) *Beowulf* and the dragon. Further, the first part may be divided into two sections, dealing, respectively, with Grendel and Grendel's mother. Earlier theorists, headed by Mullenhoff, inclined to suspect that these divisions represented independent heroic lays, fused later into one whole. Of the existence of such lays in early Germanic times there can be no doubt, but we cannot be certain of their number, nor of the particular achievement of the poet, who gave to the epic its final form. The influence of the prose *marchen* must also be

reckoned with, since it is clear that *Beowulf* has links with some form of the widespread stories of the *Bear's Son* and *Strong Hans*. The metre of *Beowulf* suggests that it was meant to be read, or at least recited. Its general tone suggests an author associated with the court and belonging to the aristocratic circle of glee-men.

A short summary of the poem will prepare the way for a discussion of origins. Hrodgar, king of the Danes, has built for himself a magnificent palace, called Heorot. His peace is disturbed by the nightly visitations of a monster, Grendel, who carries off the Danish warriors, while they sleep. Hrodgar appeals to Hygelac, king of the Geats, who sends his nephew, Beowulf, to the rescue, accompanied by fourteen followers. Beowulf awaits the appearance of Grendel, tears off his arm, and drives him to his abode beneath the lake. Soon afterwards, Grendel's mother renews the feud and carries off Aeschere, one of Hrodgar's counsellors. Beowulf pursues her to the bottom of the lake, slays her, and cuts off the head of the dead Grendel. In the second part, Beowulf has succeeded to the throne of Hygelac and, in his old age, is called upon to defend his country against the ravages of a fire-breathing monster. Assisted by his faithful companion, Wiglaf, he quells the dragon, but yields up his own life, leaving final instructions as to the care of his kingdom to Wiglaf.

The above summary will suffice to bring out the fact that the scenes and characters of the epic are non-English, though the range of the material has by no means been indicated. In common with all epics on an extended scale, *Beowulf* is provided with a liberal supply of episodes, the personages of which are practically all drawn from non-English sources. Under other names, they figure elsewhere in history and legend, and serve to prove the ubiquity of the Germanic hero. The names Healfdene, Hrodgar, Halga, and Hrodulf, in the main body of the story, have been equated with Halfdan, Hroarr, Helgi, and Hrolfr Kraki, in Scandinavian history and

legend. Hygelac is most plausibly identified with the Ch(1)ochilaicus of Gregory of Tours, and Beowulf himself with the Bodvarr Bjarki of the *Hrolfssaga*. The episodes greatly increase the number of foreign personages, by the addition of heroes like Finn and Hnsef, Sigmund, Ingeld, Eormenric, Ongenpeow and Weland. Of the episodic figures, Offa alone has any claim to be regarded as a national hero, unless we accept the very doubtful identification of Hengest with the Saxon invader.

Anglo-Saxon readiness to base its expression of national life and sentiment upon foreign material is less difficult of comprehension, if we bear in mind the readiness with which nations, like the French, welcomed Arthurian material. The spirit actuating our epic is none the less English because of its foreign scenes and characters; a common ideal of honour and justice occupied the minds of poets throughout Germania. But there is a difficulty in explaining the sudden appearance of this mass of foreign legend at the beginning of the eighth century, the supposed date of composition of the poem. It has been assumed that the material was inherited from the original home of the Angles, from a period at which Angles and Danes lived in juxtaposition. This theory, the *lay-theory*, scarcely allows sufficiently for the activity of the poet, who handled the materials in the eighth century, *Beowulf*, in its final form, is clearly the work of a single writer, to whom we owe the orderly presentment of the material, the uniform treatment of the character of the hero, and the peculiar tone of the sentiment. It has been suggested by Sarrazin that the choice of material was dictated by a revival of interest in Danish history, which came to England about this date from Frisia. In any case, the independence of the *Beowulf* poet is attested by the systematic way, in which he remoulds his materials into harmony with the Christian standpoint. The Biblical element is no mere interpolation; it forms the very weft and woof of the poem. Klaeber has succeeded in showing that *Genesis A* lay to the hand of the author of *Beowulf*,

and that it was assiduously imitated, in particular instances. A new chronology is, therefore, indispensable, and, if c. 700 be accepted as the date of *Genesis A* *Beowulf* must be placed somewhat later.

Beowulf exemplifies the main characteristics of Old English poetry,—its heroic sentiment, its high seriousness, its deep vein of melancholy. "Dead bid sellra eorla gehwylcum ponne edwitlif" might serve as the text of a discourse on heroic loyalty. The apparent triviality of the story is soon forgotten, submerged beneath the lofty sentiment and the heroic outlook. *Beowulf* has no claim to be regarded as a patriotic poem; it is rather the glorification of a hero, who lives as an embodiment of universal Germanic ideals.

It is to the *Linguarum Veterum Septentrionalium Thesaurus* (1705) of the antiquary Hickes that we owe the text of the *Fight at Finnsburg*: the MS. has disappeared from its original home in the Lambeth Palace Library. *Finnsburg* is a tragic tale, told with rapidity and vigour, and, though it lacks a beginning and an end, there is no reason to believe that it extended much further, in its original form. It conforms to the concise heroic type, represented by the *Hildebrandslied*. The chief characters of the poem make their appearance in the Finn episode in *Beowulf*, but, despite this parallel, the situation is not entirely clear. It would appear that Hnæf was treacherously attacked by Finn, or his allies, in the hall of Finnsburg, though the issue of the encounter is left untold. From *Beowulf*, we gather that Hnæf was actually slain by Finn, who was afterwards forced to make terms with his successor, Hengest. The attack on Hnæf was avenged by Gudlaf and Oslaf (apparently the Gudlaf and Ordlafe of *Finnsburg*), who slew Finn in one of his castles. The *Fight at Finnsburg* opens with a vigorous speech on the part of the besieged leader, in which he warns his men that it is the torches of the foe, and no dawning from the East, that they perceive: the moon shines forth, and deeds of woe arise. Then

follows a dramatic account of the incidents of the fight, one of which has been interpreted so as to suggest a parallel to the story of *Sohrab and Rustum*,—Gudlaf and his son, Garulf, fight on opposite sides, the son eventually falling in the fight, though at whose hands we are not told.

In 1860, two vellum leaves containing portions of the story of *Waldere* were discovered in the National Library at Copenhagen. The first fragment consists of a speech, apparently by Hildegud, Waldere's betrothed, in which she reminds that battle-leader of the virtues of his good sword, Mimming, and of his prowess in the past: Waldere, she declares, may well hope to bring to naught the pride of Gudhere. In the second fragment, Gudhere vaunts the quality of his particular blade, once the property of Theodoric and destined for Widia, who assisted his lord against the giants. Waldere replies, challenging Gudhere to begin the onset.

The story is told in full in the *Waltharius* of Ekkehard, a Latin poem in hexameters. Waltharius (Waldere) and Hiltigund (Hildegud) have fled from Attila into Burgundian territory, where they are attacked by Guntharius in their rocky stronghold, despite Hagano's attempts to dissuade him. After the slaughter of Guntharius' men Hagano can no longer hold back, but, after a fierce encounter between the three survivors, the struggle terminates peacefully. The scale of the Latin poem suggests that the original *Waldere* was long drawn out, a supposition all the more probable in view of the length of the speeches and the didactic note at the close. The situation in the second fragment is, on the other hand, akin to that in the shorter epic of *Finnsburg*,—a fight against odds. The background of Germanic saga is well illustrated in the brief compass of the English text by the allusions to Wayland, Attila, Theodoric, and the Burgundian chieftains, Gunther and Hagen.

VI. CYNEWULF AND HIS SCHOOL

As far back as the year 1840, Grimm and Kemble simultaneously discovered that certain Old English poems,—*Elene Christ*, and *Juliana*,—contained, embedded in them in runic letters, a personal name, presumably that of the author : the form of the name varied between Cynewulf and Cynwulf. In 1888, Napier discovered the second form in the poem, known as the *Fates of the Apostles*, and thus extended the list of the poet's works. For more than half a century conjecture has been busy with the Cynewulfian problem, hypothetical lives of the poet have been written, and the canon of his works has been vigorously debated.

The runic passages make it clear that Cynewulf was the author of four poems, which have been arranged conjecturally in the following order,—*Juliana*, *Fates of the Apostles*, *Christ*, and *Elene*. The original dialect of these poems was Anglian, possibly Northumbrian ; they have come down to us in West Saxon transcripts. The hypothetical lives are based, primarily, on the runic passages, which are of a subjective character. Of these, the most important is that contained in the *Elene*, written most probably at the close of the poet's life:

Ever till then was strife,
A drooping torch harassed by wellings of care,
Though he in the mead-hall treasures received,
Appled gold. Affliction was oppressed,
Necessity's companion, endured sorrow,
The narrowing rune, when the steed before him
Measured the mile-paths, proudly rushed on,
Bedecked with wires. Joy is lessened,
And pleasure in the course of years ; youth is changed,
The pride of former days. My possession was once
The gleam of youth. Now are my days,
In their appointed time, departed forth,
My life-joys have vanished, as water glideth away,

The rushing floods. Wealth is for every man
Transient beneath the sky. (*Elene*, ll. 1257-71.)

With this passage is associated an account of how the poet, "fettered with sin," was released from bondage by a vision of the Cross. It would appear then that Cynewulf, in his youth, had been rewarded with treasures in the mead-hall, though not necessarily as a minstrel, attached to a lord. As he grew older, he felt the passing of youth's gleam, and, for a time, abandoned himself to grief. Salvation came to him in the form of a vision. Cynewulf does not deny that he had meditated on religious themes before the appearance of the vision, but he emphasises the fact that the vision was for him in the nature of a new revelation. He may, therefore, have composed religious poems before the date of the *Elene*, while the reference to his old age does not exclude the possibility of his having continued to write after the date of the *Elene*. In addition to these facts, deduced from the poems, linguistic investigation favours the view that Cynewulf belonged to the second half of the eighth century.

Cynewulf's poems belong to the type of religious epic. They display much of the old heroic manner, but with the view-point changed. The subjective note is everywhere prominent, and the poet is interested, first and foremost, in ideas and emotions. Cynewulf possessed the artistic temperament in a high degree. His diction, his metre, his elaborate similes suggest the conscious artist. He was in close touch with the culture of his day, and displays an intimate familiarity with Latin lives of the saints, sermons, and hymns. Above all, he was possessed of a powerful imagination. But Cynewulf's style betrays much inequality; he is unable to sustain himself on the poetic heights. He has little skill in fusing together the elements of a poem, and is apt to lose himself, at times, in vagueness and obscurity.

Juliana is based on a Latin life of the saint, akin to that printed in the *Acta Sanctorum*. Cynewulf fol-

lows his text closely, but, by omitting certain details, he has succeeded in conveying a more favourable impression of his heroine. The speeches tend to be prolix, though there is a rare charm in the father's opening words:

Thou art my daughter, the dearest and the sweetest to my heart, my only daughter on earth, the light of mine eyes, Juliana !

and this despite the fact that the source lay to hand in the Latin original :

Filia mea dulcissima Juliana, lux oculorum meorum.

There are occasional echoes of *Beowulf*, and epic passages proving Cynewulf's enthusiasm for the heroic style. At the close, the poet introduces himself as one, who has particular need of the saint's intercession:

I have great need
That the saint should grant me help,
When the dearest of all things part from me,
When the two comrades sever their kinship,
Their great heart-love, and my soul from the body
Fares on its journey, I know not whither,
Ignorant of its future home.

Christy with its three sections,—the Nativity, the Ascension, and the Day of Judgment,—has claims to be regarded as Cynewulf's finest work. It is true that some of the separatists have attempted to limit his authorship to the second section, extending from ll. 440-867. But this view is based almost exclusively on metrical statistics of Uncertain value, and Dietrich's opinion as to the unity of the poem is not lightly to be set aside. The general tone of the *Christ* is lyrical, though there are passages of a semi-dramatic character, e.g. the dialogue between Joseph and Mary, and the speeches of the heavenly messengers. There is no lack of show-pieces, such as the descriptions of the Seraphim (ll. 385 ff.), Nature's gifts (ll. 604 ff.), the endowments of men (ll.

664 ff.), and the Judgment Day (ll. 867 ff.). The poet is limited by the nature of his theme, but, in an ingenious allegory, he has contrived to introduce, at l. 850, one of those sea-passages, in which he always excels. The general sources of the *Christ* have been tracked out: Part I is based on the ecclesiastical antiphons, Part II on the 29th homily of Gregory the Great, Part III on the Latin hymn, *De Die Judicii*.

The short poem, known as the *Fates of the Apostles*, has suggested some interesting problems. In 1871, Sweet hazarded the opinion that the *Fates* was merely an epilogue to *Andreas*, its predecessor in the MS. Sweet's view has been upheld by several scholars, and would seem to be confirmed by Napier's discovery of the runic passage at its close. On the other hand, it has been maintained that the runic passage is an independent piece, unconnected with the *Fates*, and that no argument can be based upon its position. This is an extreme view, and the *onus* of proof rests with the objectors. Less easy to dispose of is the fact that a combination of *Andreas* with both the *Fates* and the runic passage involves the existence of two epilogues. Skeat supposed the epilogue containing the runes to be the later, and made the scribe responsible for the inclusion of the older version. It is still possible to maintain the view that *Andreas* is the work of an imitator, well-versed in the style of the *Elene*. Heroic passages abound in both, and a romantic element of a somewhat crude character suggests a connection between the two.

The legend of Helena and the "Finding of the Cross" is recounted in the *Acta Sanctorum* and the *Legenda Aurea*. The particular version used by Cynewulf is not extant, but it is highly probable that he made use of a Latin, rather than a Greek, text. The same appears to be the case with *Andreas*, though the story is ultimately derived from the Greek legend in the *Acta Apostolorum*. While the framework of both *Elene* and *Andreas* is, thus, taken over from the legendary lives, the poet permits himself

great freedom of treatment. Significant expressions remind us, at intervals, of his originals, but the descriptive passages find their natural kinship in Old English epic poetry. The terrors of battle and of the sea, as described in these poems, come from a master hand.

Elene and *Andreas* have the appearance of companion poems, but, if common authorship be denied them, we must have recourse to the theory of a Cynewulfian school, in order to explain their resemblances. A number of other poems have also been ascribed to Cynewulf, from time to time, the special characteristics of which are best explained by some such theory.

There can be little doubt that *Gudldc*, as we have it, consists of two parts, the work of independent authors. The view-point is different in the two sections, the second passing lightly over the fiends and concentrating on the circumstances attending the saint's death. *Gudldc A* (ll. 1—818), after a preliminary passage, dealing with the various conditions of man on earth, refers briefly to the saint's youth, and proceeds to his conversion and retreat to the wilderness, where he is assailed by fiends and subjected to temptation. In the end, Bartholomew intervenes, and the fiends are compelled to bear Gudlac to his retreat, where he remains to the day of his death, at one with God and Nature. There is little movement in the poem, which is concerned, chiefly, with mental states and heart-burnings. In the second section, *Gudldc B*, the poet reminds us how death came into the world, as a result of Adam's sin. Holy men, from time to time, have combatted this evil, as instanced by Gudlac, who led a solitary life for fifteen years, harassed by fiends, until, at length, sickness overcame him. In this second poem, a faithful servant ministers to Gudlac's wants, and plies him with questions. *Gudldc A* is not distinguished by imaginative writing, though it possesses a certain charm. An interesting psychological passage emphasises the differences between youth and middle-age (ll. 495-504), and there is a pleasing picture of the hermit's retreat,

" where the song of birds is sweet, the earth abloom, and cuckoos herald the year " (ll. 744-45). The author profæsæ to have been a contemporary of the saint, thus ruling out Cynewulf. On the other hand, it is difficult to deny *Gudldc B* to the author of the signed poems. The rhymæ, both leonine and final, of the opening passage are characteristically Cynewulfian, if not inevitably his. Artistically, *Gudldc B* is much in advance of its predecæsor, and the first author has nothing so charming as the account of the birds, that flew to the hermit's hand, nor so touching as the picture of the saint in his last sicknæs. Nor is the splendour of the closing passage, where the beam of light arisæ from the saint's body, hastening the departure of the mæsenger on his sea-voyage, paralleled in the earlier poem. Some controversy has arisen as to whether the linæ, formerly printed at the end of *Christ* (ll. 1664-92), are not actually the opening of *Gudldc*. It seems probable that this is so (cf. ll. 26-29 with ll. 46-50), in spite of the opposed view that they repræent an independent poem. Both *Gudldc A* and *Gudldc B* appear to have been based on a Latin life of the saint by Felix of Croydon, but the source is handled much more freely in the second. The fact that *Gudlac* was a Mercian (d. 714) has led some of those, who ascribe *Gudldc B* to Cynewulf, to assign the poet also to the same district.

The tendency to ascribe anonymous poems to known authors has ræulted, further, in the ascription of the *Phoenix* to Cynewulf. Thorpe, Ten Brink, and Sweet pronounced the poem his, the opposite view being maintained by Bradley and Sievers. The *Phoenix* and the signed Cynewulfian poems have a certain word-element in common, along with a tendency towards the employment of rhyme :

ne forstæ fnsæt	ne fyræ blsæt
ne haeglæ hryre	ne hrimæ dryre
ne sunnan haetu	ne sincaldu

(*Phoen.* ll. 15-17, cf. *Elene*, l. 1237 ff.)

But the subject of the *Phoenix* belongs to another category than that of the signed poems, and, though it is, by no means, impossible that Cynewulf should have interæted himself in the mediaeval version of the theme, the superior workmanship of the poem tells against his claim. The legend, ultimately of Eastern origin, is referred to by Herodotus and by Ovid. In the early Christian era, there appeared a poem, *De Phoenix*, ascribed to Lactantius, from which the *Phoenix* is derived. Verbal ræemblancæ associate the two poems, Latin and Old English. The symbolism of the latter part of the *Phoenix* is, however, derived from patristic literature.

Perhaps the most interætting of the problems of Old English poetic authorship concerns the *Dream of the Rood*, which corraeponds, in subject-matter and phrase, with the linæ on the Ruth well Cross. Much significance has been attached to the inscription on the cross, but the rendering "Csodmon made me" is highly doubtful, and the reference, in any case, uncertain. On the other hand, the theme of the *Dream* is related to the closing passage of *Elene*, possibly a mere coincidence due to the new position assigned to the cross, in worship, by Pope Sergius. The language of the Ruthwell Cross is almost certainly pre-Cynewulfian, and, though the *Dream* itself has points of contact with Cynewulf, certain featuræ suggæt that it, also, belongs to an earlier period. It is uncertain whether the linæ on the cross repræent the nucleus of the *Dream*, or merely a seriæ of extracts from that poem, though the latter view is more probable. In any case, the combination of long and short linæ in the *Dream* tends to associate it, in part, with the older Csedmonian School. The *Dream of the Eood* must always rank among the finæt products of the Old English muse. Its personification is much more than a literary convention; passion permeatæ the whole. Its brooding melancholy is deeper than Cynewulf's, and the possibility that the author of *Elene* was himself indebted to native models needs to be borne in mind.

VII. OLD ENGLISH LYRIC

Old English poetry possæsæ few, if any, exemplæ of pure lyric. A variety which has been distinguished as heroic lyric is, however, well repræented by *Widsid* and *Deor's Complaint*. The term, dramatic lyric, has also been applied to thæe poems, and the list extended by the addition of the so-called *First Riddle*, the *Seafarer*, the *Wanderer*, the *Wife's Complaint*, and the *Husband's Mæsaige*. From another point of view, the *Wanderer* has claims to be regarded as an elegy, along with the *Ruin* and the *Grave*. But lyricism is closely bound up with form. In certain moods, the Anglo-Saxon poet was capable of imparting a strong emotional tone to the epic line, as the poems of Cynewulf tætify, but the continuous lyric was rarely attempted. The outstanding exemplæ, *Deor's Complaint* and the *First Riddle*, followed later by the *Runic* and *Rhyming poems*, survive to show how far the Anglo-Saxons attained to mastery of this type.

Widsld, the "far travelled," is præerved in the Exeter Book, along with *Deor's Complaint*. The poem consists of two parts, (a) a general catalogue of kings, (6) a list of persons and tribæ visited by the poet. The prologue suppliæ the namæ of the poet and of his tribe, the Myrgings; the epilogue celebratæ the bountiful patrons of the glee-man. The namæ in *Widsict* have given rise to many problems; they cover a period of, at least, three centuriæ, even if we exclude the non-Germanic peoplæ. It is impossible, therefore, to regard the poem as biographical; it is rather a repertory of historical and geographical material, such as a *scop* would find useful for his poetic businæs. The interæt liæ in the more elaborate of the allusions to epic heroes,—Eormanric, Ofifa, Hrodwulf and Hrodgar, Gudhere, Ælfwine, Eadgils, Wudga and Hama. The personal note becomæ prominent in the

account of the poet's relations with the lady, Ealhild, and of his rivalry in song with Scilling.

Like *Widsict*, *Dear's Complaint* treats of a minstrel, though in a læs cheerful way. In the former, there is no hint of serious rivalry between the poet and Scilling, but Deor has lost his lord's favour, supplanted by a rival, Heorrenda. From the formal point of view, the remarkable thing about *Dear's Complaint* is the recurrent refrain,

That passed over : this likewise may.

The poet seeks comfort for himself in the woæ of others, —Weland, the smith, Beadohild, the ill-starred daughter of Nidhad, the more or læs obscure Hild, the Gothic Theodoric, and Eormanric. The stanzas, in which thære personagæ are introduced, vary in length from two to six linæ, but end invariably with the refrain. The personal passage, at the close, is expanded to fourteen linæ, a portion of which may possibly have been interpolated. For the most part, the allusions are clear, but the identity of Hild has not been satisfactorily made out. The assumption that she is identical with Beadohild involvæ a double allusion, and a difficulty in the interpretation of the name, Geat. Possibly, Hild stands for Swanhild, in which case the Geat is Eormanric.

With regard to the interpretation of the so-called *First Riddle*, in the Exeter Book, many views have been held. As the title suggæts, it has been regarded as a riddle, pure and simple ; on the other hand, the tendency of recent opinion has been to class it as a dramatic lyric, in which case some such title as *Eādwacer* would be appropriate. But the theory that the personagæ of the poem are the Norse Sigmund and his sister, Signy, has suggæted a rival title, *Signy's Lament*. The vaguenæs of the back-ground makæ it difficult, however, to determine whether the story is to be associated with Odoacer, or with Sigmund. All that can be said with certainty is that we have before us an intensely passionate little

lyric, seeking expræson in an approximation to the stanzaic form, and making effective use of the refrain :

Wolf, my Wolf, my longings for thee
'Twas they made me sick, thy seldom-comings,
My sorrowful mind, not lack of food.

The *Wanderer* and the *Seafarer* are companion poems, with material in common. Both display enthusiasm for the wilder aspects of Nature, tinged with a brooding melancholy and a sense of the vanity of earthly things. Within the brief compass of each, the style changæ rapidly from the dæcriptive to the gnostic, from the rhetorical quætion to the slow-moving expanded passage. How far interpolation need be assumed in explanation of thæe transitions is a moot point: a blending of paganism with the new faith is characteristic of the later expræsons of Anglo-Saxon poetic genius. The close parallel between the closing sections of the poems may, however, point to a common interpolator. The nucleus of both has been assigned to the eighth century ; they are certainly later than the national epic, from which they differ peculiarly in tone. The central note of the *Wanderer* is the longing of an exile for a lost patron, expræsed with deep pathos, and emphasised by the contrast between his præent situation and the cheerful scenæ of the mead-hall. The wanderer himself appears to be a type rather than an actuality, and attempts to associate him with epic cyclæ are not convincing. The *Seafarer*, with its contrasted picturæ of land and sea, has prompted other theoriæ. It has been claimed as a dialogue by Bieger, Kluge, and Honncher, though none of thæe critics are agreed as to the division of the speechæ. A more plausible view is that of Sweet, who regarded the poem as a monologue, in which an old sailor contrasts the hardships of a seafaring life with its inevitable allure-ment, and proceeds to illustrate his point by instancing the constant claim upon man of the spiritual life. Both the *Wanderer* and the *Seafarer* excel in vivid sketchæ of

the sea and of sea-birds. This nature-painting represents an important phase in the development of English poetry, while the grave reflective tone links the poems with certain aspects of eighteenth-century literature.

A connection between the *Wife's Complaint* and the *Husband's Mæsaġe* has been assumed, with some plausibility, by several critics. Unfortunately, the meaning of the former is often obscure. It would appear (if the evidence of the second poem is relevant) that the lady's husband has dærted her, in consequence of a feud, In his absence, she is imprisoned, or has taken sanctuary, in a cave, under an oak, where she bemoans her fate, so unlike that of the majority of lovers. She is confident that her husband's grief is as great as her own, and poignantly expræsæ her emotion in the concluding outburst,

Woe to her who, with anxious longing, must needs abide
her loved one's coming !

Difficultiæ have arisen owing to the assumption that ll. 17 ff. repræent a curse against the husband, but, as Lawrence has shown, the passage may be interpreted quite otherwise. The theory that the poem is an offshoot from the Offa-cycle, and that the ill-treatment of the lady is due to a forged letter, ostensibly from her husband, is ingenious, though it robs the poem of any possible connection with its companion. A connection with the Cræcentia legend has been assumed by Stef anovič. The interpretation of the *Husband's Mæsaġe* præents fewer difficultiæ, in spite of defects in the text. A lady receivæ a mæsaġe from her husband in the form of a rune, which, curiously enough, assumæ the part of speaker. He has been separated from her for a time, but bids her join him as soon as she shall hear " the mournful cuckoo sing forth in the grove." He has wealth to set at her disposal, and joyfully renews his old-time vows. In the Exeter MS., the poem follows immediately upon the " Reed " riddle (No. 61), and a pretty

guæs that the riddle is actually an introduction to the lyric has been hazarded by Blackburn. On the whole, it seems safer to assume that the lyric has strayed into the riddle collection, owing to *ræemblancæ* between its opening *linæ* and No. 61. It is an attractive thebry that the *Husband's Mæsaġe* suppliæ the true sequel to the *Wife's Complaint*.

The *Runic* and *Rhyiming* poems display a formal connection as experiments in unusual *modæ*. The former consists of twenty-nine stanzas, varying in length from two to five *linæ* : the latter, as its title suggæts, is an experiment in rhyme. In the *Cynewulfian* poems and elsewhere, rhyme makæ sporadic appearancæ, but the elaborate venture, repræented by the second poem, is without parallel in Old English literature. The rhyme forms a link, not merely between ends of *versæ* and half-*versæ*, but, as a specific literary ornament, between succæssive words :

Bcrifendscrad glad þurh gescad in brad :
wsæ on lagustreamc lad, pær me leopu ne biglad
(II. 13-14).

This experiment would seem to find its natural place at the close of the Anglo-Saxon poetic period, but it is asserted that the original dialect was Anglian, and that its date may be as early as the eighth century. As regards subject-matter, the *Rhyiming poem* has links with the *Ruin*, which dæcribæ with much vividnæs a poet's impræssions of a decaying city. The hot baths, introduced at l. 39, have suggæted identification with the Roman city of Bath. The reference to the vanished joys of the hall associatæ the *Ruin* with the first portion of the *Rhyiming poem* (ll. 1-42), and with parts of the *Wanderer*.

The short poem, entitled the *Grave* (twelfth century), is the last echo of Old English lyric : a transition poem in regard to both metre and language, it brings the period to a close on a note of gloom.

VIII. DIDACTIC POEMS

It will be convenient to class under the head of didactic verse a number of poems of various agæ, all of which exhibit a tendency to instruct, in greater or læs degree. Of thæe, the *Riddlæ* might well be claimed for other groupings, but their original connection with proverbial literature justifiæ their inclusion here.

The Old English *Gnomic versæ* repræent a particular aspect of the wisdom literature of our ancætors. Sententious sayings of a proverbial or moral character, they find expræsion in detached linæ, or seriæ of linæ, constructed on the alliterative principle. Ordinarily, the compass of the gnome is brief, but in narrative poetry it is expanded, for purposæ of illustration, into the gnomic passage. Contrast the following maxim from the Cottonian Collection :

geongne	æpeling	sceolan gode gæidas
byldan to	beaduwe	and to beahgife

with the expanded passage in *Beowulf*, ll. 20-25. The gnomic verse repræents popular wisdom on the subject of nature, man, and the gods. The point of view is often definitely heathen, sometimæ equally definitely Christian. But parallels in other literaturæ suggæt that the nucleus of the collection was pre-Christian,—apart from which theory it would be difficult to explain the reference to Woden, among other things. The style of the versæ is bald, with the exception of certain passagæ of an evidently later date. Of thæe, the linæ on the Frisian wife stand in the very forefront:

Dear is he and welcome
 To the Frisian wife,
 When the boat comæ to land :
 His keel is come,
 Her husband home,

Her own food-giver:
She invitæ him in,
Washæ his raiment,
Givæ him new weeds.
There waits him on shore
What his love needs.

A mixture of old and new may, likewise, be found in the *Charms*, though the outlook is more definitely pagan than elsewhere. Thæe charms repræent a particular aspect of Indo-European folk-lore and possæs formal characteristics, paralleled East and Wæt. The opening passagæ are frequently epic in character, and this throughout the range of Indo-European literature. An invocation follows, addræsed to some mysterious power, and accompanied by the recitation of the magic formula. For the ridding of the disease, flattery, threats, or even sympathetic repræentation is relied upon. Many of the charms contain detailed directions as to method of procedure. The incongruity of the material is illustrated in the juxtaposition of the "mother of earth" and the Almighty. Charms were recited to promote the fruitfulness of earth, to prevent loss of cattle, or to expel diseases from men and animals. Such literary interæt, as they have, depends entirely upon the epic introductions.

As examplæ of literary composition, the *Riddlæ* are infinitely superior to anything in this department of didactic literature : they have a place here, exclusively, on the ground of their origin in folk-wisdom. The distinction between literary and popular typæ is always difficult to maintain. Popular material, in the hands of an artist, may take to itself literary form, and, conversely, a cultured type may degenerate in the mouths of the people. The comparative method has proved the world-wide distribution of many riddle-subjects,—for example, the ice, the ship, the rake. Where a Latin source can be adduced, the riddle may, certainly, be classed as literary, though its ultimate origin be popular.

The only distinction, which can be maintained with profit, is that between the highly-finished poetic riddle and its more or less naive congener. Collections of Latin riddlæ date back to the century of three-lined hexameter poems, bearing the name of Symphosius (fourth to sixth century). To the seventh and eighth centuriæ belong the collections of Aldhelm, Tatwine, Eusebius, Boniface, and Alcuin. But, apart from the riddlæ on the " byrny " and the creation (derived from Aldhelm) and that on the bookworm (based on Symphosius), the Exeter Collection is not greatly indebted to any known predeceßors. The solution of the Old English riddlæ præents many difficultiæ, as may be judged from the variety of those offered. *Riddle XI*, for example, has been variously interpreted as an anchor (Trautmann), the wake of a ship (Dietrich), a barnacle-geese (Stopford Brooke), a water-lily (Holthausen). The solutions are not, however, equally plausible, and it is likely that the field of agreement will gradually widen. From the literary standpoint, the riddlæ vary greatly in value, but the bætt rank among the finest products of Old English poetry.

The poems known as the *Endowments of Men* and the *Fate of Men*, corraepnd to one another, in part. Between them, they cover the range of man's accomplishments as known to Anglo-Saxon society, but their methods differ. The outlook of the *Endowments* is broader, more discursive : a smaller canvas servæ the author of the *Fate*, while his sketchæ are more elaborate : for example, those of the harp-player and the falconer. The superior art of this latter author is further evinced in the opening section, which is without parallel in the *Endowments*. The various perils, that confront a man in his journey through life, are reviewed, in succæssion, thæe being, for the most part, such forms of violent death as were particularly familiar to primitive societæ. The pathos of the poem turns upon the prominence accorded to the man's mother,—a witnæs, in one instance, of her son's doom.

The *Physiologus* is ultimately of Eastern origin: its influence in the Wæt was directly due to Greek and Latin versions. The Old English poem is a mere torso, compared with the Latin (Bern 233 and Royal 2 C XII, Brit. Mus.), but it has not been proved that its original scale was much expanded. Though the Bern version contains thirty-two typæ of birds and animals, the Old English has three only,—the Panther, the Whale (or shield turtle, according to Cook), and a more or læs obscure bird. By a procæs of symbolism, the panther is taken as a type of Christ and the whale of the devil, the sketch of the latter being, as it happens, the more entertaining. The whale is a source of danger to seamen, its skin ræemblæ a rough stone, and, as it swims near the sand-hills, it is readily mistaken for an island. Sailors rope their ships to this land, which is no land, kindle a fire thereon, and ræt themselvæ, enjoying the weather. Suddenly, they are borne away to the bottom, men and væsel together. The moral in the Latin version runs :

Sic patiuntur omnæ qui increduli sunt, et quicumque ignorant diaboli astutias ; spem suam ponentæ in eum et operibus eius se obligantes, simul cum illo merguntur in gehennam ignis ardentis.

The tenth-century *Salomon and Saturn* belongs to a widely distributed type, bæt repræented in the Germanic field by the Old Norse *Vafpruðnismdl*. The subject-matter is akin to that of the gnostic versæ and of the riddlæ, though the form is that of the dialogue. Solomon's antagonist is Protean in shape, varying in the different versions between Saturn, Marcolf, Asmodeus, Abdimus, and Hiram, and, dæpite his reputation as a repository of wisdom, Solomon is sometimæ worsted. The contæt is æsentially one of wits, in which Solomon plays a grave part, as the champion of religion. The tone of his opponent variæ according to time and place, with the ræult that the dialoguæ sometimæ fell into disrepute. In Old English, there were three distinct

versions connected with *Salomon and Saturn*, two in metre and one in prose. The verse dialoguæ differ greatly in tone, the first centering round a vigorous defence of the Pater Noster and concluding with a seriæ of prose passagæ, bearing an unmistakable relationship to Eastern romance. Yet this version possæsæ none of the imaginative qualitæ of the second, and it is in this latter that the kinship between the various typæ of didactic literature is most clearly exemplified. The linæ:

Niht bid wedera peostrost nyd bid wyrda heardost
sorh bid swierost byrbhen slæp bid deade gelicost.
(Kemble's edition, 11.621-24.)

are purely gnomic : a fully developed riddle on the theme of old age is the subject of ll. 563-82, with a conciser type following in ll. 663-64 : lastly, quitting didacticism, we draw perilously near to the charmed land of romance in Saturn's ræponse to the quætion concerning " the land where no man may venture."

The metrae in the British Museum MS. of *Boethius* (Otho A. 6) extend the scope of didactic poetry over the field of history and philosophy. The poems themselvæ attribute the authorship to Alfred. On the whole, they may be regarded as versified renderings of a prose original, with wholæale modifications of the older rulæ, but without the tendency to sink into mere doggerel. The nature passagæ attæt the poet's skill, and considerable imagination is evinced in the oft-cited linæ on Weland, part of a passage in the strain of the familiar mediæval lament:

Hwser sint nu pæ wisan Welandæ ban,
pæs goldsmidæ, pe wsæ geo mserost ?

Another product of the school, the *Menologium* or poetical calendar, is extant in the Abingdon version of the *Chronicle*. The list of saint's-days and the obsolete namæ of the months impart a curious antiquarian interæt

to this calendar, while the dæcriptions of the seasons, particularly of summer, ræcue it from mediocrity.

The remaining didactic poems fall together as exemplæ of religious instruction. The oldæt, the *Father's Instruction*, a grave discourse on the linæ of the *Wisdom of Solomon* and analogous to the Middle English collections, is associated with the namæ of ^Elfred and Hend-ing. The *Addræs of the Soul to the Body* is extant in two texts in the Exeter and Vercelli MSS. Of the former, the theme is the addræs of a sinful soul to the body, which it revisits : the Vercelli text, running parallel with the Exeter as far as l. 129, passæ, however, at that point to a sequel, in which a virtuous soul displacæ the sinful. Though the weakæt part of the poem, this has interæt as a unique treatment. The material common to the MSS. repræents a well-worn theme, handled with much power : the soul revilæ the body for its luxurious-næs, and expatiatæ upon its doom in the grave :

Bid pæt heafod tohliden,	handa tolidode,
geaglas toginene,	goman toslitene,
sina beod asocene,	swyra becowen,
fingras tohrorene,	
rib reafiad	rede wyrmas,
beod seo tunge totogen	on tyn healfa
hungregum to hropre.	

A poem on the *Last Judgment*, a set of *Prayers*, a *Hymn*, and a *Creed* complete the tale of Old English didactic verse.

IX. HISTORICAL POEMS

The historical poems so called include all that are known to have been inspired by some definite event. It is probable that the older epic contained a nucleus of fact, but this had tended to become submerged under an accretion of legend. In the later historical poetry the events described are practically contemporaneous with the poems, and these have come down to us, as far as can be surmised, in the condition in which they were first produced. The historical poetry of the tenth and eleventh centuries illustrative, in a remarkable way, the strength of the literary tradition. *Judith* and *Maldan* rank amongst the best products of the Old English poetic spirit, and, even where the verse betrays degeneration, the characteristics of the older school are largely present. Alliteration and *kennings* continue in vogue, though with inevitable modifications. The fact, however, that the eleventh century poem, the *Death of Edward the Confessor*, has phrases in common with older epic schools affords a remarkable proof of literary continuity.

The inclusion of *Judith* under this category cannot be altogether justified. It is essentially a heroic poem, celebrating the character of a Jewish maiden and her exploits against the Assyrians. The source lies to hand in the apocryphal book so named. It is possible, however, that the poet intended an allegory, and that he was inspired by the heroism of Ædelflaed in her conflict with the Danes. Foster's theory is reinforced by the fact, pointed out by Cook, that Ædelflaed's grandmother bore the name of Judith. The art of literary portraiture is finely illustrated in the contrasted pictures of Judith and Holofernes. Moreover, the poem displays both life and movement, the original being frequently amplified, particularly where the tradition of the heroic school suggested a freer handling. From the metrical point

of view, there is additional evidence of elaboration. Linæ tend to fall into sequencæ, distinguished by the employment of identical verse-typæ (cf. ll. 182-85), or by an alliterative device, whereby the last stræsed syllable in a line dictatæ the alliteration of its succæsor. Sequencæ of expanded linæ occur frequently, and serve to enhance the dignity of the poem. In Sweet's words, *Judith* shows a combination of "the highæt dramatic and constructive power with the utmost brilliance of language and metre."

The *Battle of Maldon* was probably composed soon after 991, the year of Byrhtnod's struggle with Olaf. The vividnæs of the dæcriptions suggæts the work of an eye-witnæs, as well as the fact that the name of the Danish leader is omitted. Unfortunately, the poem is incomplete, and we have no means of determining its original compass. The spirit of *Maldon* approachæ near to the Homeric. The catalogue of heroæ, with their lineagæ and separate conflicts, is æsentially epic while the note of loyalty, permeating the whole, is characteristic not only of Germanic, but of heroic, poetry, in general.

Chronologically, the *Battle of Brunanburh* has precedence over *Maldon*, but its literary importance is considerably læs. Its theme is the heroic fight (A.D. 937) in which Ædelstan and Edmund overcame Olaf and his ally, the Scottish Constantine. Both English and Celtic sourcæ bear witnæs to the grim character of the struggle. Though the compass of the poem is brief, the poet finds opportunity to introduce a spirited reference to the raven, the eagle, and the wolf, the traditional concomitants of battle:

"Many a carcass they left to be carrion,
 Many a livid one, many a sallow-skin,—
 Left for the white-tail'd eagle to tear it, and
 Left for the horny-nibb'd raven to rend it, and
 Gave to the garbaging war-hawk to gorge it, and
 That gray beast, the wolf of the weald."

(Tennyson's trans.)

As we proceed through the tenth and the eleventh centuriæ, the literary value of thære poegas steadily declinæ. The *Recovery of the five boroughs* is merely an ingenious collection of namæ, with the *Edgar* poems little in advance of it. The remarkable thing is the strength of the literary tradition and its application to novel subjects, like the appearance of the comet in *Edgar's death*. The old metrical rulæ are still followed, and the *kennings* find parallels in the older poetry. The poem, entitled the *Death of Prince Alfred*, introducæ the eleventh century, and prænts a curious problem. Thorpe took it for prose, but the sporadic occurrence of rhyme and metrical feet makæ it probable that its original form has been modified:

Ne weard dreorlicre dæd geddn on pison earde
syppan Dene comon and her frid namon (11.11-12).

A similar problem arisæ out of the linæ on *William the Conqueror*, where rhyme is employed throughout, and the rhythm suggæts a popular four-beat metre. *Edward's Death*, however, is not to be associated with the popular school. Dæpite its date, the second half of the eleventh century, its style surpassæ that of the *Edgar* poems, while its observation of the rulæ is practically faultlæs.

X. OLD ENGLISH PROSE

In the evolution of literature, prose makæ, as a rule, a tardier appearance than verse. The account of Old English prose, has, accordingly, been ræerved till this point. As a matter of fact, the oldæt examplæ of Old

English prose appear as early, if not earlier, than any of the extant verse-piecæ. But allowance must be made for the disappearance of much verse, the existence of which is involved in our theoriæ of epic origin. Literary prose is, in any case, a later phenomenon than verse.

The oldæt specimens of prose fall under the head of charters, laws, chroniclæ, and religious documents. Of thæe, the *Charters* comprise such material as grants of land, leasæ, and wills. The predominance of Latin, as a legal language, ræulted in its almost exclusive employment in the early charters, and it continued to be used, side by side with the vernacular, down to the end of the Anglo-Saxon period. The earliæt specimens of native charters, Saxon or Kentish, reveal no tracæ of literary composition, and possæs linguistic interæt, merely. Not until the middle of the ninth century, do native charters begin to be numerous : they have proved invaluable for the light they throw upon Anglo-Saxon law and custom.

The oldæt English *Laws*, compiled at the beginning of the seventh century, bear the name of ^Ethelbert of Kent. They have survived, however, only in Wæt Saxon, and possæs no linguistic featuræ, which can be dated earlier than the eighth century. The code opens upon an ecclæiastical note, by providing against injuriæ done to the Church. Then follow tariffs for injuriæ done to the king, the *eorl*, and the *ceorl*. The sanctity of private dwellings is upheld,

Gif man rihthamscyld purhstind, mid weorde forgelde,

and personal injuries are variously assæsed, 30s. for shoulder-laming, 3s. for ear-splitting, etc. The teeth and fingers are separately priced, the latter being distinguished as *puma*, *scytelfinger*, *middelfinger*, *goldfinger*, and *se lytla finger*. The occasional employment of alliteration suggæts an effort towards a more ornate style. The code of Hlodaere and Ēadric (673-685) betrays an advance in sentence-structure;

Gif mannæ æne eorlcundne mannan ofslaehd, pane de sio preom hundum sell' gylde, se agend pone banan agefe and do pær prio manwyrd to,

while the *Wihtrced Code* (695) makæ some use of end-rhyme. As for the *Laws of Ine*, extant only as an appendix to Alfred's, thæe date back to the seventh century. After Alfred's day, codæ continued to be produced down to the Conquæt, with the ræult that Old English possæsæ a seriæ of legal documents more considerable than that of any other Germanic nation.

The *A. 8. Chronicle* is, of all the prose products inaugurated during the pre-Ælfredian period, by far the most interætting and important. In its extant form, as represented by its seven MSS., the work is composite, revealing the inter-action of chronicle upon chronicle. It has been the task of modern scholarship to disentangle the threads, and recover its history, from the beginning. No doubt, the *Chronicle* originated in an attempt to distinguish the years, as they passed, by a seriæ of outstanding events. Already at Canterbury, records of the appointment of bishops, of conflagrations, and other events had been set down, in the seventh century. The first organisation of the *Chronicle* is usually assigned to Winchæter: it had reached considerable maturity by the time of Æthelwulf (839-858), with whose name the first redaction appears to terminate. In the early part, a good deal of foreign material was afterwards incorporated, the source of which has been sought in some such treatise as the *Eecapitulatio*. The famous episode of *Cynewulf and Cyneheard*, selected by Milton as a possible theme for an epic, illustratæ the native vigour of the early *Chronicle*, at its bæt. According to Plummer, separate chroniclæ existed at different centræ, at Winchæter, Abingdon, Worcæter or Evæham, Peterborough, and Canterbury, between all of which there was more or læs interaction. Under Ælfred, the *Winchæter chronicle* (Parker MS.) was reorganized and elaborated, the events of 871-897 being handled with much distino-

tion. The interæt of the narrative is maintained during the earlier years of the tenth century, and again, towards the close of that century, when the record suddenly terminatæ. It is noteworthy that records in verse begin to make an appearance from the year 938. About 1001, the *Winchæter chronicle* appears to have been transferred to Canterbury. The local noticæ in MSS. Cott. Tib. A 6 and Cott. Tib. B I further suggæt the existence of an *Abingdon chronicle*, the shorter version, in the first MS., coming down to 977, the second to 1066. With thæe, the *Mercian register* (902-925), with its enthusiastic account of Æthelfæd's exploits against the Danæ, has been incorporated. Again, the *Evesham chronicle* so-called (Cott. Tib. B. IV) is closely related to that of Peterborough (Laud. Misc. 636), both embodying the Northern annals of 733-806: this record is further linked to that of Abingdon. The *Peterborough chronicle* introducæ much local detail into the early pagæ of its copy, and, in its closing sections, betrays a Southern interæt, for which a Kentish source has been assumed. It contains highly important material for the eleventh century, and concludæ with the famous passage concerning the anarchy of Stephen's reign. The deterioration in the general style of the *Chronicle* becomæ apparent after a comparison of the records in the ^Elfredian sections with those at the close of the Peterborough record.

It was in the second half of the ninth century under ^Elfred, that English prose first attained to importance. The activitiæ of the king in the various fields of government, of legal and military organization, have often been emphasised: his interæt in literature is attætæd by the zeal, with which he prepared versions of standard books, adapted alike for cleric and layman. During his reign, the centre of culture was transferred from Northumbria to Wæsex, and, though the South was more naturally the home of prose, Wæsex was familiarised with the poetical products of the North, in various

adaptations. In thæe ræpects, the activitiæ of Alfred's reign invite comparison with those of Charlemagne.

In his endeavour to translate those monuments of Latin scholarship, which seemed bæt adapted for his educational purposæ, Alfred was assisted by a bånd of scholars, the Welshman, Asser, Grimbald of Flanders and John of Corvey. The order of his works, though known approximately, has not been exactly determined.

The *Encheiridion* or *Handbook*, was Alfred's first tentative effort in the direction of literary composition. The book is non-extant, but the term *flosculi*, under which it is referred to by Asser, suggæts that it consisted of cullings from various sourcæ. The rendering of thæe passagæ into the vernacular inaugurated the king's career as a translator.

The *Hierdeboc* or *Pastoral Care*, a version of the *Cura Pastoralis* of Gregory the Great, is generally placed at the head of JSlfred's translations. Its closenæs to the original suggæts journeyman-work, but the *Preface* is an excellent piece of original writing, and its function is clearly that of an introduction to the whole seriæ of translated books. The account of the state of learning in uElfred's day and of the methods employed in his work as translator impart unique interæt to this particular section. The book, as a whole, is marred by an excæs of allegory, the ræponsibility for which ræts with Gregory.

In the *Historia adversus paganos* of Paulus Orosius Alfred discovered a work better adapted to the use of the laity than the *Pastoral Care*. To an unsophisticated audience of the ninth century its appeal must have been exclusively historical or geographical, and the thæis, which Orosius set out to expound, would easily be relegated to the background. Recognising its real interæt, Alfred inserted original accounts of the voyagæ of Ohthere and Wulfstan, which afterwards earned a place for themselvæ in Hakluyt's great compilation. As a whole, the book is freely manipulated, Ælfred's function

throughout being that of a guide, at liberty to add, or omit, as he thinks fit. The mass of classical lore, now introduced to an English audience for the first time, must have been greatly influential in widening the mental horizon of its ninth-century readers.

The translation of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* differs from its predecessors by reason of its close rendering. Much doubt has arisen as to the authorship, on the ground both of idiom, and of the exactness with which Mercian place-names are rendered. The omission of Gregory's religious activity in England and other matters is still unexplained. The account of Csedmon, illustrated by a Wæt Saxon rendering of his famous hymn, constitutes a section of first-rate interest. Ælfric is the chief authority for Alfred's authorship.

The composite code of *Laws*, embraced under the name of Ælfred, betrays both an ecclesiastical and a secular origin. There are insertions from the Mosaic code, and a reference to the history of synods throughout the world. On the other hand, recognition is accorded to Alfred's predecessors in Britain by the inclusion of the laws of Ine, of Offa, and of Ædelbert, which appear, side by side with Alfred's ordinances, in a more or less revised form.

The *De Consolatione Philosophiæ* of Boethius was probably translated towards the close of Alfred's literary career, though an earlier date has been assumed, on the ground that the king derived assistance from Asser. The abstract character of the book, with its discussions upon Fate and Providence, would seem, however, to argue a more mature stage in Alfred's literary development. Alfred displays a certain kinship with the Neo-Platonic philosopher, and indulges in fervent reflections, in keeping with his original. The interest of the translation is greatly enhanced by these additions, while the simile constitute a highly novel feature.

In the last instance, Ælfred set himself to provide a rendering of Augustine's *Soliloquia*, the style of which suggests a connection with the *Consolation*. Once more,

the subject is philosophical, concerned with the nature of God and of the soul. In Book III, new sourceæ are drawn upon. Taken together, the *Soliloquiæ* and the *Consolation* serve to reveal the depth of Alfred's religious convictions. The *Preface* to this closing book is in the nature of an Epilogue to the whole seriæ of translated work.

An attempt to ætimate Alfred's position in the history of prose must, necæsarily, emphasise the pioneer character of his work. Throughout, we find him in a position of pupilage to Latin models, with the ræult that a large importation of foreign idioms was inevitable. He has the credit, however, of having recognized the importance of the vernacular, which he ætablished on a sound footing, and, thus, prepared the way for Ælfric and his succæsors. The importance of his independent insertions, leavened as, they are by his personal enthusiasm, cannot be over emphasised. " He found learning dead, and he rætored it; education neglected and he revived it."

The condition of English monasticism, during the first half of the tenth century, appears to have been deplorable. Ælfred's efforts in the direction of reform had failed to permeate the community, at large, and, for fifty years, the Emperor kings were too much occupied with the Northmen to attend to such matters. Among the clergy, Alfred found no imitators, save Werferth of Worcæter, who translated Gregory's *Dialoguæ* under the king's inspiration. The impulse towards reform came, at length, from the Benedictinæ, and was fully developed during the reign of Edgar (959-975). Though its origin datæ back to the fifth century, the Benedictine reform failed to reach England before the tenth century. Insisting, as it did, upon the regular performance of the liturgy, upon daily study, and manual labour, the *Benedictine Code* had rapidly changed the face of things upon the Continent, and, under Ædelwold, its influence spread from Fleury to Winchæter and Abingdon. Dilapidated foundations were rætored, secular monks expelled, and

scriptoria ætablished throughout the country. Somewhat earlier, under Dunstan, reforms had been introduced at Glastonbury, not only in the study of letters but in the fine arts generally,—Church music, embroidery, smith-work, and metal-casting. But Dunstan's efforts were largely isolated, and the organisation of reform was left to his succæsor. Under Ædelwold, the study of grammar and poetry was pursued with vigour, he himself supplying a free translation of the famous *Code*, together with an account of the history of the Church in England.

After JSlfred, the most important figure in Old English literary history is JSlfric. His relation to the reform movement is clearly seen from the fact that he was a pupil of Ædelwold, who had himself studied under Dunstan. Born c. 955, Ælfric was educated at Winchæter, whence he removed, in 987, to Cerne (or Cernel) in Dorsetshire. In 1005, he became abbot at Eynsham, and died there c. 1025. Ælfric's *Homiliæ* were composed at Cerne : they had been anticipated, but in a different way, by the Blickling seriæ. Thæe latter had covered the period from Christmas to Pentecost, concluding with legendary accounts of John the Baptist, Peter and Paul, Sts. Martin, Michael, and Andrew. In comparison with the more refined method of Ælfric, their style appears homely ; legendary material abounds, together with a certain happy intrusion of poetic matter, derived largely from the sourcæ. For example, St. Martin offers half his cloak to a poor man, and, on the following night, seæ the Christ clad in the same garment, St. Paul has a vision of the souls of the wicked, clinging to a cliff, which risæ above a dark pool, filled with sea-beasts, and so on. Ælfric viewed the ecclæiastical legends in a critical spirit, adopting a plain and direct exegæis, with explanations of foreign namæ and referencæ to incidents of daily life. His *Homiliæ* fall into two seriæ, dated, on the evidence of the dedication to Archbishop Sigeric, c. 991 and 994. Forty homiliæ, including interpretations of the Pater-noster and Creed, together with accounts of John the

Baptist, Laurentius, Bartholomew, Michael, Clement, and Andrew, constitute the first *seriæ*, the *sourcæ* being indicated in the preliminary *addræs*. The English preface, added later, explains how -Ælfric afterwards translated the whole material into the vernacular for the benefit of unlearned men :

Then it ran in my mind, I trust through God's grace, that I would translate the book from Latin into English, not from the assurance of much learning but because I saw and heard much folly in many English books, which ignorant men innocently reckoned as wise : and I grieved that they neither knew nor possæsed gospel teachings in their writings, save those alone who knew Latin, and those books excepted which Alfred the king wisely turned from Latin into English, which are to be had.

In the second *seriæ* of forty-five, *homiliæ* upon the Nativity, Palm Sunday, and the efficacy of the Holy Mass appear side by side with accounts of Gregory the Great, the Invention of the Holy Cross, and the Seven Sleepers. The two *seriæ*, each originally of forty *discoursæ* and associated with particular Sundays and Feast Days, were *dæigned* for instruction in doctrinal matters and *ecclæiastical* history. The tendency to overstrain interpretation is shared by Ælfric with his contemporariæ, but there are enlightened *passagæ*, such as the following from the Mid-Lent Sunday discourse (1st *seriæ*) :

God hath wrought many *miraclæ* and daily works ; but the *miraclæ* are much weakened in men's sight, because they are very usual. It is a greater miracle that God Almighty every day feeds all the world, and directs the good, than that miracle that he filled five thousand men with five *loavæ*.

The *ornatenæs* of the language, with its care for rhythm and alliteration,

Fela wundra worhte God, and daeghwamlice wyrcd,
marks an advance upon Alfred: at the same time, the

manner is sympathetic and in touch with its audience. In other homiliæ, however, Ælfric drew more largely upon thære adventitious aids, and in the *Saints' Lives*, 996-997, his rhythm comæ perilously near to that of verse.

Ælfric's two text-books, the *Latin Grammar* and the *Colloquy*, appear to have been written immediately after the *Homiliæ*. The *Grammar*, based upon Donatus and the *Institutionæ Grammaticæ* of Priscian, is followed in some MSS. by a *Latin-English Glossary*. More interæting is the *Colloquy*, accompanied in MS. Tiberius A. 3 by an interlinear translation. The form is that of the dialogue, introducing the pupil to the various functions of the ætata of the realm. In this way, Ælfric inaugurated a new and direct method of instruction in both language and general knowledge :

- Hwylcne crseft canst pu ?
 M. Qualem artem scis tu ?
 Ic eom fiscere
 P. Ego sum piscator
 Hwset begytst pu of pinum craefte ?
 M. Quid adquiris de tua arte ?
 Biglcofan, and scrud, and feoh.
 P. Victurn, et vætitum, et pecuniam.
 Hu gefehst pu fiscas ?
 M. Quomodo capia placæ ?
 Ic astigie min scip, and wyrpe max mine on ea, and
 P. Consendo navem, et pono retia mea in amne, et
 angil (sea) ic wyrpe and spyrtan, and swa hwset swa
 hamum projieio et sportas et quicquid
 big gehsefta ic gemine
 ceperint sumo

Ælfric's translations from the Bible bear an intimate relationship to his homiletic work : the versions are free, with large omissions. The task was not completed, and we have only portions of the *Pentateuch*, of *Joshua*, and *Judgæ* from his pen. He stata, however, that he had been

engaged upon other books, namely *Kings*, *Daniel*, *Job*, *æther*, and the apocryphal *Judith*. The alliterative style connects thære versions with the *Saints' Livæ*. Along with the *Rushworth*, the *Lindisfarne*, and the *Wist Saxon versions of the Gospels*, they repræent a preliminary attempt to provide Englishmen with a vernacular rendering of the various portions of the Bible. Somewhat later, ÆKric wrote a *Treatise on the Old and New Tætaments*, summarising the various books, and, thus, providing an interætting introduction to the study of the Bible, in general.

In addition to thære works on a large scale, ^Ifric contributed a *Life of Aedelwold*, translations of the *Hexameron* of Basil and of Bede's *De Temporibus*, bæidæ a number of detached letters and homiliæ. Among thære latter, the *Pastoral letter* to Bishop Wulfsige attracted attention during the Reformation period, Ælfric being claimed as a follower of Ratramnus in his spiritual conception of the Eucharist. His *Easter Homily* also took rank among the more important of theological pronouncements :

Whatsoever there is in the housel , which givæ us the substance of life, arisæ from its ghostly power and invisible efficacy.

Ælfric ranks, accordingly, as a theologian of distinction, second only to his position as a cultured repræentative of letters.

The *Homiliæ* of Wulfstan, bishop of York and Worcæter betray a fiery indignation, prompted by the evils of Ædelred's reign. Not more than half-a-dozen, perhaps, are authentic, but, among thære, the famous *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* occupiæ the central position. In his employment of poetic devicæ Wulfstan went beyond Ælfric, and his alliteration, assonance, and end-rhyme suggæt kinship with contemporary ballads :

Ne dohte hit nu lange inne ne ute, ac wææ here and hunger,
bryne and blodgyte, on gewelhwylcon ende oft and gelome ;

and us stalu and cwalu, stric and steorfa, orfcwealm and uncodu, hoi and hete, and rypera reaflac, derede swyde dearie, and us ungylda swyde gedrehon, and us unwedera for-oft weoldan unwaetma.

During the later Anglo-Saxon period, there appeared a number of scientific treatisæ, belonging to the class of leech-books, herbalriæ, and lapidariæ, the most general being the *Handbook* of Byrhtferd, with dissertations upon chronology, the agæ of the world, grammar, metre, and rhetoric. A counterpart to *Salomon and Mar coif* appeared in the dialogue of *Adrian and Riiheus*, while, late in the twelfth century, came a translation of the *Elucidarium*. The marvels of the East were reflected in Alexander's *Letter to Aristotle* and the *Wonders of the East*, lastly, a venture in romance, the story of *Apolonius of Tyre* (eleventh century), links the Anglo-Saxon period, through the intermediary of Gower and Lawrence Twine, with Shakæpeare, who drew upon the story in *Periclæ*.

PART II

THE MIDDLE ENGLISH PERIOD

XI. RELIGIOUS LITERATURE

HOMILIÆ, LEGENDS, AND DIDACTIC PIECES

The religious literature of the Middle English period is most clearly related to that of its predecessor in the department of the sermon or homily. In accordance with the precedent provided by writers like Bede and Ælfric, the earliest exemplæ of Middle English homily group themselves into series, distinguished by the names of the particular MSS., in which they occur. Thus, we have from the twelfth century the so-called Bodley, Lambeth, and Trinity homiliæ, followed, somewhat later, by the Cotton Væpasian and the Kentish. In particular instances, Ælfric's discourses are simply retold, and there is a general obligation to writers like Augustine, Jerome, and Isidore. The employment of *exempla* is not usual in these early collections, though there is a considerable amount of quaint material, such as the fable of the crab and the account of Paul's descent into Hell (Lambeth), and the illustration from the natural history of the adder (Trinity). The tendency to indulge in speculative etymologies is in accordance with the practice of Isidore. On the whole, the exegesis is healthy and thorough, though little attempt is made to relate it to contemporary conditions. A crude type of symbolism appears in the discourse on the miracle of Cana (Kentish), where the water is identified with the cold Christian and the wine with the love of God. The Cotton Væpasian collection is distinguished by the occurrence of a pretty allegory concerning a king who, having made an experiment to

distinguish friends from foæ, proceeded to reward them according to their dæerts. This so-called *Bispe* is one of the bæt things in the prose of the early Middle English period. A curious interæt attachæ to the verse-piece, entitled *A Intel soth sermun*. It is composed, with occasional variation, in four-line stanzas rhyming abcb, and portrays the ill-condition of the timæ. The preacher denouncæ chapmen, bakers, and brewers, who deceive their customers, and then, turning to the young men and maidens of his day, comments particularly upon their behaviour in Church and the market-place :

At chircche and at chepyng
 Hwanne heo togadere come
 Heo rune]? togaderes
 And spekep of derno luue.
 Hwenne heo to chirche cumeþ
 To pon holy daye
 Eueruych wile his Icof iseo
 per yef he may,
 Heo biholdep Watekin
 Mid swtye gled eye.

The apocryphal matter in the *Homiliæ* is but a sign of the timæ, and its vogue may be illustrated from a number of detached treatisæ belonging, for the most part, to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuriæ. Chief among thæe are the fanciful accounts of the early life of the Saviour, known as the *Birth of Jæus* and the *Childhood of Jæus* and extant in several versions. The former, as repræented by MS. Egerton 1993, introducæ the Virgin as a daughter of Joachim and Anna, and dæcribæ her childhood and marriage. Then follow the events at Bethlehem, the visits of the shepherds and the Magi. The slaughter of the innocents leads up to the flight into Egypt, and, *en route*, occurs the miracle of the tree. The idols fall in Egypt in the præence of the divine child. The Holy Family returns to Palætine, while Jæus is left in Jerusalem. The crude legends of the sparrows formed of clay, of the game of leap-frog, in which several Jewish

children were killed, of the pitcher hung from a sunbeam, etc., appear, side by side with the Egyptian wonders, in the Lauderdale version (MS. 108). For this varied material a general source lay to hand in the apocryphal *Infancy* and the *Birth of Mary*. Parallel piecæ are the *Assumption of Our Lady* and the accounts of Judas and Pilate in the *Southern Legendary Collection*. There is a romantic version of the two latter in *Titus and Vespasian* : further, a ballad in MS. Camb. Trin. Coll. B. 14-39, which providæ Judas with a sister, who counsels him ill :

Judas, pou were wrpe me stende pe with ston
For the false prophete pet tou bilevæt upon.

In his sleep, Judas losæ thirty piecæ of silver, and, thus, acquiræ a motive for his bargain with Pilate :

I nul sulle my Loverd for nonæ cunnæ *eizte*
Bote hit be for pe pritte plattcn pat he me bitai3te.

A variant of the story of Joseph of Arimathea, the *Holy Blood of Haylæ* (fifteenth century), recounts how Joseph, after receiving the sacred blood in a væsel, was imprisoned for forty-two years :

perin he was two and fowrty *zere*
Aftyr oure lorde dyed upon pe tre
Wyt "pat blode fayre and clere
pat hym sustened wele in eure degre.

During the siege of Jerusalem, Joseph was discovered in prison, but fell dead, immediately the blood was removed from him. Together with the vernicle and other relics, the holy blood was transferred to Rome, whence Charlemagne carried a portion to Germany, another being brought to England, to the Abbey of Haylæ, founded by the Earl of Cornwall. Chief among Old Tætament legends are the *Canticum de Creatione* and the prose livæ of *Adam and Eve*, which relate, with much material in common, the storiæ of the Fall, the expulsion from Paradise, Seth's return thereto, and the committing

of Adam's life to tablets of stone. The Vernon account may be taken as repræsentative. It opens with a fantastic account of the origin of the name Adam from the initial letters of the four stars, Anatalim, Dysus, Arcis, and Mæsembrion. The North and East of Paradise were, afterwards, assigned to Adam, the South and Wæt to Eve. After their expulsion, the pair appeared clothed in skins of beasts, betokening that their offspring should die in earth. Adam underwent penance in the water of Jordan, Eve in the Tigris, where she was, once more, tempted. Cain slew Abel with the cheek-bone of an ass, and was banished together with his wife, Calmana. Eve, thereupon, set out for Paradise to secure the oil of mercy, accompanied by Seth. After Adam's death, Seth placed the grains of an apple under his father's tongue, whence sprang the three shoots, on which Christ died. The tablets, upon which the history of Adam was recounted, were discovered after the Deluge, and came eventually into the hands of Solomon, who interpreted them. The legends of the *Holy Rood* carry on the history of the Cross to the date of its discovery by Helena, the materials being accæssible in the *Bodley History*, the *Cursor Mundi*, and the Northern and Southern Legendary collections. After the finding of the Cross, Judas was baptised under the name of Ciriacus (Quiriacus), and ended his career in martyrdom.

The interæting section of Vision literature had been inaugurated by Bede's accounts of Furseus and of Drihthelm. In the latter, purgatory figured as a place where cold and heat alternate, "on the left it appeared full of dreadfull flamæ, the other side was no læs horrid for violent hail and cold snow, flying in all directions." Then followed visions of hell and of heaven, the latter divided into two areas, ræerved ræpectively for the souls of the righteous and of those læs perfect. In the thirteenth century appeared the *Vision of St. Paul*, expanded in the Vernon text of the fourteenth century. Paul and Michael had visited the souls in hell and wit-

næsed the cruel ingenuity of their torments—the burning treæ, the heated cauldron, the revolving wheel, the lake of reptilæ, the boiling pitch, etc. Their pity was moved, and, in ræponse to their prayers, a ræpite from Saturday to Monday in each week was secured for the tormented. Still more horrible were the torturæ, catalogued in the *Vision of Tundale*, a highly popular piece existing in Latin, French, German, Italian, and Icelandic, as well as in English. Further, visions were related of Thurkill and the Monk of Evæham, the latter distinguished by an account of a theatrical performance, in which the damned conduct an entertainment for the amusement of the fiends. The elaborate and interætting *St. Patrick's Purgatory* recounts how Owayne Milæ discovered a pit leading to purgatory. He was dragged by fiends to a spot, where men and women were bound naked to the ground and tortured by fire. In other placæ, adders gnawed them, nails pierced their sidæ, brimstone and chains tormented them : some were roasted on gridirons, hung up by awls thrust through their eyæ, spitted like geæe, or fastened to a reeking wheel. At length, Owayne was taken to the pit of hell, whence he passed out, by Christ's help, over a narrow bridge. He arrived at a place of sweet smelling spicæ, where a fair light shone, this latter region being identified with Paradise.

A further link with the Anglo-Saxon period may be found in the extensive department of the *Saints*⁹ *Livæ*. To this type Cynewulf had devoted most of his energiæ and provided models, to which, in point of artistry, the new period could with difficulty attain. His legends were, however, detached, and it was not till after the Council of Tours, in the ninth century, that the habit arose of combining legends into cyclæ, as in the *Blickling Homiliæ* and the *Saints' Livæ* of Ælfric. The twelfth and thirteenth centuriæ were the flourishing period of the Saint's Life, the significant fact in its history being its triumph over the homiliæ, which were slowly ousted from the Saints' days, and confined to the regular officæ

of the ecclæiastical year. Gradually, legendary matter was introduced into the *temporale* itself, and the need for organised material led to the compilation, at the end of the thirteenth century, of two great native seriæ, the Northern and the Southern *Legendariæ*. Such undertakings were stimulated by the appearance (c. 1260-1270) of Jacobus de Voragine's famous book, the *Legenda Aurea*—itself a compilation from various source. Meantime, the detached Saint's Life had continued to be written with some success, and we possess, from the beginning of the thirteenth century, three alliterative prose lives of St. Margaret, St. Juliana, and St. Katherine, other versions of which were destined to appear in later collections. Of the former, there is an interesting variant in stanzas, dated c. 1270: there is, also, a tail-rhymed version of the life of St. Eustace, a figure familiar to romance. From the fourteenth century date interesting accounts of St. Gregory and Mary Magdalene, followed, in the fifteenth century, by Theophilus and Christopher. The *Lives of the Saints* suffer, in general, from a monotony of handling: prodigies of heroism are performed in the face of excruciating torture, and there is much exaggeration in the incidents, as, for example, in *St. Anastasia*. But, after all, there is considerable variety of story, from the account of St. Thomas of India to that of St. Nicholas, together with an abundance of folk-lore, humour, and piety. The Gregory legend has the same kind of interest as the romance—the exposure of a child of obscure birth, his adventure by land and sea, and his final triumph over all obstacles—together with much charm of detail:

pe ffisscheræ seiden bope iliche
 pe abbot heo onswereden sone
 Bi Jæu Kyng of heuene riche
 Ur pingæ bep perinne idone
 Wip pat pe child bigon to skrike
 Wip steuene as hit were a grome
 pe ffisschers wenden to han ben a swike
 Heo ne wusten what to done.

pe abbot bad hem wtyouten wouh
 Undo pe tonne pat he per seyh
 pe ffisschers were redi inous
 To don his wille pat ilke day
 A clop of selk pe abbot updrouh
 pat on pe child in pe cradel lay
 po lay pe luytel child and louh
 Uppon pe abbot wip æen gray.

Attractions of another kind, due to a variety of sources, characterise the *Theophilus*, the *Christopher*, and *Mary Magdalene*, while *St. JBrandan* is unique in its combination of the spirit of adventure with the atmosphere of the Celtic other-world.

The attempt, inaugurated in the Anglo-Saxon period, to provide vernacular renderings of the Scripturæ was continued, at the end of the thirteenth century, in the *Surteæ Psalter*. In Wæt Midland of the same period a prose version appeared, consisting of the whole of the Psalms, eleven Canticlæ, and the Athanasian Creed. The dialect material of the *Surteæ Psalter* is interæting, though its range of appeal must necæsarily have been limited :

Louand Lauerd calle sal I,
 And fra mi faas be sauf for-thi
 Umgaf me sorwæ of dede ;
 Umgriped me weelæ of quede.

The dominance of allegory in the department of religious literature is illustrated by the *Castle of Love* of Bishop Grossetæte, of which there were, at least, three Middle English versions. The castle, girt with the towers of the cardinal virtua, the baillia of maidenhood, chastity, and wedlock, and the barbicans of the seven virtua, repræents the Virgin. Altogether, the poem constitutæ an attractive piece of symbolism. Læs happy in the handling of its theme was the prose *Abbey of the Holy Ghost*, its succæsor in the fourteenth century.

The first important religious poem of the new period,

the *Poema Morale*, appeared, in the southern dialect, towards the close of the twelfth century. The author possibly belonged to the district, bounded by the Avon and the Stour, an inference drawn from one of his illustrations. His poem partakæ of the nature of a warning and of an appeal. With considerable vividnæs he dæcribæ the pains of Hell,—its hunger and thirst, its heat and cold, its adders and snakæ,—to contrast them with a vision of Heaven, spiritually conceived:

Ne sceal der beon ne bried ne win ne oder cuirnæ æte,
God ane sceal beo eche lif end blisse end eche ræte.

The poet shows himself a wise counsellor, with knowledge derived from experience. Age has mellowed him, and he is ready to dispense advice. His personality still attracts, and he cannot have been without influence on his early circle of readers. The *Poema Morale* doæ not betray a strong intellect, but we are conscious of the author's insight and sincerity. His language is simple, and his syntax almost modern. Of poetical flights he has none, though the metaphor in which the unregenerate are dæcribed as "striving against the hill" is a happy augury of possible things. The conceptions of the "mansions above" is, also, suggætive of an intellect capable of emancipation.

The metre repræents an extremely early attempt to naturalise the Latin septenar, the rhythm being trochaic, or iambic, according as the initial unaccented syllable is, or is not, suppræsed. In its second variety, this metre is identical with that of Orm, but the poet has gone further than his succæsor in the employment of end-rhyme. The following example from the Egerton MS. (one of seven extant MSS.) will serve to illustrate his rhythm, and, at the same time, a passing mood, his interæt in the terminology of the forbidden paradise of Romance:

Ne sceal der beo fah ne grsei ne kuning ne ermine
ne aquierne ne martræ cheole ue beuer ne sabeline

Ne sceal der beo sciet ne scrud ne woruld wele nane
eal pe murhde pe me us bihat al hit sceal beo god ane.

The monitory tone of the *Poema Morale* characterisæ a whole group of poems, composed upon the text, *Memento homo quod cinis æ et in cinerem reverteris*. Of thæe, *Erthe upon Erthe* has retained its popularity down to modern timæ, being frequently drawn upon for head-stonæ and mural inscriptions. In general, its theme is akin to those of the *Soul and the Body* and the *Dance of Death*, but, dæpite the bilingual character of MS. Harleian 913, its *provenance* appears to be English. At least three versions exist, the nucleus being, perhaps, the following stanza from MS. Harleian 2253 :

Erpe toe of erpe erfe wyp woh,
Erpe oper erpe to pe erpe droh,
Erpe leyde erpe in erpene proh,
po heuede erpe of erpe erpe ynoh.

The related *Sayings of St. Bernard*, the *Song an Death*, *Old Age*, and *Maximian* enforce their warnings in different ways, though the capricæ of Fortune, the decay of the physical powers, and the horrors of the grave are treated by all with evident interæt. Thus, the little poem on *Old Age* (MS. Harl. 913) handlæ its theme with gusto, in a curious mixture of alliterative and rhyming linæ. With a larger canvas at his disposal, the author of *Maximian* has added a contrasted picture of youth : the old man, avoided by friends and relativæ alike, exults in the fact that he was once fair as Absalom :

Ase I rod thourh Rome,
Richæt alre home,
With murthæ as ychoJde,
Ledys wyht so swon,
Maidnæ shene so bon,
Me come to bi-holde:
Ant seyden on after on,
" 3ent ryd Maximon,
With is burnæ bolde."

Nou nis non of the,
That wolleth me y-se
In mine clothæ olde.

The *Ormulum* was the first important product of the North-Midland area to appear after the Conquæ, and occupiæ a position, analogous to that of the *Brut* in the South. It has been dated c. 1200. The author givæ his name in two forms as Orm and Ormin, for both of which a Scandinavian origin may be suspected. He informs us that he named his book after himself :

Thiss boc is nemmedd Orrmulum
forrthi thatt Orm itt wrohhte.

Orm's ecclæiastical position was that of an Augustinian canon regular, and it is probable that he was connected with Lincolnshire, where a number of Augustinian housæ existed in his day. The *Ormulum* is a metrical paraphrase of the Gospels for the year, accompanied by interpretations and applications. It has come down to us in fragmentary form, extending to some 10,000 linæ, but repræenting only about an eighth of the original plan. The unique MS., dæcribed in a catalogue of 1666 as "an old Swedish or Gothic book on the Gospel," is the author's holograph, with additions and corrections in various hands. The *Ormulum* is of didactic intent, and dæigned for the vulgar. In the *Dedication* to Walter, Orm recalls the part played by his "brother" in originating the book :

Thu thohhtæst tatt itt mihhte wel till mikell frame turnnenn
Yif Ennglissh follc, forr lufe off Crist, itt wollde yerne lernenn.

This interæt in the well-being of the folk constitutæ Orm's chief claim on our gratitude. At the risk of becoming tedious, he reiteratæ his points, and the doctrine he providæ bears the stamp of orthodoxy : for it is to Bede and Gregory, rather than to Anselm and the new teachers, that he turns for his material. The allegorical and mystical explanations and the curious

interæt in proper namæ, like Amminadab, have a smack of pedantry about them, but, in this, Orm merely followed the footsteps of Isidore and earlier writers.

Orm's metre is of great interæt for the light it throws on the origin of our common metre, in one of its varietia. Its source was the Latin septenar, trochaic or iambic, found in mediaeval students' songs, and elsewhere. Each line consists strictly of fifteen syllablæ, broken by the caœura into sets of eights and sevens. Orm æchewed rhyme, so æsential to his modern repræsentativæ, cf. the following passage from the *Holy Fair* :

The risin' sun, owre Galston muirs,
Wi' glorious light was glintin' ;
 The haræ were hirplin' down the furs,
 The lav'rocks they were chantin'.

In spelling Orm was a purist, and his poem constitutæ a precious document to the philologist. He distinguishæ between three kinds of " g," (1) the explosive, (2) the continuant, and (3) the affricate, and, by his habit of doubling consonants after short vowels, enablæ us to ascertain vowel quantitæ. His dread of scribal errors is well illustrated by the following passage :

Annd whase wilenn shall thiss boc eftt otherr sithe writenn,
 Himm bidde ice thatt het write rihht, swa summ this boc
 himm taechethth,
 All thwerrett afftterr thatt itt iss uppo thiss firrste bisne,
 Withth all swillc rime alls her iss sett, withth all se fele wordæs;
 And tatt he loke wel thatt he an bocstaff write twiggæs
 Egg whaer thaer itt uppo thiss boc iss writenn o thatt wise.

The aim of the author of the *Ormulum* was religious enlightenment: the same is apparent in the prose treatisæ, the *Wooing of Our Lord*, *Holy Maidenhood*, and *Soul's Ward*, which bridge the interval between Orm's poem and *Genæis and Exodus* (c. 1250). All are written in a kind of alliterative prose, which imparts to them a measure of poetic refinement. The *Wooing of Our Lord*

is a fine example of erotic mysticism, instinct with the tenderæ emotion, but it is difficult for the modern mind to appreciate the rigorous asceticism, proclaimed by the author of *Holy Maidenhood*. An ingenious allegory forms the basis of the third piece, *Soul's Ward*, in some ways an early anticipation of the method of Bunyan's *Holy War*.

In verse, a *Good Orison of Our Lady* (c. 1210) introducæ the cult of the Virgin, inherited from the twelfth-century mystics. The linæ are irregular, and, alongside of the fourteener, we find possible anticipations of the alexandrine, if not of the decasyllable :

pu ert mire soule liht and mine heorte blisse,
mi lif and mi tohope, min heale mid iwisse.

But the metrical interæt of the *Good Orison* is surpassed by that of *Genæis and Exodus*, a wonderful experiment in short rhyming couplets, with a preponderating number of monosyllabic endings. The main source was Comætor's *Historia Scholastica* (twelfth century), while some use was made of Philippe de Thaon's *Comput*. The author betrays no sympathy with the mystics, his purpose being to produce a concise paraphrase of the earlier books of the Old Tætament, with, as little as possible, legendary matter. This didactic intent he carried out in a somewhat bald and uninspiring way, though his achievement was no slight one, having regard to chronology : the " small words " were inevitable in any attempt to popularise such material in " landæ speech." An extract from the history of Mosæ will serve to illustrate, at one and the same time, the metrical advance and the fascination of legend for the mediaeval mind:

He bad dis child brennen to colen
And he toe is, hu migt he it dolen ?
And in hise muth so depe he is dede
Hise tungæ ende is brent dormide ;
dorfore seide de ebru witterlike
dat he spac siden miserlike.

At the outset of the fourteenth century, the work of religious instruction in verse was continued in an encyclopaedic poem, the *Cursor Mundi* (c. 1320). In regular couplets of four stræsa, the history of the Seven Agæ is reviewed, some MSS. adding miscellaneous prayers and other material, at the close. The variety of the contents may be realised from the fact that the author includa, along with the Biblical story, material from the Rood-literature, the allegorico-religious poetry, the apocrypha, the Virgin poems, and the livæ of the martyrs. His main source, was, however, the *Historia Scholastica* of Peter Comætor. The *Cursor Mundi* is, æsentially, a popular book, with its material attractively manipulated. It repræents an attempt to wean readers by imparting to religious instruction something of the attraction of romance.

The tendency to make verse the vehicle of instruction in general matters accounts for the rarity of prose during the thirteenth century ; in this ræpect, we have a curious parallel with the literary conditions of the age of Anne. The outstanding example of didactic religious prose, in this period, was the *Ancren Riwe*, extant in English, French, and Latin. Of thæe versions, Macaulay assigned the priority to the French, the Latin being regarded as a translation of the English ; but the drift of the evidence makæ an English original certain. A note at the head of the Latin version (Magdalen Coll. Oxf. 67) assigns the authorship to Simon of Ghent, Bishop of Salisbury, who prepared it "sororibus suis Anachoritis apud Tarente." Richard Poore, Bishop of Chichæter, Salisbury, and Durham, has, also, been claimed as the author, on the ground that he was born at Tarrent (Dorsetshire), and buried there in 1237. The claim of neither of thæe can, however, be substantiated. The *Ancren Riwe* is a treatise on the conduct of life, addræsed to three reclusa who had retired to an anchor-hold, in close proximity to a church. The author distinguishæ carefully between what he regards as the "outward" and

the "inward rule." Being no formalist, he lays the greater stræs on the latter, but, as regards the former, counsels adhæion to the rule of St. Jamæ, according to which "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherlæs and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world/' In the same way, he limits the anchoræsæ' vows to those of obedience, chastity and constancy. The *Ancren Riwle* is a liberal and kindly tractate, with much variety of material. The vivid account of the Seven Deadly Sins suppliæ a pendant to those in *Piers Plowman*, the *Handlyng Synne*, the *Ayenbite of Inwyte*, and the *Parson's Tale*:

The wrathful man fencæ with knivæ before the devil: he is the devil's knife-thrower, and plays with swords, and bears them by the sharp point upon his tongue.

Following upon this comæ the charming allegory, known as the "Wooing of Our Lord," one of the tenderæt things in mediaeval prose, and a tætimony to the prevalence of erotic mysticism. The concluding section, "Of domætic matters," interæts by its detail and occasional *naivete*. The dræs and daily occupation of the anchoræsæ are considered, in turn. They are to concern themselvæ as little as possible with outside affairs. An anchoræs must not be a buyer nor a seller. The sewing of church vætments and of garments for the poor will provide legitimate employment. Two maids may be kept, one as an "out-sister." During the greater part of the day silence should be observed, but rigorous penance is discountenanced. The thumb-nail sketchæ from familiar life greatly enhance the charm of the book,—the pedlar selling his soap, Slurry, the kitchen-boy, insulting the maids while he washæ the dishæ, and the tender account of the child, cited in illustration of the "comfort of the Lord";

Our Lord when he suffers us to be tempted, plays with us as the mother with her darling: she fliæ from him, and

hidæ herself, and leavæ him to sit alone, and look timidly round, and call ' Dame! dame !' and weep a while : then she leaps forth laughing with open arms, and embracæ and kissæ him and wipæ his eyæ.

A snatch of popular song, " My eye is ever toward the sheltering wood, wherein is he I love," contrasts with the learned citations from Jerome, Augustine, Benedict, Anselm, and Bernard of Clairvaux, with which the book is liberally bætrewn.

XII. THE ORGANISATION OF ROMANCE

(a) THE MATTER OF FRANCE.

The classification of mediaeval romance præents considerable difficultiæ, though certain groups are easily distinguishable, and were, indeed, recognized, as far back as the twelfth century, by the *trouvere*, Jean Bodel:

Ne sont que trois matieræ a nul home attendant
De France et de Bretaigne et de Rome la grant.

Of thæe " matters " so-called, that of France may be accorded its traditional priority, though it cannot claim to have, at any time, assumed first-rate interæt in the eyæ of Englishmen.

Under the title of *chanson de gæte*, the epic was the favourite branch of poetry, cultivated in France during the mediaeval period. At first concerned with the deeds of a single hero, the *chanson* extended its scope so as to embrace the history of a whole family, and, finally, degenerated into the prose " jæt-book " of the later Middle Agæ.

The origin of the *chanson de gæte* has been sought in

popular songs or *cantilenæ*, of the fifth to the ninth centuriæ, the existence of which has been deduced from referencæ in Gregory of Tours, Fredegarius, and later chroniclers.

Quorum quia vulgata sunt nomina dicere supersedi,

so writæ the biographer of Louis with reference to the heroæ of Roncævallæ. But recent criticism, repræented by M. Bédier, assigns the *chansons de gæte* exclusively to the eleventh century, and associatæ their formation with religious fæstivals, fairs, pilgrimagæ, etc. They derive from the clerks, and not from popular inspiration. Still, M. Bedier admits that the *chansons* can scarcely be regarded as a *prolæ sine matre creata*, and it is probable that certain folk-lore, as well as metrical, characteristics derive from popular ballads of an earlier period. The possibility that the Norman inroads of the ninth and tenth centuriæ may have inspired contemporary songs, afterwards embodied in the epics, has also been urged.

In their extant forms, the *chansons de gæte* repræent a period, extending from the end of the eleventh well into the fourteenth century. They number roughly eighty, and fall into groups of varying denomination, the chief being : (1) the *gæte* of the king (repræented by *Roland*, *Mainet*, *Otinél*, *Fierabras*, etc.); (2) the *gæte* of the traitors (*Doon de Mayence*, *Benaud de Montauban*, *Raoul de Cambrai*, etc.) ; (3) the *gæte* of William (*Aliscans*, *Aimeri de Narbonne*, etc.). In the earliæt *chansons*, linæ were grouped into *laissæ* of varying length, in which assonance assumed the function of rhyme. The line itself consisted of ten syllablæ, divided into 4's and 6's, or *vice-versa*, by the caæura. An extra unaccented syllable was permissible before the caæura, and, similarly, at the end. Later on, the decasyllabic line was displaced by one of twelve syllablæ, and assonance by rhyme. The *chansons* were the work of *trouveræ*, and intended for recitation. The prose versions are of late date, and betray considerable rehandling of the materials.

Outside France, the Charlemagne legends attained to much vogue. In Italy, at the beginning of the fifteenth century, appeared a *rifacimento* of chivalrous legend, under the title, *Reali di Francia*, while Ariosto, in the sixteenth century, paid a direct compliment to the spell of Roland in his *Orlando Furioso*. In Spain, the *Cronica* of Alfonso X contained, in its third section, an account of Charlemagne and Roncævallæ, which was influential in developing a native heroic cycle. Germany, in the thirteenth century, produced in *Karl* and *Karl Mainet* adaptations of *chansons*, particularly concerned with Charlemagne, while *Aliscans* was translated by Wolfram von æchenbach, under the title of *Willehalm*. The great Norse compilation, the *Karlamagnussaga*, was based partly upon the *Pseudo-Turpin*, partly upon the *chansons* themselvæ.

In England, the vogue of the Charlemagne legends was considerable, but the quality of the versions was never first-rate. The famous *Chanson de Roland* has peculiar associations with England. The bæt MS. is præerved at Oxford, and a second at Trinity College, Cambridge. Further, as Wace tells us, the heroæ of Koncævallæ formed the theme of Taillefer's song at Hastings, in 1066 :

Devant le due aloud chantant
De Karlemaigne e de Rolant
 E d'Olivier e dæ vassals
 Qui moururent en Rencevals.

A fragmentary version of the French poem survivæ from the end of the fourteenth century, in the S.W. Midland dialect. Compared with existing French MSS., this *Song of Roland* repræents a very free translation : its exact source is, probably, yet to be discovered. The workmanship is rough-hewn, the author displaying command of neither rhyme nor metre.

Five English romancæ link themselvæ together as component parts of a great cycle, beginning with Charlæ' journey to the East and ending with Roncævallæ. Thæe are *Roland and Vernagu*, the *Sege of Melayne*, *Otuel*, *Duke*

Rowlande and Sir Ottuell of Spayne, and the lost *Fillingham Otuel* (so named from its former owner). The poems are of various dialects, *metræ* and *dataë*, and repræent the work of several authors. In the opening section (*Roland and Vernagu*), Charlæ is summoned to the East to aid Constantine against the Saracens. Having secured certain precious relics there, among which were the holy crown, the arm of St. Simeon, our Lady's smock, and one of the nails, he made his way to Spain and started on a triumphal progræs, culminating in Galicia, where he founded a church in honour of St. Jamæ. One day, while he held his court, a giant, Vernagu, entered and challenged the knights to single combat. His treatment of those who præented themselvæ was highly contemptuous but, at length,

Rouland with Durindale
Brewed him miche bale.

During the adjournment of the fight, Roland magnanimously assisted the giant's sleep by placing a stone under his head for a pillow. Roland discussed Christian theology with Vernagu, but to no purpose :

Quoth Vernagu, " now ich wot
3our cristen lawe eueri grot
Now we wil fight.
Whether lawe better be
Sone we schul yse,
Long ar it be night.

The fight was renewed and Roland killed the giant. In the second section (*Sege of Melayne*), Charlæ sent an army to the relief of Milan under the leadership of Roland, who was captured, along with Oliver and Guy of Burgundy. The failure of the expedition was set down to Ganelon's treachery. æcaping, at length, to Paris the knights looked for vengeance, but Ganelon, gaining Charlæ' ear, interfered with their plans once more. Charlæ' reluctance to act angered Turpin, who proceeded to excommunicate him. In the subsequent campaign, Turpin

played a hero's part, performing prodigiæ of valour, and swearing never to eat nor drink until Milan was taken. *Otuel* is linked to the preceding sections by a reference at the close of *Roland and Vernagu*. *Otuel* repræented King Garcy of Lombardy, from whom he brought a mæsaġe to Charlæ, bidding him renounce Christianity. He displayed great courage, in face of the French knights. As a nephew of *Vernagu*, it was *Roland* he was anxious to meet. The combat took place, and, during its course, *Roland* offered *Otuel* the hand of *Belisant*. *Otuel* accepted, and was converted, simultaneously. In the latter part of the romance, *Otuel* aided the French knights against *Garcy*, who submitted, at length. The story of *Otuel* was retold in the fourth section (*Duke Rowlande and Sir Ottuel*), with large variations. Finally, the *Fillingham Otuel* (as dæcribed by *Ellis*) recounted Charlæ' campaign against *Ibrahim* of *Seville*, and his victory over the king of *Navarre*, concluding with an account of *Ganelon's* treachery and the final disaster at *Roncævallæ*.

An examination of the romancæ makæ it clear that this cycle so-called lacks sequence. Apart from defects in the MSS., the romancæ are complete in themselvæ. Further, the ground, covered by *Duke Rowlande*, is that of its predecæsor, while the *Fillingham Otuel* introducæ once again that *Ibrahim* of *Spain*, who figured at the outset of *Roland and Vernagu*. We have, therefore, merely a rough summary, with omissions and repetitions, of the chief events of Charlæ' reign. The motive at the back of the romancæ, the attempt to magnify the importance of the Church, is clearly discernible. Miraclæ are of regular occurrence, while the part played by *Turpin* is not without significance. Charlæ himself is depicted from varying points of view, for, while he figuræ in *Roland and Vernagu* as a vigorous knight, twenty feet in height, with black hair and a ruddy complexion, in the *Sege of Melayne* he plays a sorry part over against *Turpin*.

Roland and Vernagu corraeponds, generally, to the *Dæcriptio qualiter Carolus Magnus clavum et coronum*

Domini . . ., a Latin poem of the eleventh century, and to the *Pseudo-Turpin*. Vernagu's ræolve to settle the rival claims of the two religions by combat is thus expressed in the latter :

" Tali igitur pacto," inquit Ferracutus, " tecum pugnabo ; quod si vera æt hsec fidæ quam asseris, ego victus sim ; et si mendax æt, tu victus sis ; et sit genti victse iugiter opprobrium, victoribus autem laus ct decus in ævum."

A comparison with the extract from *Roland and Vernagu*, cited above, will show that the English version is not based directly upon the Latin, and there is reason to believe that our author followed a French text. A French -source may, also, be assumed for the *Sege of Melayne*. Both *Otuel* and its succæsor follow the *chanson*, known as *Otinel*, though the second runs much closer to the extant text. Finally, the *Pseudo-Turpin* providæ the nearæt analogue for the material in the Fillingham version.

The *Sowdone of Babylon* and *Sir Ferumbras* constitute another group, linked by the figure of Ferumbras. The introductory matter, in the *Sowdone*, relatæ how Laban of Babylon attacked Rome, assisted by Lukafer of Baldas, a suitor for the hand of his daughter, Floripas. During the interval between the summoning and the arrival of Charlæ, Ferumbras, the Sultan's son, unhorsed the Pope, the Saracens entered Rome, and the relics were removed. The main portion of the narrative corræponds generally with *Sir Ferumbras*, the central figure being Floripas, whose love for Guy of Burgundy caused her to exert herself, to the full, on behalf of the French knights. This section abounds in vigorous fighting and thrilling adventure. The material is of a highly popular character, as in the incident of the scorching of Naymæ' beard, avenged by the burning of his assailant. The character of Floripas, likewise, displays crude elements. Curiously enough, the author of the *Sowdone* has attempted to combine with his matter an occasional imitation of

Chaucer, e.g. the dæscription of spring and the incident of Floripas in the garden. From the metrical point of view, *Sir Ferumbras* is the more interæting, with its long rhyming couplets and irregular alliteration. Variation in the details suggæts that the two romancæ repræent different texts of the French *Fierabras*, though the opening of the *Sowdone* is related to the *Dæstruction de Rome*.

Ferumbras was, until quite recently, a familiar name throughout Britain and the Continent, and the reference in Barbour's *Bruce* attæts his early popularity in Scotland.

In the fifteenth century, the famous *Huon of Bordeaux*, following its French original into the strange paths of Oriental marvel, prepared the way for the faery element in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

(b) THE MATTER OF BRITAIN.

Unlike Charlemagne, Arthur has always been a familiar figure to Englishmen, a fact for which many explanations might be adduced. In the first place, the proximity of the Celtic borderland made him, at the outset, a more or læs accæssible theme for poets ; his exploitation by the French and by the Norman conquerors of Britain was a factor of even greater importance; again, the breadth of the theme itself, with its chivalry and its passion, its emancipation from convention, its adventurous incident and its mysticism—thæe elements, separately or combined, have made a continuous appeal to Englishmen, from the twelfth to the nineteenth century.

An attempt to assign to Arthur his position in history and legend would necæssitate an examination of many literaturæ, Celtic, Germanic, and Romance. Even for our præent purposæ, it is impossible to ignore this material altogether, though the survey must necæsarily be brief and limited to definite points of view.

The historicity of Arthur has been much debated, but without definite ræults. The Welsh evidence fails to carry us far, for, already in Nennius (c. A.D. 800), in the

oldæt poems, and in the prose talæ, Arthur has attracted to himself an accretion of myth. Nennius, indeed, speaks of him as *dux bellorum*, which is taken to imply that, in the defence of Britain against the Saxons, Arthur held the rank of *Comæ Britannia*. A list of twelve battlæ, in which the king participated, is added by Nennius, the most famous of which, that of Mons Badonis, had already been recorded by Gildas (sixth century) as having taken place in the year of his own nativity (c. 500). The absence of reference to Arthur in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and in Bede has aroused suspicion, but it is unnecæsary to have recourse to a purely mythological explanation of his origin, in view of the euhemeristic arguments, urged in defence of other figuræ of epic and romance.

Already in early Welsh literature accounts of Arthur assumed a romantic cast, though many elements in the primitive legend fail of a place in later forms, as known to English literature. From the outset, Arthur was the husband of Gwenhywfar (Guinevere), and in close companionship with Bedwyr (Bedivere) and Kei (Kay). Associated with him, at a later period, were Peredur (Perceval) and Gereint (Geraint). Arthur conducted a campaign against the Romans, slaying the Emperor in single combat. He fell in the battle of Camlan, in consequence of Medraut's (Mordred) treachery, and was buried in the isle of Avallach (Avallon). A familiar element, reproduced by Geoffrey, occurs already in Nennius, who statæ that, at the battle of Guinnion, Arthur bore the image of the Holy Virgin, mother of God, upon his shoulders, and, through the power of our Lord Jæus Christ and the holy Mary, put the Saxons to flight, pursuing them the whole day with great slaughter. The position assigned to Arthur among the Christian worthiaë finds an early justification here. Unfamiliar featuræ occur, however, as early as the *Mirabilia*, associated with Nennius, where Arthur is dæcribed as hunting the Porcus Troit, accompanied by his famous hound, Cabal: another

version of this story appeared later in *Kulhwch and Olwen (Mabinogion)*. In this latter, a curious band of followers associatæ with the king, parallels for whom are found in widely distributed *m&rchen*. Again, in the poetical collection, known as the *Book of Taliessin*, Arthur undertakæ an expedition to the realm of darknæs, and robs the king of Hadæ of his magic cauldron. Such were the more prominent elements, rejected by Geoffrey and those writers of the twelfth century, who combined with him to build up the cycle in its modern form.

The part, played by the *Historia Begum Britannice* (c. 1139-1148) of Geoffrey of Monmouth in the development of the Arthurian legend, has received full recognition from a succæssion of scholars. Repræenting as it doæ the first attempt to set forth a coherent account of Arthur's career on linæ followed by later writers, Geoffrey's book marks a fræh beginning in the evolution of the legend. But it was a beginning only. The poignant storiæ of Lancelot and Tristram found no place in the book, nor was any recognition as yet accorded to the mystical aspect of the Arthurian theme, repræented by the Holy Grail. The problem as to Geoffrey's relationship to the mass of Celtic tradition, stretching behind him, has never been completely solved, though he himself tells us that he made use of an ancient book in the British language, præented to him by Walter, Archdeacon of Oxford. This book has been assumed to be either a Welsh or a Breton MS., though a recent theory of Dr. Sebastian Evans suggætæ that it may have been English. There are, again, those who deny the existence of the book altogether. It is certain that nothing has yet been discovered outside of Nennius, Bede, and a few other writers, which can be regarded as in the nature of a source-book for Geoffrey's materials, though it seems impossible to doubt that he drew upon floating Celtic traditions, while indulging freely in "romancing" on his own account. The contemporary purpose of the *Historia Begum*

Britannice seems to have been to provide an epic, which might serve, by its joint appeal, to unite Normans and Englishmen, Welshmen and Bretons in the one common purpose of maintaining and extending the empire of the Angevins.

In, or about, 1155, Geoffrey's book was translated into Anglo-Norman verse by Wace, who added details regarding the foundation of the Bound Table and other matters. Wace shows some independence, in omitting portions of Geoffrey's material, and his work is meritorious. He links Geoffrey to Layamon.

The activitiæ of French and Anglo-Norman writers of the twelfth century extended the range of Arthurian themæ far beyond the limits imposed by Geoffrey. Once again, the Celtic problem forcæ itself to the front, since the possibility of Breton influence must now be reckoned with. Intangible though the *lai*, as a literary product, may be, its influence is attæted by the work of Marie de France, with its peculiar atmosphere of charm and mystery. Except in *Lanval*, Marie's poems are not definitely associated with Arthur, and there is no proof of the existence of an elaborated Breton cycle. But motivæ in the unattached *lais* can be paralleled in the Arthurian poems (cf. the *enfance* in *Tyolet* with Chretien's *Conte del Graal*), and there is direct reference on Chretien's part to, at least, one of them (*Guingamor*). The personality of Kyot, cited by Wolfram von æchenbach as his authority, is still a mystery; though there is a possibility that 'Thomas' Breri was the Bledhericus, dæcribed by Giraldus Cambrensis as a Welsh *fabulator*. The special atmosphere of the Tristram story calls for explanation, and is accounted for by nothing in the known work of Geoffrey, or of Chretien. Such are the general arguments put forth by the upholders of the Celtic theory.

The possibility of Celtic influence being granted, it still remains true that the organisation and extension of Arthurian romance during the twelfth century was the

work of French and Norman writers. In their wake followed the German school, including some illustrious namæ, and, more tardily, the English. Of French writprs the most distinguished was Chretien de Troyæ, who wrote, between 1150 and 1188, a *Tristan* (lost), followed by *Erec*, *Cliges*, the *Chevalier a la Charrette*, *Yvain*, and the *Conte del Graal*. The unfortunate disappearance of *Tristan* makæ it impossible to compare Chretien's treatment with those of his contemporariæ, Beroul and Thomas. It may, however, be conjectured that Chretien would have shown none of the penetrating insight into passion, characteristic of Thomas' work. *Erec* is the story of the ætrangement and reconciliation of two lovers, paralleled in the *Mabinogion* by *Geraint the son of Erbin*, and familiar in Tennyson's modern version. It definitely marks the appearance of a new psychological poet. The *Chevalier a la charrette* is interætting from the fact that there Lancelot assumed a prominent *role*, for the first time. He is definitely the Queen's lover, and, though this appears to have been originally Gawain's part, the first form of the Lancelot-Guinevere story, as we know it, must be laid to Chretien's credit. It is possible, judging from the evidence in Ulrich von Zatzikhoven (c. 1195), that the outlinæ of the story had been traced in an earlier French version, but this is non-extant. Nor are the Celtic *lais* extant, for which evidence has been found in the composite character of the German poem. *Yvain* is generally regarded as the bæst of Chretien's romançæ. Having achieved the adventure of the Fountain perilous, Yvain married the lady, Laudine. Arthur and his knights were entertained at his castle, after which Yvain returned for a time to court. He overstayed his leave, and, prostrate with grief, went mad in the foræt. There he associated himself with a lion, and was, henceforth, known as the Knight of the Lion. After various adventuræ, he was rætored to his lady's affections. The *Lady of the Fountain* in the *Mabinogion* suppliæ a parallel

to Yvain, and both have been traced to a hypothetical Anglo-Norman romance, based on a Celtic source, similar to the tale of the *Slothful Gillie* (cf. O'Grady's *Silva Gadelica*). The French poem supplied the materials for Hartmann von Aue's *Iwein* (c. 1200) and for the M. E. *Twain and Gawain* (1300-1350). Chretien's last poem, the *Conte del Graal*, introducæ the sacred væsel, and must be ræerved for another section.

Chretien ranks in medieval French literature as the great practitioner of the courtly epic. The position accorded in his romancæ to love, and the ingenuity, with which he handlæ the problems arising therefrom, constitute him the founder of the psychological novel. Yet he has no sense of passion, no mystery, and is worlds removed from the genuine Celtic atmosphere. He is the repræentative of cultured speech, the courtly poet, *par excellence*. In intimate knowledge of the human heart Chretien was surpassed by his contemporary, Thomas: the German school supplied his limitations in other directions. Of this school, Wolfram von æchenbach (c. 1170-1220) stands out as the great repræentative of spiritual mysticism, and Gottfried von Strassburg, whose *Tristram* was composed c. 1210, as the poet of the love-passion.

The main body of the Arthurian story, as developed by Geoffrey and his succæors of the French and German schools, was further strengthened, towards the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth century, by a seriæ of prose romancæ,—the *Lancelot*, the *Mori Artu*, the *Merlin*, based on Robert of Boron, and the *Tristan*. The fusion of the knightly epic with the mystic material of the Grail had already begun in Chretien's *Cante del Graal*. By the thirteenth century, the welding of the two strands was finally completed in the prose of the *Grand St. Graal* and its congeners.

The origin and meaning of the Holy Grail legends constitute a problem as obscure as any that confronts the student of Arthurian matters. Already in Chretien's

Conte del Oraal and its continuations the quæting knight makæ an appearance, repræented at one stage by Perceval, at another by Gawain. Perceval failed at the outset to put the necæsary quætion, but redeemed his fault by his subsequent conduct in avenging the murder of the Fisher-king's brother. In Wolfram von æchenbach's *Parzival* the purely spiritual aspect of the Grail becomæ prominent, and the vengeance element disappears: the M.E. *Sir Percyvelle* (1350-1400) contains neither Fisher-king nor talisman. Chretien identifiaë the Grail with Joseph's væsel, but a more elaborate account of the ecclæiastical origin may be found in the *Grand St. Oraal* and in Robert of Boron's *Joseph of Arimathea* (c. 1180). In the *Quete del St. Oraal* we return to the knightly adventuræ, the chief figure being Galahad, Lancelot's son. Perceval is, once again, the hero of the *Didot Perceval* and the *Perlævaus*.

A purely ecclæiastical origin has been claimed for the Grail legends by one school of critics, who discover therein a conversion of Britain legend and an attempt to set up a claim for a knightly priæthood. This view explains the prominence accorded in the cycle to Joseph of Arimathea, who is first connected with Glastonbury in an interpolation to William of Malmæbury's *De antiquitate Glastoniensis ecclæice*. A second school discovers the ultimate origin of the Grail material in the background of Celtic heathendom. In this connection, it is curious to observe how often the Grail is referred to in terms most readily explicable on some such assumption. Thus, it is dæcribed as a food-providing object, or again as a "stone," endowed with life-giving propertiaë. A highly interætæing theory, put forth by Miss Wæton, finds the origin of the Grail ceremonial in a primitive initiation-ritual. Upon this the Christian element was imposed at a later date, but, in such a way, that the cruder elements may still be detected below the surface.

The English contribution towards the development of the cycle remains to be indicated. Follwoing upon
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Geoffrey of Monmouth, the prime mover in the organisation of the material, a large number of romancæ appeared, based either upon Geoffrey himself or upon other sourcæ. At the beginning of the thirteenth century, the story of Arthur's career was retold by Layamon in his *Brut*, with interæting additions concerning the elvæ, who appeared at his birth, the organisation of the Round Table, and other matters. The verse *Arthur* amounts to no more than a bald and incoherent summary of Geoffrey. The so-called early history is smoothly recounted in the couplets of *Arihour and Merlin*, while the stanzaic *Le Morte Arthur*, based on the Vulgate *Mart Artu*, concerns itself chiefly with the lovæ of Lancelot and Guinevere. In this story, the ill-starred Maid of Ascolot constitutæ a pathetic figure :

He nolde her nought, we mow well see ;
Forthy, deed is that white as swan ;
This letter thereof warrant wol be,
She plaineth on Lancelot to each man.

As for the attached knights, their historiæ were told, with varying degreæ of succæs, in *Sir Tristrem*, unjustifiably assigned to Thomas of Erceldoun, *Twain and Oawain*, *Sir Percyvelle of Gallæ*, and the fifteenth-century *Lancelot of the Laik*. Of thæe, *Twain and Oawain* alone has any distinction. As already indicated, it derivæ from Chretien, whose *Chevalier au Lion* supplied the material for the fluent paraphrase. A noteworthy romance, *Libeaus Dæcanus*, tells the story of Gawain's son, Guinglain,—his exploit in the Vale perilous, the winning of the sparrow-hawk, his sojourn in the *Tie d'or*, and his final triumph in the disenchantment of his lady by means of the *fier baiser*. The same story, with variations, appears in *Le Bel Inconnu*, the Italian *Carduino*, and the Middle High German *Wigalois*. Apart from the distinguished group of alliterative romancæ, in which Gawain plays so prominent a part, we may regard the *Brut*, *Arihour and Merlin*, *Le Morte Arthur*, *Twain and*

Gawain and *Libeaus Pæconus* as the most noteworthy contributions made by the older English poets to this department of romance.

In the fifteenth century, Malory summed up the main featuræ of Arthurian romance in the matchlæs prose of his *Morte d'Arthur*, to which his editor, Caxton, contributed a noteworthy preface :

Herein may be seen noble chyvalrye, curtosye, humanyte, frendlynæse, hardynæse, love, frendshyp, cowardyse, murdre, hate, vertue and synne. Doo after the good and leve the evyl and it shal brynge you to good fame and renommee.

(c) THE MATTER OF ANTIQUITY.

A somewhat free interpretation of BodePs *matiere de Borne* enablæ us to include thereunder all the romance-material derived from antiquity,—the storïæ of Troy, of Thebæ, and of Alexander. Of thæe, the theme of Troy, in particular, proved attractive to a succæsiön of men-of-letters, repræented by Benoit de St. More, Guido delle Colonne, Boccaccio, Chaucer, and Shakæpeare.

During the Middle Agæ Homer, known only in Thebanus' *Epitome*, was largely discredited. But the story of Troy was popularised by two medievalists, Daræ and Dictys, whose namæ are probably forgeriæ. Their versions have come down to us in Latin, though Dictys, at least, appears to derive from a Greek source. The datæ are quite uncertain, but Dictys has been assigned, hypothetically, to the fourth, and Daræ to the sixth century A.D. Dictys Cretensis, assumed to be a follower of Idomeneus, repræented the side of the Greeks, Daræ Phrygius, identified with the priæt of Hephæætus mentioned in the Iliad, that of the Trojans. Both accounts are brief, though Dictys is about twice as long as Daræ: they repræent early examplæ of literary forgery, both writers claiming to have been eye-witnæsæ of the events described. Of the two, Daræ was the favourite author in the Middle Agæ on account of his defence of Troy, from

which almost all the nations of Wætern Europe assumed dæcent. Daræ' book, accordingly, repræented the starting-point of the mediaeval legend of Troy. Its graphic details assured for it a large amount of credibility, while the absence of the miraculous element was in its favour. For the later development of the story, the important contributions made by Daræ were the prominence accorded to Troilus, raised to the position of Trojan hero after the fall of Hector, and the concise portrait of Briseida, who thus lay to hand as a possible future heroine :

Briseidam formosam, alta statura, candidam, capillo flavo et molli, superciliis junctis, oculis venustis, corpore eequali, blandem, affabilem, verecundam, animo simplici, piam.

About 1165, Benoit de St. More expanded Daræ into a *Roman de Troie* of some 30,000 linæ, drawing, at the same time, upon Dictys. Benoit's chief feat was to assign Briseida, who, under the name of Briseis, had been Achillæ' mistræs in Homer, to Troilus. She became the daughter of Calchas, the treacherous priæt who left Troy to join the Greeks. Briseida and Troilus had already plighted troth, when she made Diomed's acquaintance in the Greek camp. The character of Briseida is only partially developed in this version, while Troilus is almost a shadow. But many elements conduced to its popularity. Though the old mythology found no place in Benoit, there was much fairy-lore. In fact, the classical story was completely medisevalised, and re-told with vigour.

In the same century, about 1187, Joseph of Exeter wrote a Latin poem, *De Bello Trojano*, in which he drew upon Daræ, Benoit, Statius, and Ovid. But the importance of Joseph of Exeter ræts upon his form, rather than his material. The book was formerly attributed to Cornelius Nepos.

Towards the end of the thirteenth century, Benoit's poem was plagiarised by Guido delle Colonne, a Sicilian, whose *Historia Trojana* became enormously popular.

Until recently, the credit due to Benoit was accorded entirely to Guido, though his book was practically a translation of his predeceſor's work into Latin proſe, with additions from Virgil and Ovid.

The next important name is Boccaccio, who, in his *Filoſtrato* (1344-1350), centred his attention on the early relationships between Troilus and the lady, whom he re-namæ Griseida. She is introduced as a widow, with Pandaro in the *role* of intermediary. The conception of Troilus constitutæ the outstanding feature of Boccaccio's treatment.

The English had been familiar with the general ſtory of Troy ſince the time of Geoffrey of Monmouth, to whom Chaucer afterwards accorded a diſtinguiſhed place among the hiſtorians. Before 1400, two verſions of the romantic hiſtory appeared in English, the *Gæt Hiſtoriale of the Dætruction of Troy* (1350-1400) and the *Seege of Troye* (1350-1400). Of thæe, the former was a cloſe imitation, in alliterative verſe, of Guido, the latter a free verſion, based on Benoit. The *Gæt Hiſtariale* has been assigned, without ſatisfactory evidence, to Huchoun. It providæ a vigorous example of the alliterative ſtyle of the fourteenth century. In the prologue, the author reviews the hiſtory of the romance, and concludæ with an apt tribute to Guido:

In this ſhall faithfully be founden to the fer ende,
 All pe dedis bydene as pai done were ;
 How pe groundæ firſt grew, and pe grete hate,
 Bothe of torfer and teno pat horn tide aftur.
 And here fynde ſhall ye faire of pe felle peopull,
 What kyngæ pere come of coſtæ aboute :
 Of dukæ full doughty, and of derfle erlæ,
 That aſſembled to pe citie pat ſawte to defend:
 Of the Grekys pat were gedret how gret was pe nowmber,
 How mony knightæ pere come and kyngæ enarmede,
 And what dukæ thedur droghe for dedis of were :
 What ſhippæ pere were ſhene, and ſhalkæ within,
 Bothe of bargæ and buernæ pat broght were fro Græe:

And all the batels on bent pe buernæ betwene.
What duke pat was dede through dyntæ of hond,
Who fallen was in ffylde, and how it fore after:
Bothe of truse and of trayne pe truthe shalt pu here,
And all the ferliæ fat fell unto the ferre ende.

About the same time, a worthier poet turned to Boccaccio's version, and evolved therefrom an independent masterpiece, *Troilus and Criseyde*. Chaucer devoted himself mainly to the character of Pandarus, and, in so doing, produced the first great psychological poem in English. At the beginning of the fifteenth century, a capable version of Guido appeared from the pen of Lydgate, and to the same century are assigned certain Scottish fragments of the Troy story. Caxton's famous *Recueyll of the historyæ of Troye* (c. 1474) repræsents a translation from the French of Raoul le Fevre. But the most original contribution made during this century was Henryson's *Tætament of Cræseid*, in which the poet brings down vengeance upon the lady's head. The English versions culminate in Shakæpeare's *Troilus and Cræside*, a play which has given rise to many problems, and in which the great dramatist saw fit to adopt a debased view of the characters, generally.

The nucleus of the romantic history of Alexander, as known to Wætern Europe, appears to have been formed early in the Christian era in the so-called *Pseudo-Callisphenæ*. This latter, which belongs to the same category as the *Turpin* and *Daræ*, affords another example of mediaeval literary forgery: certain featuræ of the book point, indeed, to an Egyptian origin. By the end of the twelfth century, various Latin versions had appeared, the earliæt by Julius Valerius (c. 340): an epitome of this appeared in the ninth century. More important was the *Historia Alexandri Magni de Proeliis*, composed in the tenth century by the Archpriæt Leo, after a visit to Constantinople. More or læs independent were the *Epistola Alexandri ad Aristotelem*, the *Iter ad Paradisum*,

and the Latin corraepondence between Alexander and Dindimus.

Towards the end of the eleventh century, the Alexander story was retold in French by Alberic de Briangon, to be followed in the next century by the decasyllabic *Roman d'Alixandre* of Lambert le Tort and Alexandre de Bernai. In contrast to that of Alberic, this latter version abounded in the marvels of the East and became instantly popular. To the end of the twelfth century is assigned the *Vengeance Alexandre* of Gui de Cambrai: the thirteenth century claims the Anglo-Norman *Roman de toute chevalerie* of Eustache of Kent, the source of the M.E. *King Alisaunder*. Jacquæ de Longuyon's *Vceuxdupaon* (c. 1312) introduced a new episode, afterwards handled by the author of the Scottish *BuiTc of Alexander* (fifteenth century) and by Sir Gilbert Hay. The theme of "the Nine Worthia" was treated at length, for the first time, by Longuyon, and imitated, for example, in the fourteenth century *Parlement of the Three Agæ*.

During the Anglo-Saxon period, the *Epistola Alexandri ad Aristotelem* and the *De rebus in Oriente mirabilibus* were translated into English, to be followed, after the Conquæt, by a remarkable seriæ of books, of which the pioneer was the metrical *King Alisaunder* (c. 1330). After a prologue of forty linæ, in four-beat metre, which promisæ matter "delicious to listen to/⁵ the author introducæ the wizard, Neptanabus (the Nakhtenephen of ancient Egypt), attempting to discover, by sortilege, the prospects of the Persian invasion. Then follows an account of the wizard's relations with Phillip's queen, leading up to the mysterious birth of Alexander. The boy soon displayed his dexterity by taming Bulsifal (Bucephalus), and, afterwards, effectively avenging his parents upon Neptanabus. During a military expedition against Carthage, Alexander learnt of his mother's relations with Pausanias, and, returning, slew her paramour. Having succeeded to his father's dominions, Alexander inaugurated his career of conquæt by an

expedition against Thrace and Italy. At Tripoli, he saw the image of Neptanabus, and, definitely, learnt his parentage, for the first time. During the siege of Tyre, he was insulted by the inhabitants, and, shortly afterwards, Darius sent him a number of childish præents,—a top, a scourge, and a purse. The completion of the war with Darius was delayed by a progræs through Greece, during which Alexander conquered Thebæ and received the submission of Athens, but, returning to the East, he, finally, defeated Darius. So ends the first part.

In the second, Porus takæ the place of Darius. The interæt turns upon the wonders of the East, the fauna and flora, as well as the peoplæ, dæcribed being closely akin to those in Sir John Mandeville :

Another folk there is biside ;
 Houndyngæ men clepeth hem wide
 From the bræt to the grounde
 Men hy ben, abouen houndæ.
 Berkyng of houndæ hy habbe.
 Her honden, withoutn gabbe,
 Ben yshuldred as an fysshe,
 And clawed after hound, iwisse (ll. 4962-69).

During an interval of peace, Alexander journeyed with Porus to the world's end, where he saw two golden imagæ, identified with the pillars of Herculæ. The terrætrial paradise is alluded to, but briefly. The sole love-element is provided by the Queen Candace episode, which occupiæ considerable space. With much detail, the author describæ the treæ of the sun and moon, and from thæe Alexander learnt the exact nature of his death :

Forth Alisaundre gan wende,
 Til he come to theowrow ende.
 Notemugge, and the sedewale,
 On heom smullith, and the wodewale,
 Theo canel and the licoris,
 And swete savour ymeynt, ywis (ll. 6790-95).

After the founding of Alexandria, the campaign against

Porus was brought to a succæful termination, the romance concluding with an account of Antipater's treachery and the death of Alexander.

The above summary will serve to indicate the main linæ of the romantic history of Alexander. In the M.E. version, many elements are omitted, in particular the "Foray of Gaza," though this doæ not appear to have been one of the primary elements, and the Fountain of Youth: but the early history is recorded with some completenæs. *King Alisaunder* bears all the marks of a popular poem, but it is by no means lacking in charm. The style is vigorous and reminiscent of the older epic. Short reflective and didactic passagæ, enlarging upon the brevity of life, the futility of battle, the ill-effects of sin, the attractions of the hall, and the characteristics of women, enhance the charm of the narrative. The pithy proverb finds an entrance, here and there, while the tendency to moralise, is so characteristic of the poet that he concludæ on this note. Most attractive of all are the so-called "lyrical intermezzos,"* with which each section is introduced, little nature-passagæ of a quality altogether charming :

In tyрно of heruæt mery it is ynough ;
 Peræ and applæ hongeth on bough.
 The hayward bloweth mery his home;
 In eueryche felde ripe is corne ;
 The grapæ hongon on the vyne :
 Swcte is trewe loue and fyne (ll. 5754-59).

In the fourteenth century, under the influence of new literary influencæ, the story of Alexander was re-told, in alliterative verse, in three independent poems, known ræpectively as *Alisaunder*, *Alexander and Dindimus*, and the *Wars of Alexander*. Taken together, thæe piecæ provide a complete view of Alexander's career, including his corræpondence with the king of the Brahmins. At the same time there is considerable over-lapping. The main source, was, undoubtedly, Leo's *De Proeliis*, but

the Dindimus material, in particular, must be accounted for otherwise. The poems provide accomplished exemplæ of the alliterative manner, and the learned allusions contrast with the *naïve* matter of the metrical romances. Contrast the following dæscription of the portents at Alexander's birth with the corraëponding passage in *King Alisaunder* :

pe li3t lemand late • laschis fra pe heuyn,
 Thonere thrastis ware thra • thristid pe welkyn,
 Cloudis clenely to-clefe • clatird unfaire,
 All blakenid aboute • and boris pe son.
 Wild wedirs up werpe • and pe wynd ryse,
 And all flamæ pe flode • as it fire were,
 Nowe bri3t, nowe blaa • nowe on blase efter,
 And pan ouer-qwelmys in a qwirre • and qwatis euer e-like.
 pan slike a derknæ par drafo • and demyd pe skewys,
 As blænanð as bale fyre • and blake as pe hell
 pat it was neuer bot as ny3t • fra pe none tyme
 Till it to mydday was meten • on pe morne efter.

(*Wars of Alexander*, II. 553-64.)

The tendency towards didacticism is characteristic of the alliterative school, in general, and the corraëpondence between Alexander and Dindimus may be regarded as an academic discussion on the ræpective claims of the active and the contemplative life. One singularly happy passage, dæcribing the attractions of the woods frequented by the Gymnosophists, servæ to illustrate the close relationship to the Latin source. Compare *Alexander and Dindimus II.* 494-503 with the following from the anonymous *De Bragmanis* :

Delectamur etiam videre florigeros campos ex quibus in nostros naræ suavissimus odor intrat. Delectamur etiam in optimis locis siluarum et fontium in quibus iocundissimas avium audimus cantilenas.

The prose epitome of the *Life of Alexander* in the Dublin MS. repræents an attempt to arrive at a true historic ætimate, but the Thornton *Life* (fifteenth

century) abounds in the usual fabulous material. The Scottish *Buik of Alexander* (fifteenth century) is episodic, treating of the Foray of Gadderis, the Avows of Alexander, and the Great Battle of Effæoun in a metre strongly reminiscent of Barbour. Sir Gilbert Hay's long poem recounts the whole history once again.

Apart from Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*, no M.E. version of the story of Thebæ appeared before the end of the fourteenth century. Chaucer's story dealt merely with an episode, on the line of Boccaccio's *Tæeide*, but Lydgate was to provide a fuller survey of the subject. During the Elizabethan period, the Chaucerian episode was selected for dramatic treatment by a number of writers, including Richard Edwards and, possibly, Shakæpeare himself.

XIII. THE SHORT STORY

The mediaeval short story, whether in the form of *conte devot*, *exemplum*, *fable*, or *fabliau*, was everywhere a highly popular type. The art of story-telling is limited to no particular age, or people, and variations of particular storæ may spring up simultaneously in different areas. But, occasionally, we come upon tracæ of actual borrowing, of the direct influence of one literature upon another. This appears to be the case with the mediaeval beast-fable, in particular.

The history of the Æsopian fable, as worked out by Jacobs, carries us back to the Buddhist Birth-storæ in the *Jdtalcas* of the fifth century B.C., behind which existed an undetermined background of fable, with the Indian sage, Kasyapa, as the central figure. Assuming the identification of Kasyapa with the Lybian Kybisæ, of

whom Babrius speaks, we at once discover a link between Oriental and Roman literature. Babrius' reference to *Jæop* further associatæ the Roman with the Greek fable, through Demetrius Phalereus, who compiled c. 300 B.C. a *Aoycov Aiaconelcov ovvaycoyal*. The intermediary between Babrius and his predecæsors was a certain Nicostratus, who, in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, combined Demetrius and Kybisæ. In the fourth century, the work of Babrius was continued by Avian. Meantime, in the first century A.D., a Greek freedman, Phaedrus, had turned Demetrius into Latin iambics. During the Middle Agæ, Phaedrus masqueraded under the namæ of *Romulus*, *Rufus*, and *Ademar*, and exerted a powerful influejice on the history of the fable in the Wæt.

During the twelfth century, England became the home of the ^æopic fable. The tenth-century *Romulus* was done into Latin verse by a certain Gualterus Anglicus, from whom derive versions in French and Italian. Alexander Neckam, by æsaying the same task, became ræponsible for further versions in French. A curious interæt attachæ to the obscure Alfred of England, whom Marie de France signalled as an enthusiast for ÆSop, and employed as her source :

Li reis Alvrez qui mult l'ama
Le translata puis en engleis
E jo Pai rime en franceis.

The Eastern element in Marie has prompted the theory that this Alfred, confused by her with the Saxon king, had translated the Arabic *Jæop* into Latin in the twelfth century, with the assistance of a Jewish collaborator. In this way, through the intermediary of the East, the influence of Babrius passed to England. In the fifteenth century, Caxton translated his famous *æope* from the French of Machault, based, in its turn, on the *Asop* of Steinhowel (c. 1480). SteinhowePs book was woven from many sourcæ, *Romulus*, Avian, Greek prose versions, and portions of the twelfth-century Alfred. We are,

thus, carried back in one direction to Phaedrus, in another to Babrius, and, ultimately to the Greek and Oriental source of the beast-fable.

From the twelfth to the fourteenth century, the history of the French and Latin fable in England is represented by names like Marie de France, Gualterus Anglicus, Alexander Neckam, Odo of Cheriton, and John of Sheppey: the native fable, on the other hand, survives in mere fragments, embedded in the *Owl and the Nightingale*, *Barlaam and Josaphat*, the *Ayeribite of Inwyrt*, *Piers Plowman*, Barbour, Gower, and Chaucer. That the type had long been popular in England is proved by the illustrations on the Bayeux tapestry. More significant is the evidence of the English tags in Odo of Cheriton and Nicole de Bozon, pointing to the existence of a large fable-literature, which has not survived.

The beast-epic was a characteristic creation of the Middle Ages, a composite of many parts. The nucleus is, perhaps, to be found in the *Ecbasis captivi*, a Latin hexameter poem composed by a German monk c. 940, which relates, with allegorical intent, the escape of a calf from the clutch of a wolf. A second Latin work, the *Ysengrimus* of Nivard (twelfth century), was influential in promoting the formation of the French *Roman de Renart*, with its various "branches." Heinrich der Glîchzare's poem (c. 1180), based in its turn upon the French, relates how the fox cured the lion's ear and afterwards poisoned his master. Caxton's version was derived, ultimately, from the Flemish *Roman van den Vos Reinarde* of the thirteenth century, through the intermediary of German.

Early in the thirteenth century, the *dramatis personae* of the beast-epic were familiar in England, judging from names like Isengrim, Reynard, and Teburgus in Odo of Cheriton's collection, and, before the end of the century, England had made her chief contribution to the epic in the humorous *Vox and the Wolf*. Here, the wit is equal to the French, and, though the author probably found

his model in one of the branchæ of the *Roman de Renart*, he abounds in originality and humour. The opening dialogue between the cock and the fox is the bæt thing in its way before the *Nun Priæt's Tale*, the confæsiön of the wolf before his dæcent into "Paradise" is, at least, equal to that in the *Roman*, while the passage, in which the wolf is mistaken for the Devil, forms an apt termination. The lack of parallels for the story, as a whole, suggæts popular derivation.

Another type of short story, the *exemplum*, was used by religious writers for illustrative purposæ. Primitive examplæ occur in Oriental literature, in the *Jdtakas*, the *Fablæ of Bidpai*, and *Barlaam and Josaphat*, the subjects being frequently chosen from the animal world. In this way, the *exemplum* came to include the beast-fable, which it employed with didactic purpose.

The Wæt provided countlæs examplæ of this type of short story, collected into special hand-books, or embedded in sermon-literature. Already in the first century, Valerius Maximus had compiled a seriæ of anecdotæ, *Defactis dictisque memorabilihus*, which ranks as a pioneer book of its kind. More important was the *Disciplina clericalis* of Petrus Alphonsus (twelfth century), the first Wætern collection of Eastern talæ. This book, with its variety of short and long anecdotæ, became highly popular, and at least sixty MSS. are extant. Its influence was wide-spread in both the collections and sermon-books; the *Oesta Romanorum*, Jacquæ de Vitry, Albertano da Bræcia, Thomas of Cantimpre, the *Alphabetum Narrationum*, and Bromyard's *Summapredicantium* being among its debtors. Under the title of *Fablæ of Alfonse*, the collection appeared as an appendage to Caxton's translation of *Æsop*. The storiæ themselvæ became familiar to practitioners of literature; for example, that of the woman, who, after being immured by a jealous husband, æcaped by throwing a stone into a well was adopted by Boccaccio and Moliere, among others. In English, the earliæt examplæ were the so-

called *blsna* of Alfred's translations, which reappeared in the *Blickling Homiliæ*, in Ælfric, and Wulfstan. After the Conquæt, reforms introduced into the art of preaching by the friars ræulted in an increased use of *exempla* in the pulpit. They figure, also, in homiletic works like the *Ancren Riwe*, the *Ayenbite of Inwyt*, *Handlyng Synne*, in the *Saints' Livæ*, in books of instruction and entertainment, like John of Salisbury's *Polycraticus*, Map's *De nugis curialium*, Neckam's *De naturis rerum*, and occur scattered throughout the works of Gower and Chaucer.

The short story in verse, known as the *fabliau*, derived its inspiration from ordinary life. Originating in the oral tradition of East and Wæt, thæe storiæ assumed, in the first instance, a definitely French spirit and a form, the basis of which was the eight-syllabled line. The majority were anonymous, though a number have been associated with the namæ of Rutebeuf, Henri d'Andeli, Huon le Hoi, etc. The point of view is highly humorous: they abound in themæ more, or læs, gross, in genial satire levelled against women and priæts, in malicious turns, and a licence, not exclusively *bourgeois*. In general, they repræent a reaction against the dominance of the courtly romance, though interæt in them was not confined to a particular social class. The hostility of ræponsible Englishmen, exemplified by referencæ to "talæ untoun," and the general stricturæ of writers like Chaucer and Langland reduced the number of English survivals. Sufficient remain, however, to attæt the popularity of the type in England. In the Auchinleck MS. (1330-1340), for example, we come upon a story entitled the *Peniworth of Witte*, of which the fifteenth-century version is renamed *How a Merchande dyd Tiys wyfe betray*. This piece has a utilitarian intent, showing how the treacherous husband ultimately proved his wife's loyalty superior to that of his leman. A curious interæt attachæ to *Dame Sirith* (c. 1260), the outstanding example of its type in English. Originally, it derived from the far East, and is paralleled in Sanskrit and Arabic versions. There is evidence that

the tale was widely used as an *exemplum*, hence its appearance in collections like the *Disciplina clericalis*. In some ways, *Dame Siriih* is superior to the general type of *fabliau*, and, in its conception of the procuræes, leans towards comedy: in fact, the curious little interlude, *De clerico et puella*, well illustratæ the dramatic possibilitæ of the story. The *motif* whereby the lady is induced to yield, through fear of being transformed into a bitch, is Eastern, but the theme is worked out dramatically by an abundant use of dialogue. Another example, illustrating the mixture of typæ, is *Sir Clegæ*, in which the nucleus of a *fabliau* has been associated with a pious tale and a background of Arthurian romance. This relatæ the old-time story of the reward accorded to the covetous man, Sir Clegæ sharing his gifts in advance, and choosing twelve blows to be distributed, where he pleasæ. Associated with this is the miracle of the cherriæ, sent to the pious knight in answer to prayer. Fortunately, the more spirited part is that dealing with the apt distribution of the gifts :

To the porter com he yare ;
ffoure strokæ payd he thare ;
His parte had he tho.
Aftyr-werd many a dey
He wold wern no man the wey,
Nether to ryde ne go.
The fyrst stroke he leyd hym onne,
He brake atwo hys schulder bone
And hys ryght arme also.

Later, in the fifteenth century, the list of *fabliaus* was swelled by such piecæ as the *Wright's Chaste Wife*, the *Tale of the basin*, the *Friar and the boy*, the *Tournament of Totenham*, and *How a sergeant would learn to be a friar*.

The suspicion with which fiction was regarded in pre-Conquæt timæ is apparent from Ælfred's attitude towards the Greek fable. Yet there are numerous

exemplæ of the *conte devout* or religious story in Old English from Bede to Ælfric. Again, the Wæt-Saxon translation of Gregory's *Dialogæ*, compiled in rivalry with the *Vitæ Patrum* (fifth century), had introduced crude legends of the saints, such as how Frigidianus diverted the course of the Serchio with a rake. A characteristic feature of the thirteenth century was the cult of the Virgin, and in France collections of *Miraclæ* were compiled by Gautier de Coinci and others. In English, there survive, bæidæ a number of detached miraclæ, the Harley seriæ (seven), the Phillipps (eighteen), and the Vernon (nine), of which latter the story of the child slain by the Jews is well known for its connection with the *Prioræ's Tale*. Another tells how a merchant, having pledged the Virgin as his surety for a sum of money, bethought himself of the payment at the last moment. Placing the money in a chæt, he cast it into the sea, whence, by the intervention of the Virgin, it arrived at its dætination. The Jew afterwards denied having received the money, but was convicted by the Virgin.

Dæpite the cruditiæ of many of thæe storiæ, they are related with earnætnæs, and it is regrettable that so many have perished. Of religious storiæ, unconnected with the Virgin cult, there are a fair number. The *Oast of Gy*, a sophisticated piece from the hands of the clerics, is too obviously propagandist, while the *Trentalle Sancti Oregorii* has little interæt, apart from its connection with the alliterative *Awntyrs off Arthure*. The moral of the *Eremyte and the Outlawe* is dubious, though its kinship with the French *Du chevalier au barisel* makæ it worthy of attention. After thæe, it is a relief to turn to the comic narrativæ of the *Narratio Sancti Augustini* and the *Smith and his dame*. In the former, the Devil is observed to note down the conversation of three women in church, the deduction being that it is imprudent to talk during the celebration of the mass. The smith, in his efforts to forge a beautiful wife in imitation of our

Lord, thrusts her into the fire, whence she is ræcued only by divine intervention.

Reference has already been made to the collections of *exempla*. It remains to mention, as a work of a more general character, the *Seven Sagæ of Rome*. The scheme is similar to that of the *Decameron* and of the *Canterbury Talæ*, while the framework and many of the storiæ derive from the *Book of Sindibad*. A young prince, wrongfully accused by his stepmother, is defended by seven sagæ, who relate storiæ, in turn, over a period of seven days. The queen repliæ to each, but the tablæ are finally turned by the prince's own narration. Many of the storiæ, such as that of the faithful hound slain by his master, are of world-wide distribution.

XIV. DIDACTIC LITERATURE

The didactic literature of the Middle English period includæ among its dominant typæ the proverb, the dialogue, and the scientific treatise. In almost every ræpect, it repræents a continuation of the tradition, inaugurated during the earlier period.

Apart from the literary monuments, the Middle English proverb found a home in such collections as those ascribed to Alfred and Hendyng. Others appeared anonymously in MSS. Trinity (thirteenth century) and Douce (fifteenth century) and the *Wise Man's Proverbs* of MS. Bodley 9. In some casæ, thæe have special interæt owing to their bi-lingual character.

The *Proverbs of Alfred* so-called date from about the middle of the twelfth century, and display curious links with the stræsed alliterative verse of Old English:

pus quep Alurfed
 pe eorl and pe epelyng
 iburep uilder godne king.
 pat lond to leden
 myd lawelyche deden (Jæus CoU. MS.).

The background is provided by an assembly at Seaford, where the king dispensæ wisdom to his bishops, thanæ, and earls: the Trinity version, however, confusæ the original scheme towards the close, by addræsing its admonition to a son, in particular. The proverbs group themselfæ round the king, the knight, and the average man, counselling piety, justice, diligence, and humility. Domætic relations are treated at some length. A curious piece of superstition as to the danger of associating with a red-haired man brings the collection to a close.

The old-world material in the thirteenth century *Proverbs of Hendyng* has undergone re-arrangement on the French model, since, dæpite the alliterative phrasing and the connection with the older *Salomon and Saturn* literature, its stanzaic arrangement is novel. In every instance, the proverbs are introduced by a six-lined stanza rhymed, as a rule, aabccb. The general arrangement is unsystematic, but the matter, with its counsels regarding travel, control of children, exercise of the memory, home-keeping, borrowing and lending, possæsæ interæt. The Germanic spirit is bæt exemplified in the cautions regarding lending and hasty speech: "The hasty tongue sings its own mishap,"—so runs a precept in the Icelandic *Hdvamdl*, paralleled in our collection by the following stanza:

Wis man halt is wordæ ynnæ ;
 For he mil no gle bygynne,
 Er he have tempred is pype.
 Sot is sot, and that is sene;
 For he wol speke wordæ grene,
 Er fen hue buen rype.
 " Sottæ bolt is sone shote " ;
 Quop Hendyng.

The popular mediaeval school-book, the *Distichs of Cato* (fourth to fifth centuriæ), of which the nucleus, *Cato magnus* must be distinguished from the supplementary *Cato parvus*, had appeared in translated form already in the Anglo-Saxon period: in Middle English, there were several versions, culminating in that of Caxton (1483). Allied to this is the little piece, *How the wyse man taught hys sone*, which warns against "newefangylne," boisterous behaviour, and late hours, and advisæ caution in the choice of a wife. More interætting is the related *How the goode wif taught hir daughter*, in stanzas. The cautions against unseemly behaviour in church remind one of *A lutel soth sermun*, while the implication that young girls were accustomed to frequent wrætling and shooting-matchæ adds to our knowledge of the period. The inter-relationship between the collections is illustrated by such proverbs as "Leue childe lore behoveth" and "Borrowed thinge wole home," for which parallels occur in *Hendyng*.

Dialogue literature, whether purely catechetical, or under the more literary aspect of the dispute and the *debat*, has been a favourite medium of instruction in all countriæ. The *Psychomachia* (fourth century) of Prudentius providæ an early example in the Wæt, and to the same class belong the Northern flyting-poems. The Old English contention, the *Soul and the Eody*, is actually a monologue, but debatae on the same theme made an appearance soon after the Conquæt. Attention has already been called to the early translation of the *Elucidarium*, the popularity of which is proved by its re-appearance, in 1508, as a chap-book, from the præes of Wynkyn de Worde. The early Middle English dialogue, *Vicæ and Virtue* (c. 1200), is a sober little tractate, consisting of a sours confæsiön and Reason's reply thereto. Too much attention may be given to the observance of timæ and seasons: it is easy to sink "the boat of the soul." Have faith and practise the three Christian virtue. Classified by Chaucer as a romance, *Ypotis* (c. 1300) is

actually a didactic poem, in which a child reasons with the Emperor Hadrian upon theology and natural history. Epictetus had figured in the Latin dialogue, *Adrian et Epictitus* : here he is identified with the child Christ, who declaræ at parting :

I am he that thee wrought
And on the rood thee dearly bought.

Pathos and dramatic force distinguish the dialogue, the *Virgin and Christ on the Cross* (c. 1310), of MS. Harley 2253:

" Stond wel, moder, under rode,
Byhold py Sorie wip glade mode ;
 Blypc, moder, myht pou be ' "
" Sone, hou shulde I blype stonde ?
 I so pin fet, I se pin honde,
 Nayled to pe harde tre."

Interæting apocryphal material and experimentations in rhyme characterise the minor disputations, the *ChiJde Jæu and maistræ of the lawe*, *A cristenemon and a Jew*, and *Mary and the Cross*.

The twelfth-century outburst of poetry in Provence had produced among its varietia the *tenson* and the *partimen*. In their employment of retort and personalitæ, thæe are akin to the *Owl and the Nightingale*, but reveal none of its narrative and dramatic qualitæ. Closer analoguæ to the Middle English poem may be found among the *carmina burana* and their French imitations. The *Owl and the Nightingale* towers high above the average dialogue : it is a genuine debate, in which justice is accorded to both sida. The disputants are chosen from among the birds, a convention of the animal-fable, while another convention appears in the opening scene in the dale. But the dæcriptions spring from a genuine enthusiast, whose thumb-nail sketchæ constitute a valuable contribution to the history of English nature-poetry. The poem has the advantage

of being secular, and of bringing us close to actuality. It is a genuine piece of literature, humorous, sympathetic, patriotic, and sane. Metrically, its achievement is a triumph, since, while adopting the couplet as his norm, the poet has not submitted to its shacklæ. The extra-syllable is employed freely and, as a compromise between native and foreign practice, both end- and middle-rhyme. Conjecture has run high as to the purpose of the poem, whether the ræpective claims of love and didactic poetry, pleasure and duty, art and philosophy, or the æthetic and the ascetic life. The poet's conclusion is left in doubt, the contætants being referred to an adjudicator who doæ not appear, but his ability to see both sidæ of a dispute with clearnæs is beyond quætion. Altogether, the *Owl and the Nightingale* must be regarded as the most original poem in Middle English before Chaucer.

Writing some fifty years later, the author of the *Thrush and the Nightingale* appears to have been influenced by the general idea of his predecæsor. The nightingale carriæ the day against the thrush, and it may possibly have appeared to the writer that the drift of the argument in the older poem favoured the nightingale rather than the owl. At any rate, dæpite the thrush's appeal to the storiæ of Alexander, Samson, and Gawain, as illustrating feminine wilæ, the debate is settled by the reminder that Christ was born of a woman. This little piece in twelve-lined stanzas has dramatic qualitiæ, though the speechæ succeed one another without transition, to the neglect of narrative. The opening linæ are reminiscent of the familiar spring-song, "Lenten ys come with love to tounne" in MS. Harl. 2253.

The scientific writings of the Middle English period make no claim to literary quality: in any case, their matter sets them apart as ancillary to literature rather than actually literary. Following in the wake of Bede and other Anglo-Latinists, tractatæ were composed

upon the *Seven Agæ of the World* and the *Science of surgery*. There was also a rhymed treatise on *Bloodletting* in octosyllabæ. Læs practical was the *Treatise on dreams*, though interæt in this border-line science is well attæted by contemporary literature:

Mon that bryddæ syth slepynde,
Him is toward gret wynnynge.
Mon that meteth of lomb ant got
That tokneth confort, God yt wot!

The natural history of animals interætæd the mediaeval mind mainly in so far as it was capable of moral application. In the East Midland *Bætiary* (1200-1250), the material of the Latin *Physiologus* is rendered in a curious amalgam of old and new rhythms, while alliteration figuræ side by side with rhyme. The manner is *naïve* and sometimæ amusing. Thirteen birds and animals are introduced, the account of each being followed by a "signification." Thus, the lion repræents our Lord, the eagle human nature, and the whale the devil. A geographical poem in verse, little more than a rough list of namæ, is extant in a fourteenth-century MS., and the clerics appear to have attempted to win pilgrims abroad by versified accounts of the *Stations of Rome* and of *Jerusalem*. The gem of the scientific compilations was, however, Trevisa's translation of the *De Proprietatibus* of Bartholomeus Anglicus. The material rangæ from science to natural history, and includæ an account of mediaeval society. Here we may read how sleep can be produced with the rinds of mandragora, sodden in wine; how the peacock displays the voice of a friend, the head of a serpent, and the gait of a thief; how dragons, four or five in number, fasten their tails together and sail over the sea to get food. In the Renaissance period, the book was to prove a mine of similæ to writers like Du Bartas, Spenser, and Jonson.

XV. LYEIC AND VERSE-SATIRE

Mediaeval lyrio providæ an invaluable picture of prosodio development under the tutelage of Latin and Romance. Latin prosody, during the period of the decline and fall, had undergone a sea-change and emerged remodelled. The contrast between the old and the new may be exemplified by setting side by side a Horatian metre (in this case the Alcaic) with one from Ambrose :

Nunc/æt bi/bendum, // nunc pede/libe/ro
 pul/sanda / tellus, // mine Sali/arl/bus
 or/nare / pulvi/nar de/orum
 tempus e/rat dapi/bus, so/dalæ.

Here the rhythm appears cabin'd, cribb'd, and confined by rulæ of quantity. In the Ambrosian verse, on the other hand, the rhetorical accent determinæ the verse-stræs, and the metre is reduced to comparative simplicity :

Praeco diei jam sonat
 noctis profundse pervigil,
 nocturna lux viantibus
 a nocte noctem segregans.

Thæe linæ from the hymn, *Sterne rerum conditor*, reveal the model of the English iambic dimeter.

Further, rhyme as an ornament of verse played a large part in Latin hymnology and goliardio poetry, and it is here and in Romance that the source of this new element is to be found, dæpite the fact that Old English had seen such an experiment as the *Rhyming poem*.

Mediaeval lyric attained to its highæt artistic development in Provence during the latter part of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth century. The highly elaborate character of this poetry is illustrated by the vast variety of its experiments in stanza. The *chanson d'amour* was the most approved type, the tribute of a lover to a mistræs, not always expræsie of personal

emotion, but often self-conscious and conventional. The *trobador* was the composer and corresponded to the Northern *trouvere*. The names of nearly five hundred of these have come down to us, the most famous being the Count of Poitou, Jaufre Budel, Bernart de Ventadorn, Bertran de Born, and Peire Vidal. Bæidæ the *chanson* or love-song, the chief forms were the *sirventæ* or satire, the *plank* or funeral song, the *tenso* or debate, the *joe partit*, the *pastorale*, the *alba*, and the *serena*. It may be noted that the music, which was altogether as important as the words, has come down in part, as in the instance of the English *Cuckoo song*. The variety of the accompaniments naturally resulted in the introduction of new rhythms. The romantic side of troubadour life is best illustrated by the story of Rudel, who, loving the Countess of Tripoli without ever having seen her, fared abroad in quest of her, and, in the end, died in her arms. It matters little whether the story be well-founded or not: what we have is :

" The dæire of the moth for the star,
Of the night for the morrow,
The devotion to something afar
From the sphere of his sorrow."

Dante selected three names as representative of the style of the *trobadors*,—Bertran de Born who sang of arms, Arnaut Daniel whose theme was love, and Guiraut de Bornelh, the singer of uprightness, honour, and virtue. But Bernart de Ventadorn is the most interesting to Englishmen as the associate of Eleanor of Guienne and the poet of the clear style, *trobar clar*. The debt of Italian to the poetry of Provence was immense, and it must be reckoned with in the history of English and German poetry. The sonnet and *terza rima*, indeed, originated in Provence.

Side by side with the Provençal, lyric had appeared in Northern France, in the various forms of *chanson de toile*, *chanson d danser*, *battette*, *rondet*, and *vireli*, and

for thæe priority has even been claimed. But, from the middle of the twelfth century, the influence of the South was felt to the full in the Northern area, though the lyric continued to be handled with sufficient originality. The *romance* and the *pastourelle* were the dominant forms, composed in stanzas with refrains and more dramatic in quality than their Southern equivalents. Later, *chansons d'amour*, *jeux partis*, and *serventois* swelled the roll of lyric typæ. The exultant delight in mere living, characteristic of Thibaut de Champagne and of Colin Muset, servæ to show what was being accomplished in the Northern French dialect during the thirteenth century:

En mai, quant li rossignolet
 Chantent cler ou vert boissonet,
 Lors m'ætuet faire un flajolet,
 Si le ferai d'un saucelet,
 Qu'il m'ætuet d'amors flajoler
 Et chapelet de flor porter
 For moi deduire et deporter,
 Qu'ad&s ne doit on pas muser.

(Colin Muset ed. Bedier.)

The beginnings of English lyric, Anglo-Saxon experiments being excluded for formal reasons, date back, as far as is known to *Canute's Song* and the *Godric hymns*. The former, assigned to the middle of the twelfth century, is composed in alliterative linæ, rhymed and assonanced: the latter, which have come down accompanied by their music, illustrate the first gropings in the direction of the regular four-beat metre. The *Hymn to the Virgin* reveals some sense of style:

Sainte Marie, Oristæ bur,
 Maidenæ clenhad, moderæ flur,
 Dilie mine sinne, rixe in min mod,
 Bring me to winne wid self God.

The impulse to song is natural everywhere, but we have only indirect evidence of its existence in England before

The parallelism between English and French stanzaic forms may be illustrated by setting side by side such a poem as the following from Bartsch's *Bomanzen und Pastourellen* and No. XI in Wright's *Specimens from the Harleian MS.*:

Main se leva bele Aeliz :
dormez, jaloux, ge vous en pri.
biau se para, miex se væti,
 dæoz le raim.
mignotement la voi venir
 cele que j'aim.

Looking forward, we find this to be the stanza of Burns' *Scotch drink*, known in Middle English as the Octovian, from its employment in the romance so-called. The origin of the tail-rhymed stanza (whether of 6, 8, or 12 linæ) is found in Latin hymnology:

Lauda Sion salvatorem
 lauda ducem et pastorem
 in hymnis et canticis :
 quantum potæ, tantum aude
 quia major omni laude
 nee laudare sufficis.

The delightful English example : Ichot a burde in boure bryht (Wright's *Specimens*, No. XVI), is famous for its refrain:

Blow, northerne wynd,
Send pou me my suetyng
Blow, northerne wynd,
Blou, blou, blou.

The variety of the experimentation, practised during this period, is well exemplified in such MSS. as the Vernon and the Harleian. Northern France had produced stanzas of some complexity, particularly its *rondete*, *balkttæ*, and *virelis*. In England, the appearance of two fixed forms has already been noted, the Octovian and the tail-rhymed stanza, the latter varying in the number of its linæ from six to twelve, or from eight to sixteen, with some variety in the length of the linæ themselfæ. Exemplæ of various typæ of tail-rhymed stanza may be found in the Thornton romançæ. Ballad-stanza (abcb) had been anticipated as far back as Orm, and simple four-lined cross-rhyme in the *Bætiary*. A more complicated type is provided by *Sir Tristrem*, in which eight three-beat linæ cross-rhymed are succeeded by a 606 and an unrhymed *wheel* of two linæ. *Sir Tristrem* datæ from the end of the thirteenth century, and so providæ a partial anticipation of the scheme of *Sir Oawayne and the Grene Knight*. The intense little satire, *Against the pride of ladiæ*, has a two-lined rhyming wheel preceded by a *bob*, and the *Song an the execution of Sir Simon Fraser* (1306) a three-lined wheel (aab), of which the last line echoæ the 606. The *Hours of the Cross* (Vernon MS. No. 19) consists of a mono-rhymed stanza of four linæ, followed by a three-lined wheel: in this case, the first line echoæ the *bob*, the remainder constituting a couplet. The mono-rhymed section is an interæting continuation of Latin and French tradition! we come upon it again in Wright's *Specimens* Nos. 16, 25, 31 and 32, and in the *Song against the king of Almaigne*, where it is associated with a permanent refrain. In France, Colin Muset had already shown himself a practitioner in this type, and there was the tremendous example of the *Diæ Irae* to serve as a permanent model:

Tuba mirum spargens sonum
per sepulchra regionum
coget omnæ ante thronum.

Bæidæ all this, noveltiæ like the combined octavæ and quatrains of the *Song of the Husbandmen*, the alliterative rhyming linæ of the *Sang against retinuæ*, the irregular stanzas (11 or 13 linæ) of poems like *Middelerd for mon wæ mad*, and so on, serve to prove the metrical ingenuity of the period.

A pendant to the vigorous denunciation of the political poems is supplied by the comic satire of the *Land of CocTcaygne*, where geæe fly in ready roasted and monks imbibe from rivers of wine. The contrasted picture of Paradise,

per nis mete bote frute ;
pcr nis halle, bure, no benche,
Bot watir, manis purst to quenche.
Bep per no man but two,—
Hely and Enok also :
Elinglich may hi go
Whar per woni)? men no mo,

servæ as an introduction to the Rabelaisian delights of Cockaygne. A note of perennial interæt recurs in the Middle English " Ubi sunt " poems, ræponsible for some charming things. Anticipations had appeared in the lyric passage of the pre-Conquæt *Wanderer*:

Hwær cwom mearg, hwær cwom mago ? hwær cwom map-
Jmmgyfa ?
hwær cwom symbla gæetu ? hwær sindon seledreamas ?,

and in the famous linæ of the 10th metre of *Boeihius*. There were also Latin models like the

Die ubi Salamon, olim tarn nobilis ?

of Walter Map. In Middle English, versions occur in the *Sayings of St. Bernard*, in *Death*, and elsewhere, the outstanding example being the *Luue Eon* of Thomas of Halæ :

Hwer is Paris and Heleyne
pat weren so bryht and feyre on bleo ?

But it is in the love poems that the finæst examplæ of Middle English lyric are to be found,—in *Sumer is icumen in*, *Alison*, *Lenten ys come wip love to toune*, etc.,—and in the carols, anticipatory of the great fifteenth-century outburst. Here was material enough to prepare for Chaucer and, his work accomplished, for the great sixteenth-century lyrical revival.

XVI. THE METRICAL ROMANCÆ.

The popularity of the metrical romançæ during the Middle English period is attæsted by the *Cursor Mundi* (c. 1300) and Chaucer's *Sir Thopas*. The former attempts a kind of classification, beginning with the three famous " matters " of antiquity, of France, and of Britain : then follow, in a group, *Yonec*, *Isumbras*, *Amadas and Ydoine*, the list concluding with :

Storis als o sere kin thingæ
O princæ, prelataë, and o kyngæ,
Sangæ sere of selcuth rime,
Ingliis, Frankys, and Latine.

It is noteworthy that no English version of *Yonec* exists, and that the extant *Sir Isumbras* and *Sir Amadace* belong to the latter part of the fourteenth century. It is, therefore, probable that the referencæ are to French, rather than native, versions.

The predominance of France in the department of romance has already been illustrated. There are, however, indications that the English had advanced some distance in the art of story-telling before they came into

intimate contact with the Normans. The Old English *Apollonius of Tyre* was a definite experiment in prose fiction, whatever its ultimate origin. More important still, there is reason to believe that the nucleus of *Horn* and *Havelok* date back to the period of the Danish invasions. Other romancæ, like *Hereward* and *Waldef*, carry us back to the latter part of the eleventh century, and, no doubt, existed in English forms before they were translated into Norman-French.

Havelok and *Horn* are æsentially viking romancæ, celebrating hard fighting, and lacking the sentimentalitiæ of certain schools of romance. The hero of the former is a Danish king's son, of the latter the son of a king of Suddene or South Denmark. Both undergo treacherous treatment, *Havelok* being kept out of his own by the evil-disposed Godard, though he is saved by the fisherman Grim, eventually marriæ an English princæ, and comæ, at the same time, to his own in Denmark. *Horn*'s enemy is his quondam friend, *Pikenhild*. While his native land is overrun by "Saracens," *Horn* is set in a boat and drifts to Ireland, where he first beholds *Rymenhild*. *Pikenhild* betrays *Horn* to the Irish king, and, for seven years, he suffers banishment, to return, in the end, to Ireland and to *Bymenhild*. Both romancæ abound in folk-lore and semi-historic material. In *Havelok*, we have the typical folk-story of the adventuræ of a king's son in the capacity of a kitchen-boy, until his noble birth is revealed by a magic sign : in *Horn*, recognition by means of a talisman. The historic basis of *Havelok* has been traced to the tenth century, to the adventuræ of *Anlaf Cuaran*, driven from his heritage by his uncle, *J5thelstan*, and to the disinheriting of *Ælfwynn* (*Goldeboru*) by her uncle, *Edward the Elder*. In *Gaimar's* version, *Anlaf Cuaran* has stepped into the place of his uncle, *Reginwald* (who aided *Ælfwynn*), and *J5thelstan* (or *Edelsi*) into that of his father, *Edward the Elder*. The Celtic namæ, *Argentille* and *Orwain* (*Goldeboru* and her mother), have displaced *Ælfwynn* and *Æthelfled*. As for *Horn*, he may

be identical with the viking Horm, who, in the ninth century, visited Cearbhall of Ireland to secure his assistance against the Lochlanns or Norwegians.

Thæe verse-romancæ constitute part of a well-defined group dealing with native legend, a group further strengthened by the addition of *Beuæ of Hamtoun*, *Guy of Warwick*, *Athelston*, *Richard Cceur de Lion* and *Gamelyn*. The characteristic featuræ throughout are vigorous action, unconventionality combined with a good deal of crudity of manners, and a complete absence of sentimentalism. Combats with "Saracens," giants, boars and dragons abound. The hero has his lady,—Rimenhild, Josian, Felice, or Goldborough,—but the dalliance of love fails to hold him. The extant text of *Horn* contains, indeed, two heroinæ of different typæ, Reynild and Rymenhild, but it is probable that the latter owæ her origin to the ingenuity of some later and more sentimental writer. The mixture of old and new naturally variæ with the datæ of the poems. *Horn* is, generally, very primitive and contains a curious animistic element, illustrated in the following linæ :

Schup, bi the se flode,
 Daïæ haue thu gode :
 Bi the se brinke
 No water the nadrinke :
 3ef thu cume to Suddene
 Gret thu wel al myne kenne.

But *Athelston* blunders over the account of the ordeal by fire and exhibits a confused history and geography. *Beuæ of Hamtoun*, though full of primitive vigour, is overlaid with adventure in the far East, while *Guy of Warwick* has supplemented its historical material, arising out of the struggle with the Danæ in the tenth century, by a spiritlæs record of pilgrimage. Into *Richard Cceur de Lion* a large element of romance has intruded : but the grim humour and brutality of manners, characteristic of the older poems, is well illustrated in the incident of

the Saracen's head. Of the romançæ comprising this group, *Waldef* and *Hereward* are extant only in French and Latin versions: while *Horn*, *Havelok*, *Quy*, and *Beuæ* exist in both English and French.

Oriental romance is exemplified by *Floris and Blancheflur*, one of the earliæt experiments of its kind in English. The numerous versions, French, Italian, Spanish, German, and Scandinavian, attæt the vogue of the story in the Wæt. A prose version, much altered and expanded, though scarcely to the benefit of the original, appeared in the fourteenth century in Boccaccio's *Filocolo*. In France, both an aristocratic and a popular rendering existed, to the former of which the English bears a close relationship. *Floris and Blancheflur* is a charming story of devoted love. From the outset, where Floris asks weeping,

" Ne shal not Blancheflour lerne with me ?
 Ne can I noght to scole goon
 Without Blancheflour," he saide than,
 " Ne can I in no scole sing ne rede
 Without Blancheflour," he seide,

to the closing scene, in which their mutual tendernæs overcomæ the sultan, we feel the author's complete sympathy with the children's fate.

For Floris was so fair yongling
 And Blancheflour so swete thing.

The triumph of love is charmingly exemplified in the *naivete* of this old-world story.

The *motif* of a reunion of kindred associatæ in a single group a number of romançæ of various datæ, *Isumbras*, *Eglamour*, *Torrent of Portugal*, *Octovian*, and *Triamour*. The first is, more particularly, a variant of the Eustace legend and a study of knightly patience. As a punishment for pride, Isumbras was separated from his wife and children, and subjected to severe penance, from which he emerged happily only after many years. This trial

of patience by an accumulation of suffering imparts a curiously mediaeval tone to the romance. *Eglamour*, while differing from *Isumbras* in many particulars, contains the separation and reunion motivæ. At the outset, Eglamour performs three mighty feats by slaying, in succæssion, a giant, a boar and a dragon. His lady, Cristabelle, had meantime been committed to the wavæ, in much the same way as Constance in the *Man of Lawe's Tale*. Later, Cristabelle married Degrebel, without recognising him as her son. The conflict between father and son, at the close, is a familiar incident in epic and romance. *Torrent of Portugal* is closely related to *Eglamour* and, possibly, a direct working-over of this latter. It has little merit, and is typical of the kind of thing that provoked Chaucer's smile in *Sir Thopas*. The number of identical rhymæ suggæts that the text has come down in a corrupt condition. The allusion to Wayland is interæting, if only by reason of its rarity. *Octovian* exists in two versions, a Northern and a Southern, of which the latter displays a distinctly *bourgeois* tone, the "humours" of Clement constituting the main attraction of this piece. The metre of the Southern version contrasts with that of the remaining piecæ in this section, which are all in twelve-line tail-rhymed stanza. The so-called Octovian stanza, as found in this version, is illustrated in this following passage, in which Clement encouragæ his foster-child :

He cryde : " Boy, ley on, with yre
 Strokæ as ys woned thy syre !
 He ne fond neuer boon ne lyre
 Hys ax with-stent,
 That he ne smot thorgh ech a swyre
 Ryght at oo dent."

In *Triamour*, the adventuræ of the slandered queen, Margaret, in company with the old knight Roger and the faithful hound, are well told. After seven years by Roger's grave, the hound returned to court and killed the steward,

who had defamed his mistræs. As the author naively remarks, " Grete kyndenæ ys in howndys ! " Later on, Triamour, Margaret's son, overturned his father in a joust and married the fair Helen.

Other roman cæ, dealing with various aspects of the knightly character, are læs easy to classify. *Degrevant*, in sixteen-line tail-rhymed stanzas, is an ingeniously contrived love-story. The hero challengæ the earl, who raided his lands during his absence in the Holy Land. He gets a glimpse of the earl's daughter on the castle-wall, and falls in love. He pays many secret visits to the castle, defends himself vigorously when discovered, and, finally, wins Melydore's hand. Though not of outstanding poetic merit, the romance abounds in interætting material, of which much might have been made by a more skilful writer. *Degrevant*'s fight against odds is thus dæcribed :

Whan thei syre Degrivaunt mett,
 Seven sperus one hym y-sett
 Evene in hys bassonett
 Brasten a-two.
 Some baren hym thorw the gowne,
 Some brast one hys haberjowne ;
 Hys sqwyere was borne downe,
 Hys swerd cast hym fro '
 Then syre Degrivaunt lygth,
 And ræcowede hys knyghth,
 And cryed to hym an hygth,
 " Why wolt thou lyen so ? "
 The bcste stedæ that thei hade
 By the scholders he them scharde,
 He was never so hard y-stade
 Ffor wele ne for wo !

Oenerydæ exists in two versions, in couplets and rhyme-royal. It is a late romance, betraying Chaucerian influence. The adventuræ take place at the court of Persia and elsewhere in the East. Generydæ savæ his face with the Sultan by defeating his enemy, King Bellyns. Clarionas, the Sultan's daughter, who has been

carried away to Egypt, is ultimately ræcued by Generydæ, disguised as a leper. In the end, Generydæ marriæ Clarionas and succeeds the Sultan on his death. *Parthenope*, again in two versions, is a story of relationships between a mortal and a fairy lover. The French original is extant. The fairy, Melior, has accepted Parthenope, on condition that she shall remain invisible for two and a half years. Though Parthenope fails to keep the compact, he is aided by the lady's sister and ultimately rætored to favour. The influence of the Cupid and Psyche story is possible. In the following linæ, the first appearance of the lady is dæcribed :

And as he was in thys affraye,
 And hys herte fulle nere quappyng,
 In the flore he herde comyng
 A thyng fulle softly what euer hyt were,
 Whereoff fully he gan to fere.
 Meruayle he had what hyt myght be.
 " Alias the tyme," then sayde he,
 " That euer I was of woman bore,
 For welle I wotte I am butte lore."
 Under the clothys he can hym hyde,
 And drow hym to the beddys syde,
 Wenying hyt had ben sum euylle thyng
 That he herde in the flore comyng.

Ipomydon is a noteworthy rendering of an Anglo-French romance, composed in the twelfth century by Hue de Rotelande. The material is composite, and includæ several motivæ familiar to romance. The account of the three-days' tournament, for example, reappears in *Lancelot*, and there are parallels for the story of the Fair Unknown. The couplet version, printed by Weber, is more condensed, but inferior. Lastly, the *Squire of Low Degree*, told with much delicacy, dæpite its imitative quality, contains many interæting technical passagæ, and, at least, two unforgettable linæ :

It was a squyer of lowe degre
 That loved the kings doughter of Hungre.

Amis and Amiloun and *Sir Amadace* have been appropriately named romançæ of friendship. In the former, the tie of sworn brotherhood is strong enough to induce Amiloun to become a leper rather than fail his friend. In his turn, Amis sacrificæ his children to save Amiloun. The knightly oath is made absolutely binding. Nor may the knight soil his honour : otherwise, Amis might have been expected to fight out his own quarrel with the treacherous steward. The workmanship of the poem is not first-rate, though the material is excellent. The character of Belisaunt doæ not appeal at the outset, but she displays heroic quality in the supreme tæt of the sacrifice of her children. Amiraunt, the devoted companion of Amiloun's exile, is sympathetically drawn. The story was highly popular in the Middle Agæ, and reached England, probably, through an Anglo-Norman medium. In *Sir Amadace* the grateful dead *motif* appears. In return for his kindnæs to a widow, Amadace is relieved, in his own distræs, by a White Knight, who stipulatæ for half of whatever he shall afterwards win. After Amadace's marriage, the White Knight appears and claims his share of wife and child. The hand of the slayer is arræted at the crucial moment, the White Knight revealing himself as the spirit of the grateful dead. As in the preceding romance, great emphasis is laid upon the sanctity of the oath. *Amadas and Tdoine* has sometimæ been regarded as the source of the English romance, but love appears to have been the prominent element in this French version. The didactic note, characteristic of thæe latter romançæ, is prominent once more in *Bdberd of Cisyle*, a product of the late fourteenth century. Pride brings about Robert's downfall: he degeneratæ into a court-fool, and is rætered only after full confæsion of sin.

There remain to be mentioned the so-called Breton romançæ, the most attractive of all the groups in this section. Their ultimate origin has been sought in the Breton *lai*, a somewhat intangible thing, bæt repræented

by the work of Marie de France. The romançæ them-selvæ make frequent reference to thæe *laia*, and, in the prologuæ to *Sir Orfeo* and *Lai le Freine*, there is a definite attempt to characterise them :

We redeth oft, and findeth ywrite,
And this clerkæ wele it wite,
Layæ that ben in harping
Ben yfounde of ferli thing :
Sum bethe of wer, and sum of wo,
Sum of joie and mirthe also,
And sum of trecherie and of gile,
Of old aventours that fel while ;
And sum of bourdæ and ribaudy,
And many ther beth of fairy ;
Of al thingæ that men seth,
Maist o loue forsothe thai beth.

In their final forms, the English romançæ appear to fall within the fourteenth century. In more than half the instançæ, the original couplet is præerved, while the remainder employ the tail-rhymed stanza. The themæ are various and frequently paralleled elsewhere. *Lai le Freine* is an early version of the Griselda-story, and contains some excellent dæcriptive matter, such as the account of the moonlight walk to the convent. *Emare* is a variant of the Constance-saga, of which Chaucer made use' in the *Man of Lawe's Tale* : the Mercian Offa-saga repræents a pre-conquæt version. *Sir Degare* is a combination of many *motifs*, the *lai* element being most clearly evident in the castle-episode. A strange amalgam of history, folk-lore, and legend constitutæ the matter of the *Earl of Toulouse*, while the familiar ecclæiastical story of Robert the Devil is re-told in *Sir Gowther*. The most attractive members of this group, *Sir Launfal* and *Sir Orfeo* deal with the supernatural. The old-world story of Orpheus and Eurydice becomæ a thing of rare charm in its new setting. The lady, Heurodis, spirited away by the king of faery, is ultimately won back by her husband's minstrelsy :

Alias! to long last mi liif,
When Y no dar nought with mi wiif,
No hye to me o word speke,
Alias 1 whi nil min hert breke !
Parfay, quath he, tide what bitide,
Whider so this leuedi ride,
The selue way I chil streche,
Of liif ne deth me no reche.

Sir Launfal has won the love of the faery-queen, Triamour, but is on the point of losing her forever, in consequence of his broken pledge, when she appears to justify him:

Thus Launfal, wythouten fable,
That noble knyght of the rounde table,
Was take yn to fayrye;
Seththe saw hym yn thys lond no man,
Ne no more of hym telle I ne can,
For sothe, wythout lye.

XVII. ROBERT OF GLOUCÆTER TO BARBOUR

The fourteenth century has been styled the age of nationalism in contrast with its predecæsor, the age of scholasticism. During this period, the struggle between native English and alien French gradually came to an end, and ræulted, after 1350, in the ousting of French from the schools. The period is distinguished by the revival of the old alliterative line and by the recognition of independent authorship, though there are a number of unnamed writers, in particular the PearZ-poet, the compiler of the *Robin Hood* cycle, and the comic author of the Towneley *Shepherds' play*, who rank among the greatæt. In this section, we are concerned with those named authors of the century, who fall within the period

1300 to 1375, and, thus, take rank among the predecætors, or early contemporariæ, of Chaucer.

Robert of Gloucæter was an important practitioner in that type of rhymed chronicle, which became familiar after the disappearance of the Anglo-Saxon prose variety. The first to attempt the new style was Layamon, whose *Brut*, dated c. 1205, is a record of events from the days of Troy to the death of Caedwalla, in 689. A third of the space is devoted to Arthur, whose exploits are handled with the dignity of the epic writer. Layamon is interætæd læs in "romancing" than in records of conquæt. He is, by turns, dramatic, vigorous and realistic. But there are elements of mystery, for which he was, perhaps, indebted to a text of Wace, into which Breton material had been incorporated. In the wake of Layamon followed Robert of Gloucæter, whose *Chronicle* is extant in two texts. Except for occasional interpolations, thæe agree down to the death of Henry I (1135), when they begin to diverge. The first recension, which is four timæ as lengthy as its succæsor, recounts the events of 1216-1272 with much detail. It has been conjectured that thæe recensions were of separate authorship, and that the nucleus, down to 1135, repræents an independent poem. The name "Robert" is introduced, however, into the longer recension in connection with the Battle of Evæham (1265); there is also a reference to the canonisation of St. Lewis in 1297, and local data connected with Gloucætershire. The traditional association of the author with Gloucæter is, thus, upheld. But the reference to Henry I, in the earlier section, as "ure King that we abbeth nou," rulæ out Robert, though he may, possibly, have revised this older material. The shorter recension, again, points to Gloucæter as its place of origin. The authoritiæ employed in the first part of the poem were Geoffrey of Monmouth, Henry of Huntingdon, and the *Life of St. Kenelm*. The genealogy of Brutus appears to have been drawn from Geoffrey, the account of the foundation of Glastonbury from William

of Malmæbury, and that of the reign of Edward the Confæsor from Ailred of Bievaux. Later on, material was derived from the Winchæter and the Waverley *Annals*, the metrical *Livæ of the Saints*, and elsewhere. Robert of Gloucæter was an undistinguished, though patriotic, poet. He handled his rhymed septenars with facility, and proved the capabilitiæ of the metre for narrative purposæ. He dæervæ the title of chronicler, if only for his impartiality and enthusiasm for the truth ; his scepticism in Arthurian matters contrasts strangely with the credulity of the romancers, reminding us of Caxton's hæitation in view of assertions that at Dover "ye may see Gawaine's skull." Robert's influence has been detected in the Royal MS. of the *Short Metrical Chronicle* (South-Wæt Midland), but the unprinted *Chronicle of Thomas Bekrelia upon Geoffrey of Monmouth* throughout, at least, the whole of its opening section.

A sub-division of the political literature of the period consists of prophetic writings, anticipations of which had appeared in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Merlin*. The somewhat shadowy personality of Thomas of Erceldoun, who died before the end of the thirteenth century, is associated with various mysterious utterancæ, among which was an apparent forecast of the death of Alexander III, in 1285. In the fourteenth century Adam Davy, marshal of Stratford-atte-Bowe, composed five visions concerning Edward II, which are assigned to the king's reign (1307-1327). Adam Davy has no claim to distinction, though his linæ run fairly smoothly. His visions have linguistic interæt, however, as early specimens of the London dialect.

With Robert Mannyng of Brunne we revert to the chronicle, extending, in this case, from Noah to Edward I, the first part in short couplets, the second in rhymed alexandrinæ. Wace, Pierre de Langtoft, and Bede were the chief authoritiæ drawn upon. The *Chronicle* was finished in 1338, thirty-five years after the *Handlyng Synne*, but the earlier work, as it happens, possæsæ the

greater interæt. It is addressed to the Gilbertine community at Sempringham:

Dan Philipp was mayster pat tyme
fat I began pis ynglysche ryme
pe yeer of grace fil pan to be
A/mccc and pe.

The framework consists of a seriæ of discoursæ upon the Ten Commandments, the Seven Deadly Sins, the Seven Sacraments, the twelve requisitæ and gracæ of confæsiön, each point being illustrated by an accompanying *exemplum* or story. The book is, accordingly, a collection of talæ, all the more valuable in that they illustrate the social life of the period in every grade. Thus, the sin of sloth is exemplified by the rich man, ill-disposed to rise for church on Sunday mornings, the sin of pride by certain young bucks, a prey to every new fashion. Among the storiæ, those of the Cambridge miser, who died in the attempt to swallow his silver, of Piers the usurer and his redemption, of the bear that guarded St. Florens* sheep and was slain by the envious monks, of the mother who cursed her child,—thæe will serve to illustrate the variety of Robert's style. Everywhere there are allusions to the occupations and amusements of the people,—their fairs, miracle-plays, dancæ, carols, etc.,—with abundant warnings as to the risks incurred. Robert's interæt in the common folk constitutæ his great claim on our gratitude :

For lewde men I undyr-toke
On englyssh tunge to make pys boke

Handlyng Synne is far from being a mere translation, since, in dealing with Waddington's text, Robert everywhere permitted himself freedom. His original storiæ, of which there are quite a dozen, were selected with special reference to general edification. Robert was interætred in popular songs and romancæ and, in his *Chronicle*, supplied an original contribution to the *Havelok* legend :

Men sais in Lyncoln castelle ligges 3it a stone,
 That Havelok kast wele forbi euer ilkone,
 And 3it the chapelle standæ ther he weddid his wife,
 Goldeburgh, the Kyngæ doubter, that saw is 3it rife.
 And of Gryme a fisshere, men redæ 3it in ryme,
 That he bigged Grymæby Gryme that ilk tyme.

The religious poet, William of Shoreham, sharæ material in common with Robert Mannyng, three of his poems being devoted to the Seven Sacraments, the Ten Commandments, and the Seven Deadly Sins. He also wrote two Virgin poems, the *Joys of the Virgin*, and a *Hymn to Mary*, the latter translated, according to the colophon, from Grossetæte. William differed, however, from Mannyng in making his appeal to a more cultured audience; he was læs concerned with the elements of faith than with such abstruse points of doctrine, as he interprets in his poem on the Trinity, the Creation, and the Temptation. William of Shoreham is interæteng by reason of his varied metra. He wrote in the short stanza, abab, in *rime couee*, and in a six-lined stanza of the form, aabccb. A favourite metre was his seven-lined stanza, abcbded, and he experimented, further, in the form abcbdbeb.

The great fourteenth-century mystic, Richard Rolle, ranks among the outstanding figuræ of the period. After a brief sojourn at Oxford, he began his romantic career by suddenly assuming hermit's attire and settling on the ætate of Sir John Dalton in the Yorkshire North Riding. His ræidence there was not permanent, and, after some four years of contemplative existence, he began his wanderings from place to place, taking a share in the religious controversiæ of the day. He then settled in the neighbourhood of Anderby, in close proximity to another recluse, Margaret Kirby, and continued his controversial writings. In his last period, we find him at Hampole in South Yorkshire, associated, till his death, with a Cistercian nunnery, apparently in the capacity of spiritual adviser.

Rolle's appearance at Oxford coincided with the last

phase of the scholastic triumph : his own method, henceforth, was the very antithæis of Scotism. In the *Incendium Amoris*, he dæcribæ the last phasæ of his spiritual development as *color, canor, dulcor*. The *canor*, otherwise defined as *musica spiritualis, invisibilis melodia, Sonus coelætis, iubilatio*, is a state of rapture, in which the dominant element is love-melody. In several ræpects, Rolle was opposed to the monastic systems of his day; he recognized no authority beyond that of contemplative love, actuated by will:

Caritas nunquam æt nisi in bona voluntate, nee bona voluntas nisi in caritate.

Consequently, he came into violent opposition with the ætablished orders, and failed, at the same time, to win acceptance for his asceticism among the commonalty. Though the canon of his writings is unsettled, it is clear that, in his prose, he carried on the ornate tradition of Old English, with its impassioned, rhythmical melody :

pou pat lyste lufe, herken and here of luf. In pe sang of luf it æ writen : " I slepe and my hert wakæ." Mykel lufe he schewæ pat never is irk to lufe, bot ay, standand, sittand, gangand or wirkand, æ ay his lufe thynkand, and oft-syth parof dremande. Forpi pat I lufe, I wow pe,)?at I myght have pe als I walde, nought to me bot to my lordo. (Horstmann, I, 50.)

The *Pricke of Conscience*, a monitory poem dealing in an abstract way with the wretchednæs of man upon earth and with future punishments and rewards, has long been associated with Rolle, on the authority of Lydgate, but is now considered doubtfully his. Rolle has to his credit, however, several poems which entitle him to a pioneer position among English hymn-writers :

Unkynde man, gif kepe til me
and loke what payne I suffer for)?e.
Synful man, on pe I cry,
alanly for pi lufe I dy.

Rolle is to be judged as a mystic rather than as a philosopher. He left to his succæsor, Walter Hilton, the logical ordering of his doctrine, and to the leaders of the Reformation the enforcing of those rights of individual conscience, for which he himself had stood.

Not much can be said in praise of the *Ayenbite of Inwyt*, translated, in 1340, by Dan Michel of Northgate from Friar Lorens' *Le somme dæ vicæ et dæ vertuæ*. Its general scheme relatæ it to the *Handlyng Synne* and the *Pricke of Conscience*, but the obscurity of its style and its inept workmanship set it in a class below thæe. Its value is almost exclusively linguistic, as a specimen of the Middle Kentish dialect.

The poems of Lawrence Minot bring us, in their revised form, to the middle of the century. Minot lived on the borderland between the Northern and Midland areas, and, in his rhymæ, employed varying dialectal forms. Nothing is known of him beyond his name, which he introducæ twice into his poems. His subjects are the battle of Halidon Hill (1333), Edward III's invasion of France and entry into Brabant (1338-1339), the naval battle of Sluys (1340), the siegæ of Tournay (1340) and of Calais (1346), the battle of Crecy (1346), Neville's Cross (1346), the naval battle with the Spaniards (1350), and the capture of Guisnæ (1352). Thæe events are described with spirit and vigour, but without literary distinction. Minot was a whole-hearted supporter of Edward III, his poetical creed being distinguished chiefly by animosity against the foreigner. He had, at all events, the salt of patriotism in his veins. Minot's stanzas are varied, and interætting as experiments. He tried *rime couee* (4), six-lined alliterative stanzas aaaabb (2, 5, 9, 10, 11), four-beat couplets (3, 7), the form abcbabab, with either three or four beats (1, 6), and finally ababbcbcb (7, 8). In several poems, the stanzas are linked as in the *Pearl* and, similarly, individual linæ, in 2 and 5 :

Whare er 50, Skottæ of Saint Johnæ towne ?
pe boste of 3owre baner æ betin all doune;
When 30 hosting will bede Sir Edward æ boune
For to kindel 3ow care and crak 3owre crowne:
He has crakked 3owre croune, wele worth pe while,
Schame bityde pe Skottæ for pai er full of gile.

The poems of John Barbour were composed in a still more Northerly dialect, the Scots of Aberdeen. As in the case of Chaucer, Barbour's life has been reconstructed out of official records. In 1357, he set out for Oxford under a royal safe-conduct, in which he is referred to as Archdeacon of Aberdeen. In the same year, he figured as one of three procurators appointed to determine the ransom of David I. He was in England again in 1364-1365, and abroad in France in 1368. Entries in the exchequer rolls, extending from 1373-1384, make it clear that he acted, during this period, as auditor of the Exchequer (*compotorum auditor*). He received a grant of £10 in March 1377, a pension of 20 shillings in August 1378, and, in 1388, a further pension of £10. He appears to have died in 1395, five years before Chaucer.

Wyntoun is the authority for Barbour's authorship of the *Bruce*, but there is no evidence that he meant to associate him with a *Brut*, also. The *Stewartis original*, to which Wyntoun refers, is now lost. It appears to have been an attempt to trace the genealogy of the Stewarts to Banquo, and, ultimately, to Ninus. The scribal insertion in the Camb. MS. of Lydgate's *Siege of Troy*,

Here endis Barbour and begynnys pe monk,

is of doubtful authenticity, though the Scottish *Livæ of the Saints* in the same MS. may, possibly, be connected with Barbour. They are composed in his metre and dialect, and include accounts of two saints, associated with Aberdeen.

Barbour's aim, in the *Bruce*, was to combine profit with pleasure :

Storys to rede ar delitabill,
 Suppos that thai be nocht bot fabill:
 Than suld storys that suthfæt wer,
 And thai war said on gud maner,
 Have doubill plæance in heryng.

The poem is, accordingly, of considerable historical value, despite its atmosphere of romance. Barbour's literary instincts are attæted by his referencæ, sometimæ lengthy, to Guido, the Machabeæ, Alexander, Julius Cæær, Arthur, Fingal, Hannibal, etc. He, also, recounts how Robert Bruce beguiled the time on the shoræ of Loch Lomond by reading *Ferumbras* aloud to his men. Barbour's hero-worship accounts for the epic strain in his poem; his humour, where it breaks forth, is also of this type:

He maid thame na gud fæt, perfay,
 And nocht-for-thi yneuch had thai.
 For thouch thame failit of the met,
 I warne yhow weill thai war weill wet.

The narrative is well sustained throughout, with an occasional striking passage, such as the accounts of the fire at Kildrummy, of the shining hosts of Sir Aymer, and of the approach of spring in Book V:

This wæ in vere, quhen wyntir tyde,
 With his blastis hydwis to byde,
 Wæ ouerdriffin: and byrdis smale,
 As thristill and the nyctingale,
 Begouth rycht meraly to syng,
 And for to mak in thair synging
 Syndry notis, and soundis sere,
 And melody plæande to here.
 And the treis begouth to ma
 Burgeonys, and brycht blumys alsua,
 To wyn the heling of thair hevede
 That wikkit wyntir had thame revede.

XVIII. THE ALLITERATIVE ROMANCÆ

The alliterative romançæ constitute one of the most attractive products of the Middle English period. As a literary phenomenon, they repræsent a highly curious reversion to pre-Conquæt methods, with certain modifications consequent upon their date of composition.) The old alliterative line, remodelled and læs ræstricted, makæ a reappearance, together with much of the old epic phraseology and the old epic humour. The enthusiasm, with which battle and sea-passagæ are handled, links thæe poems of the Middled English period with their Anglian predecæors, but the culture repræented is a product of the new period, a period of amalgamation between Englishman and Norseman and Frenchman. Together with the old enthusiasm for nature in her wilder aspects, a delight in hunting and architecture, in decorative material and precious stonæ, makæ itself felt. (The effects of the Early Renaissance are apparent in the choice of subjects, while the vocabulary displays a large French element, side by side with the native English and Norse. Of the authorship of thæe poems practically nothing is known : they belong, without exception, to the North Wæt Midland, or to the Northern area;) in other words, to the Celtic borderland. It has been conjectured that the old alliterative line had lived on in popular speech throughout the period of French domination, but the problem as to how the old epic manner came to be revived in this particular area during the second half of the fourteenth century is læs easy of solution.

The earliæt products of the school, *William of Palerne* and *Joseph of Arimathie*, belong apparently to c. 1350. It is known that the former was translated from the French, at the command of Sir Humphrey de Bohun, who died in 1361. The legend of the werwolf is widely distributed. William, a son of the king of Apulia, was saved from a treacherous uncle by a werwolf, who turned

out to be a transformed prince of Spain. The boy became page to the Emperor of Rome's daughter, with whom he afterwards took to flight. The adventuræ in the foræt form the most attractive side of the book. The matter is largely that of the love romance and strangely different from that of most other poems of this school. The extant *Guillaume de Palerne*, a sophisticated poem in couplets, præents the nearæt parallel. The passage, in which the child, summoned to court, sends a parting mæsaġe to his foræt friends, will serve to illustrate the style of the English version :

And gode sire for Godæ lov#	also greteth wel oft
Alle my freyliche felawæ	that to this foræt longæ :
Han pertilyche in many placæ	pleide with ofte
Hugonet and Huet	that hende litel dwerg
And Abelot and Martynet	Hugonæ gaie sons
And the cristen Akarin	that was mi kyn fere
And the trewe kinnæman	the payenæ sone
And alle other frely felawæ	that thou faire knawæ
That God mak hem gode men	for his mochel grace.

In *Joseph of Arimathie* the ecclæiastical origin and wonder-working propertiae of the Grail are set forth. It miraculously sustained Joseph during his forty years' imprisonment, and enabled him afterwards to convert Væpasian and the King of Sarras. Further, the king was saved from his enemy, Tholomer of Babylon, by the shield which Joseph præented to him. Joseph's career ultimately ended in Walæ. The account of the battle with Tholomer is an example of the alliterative method, at its bæt.

The *Chevalere Assigne* belongs to the cycle of Godfrey of Bouillon, of which it is the sole repræentative in English before the fifteenth century. Exposed by the cruelty of the queen-mother, the seven children of king Oryens fell into the hands of a hermit. Bound their necks they wore chains, which being severed, the children flew away in the form of swans. Helyas, having æcaped transformation, returned to court and ræcued his mother. The

ræt were ultimately rætoed by means of the chains, all save one. With this latter, Helyas sailed away, to be known, henceforth, as the Knight of the Swan. A fuller form of the story appeared in the sixteenth century, where we are informed of Godfrey of Bouillon's connection with this stock. A sober account of Godfrey's career was printed by Caxton in 1481. The penalty, exacted from Beatrice at the beginning of the Middle English version, is a folk-lore element, found again in *Lai le Freine*.

The *Gæt Historiale of the Dæstruction of Troy*, the alliterative *Alexander* fragments, and *Titus and Væpasian* constitute a group of romancæ dealing with antiquity. Of thæe, the two former have already been referred to. The latter exists in an alliterative and a couplet version, both of which appear to be of French origin. Some dependence upon Josephus has been detected in the alliterative poem. To Titus and Væpasian fell the task of avenging the death of Christ, and the details of the siege of Jerusalem afforded ample scope for the poet's imagination. The legend of St. Veronica is introduced into the earlier part of the story.

The remainng Repræentativæ of alliterative romance, the Thornton *Morte Arthur e Sir Gawayne and the Grene Knight the Awntwyrs off Arthure at the Terne Wathelyne*, and *Golagros and Gawaine*, -constitute a highly important section of the Arthurian cycle. In the former, (Gawain plays a prominent *role* : he is the central and dominating figure in the remainder. In fact, he was the only knight, associated with Arthur, round whom a separate cycle grew up in England."

The *Morte Arthure* belongs definitely to the lineage of Geoffrey. Some details appear to have been added from Layamon, or Wace, and there is more than one reference to a " cronycle " or " romance," as an authority. But the poem is distinguished by almost complete independence : to its predecæsors it owæ little beyond the general outline of Arthur's career. The *Morte Arthure* can scarcely be classed as a romance, in the sense that the

term is employed of the Gawain poems. It is rather a serious chronicle, a record of dramatic situations and of deeds done, during that career of conquæt that bore the king to Rome. The author has a lofty conception of his office, and maintains a strong didactic attitude. Mor-dred's treachery is foræhadowed in Arthur's dream, but the king is held ræponsible for his own misfortunæ:

Thow has schedde myche blode, and schalkæ distroyede,
Sakelæ, in cirquytrie, in sere kyngæ landis ;
Schryfe the of thy schame, and schape for thyne ende.

As for the more romantic elements of the Arthurian story,—the wizardry of Merlin, the mystic spell of the Grail, the lovæ of Lancelot and Guinevere,—thæe things are lacking. Nor is there any hint of mystery in connection with Arthur's death. The *Morte Arihure* is a strong composition, conceived in a spirit other than the romantic. The author has an eye for the detailed picturæque, an enthusiasm for heroic exploit, and a command of pathos well illustrated by the king's lament over the loss of Gawain :

Than gliftis the gud kynge and glopyns in herte,
Gronys full grisely with gretande teris ;
Knelis down to the cors, and kaught it in armæ,
Kastys upe his umbrere, and kyssis hyme sone,
Lokæ one his eye-liddis, that lowkkide ware faire,
His lippis like to the lede, and his lire falowede.
Than the corownde kyng cryæ fulle lowde :
" Dere kosyne o kynde, in kare am I leuede !
ffor nowe my wirchiþe æ wente, and my were endide.
Here æ the hope of my hele, my happynge of armæ,
My herte and my hardynæ hale one hym lengede,
My concell, my comforthe, that kepide myne herte.
Of alle knyghtæ the kynge that undir Criste Hfede,
Thou was worthy to be kynge, thofe I the corowne bare.
My wele and my wirchiþe of alle this werlde riche
Was wonnene thowrghe sir Gawayne, and thourghe his witt
one.

The group of roman cæ associated with Gawain are

peculiar in that they stand outside the direct line of Geoffrey of Monmouth. The *provenance* of thæe poems is somewhat obscure, though the ultimate starting-point lay, probably, in the distant Celtic background. In *Sir Gawayne and the Orene Knight* we have a combination of the beheading game with the chastity tæt. The former *motif* had found its earliæt literary repræentation in the Old Irish tale of *Fled Bricrend* (assigned to the ninth century), and reappeared later, in the thirteenth century, in the continuation of the *Conte del Graal*, the *Perlævaus*, *La mule sans frein*, *Humbaut*, and the German *D'û Krdne*: the second appeared in the Old French *Ider*, certain Italian *canzoni* of the fourteenth century, and elsewhere. The original hero of the beheading game was the Irish prince, Cuchulainn, with whom Gawain shared several characteristics. In later versions, the beheading game was frequently combined with some kind of a tæt, as, indeed, is the case in *La mule sans frein* and the related *Diu Krone*. It is probable that the English poem followed the linæ of some French romance, no longer extant.

jQ *Sir Gawayne and the Grene Knight* has been claimed as the finæt of the alliterative romancæ, a position mainly due to the skill with which the character of the central figure is portrayed. With Bedivere and Kay, Gawain belonged to the original nucleus of knights associated with Arthur: in origin, he was primarily Celtic. But, with the growth of the cycle, his *role* increased enormously. From an early period, he was closely associated with Guinevere, and the most generally ræpected of the Knights of the Table Round. \ Courtæy, prowæs, sense of honour,—such were the qualitæ immediately associated with his namerj

Noble he was and curteis,
Honour of him men rede and seis.

Unfortunately, a new view of Gawain's character was sanctioned by Malory in the *Morte D'Arthur*, whence the conception familiar from Tennyson's linæ :

Light was Gawain in life, and light in death
Is Gawain, for the ghost is as the man.

In the fourteenth century, Gawain was still the knight *par excellence*, the mirror of courtæy, and the soul of honour. On the appearance of the Green Knight, he eagerly accepted the challenge to cut off his head, and when, to the general consternation, the knight recovered, Gawain ræolutely prepared to submit to a return blow a year thencfe at the Green Chapel, v The time passed quickly, aricl the eve of his departure arrived. At this point, an elaborate account of the arming of a mediaeval knight is introduced, the "pentangle" on Gawain's shield being taken as symbolical of his particular virtutæ, f The journey to the Green Chapel led the knight by perilous ways, from which he emerged on Christmas Eve at the gate of the castle, the architecture of which is dæcribed with an expert's enthusiasm. The jovial lord præsed him to stay, and Gawain found himself lodged luxuriously. His præence was regarded as an honour to the castle, guæt whispering to guæt:}]

Now schal we semlych se sle3te3 of pewez,
And pe tecchelæ termæ of talkyng noble,
Wich spede is in speche, unspurd may we lerne,
Syn we haf fonged pat fyne fader of nurture.

At the end of the Christmas fætical, the lord returned to the hunt, arranging with Gawain beforehand that the latter should remain in his chamber, and that, at the end of the day, each should exchange with the other the products of his winning. Gawain, tempted by the beautiful lady of the castle, was the recipient of several kissæ, which he religiously exchanged each night for the products of the lord's chase. But he withheld a girdle, which promised to keep him immune from danger. On New Year's day, Gawain arrived at the Green Chapel, and was struck by the wildnæs of the neighbourhood. He flinched at the first blow, though but a feint, and was reproached by the Green Knight. At the second feint,

he became angry and bade the knight " thrash on " :

Wy, Breach on,)?ou pro mon, pou prete3 to longe,
I hope pat pi hert ar3e wyth pyn awen seluen.

The third time, he was slightly wounded in the neck. The Green Knight then explained that he was himself the lord of the castle, and that all that had happened had been in the nature of a tæť of Gawain's courage and chastity. He complimented him upon having emerged almost unscathed, but explained that the wound in the neck was the ræult of his error in concealing the girdle :

Now know I wel py cossæ, and py costæ ak,,
And pe wowyng of my wyf, I wro3t hit myseluen ;
I sende hir to asay pe, and sothly me ~~pynkkes~~,
On pe faultlæt freke, pat ever on fote "fede ;
As perle bi pe quite pæe is of prys more,
So is Gawayn, in god fayth, bi oper gay ~~knyzte3~~.

Gawain retained the green girdle and, upon his return to court, this " band of blame " was adopted by the knights as the symbol of a new brotherhood.

Qlt will be evident from the above *ræume* that *Sir Gawayne and the Grene Knight* is much more than a mere variant of the beheading story. The appointment at the Green Chapel is, indeed, kept constantly before the reader's mind, and the final scene constitutæ a good climax :but the body of the poem is occupied with other matters, arising out of the combination of the two *motifs*. The scenæ at Arthur's court after the departure of the Green Knight, Gawain's lonely journey through the realm of Logræ and Jfarth Walæ, his view of the castle from a distance, his reception by the lord, the stolen interviews with the lady on the following days, with the contrasting dæcriptions of the chase,—thæe things serve to bring out, not only the author's dæcriptive power and technical knowledge, but also his wonderful psychological insight. The emotional dæcriptions of wild nature would alone entitle him to a high position among mediaeval poets, and he has, further, that detailed knowledge of dræs and

off his head. In *Sir Gawene and the Carle of Carelyle* (in twelve-line tail-rhymed stanzas) the carl puts Gawain's obedience to the tæ't, and, finding him reliable, repents the number of victims he has slain and becomæ a knight of the Round Table.

Two alliterative romançæ remain to be characterised, the *Awntyrs off Arthure at the Terne Wathelyne* and *Golagros and Gawain*. The metre of thæe is identical, and, curiously enough, both consist of two independent parts. There are excellent combats ; in the one, between Gawain and Galleroune, in the other, between Gawain and Golagros. The first part of the *Awntyrs* is occupied with a ghost which imparts moral counsel to Guinevere at the Taj*n Wadling. A source for this exists in the *Trental of St. Gregory*. In *Golagros and Gawaine*, the opening incident servæ to contrast the courtæy of Gawain with Kay's boorishnæs. The *Awntyrs* has been assigned by some to the Scottish poet Huchoun, and *Golagros* to the clerk of Tranent: but the geography of the former points to Cumberland as its place of origin, and *Golagros* may well have originated in the same district.

XIX. THE PEARL-POET AND HUCHOUN

No poet of the mediaeval period has aroused more enthusiasm among scholars during recent years than the author of *Pearl*. His personality has been vigorously debated, the canon of his works discussed, and, as in the case of Cynewulf, hypothetical livæ of the poet have been written.

As far back as 1839, Sir Frederic Madden in his edition of *Sir Gawayne* spoke with enthusiasm of the author's gifts, and assigned to him not only the poem in quætion

but the three others in the MS. (Cotton Nero Ax + 4),—*Pearly Patience*, and *Cleannæs*. In his *Early English alliterative poems* (1864), Morris, while assuming common authorship, put forward the view that *Pearl* was an expression of the poet's "sorrow for the loss of his infant child, a girl of two years old." Ten Brink, in 1877, first attempted the hypothetical life, and, since that date, much has been written, particularly by Sir Israel Gollancz, who, entering into the spirit of the poems with fine insight and enthusiasm, has made this author peculiarly his own.

The alliterative poems in the Cotton Nero MS. occur in the order,—*Pearl*, *Cleannæs*, *Patience*, and *Sir Gawayne*, and are accompanied by rough sketchæ, in which the author is depicted slumbering by a mound clad in a red gown with a blue hood, or standing by a stream with his hands raised to the opposite shore, or kneeling, while a lady extends her arm towards him from an embattled wall. Then follow sketchæ of Noah and his family, Daniel and Belshazzar, Jonah and the whale, and Jonah in Nineveh: lastly, scenæ associated with the *Gawayne* romance. All this argues, if it does not prove, unity of authorship, and there is the further evidence of common vocabulary, style, and thought, e.g. *Pearl* 341-48 resembles *Patience* 5-8; *Cleannæs* 623-27 presents a general likeness to *Gawayne* 500-30; while *Gawayne* 2364 reminds us of *Cleannæs* 1068, 1157, and of the *Pearl*, in general. Attempts to determine the chronological order of the poems have varied slightly. Ten Brink placed *Sir Gawayne* first in order of time, and *Patience* last, but *Pearl*, with its highly elaborate metrical scheme, its abundant similes, and its general indebtedness to the allegorical school, may well have been the author's earliest effort. In the same way, Chaucer opened his career as an imitator of the French allegorists, before attaining to the independence of the *Canterbury Tales*.

The *Pearl* poet displays considerable reading and interest in curious lore. The *Vulgate* represents his main authority, but there is little to prove that he was

acquainted with patristic literature, as represented by the *De patientia*, *De Jona et Nineve*, or the *De Sodoma* of Tertullian. An interesting reference to "Clopyngel in the compas of his clene rose" proves his acquaintance with Jean de Meun, some of the details of the destruction of Sodom derive probably from Mandeville, while a general knowledge of French romance is attested by *Sir Gawayne*. But it has scarcely been proved that he was acquainted with Boccaccio, despite the resemblance between *Pearl* and his Latin eclogue, *Olympia*. As regards native literature, the symbolism in *Pearl* points clearly to the Virgin poetry of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, though this hardly justifies the conclusion that the poem, necessarily, contains no autobiography. A highly interesting problem concerns the author's theological position. It is probable that the account of the state of the blessed, as described in *Pearl*, derives from Bradwardine, and even marks an advance upon his teaching: in the fourteenth century, such doctrine, no doubt, savoured of heresy.

The metre of the poems merits particular attention; it represents, in general, a compromise between Old English alliterative method and the principles of the French school. *Pearl* is composed in twelve-lined stanzas with a comparatively simple rhyme-scheme, ababababbcbc, identical with that employed in many of the Vernon poems. The stanza concludes with what is practically a *refrain*, since the last line is echoed, in varying phrase, throughout a whole section of, generally, five stanzas. Further, the phrasing of the last line of each stanza is caught up in the initial line of its successor, throughout the whole poem. Thus, by means of alliteration, concatenation, and the device of the *refrain*, the poem is welded, with marvellous ingenuity, into one artistic and organic whole. As the poet progressed in strength, he came to depend less upon adventitious aids. Assuming *Sir Gawayne* to have been his next composition, he now replaced the inter-laced stanza by the unrhymed *laisse*, with concluding 606 and *wheel*. In *Cleanness* and

Patience he dispensed entirely with rhyme, but employed the quatrain as the basis of his scheme.

The literary qualitiæ of *Pearl* and its succæsors have attracted attention from the beginning. In the first place, a certain "high seriousnæs" is evinced in his choice of subject,—the chastity motive of *Sir Gawayne* with its stræs upon honour, the commendation of innocence in *Pearl*, of purity and of ræignation in its succæsors. This didactic intent servæ to associate the poet with his Anglian predecæsors, Cynewulf and the older epic writers, and is, by no means, the sole link, serving to prove organic connection between the Anglian and Wæt Midland schools. The high imaginative qualitiæ evinced in the nature-passagæ,—the winter-scene in *Sir Gawayne*, the storm in *Patience*, the war of the elements against the doomed citiæ in *Cleannæs*,—are, indeed, additional proofs of this intimacy. Further, the poems are humanised by the sincerity of their passion : an intense emotion permeatæ *Pearl*, and, though the poet becomæ gradually more objective, the personal note is still prominent in the prologuæ to the later poems. A certain Hebraic humour, of which anticipations had appeared before the Conquæt, constitutæ one of the main attractions:

pen wat3 a skyllȝ skyualde, quen scaped alle pe wylde ;
 Uche fowle to pe flyst pat fyperez myȝt serue,
 Uche fysch to pe flod pat fynne coufe nayte,
 Uche bæte to pe bent pat bytæ on erbæ ;
 Wylde worme3 to her won wrype3 in pe erpe ;
 pe fox and pe folmarde to pe fryth wynde3,
 Herttæ to hyȝe hepe, hare3 to gorste3,
 And Iyoune3 and Iebarde3 to pe lake ryftæ,
 Herne3 and haueke3 to pe hyȝe roche3 ;
 pe hole-foted fowle to pe flod hyȝe5,
 And uche bæt at a brayde per hym bæt lyke3.

Finally, the language, an amalgam of English, Scandinavian, and Romance, is handled with power and dignity ; in the later poems, with an austerity which contrasts

strongly with the emotional delicacy of *Pearl* and the courtly diction of the speechæ in *Sir Gawayne*.

If the identity of the *Pearl* poet is still undiscovered, it cannot be said that much more is known concerning the author of the *Pistill of Susan*. He is styled " Hucheon of the Awle Bealle " in the *Orygynale CronyJcil* (c. 1420) of Wyntoun, who remarks :

And men of gud discretioun
Suld excuss and loif Huchoun
That cunnand was in litterature
He maid the Gret Gæt of Arthure
And the Anteris of Gawane,
The Epistill als of Sute Susane.

Huchoun has been plausibly identified with Sir Hugh of Eglintoun, brother-in-law of Robert Stewart. He was knighted in 1342, travelled to London in connection with the ransom of David II in 1359, and became Justiciar of Scotland in 1360. The term " Awle Realle " appears to refer to the *Aula E/egis*.

On the strength of certain *nota benæ* in the Hunterian MS. U. 7.25, Neilson concludæ that he has discovered the actual text of Geoffrey, used by Huchoun. Further he claims that Huchoun had read MS. T. 4. 1. in the same library, and, on the basis of this material, wrote a cycle of poems,—the *Wars of Alexander*, *Dæstruction of Troy*, *Titus and Væpasian*, *Morte Arthure*, *Parlement of the Three Agæ*, *Winner and Waster*, *ErJcenwald*, *Awntyrs of Arthure*, *Pearl*, *Cleannæs*, and *Sir Gawayne*. To assign this heterogenous material to a single author is manifætly an absurdity. In the first place, the dialect of the poems variæ considerably; again, the *nota benæ* cannot be said to prove anything; while such an apparently clear case as the identification of the " Gret Gæt " with the *Morte Arthure* is quite uncertain, since Wyntoun statæ that he was acquainted with no account of Arthur's death. Neither the " Gret Gæt " nor the " Anteris of Gawane " has yet been identified, so that we are left

chase, cf. the dæcriptions of the hart's antlers, the "breaking of the deer," and the attractions of falconry. C The most important of English dream-allegoriæ in the fourteenth century was *Piers Plowman*. The type had long been fashionable abroad, particularly in France where Raoul de Houdenc had written his *Songe d'Enfer* at the beginning of the thirteenth century. But the chief examplæ of French dream-allegory are to be found in the *Eoman de la Rose* of the thirteenth and Deguileville's *PMerinage* of the fourteenthÆntury.) (Between thæe latteFan3 *Piers Plowman* there are ræemblancæ, which suggæt the possibility of direct indebtednæs on the part of the English poeO

Piers Plowman consists of a seriæ of visions, more or læs loosely welded together. The vision of the "fair field full of folk," with its accompanying picturæ of Lady Meed, False, Favel, and Conscience, is succeeded by a second vision, concerned with Piers Plowman and the Seven Deadly Sins. There follow the visions of Do-well, Do-better, and Do-bæt, an account of a journey to Jerusalem in the company of Abraham, a vision of Christ's entrance into Jerusalem, His crucifixion and death, and a final section, dæcribing the poet's retreat, in his old age, to the House of Unity. In the later sections, the scheme is confused by an endlæs succæsion of discussions on social and theological problems. In his old age the poet tended to become garrulous and even pedantic. But the parts are welded together by the central personality of Piers Plowman, at the outset a type of the hard-working, God-fearing labourer, but, in the end, the repræentative of "hiiman nature united in Christ with the Godhead."

^ The serious purpose of *Piers Plowman* is at once apparent from the number of referencæ to social and religious abusæ. \ The fierce outbursts against the corrupt clergy, and the insistence on the need for social reform were but signs of the timæ. The poet makæ himself a mouth-piece of the poorer classæ, voicing their wrongs

atid sufferings. [Social quætions began to come to the front about the middle of Edward III's reign. * The frequent recurrence of pætilencæ had accentuated thære problems, owing to the ravagæ they caused among the lower orders. During the plague of 1348, large towns like Bristol and London were severely affected, and, in the following year, the whole of East Anglia fell under the scourge. In consequence, the numbers of the labouring classæ were considerably reduced. At the same time, feudal methods of land-tenure began to give way before new methods, whereby land was hired out for fixed sums. Labourers were able to move freely from place to place, but the *Statute of Labourers* (1351), representing an-attempt to fix a definite scale of wagæ, aroused much discontent. Socialistic ideas began to germinate, and John Ball hurled denunciations against the existence of private property. \Meanwhile, religious opinion was changing rapidly throughout Europe, and a multiplicity of new orders sprang into being. In England, religious opinion became more and more anti-Papal, and the *Statute of Provisors* (1351), supplemented by *Præcemunre* (1353), was the outcome of popular indignation. f]But the most important aspect of the religious movement of the period is to be seen in the work of Wycliff. He denounced the begging friars, portrayed in the pagæ of Chaucer and Langland, and aimed the fiercæt blow at the authority of Romer. At the moment when the struggle between Wycliff and the clergy was at its height John of Gaunt stood out as the most important figure in the .realm. Edward III had fallen into a decline and died in 1377, the year following the death of the Black Prince. Richard II, the " kitoun " of *Piers Plowman*, remained a minor until 1388, and during thære years the struggle between rich and poor, clergy and Lollards, went on unceasingly.

^The author of *Pieis Plowman* is an impartial reformer ; he champions the cause of the massæ, but only in so far as this position is consistent with loyalty to the sovereign.

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