

FRANK EGBERT BRYANT

A HISTORY OF  
ENGLISH BALLADRY  
*and Other Studies*

BY

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At the time of my husband's death there were among his writings some uncompleted studies. The most important among these was "Some Chapters Toward a History of English Balladry," of which six chapters had been written. They had not received the author's final revision, and are, I realize, in no sense representative of his finished work.

Many of the original sources of this material are wholly inaccessible to me, but I gladly assume all responsibility in printing these chapters, feeling that in the larger interest of scholarship they should be preserved in permanent form.

Worthy scholarly attainments are often less than final, and those most nearly complete are likely to rest upon the serious efforts of many seekers after truth. Therefore it seems but just to those interested in this field of study that I should make accessible this contribution to the history of balladry.

DORA RENN BRYANT

## INTRODUCTION

**I**N the death of Professor Bryant was a tragedy such as has not been written, the shadow of which will not soon pass; but a tragedy in which there is triumph also. In the memory of it there must be deep pain, but in the memory of him a pride no less deep. For this man had already, almost without his own knowledge, and entirely without anticipation on his part, made his mark; before his work was more than fairly begun, his name was known to linguistic scholars almost everywhere. All who were near him knew of his quality and of his promise, but not all knew what there had been of actual performance, and that real accomplishment had proved in him a mind of rare order and had made certain that time, if granted, must bring to him rare distinction. It is this which students, associates, friends, should know; and it is of this that they may find satisfaction in speaking.

Few words are needed for the story of life and deed. Frank Egbert Bryant was born at Grand Rapids, Michigan, March 15, 1877; and he seems to have come by inheritance into a cultivated taste and a love for exact science that are not always found together; these fostered by the training and companionship of his father, Mr. John Bryant, student and naturalist, whose collecting Professor Bryant loved to share in as a favorite recreation. Indeed his first ambition was toward a purely scientific career; but the English teacher of his high-school days, Mrs. Cornelia S. Hulst, turned his mind toward literature, and helped to shape



the ideals toward which he soon came to direct all his energy, and in devotion to which he soon received the further aid and inspiration of Professor F. N. Scott. These two, guides, teachers, and always among the nearest of his friends, from the very first recognized his capacity and foretold his accomplishment. He was graduated from the Grand Rapids high school in 1895, and from the University of Michigan in 1899, receiving the degree of Bachelor of Letters, a diploma for special work, and a teacher's certificate. After his graduation he taught English one year in the Ann Arbor high school, then reëntered the University and received a Master's degree in 1901. During the academic year 1901-2 he held a fellowship in Yale, and was reappointed for the following year; but declined reappointment to accept election to an assistant professorship of English at the University of Kansas. Since that time he has twice obtained leave of absence for special research, once for the year 1905-6 and once for the half-year ending in January, 1909. This time was spent at Harvard; the first period as holder of the Austin scholarship for teachers. The summer of 1905 was spent in foreign travel and in study at Oxford; that of 1908 in the library of the British Museum. In January, 1909, he was elected to membership in the recently organized chapter of the Phi Beta Kappa society at the University of Michigan. His doctorate thesis on "Some Chapters toward a History of English Balladry" was completed and submitted in May of 1910; in June he passed his examinations with distinction; and on June 29, 1910, Harvard University made him a Doctor of Philosophy. In September of 1910 he became Associate Professor of English at the University of Kansas. His last published work was a

reprinting with notes of an old Broadside, "The Bold Prisoner," in the October number of *Modern Language Notes*. This is a record of labor almost uninterrupted until the fatal illness; all addressed to a definite end, and every part in it bringing desired success and deserved and high honor.

On September 13, 1910, he and Miss Dora Renn were married in Chicago. Immediately after his return to Lawrence he was stricken with typhoid fever, and died on October 20.

The record of his publications is not long, because he had not come to the time when publication was more than an incident; he had made progress in important work, but had printed only short papers and notes by the way. The significant thing is that almost every one of these attracted instant attention. An earlier instance of skill and insight was an extended review in the *Journal of Germanic Philology* in 1901, of an elaborate work by a distinguished student of phonetics, showing many elementary errors in method so clearly that his statements seem to have been accepted without question even by the author criticised. A different sort of reception came to a short article of his in *Modern Language Notes* of May, 1904, relating to an apparent erasure that he had found in an obscure and much discussed line of "Beowulf." A self-confident "Beowulf" scholar made haste into print to say, in substance, that there was no erasure at the specified place, or if otherwise, it was merely the erasure of a blot of ink. Not satisfied with this reasoning, Professor Bryant examined the original manuscript with witnesses who corroborated his original statement that there were traces of letters in the place specified, beneath the later writing. He published another short

note to that effect, and the fact, with his name, is now incorporated in the standard edition of "Beowulf."

In marked contrast with the grudging attitude of one man in this instance was that of a great number of noted scholars toward Professor Bryant's most considerable published work. During the years of 1903-4 he planned to prepare, besides a *College Literature Note Book* (1903), a text in descriptive writing for the use of college classes. In the course of this work he chanced to discover that some of the statements in Lessing's "Laocöon" relating to description, and because they are Lessing's, reverently accepted for a hundred and fifty years, are in direct conflict with the facts of experience as recognized in modern psychology. Out of this discovery and the wise advice of Professor Scott grew a monograph entitled "On the Limits of Descriptive Writing, apropos of Lessing's 'Laocoön,'" published at the University of Michigan in 1906. Among the interesting letters following this publication was one from Professor F. E. Schelling, who writes: "I find your work of great interest and great value, and congratulate you upon it." There was also a card of appreciation from Professor F. J. Furnivall. A letter from Professor F. W. Kelsey says in part: "The subject is one in which I am much interested, and I find your treatment characterized by independence, good method and breadth of view. I shall have occasion to make reference to the paper in a course of lectures later." This work was immediately reviewed with high approval by Professor Kuno Francke in the *Nation* of May 3, 1906; and then a year later, to Professor Bryant's surprise, it was made the subject of an equally commendatory review of nine columns in the *Deutsche Literaturzeitung* of June 22, 1907, by Dr. Hugo Spitzer, who stated further



in a personal letter to Professor Bryant that he was preparing another article on the same subject at the request of Dr. Herman Ebbinghaus for another German periodical, *Zeitschrift für Psychologie und Physiologie der Sinnesorgane*. This article appeared in June of 1908. It states briefly the cardinal points of Professor Bryant's study, and approves the general service he has rendered to criticism, and its results, as equally interesting psychologically and esthetically.

To have a disproof of any thesis of Lessing's accepted and promulgated by Lessing's own countrymen may well be regarded as no small triumph even for a much older man. Dr. Francke said of this work of Professor Bryant's: "Not since Herder in his 'Kritische Walder' attacked the validity of the conclusions as to the relations between poetry and art reached in Lessing's *Laocoön*," has there appeared a more trenchant or original criticism of Lessing's æsthetic principles than that contained in Professor Bryant's article. This treatise of his is remarkable not so much for learning—although the author's reading is wide and varied—as for the fresh and unbiased manner in which he approaches subjects that to the great majority of scholars have seemed to be settled once for all. . . . Professor Bryant's treatise will be a most welcome help to college teachers who interpret and discuss Lessing's '*Laocoön*' in the class-room." Following this was a letter from Professor Scott: "You are the luckiest man alive, and I hope you realize what it would mean to have Professor Francke review your thesis.

'He can requite thee; for he knows the charms  
That can call fame on such gentle acts as these,  
And he can spread thy name o'er land and seas.'

Many good words have come to me about the pamphlet from my colleagues. A member of the faculty who has just left the office expressed his wonder that you have not presented the paper as a doctoral thesis." Later Professor Scott wrote: "I am sorry the first edition of your monograph is exhausted; you certainly are a successful author. It is a pity that some way cannot be devised of getting out a second edition, revised, corrected, and considerably augmented. I do not believe that your thesis will be received with such wild acclaim, though I expect great things from it." This high praise was echoed in letters received from England and Germany as well as from all parts of this country.

Of still another type was the compliment paid to another little study that may be classed as purely literary: a translation of one of the Norse Eddic poems entitled "Thrymskwitha, or the Lay of Thrym," first published in *Poet Lore* in October, 1902, and revised and privately reprinted three years later. The task of translation was made peculiarly difficult by the effort to reproduce something of the form and spirit of the original as well as its substance; and again the work brought immediate and favorable recognition because of its literary quality as well as the adequacy of the rendering.

Among the letters received after the publication of this translation was one from Professor E. H. Meusel of Smith College, who said: "I have read your translation with a great deal of pleasure, and congratulate you on the excellence of it and the successful manner in which you have preserved the form and spirit of the original. Let us have more." Mrs. Cornelia S. Hulst wrote: "I was delighted with your translation of Thrym. The

meter is perfectly charming and the thing is fresh and pleasing throughout. I wonder that you could give it the consistent style that it undoubtedly has, positively a new flavor. I wonder if you couldn't do that for, say, the descent of Odin to Vala to question her about Balder? That has never been anywhere near adequately done." Professor Gummere wrote: "The movement of your verse is distinctly good; and of course I am always glad to greet an advocate of translation in the original meters." Mrs. Gertrude Blackwelder wrote: "It seems to me you have preserved the literalness of the meaning, while at the same time giving the poem a verse form which is truly Norse."

One of the most appreciative letters was from a scholar who advised Professor Bryant to continue with translations of other poems from the Edda, and indeed led him to think seriously of doing so at some future time. Judge of the new surprise that awaited him a year later when this same man published a translation of the same poem, in the same meter and spirit, with occasional duplication of lines or phrases in Professor Bryant's version, without making any reference whatever to the fact that he had read and admired the earlier version, and without offering any explanation in the correspondence that followed, even though a satisfactory explanation might easily be conceived. One may speak of this action as a compliment; and such compliments are not infrequent among the adventures of literary life.

But the work to which Professor Bryant looked forward as the worthy labor of years was the prosecution of his studies in the English ballad, the work, a part of which was accepted for his doctorate thesis and of which much additional material was taking



form. How he himself regarded it is shown in these words from the preface to his thesis: "English Balladry is a large subject, one that it is necessary to grow into, and it is only . . . after several years of work that I am beginning to feel at home in handling the material . . . I have found it increasingly necessary to go more afield in order to get the proper perspective. I started out modestly enough to write up the predecessors of Percy, confining myself to the eighteenth century, but before I could begin writing it became clear that I must go farther back, and not being . . . content with half-knowledge I have been going on and on toward the beginning of things."

This work, completely historical, and dealing chiefly with the sources and the psychology of the material, was sufficient to test his powers to the full, affording ample scope for the exercise of all his critical taste and skill and all his knowledge of linguistics, which included an extraordinarily broad and accurate scholarship in phonetics. This last named field of interest should have special attention, not because it is a thing to be valued above others, in taking the measure of a man, but because they who possess it are so few. This sort of scholarship is comparatively recent; its investigations are little more than begun; the minds competent to deal with it must be of an order which is familiarly associated with some of the greatest names in science. In this field, likewise, Professor Bryant might have won renown; and of the best workers in it, those who knew him had already expressed their confidence in him. In this field of his, perhaps, more than in any other must large things depend upon infinite accuracy in the study of things infinitely small; and the teacher who first influenced him to take his

scientific bent into the study of literature defined his fitness well: "How sensitive he was, how he penetrated into a thing, how he took it in from its minutest points to the big round of its circumference! . . . I can imagine how he piloted his students into the realms of gold, and how his pure and unworldly spirit taught them truths it is hard for the natural man of earth to apprehend. He had the head of a sage and the heart of a child." In another letter she said: "In all my experiences of character I have never met the like of Frank Bryant's in simplicity, frankness and daring; and in all of this he was a child and would never have been anything else. He did not know how much courage he had, that would be called moral courage. He was the man who had never known fear, and this he showed when he was attacking the theories of celebrities alive and dead. What penetration he had, and how unhampered he was with the learning he had! What an unspoiled heart he was! How free from pedantry! and he was the most promising scholar I ever saw in his subject, in the way of tests and renderings of the old Saxon and Norse, in rhetorical principles and in interpretation and criticism."

Professor George Hempl of Stanford University said in a letter: "He was the brightest, most original and most promising student I ever had."

But publicity for this part of his work, apart from his teaching, was in the future; it was to the "History of English Balladry" that he proposed to give the best of his effort, for whatever time might be necessary to round out the study of the period undertaken. The publication of what he has left in manuscript will do him honor; but as a critic of literature and literary theories his reputation is already made. When his

monograph on the "Laocoön" was published, his friend, Professor W. C. Abbott, wrote him immediately, "I shouldn't be surprised if it made you famous in a critical way." In a few months afterward this prophecy had gone far toward fulfillment; and there can be no question that this little booklet will always hold a place of repute in the history of criticism, and will insure that the name of its author will not be forgotten.

E. M. HOPKINS



I

A History of  
English Balladry



## PREFACE

**T**HE following chapters form the beginning of a history of English Balladry. They are the beginning in more than one sense, for though I have been long at work and have gone through practically all the material down to Scott's Minstrelsy, the part actually treated in the succeeding pages extends no farther than through the reign of Elizabeth, and even these chapters I consider in no sense final. English Balladry is a large subject—one that it is necessary to grow into, and it is only now after several years of work that I am beginning to feel at home in handling the material. What I have written, therefore, has been all along largely tentative. I have ever been on the lookout for new material to modify my views, and very often I have found it. Then, too, I have found it increasingly necessary to go more afield in order to get the proper perspective. I started out modestly enough to write up the predecessors of Percy, confining myself to the eighteenth century, but before I could begin writing it became clear I must go farther back, and not being of the sort that is content with half-knowledge, I have been going on and on toward the beginning of things.

The paging by individual chapters shows how I left myself a chance to recast largely. The opportunity has been often improved. Many a compressed or expanded page marks the place of a discarded or added notion, and sometimes a later footnote has had to be written to correct some erroneous impression in the text. I am still in a tentative attitude. There are



many things I have had to leave undecided, and too many others that I have had to pass over too lightly to leave perfect content in my soul. Still, perfection is a far goal, and the present form of the material is as good as I can make it at just the present time. I therefore rather jealously offer it for inspection. I wish I had carried the treatment as far as the Percy Folio, and perhaps during the year I shall be able to do so, but there are so many other necessary labors besides ballad research that I am not at all certain. I hope I have been accurate, but I am not absolutely sure of the letter in all my quotations. Putting the finishing touches on at a place where, though the library is good it is entirely inadequate to so specialized a field, I can hardly have escaped errors, but I hope I have made no serious mistakes.

I have made no acknowledgment of indebtedness, mainly because I am now sending this manuscript to the one to whom I am under the greatest obligation both for the original suggestion and for later help. I am truly thankful, and in due time I shall be glad to make more open acknowledgment to him and to others.

# A HISTORY OF ENGLISH BALLADRY

## CHAPTER I

### *Questions of Definition*

**B**EFORE we take up the main work of this thesis, it is necessary to define, at least roughly, the limits of our field. Naturally our main interest all along will be centered in ballads of the types found in Professor Child's great collection.<sup>1</sup> They are the ballads par excellence and they occupy a place by themselves. Nevertheless, they cannot well be considered alone in any broad historical treatment. Their selection owes too much to Mr. Child himself. The word "ballad" is one of the loosest terms in literary nomenclature. It has been used to designate several distinct genera of poetry, and almost at no time since its introduction into English can it be said to have had any very precise meaning. It is not my purpose to try to fix meanings now, and yet I feel it is requisite to a clear understanding of the subject that we should have in mind what the word "ballad" has connoted and signified at various times in the past. I shall therefore take the liberty to present here some of the more important shifts of meaning, trusting that

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1—Francis James Child, *The English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, ten parts, two to a volume, 1882-98. The final part containing indexes and other apparatus of investigation, edited by Professor G. L. Kittredge, Boston, New York, and London.

however superficial must necessarily be my treatment, I shall at least bring out clearly the essentials.

Even in the Old French, from which language we borrowed the term in the 14th century,<sup>1</sup> ballads were not all of precisely the same type. There were differences not only in the number of lines to the stanza, but likewise in the verse form and in the use of "L'envoi."<sup>2</sup> Still the type was fairly definite: it was always a short poem of three stanzas with the same rimes and the same last line in each. Generally there followed an *envoi* to complete it.<sup>3</sup> It is to be emphasized that it was an intricate art form as hard to compose as the Italian sonnet. This type is well represented by Chaucer,<sup>4</sup> who has given us several interesting specimens. He used both seven- and eight-line stanzas, the former of the rime-royal scheme, the latter rimed ababbcbC. He has unified his poem metrically by hav-

1—Skeat, *Etymological Dictionary of the English Language*, 1882, 3d ed., 1898. M. E. *balade*, F. *ballade*, of which Brachet says that it came, in the 14th century, from the Provençal *ballada*. *Ballada* seems to have meant a dancing song and is clearly derived from Low Latin (and Italian) *ballare*, to dance. In some authors the form *ballat*, or *ballet* occurs: in this case the word follows the Italian spelling *ballatas*, a dancing song, from Ital. *ballare*, to dance.

2—J. Schipper, *Englische Metrik*, Vol. 2, p. 927 f.

3—In "Les Cent Ballades" (Poème du XIV e Siècle composé par Jean le Seneschal, etc. Paris, 1905. Société des Anciens Textes Français). There are seven different types of ballad form, besides a few exceptions. Ballads in O. French had more variety of verse form than Schipper states. The *envoi* might be omitted, as is seen in the "Ballade de la Marguerite" by Froissart (Christomathie de L'Ancien Français, L. Constans, 1906, p. 103). There was even such a thing as a 'double ballade' or 'triple ballade' as is seen in a rather formless poem in Villon's Grand Testament. (*Oeuvres Complètes de François Villon*, Paris, 1854; p. 86.)

4—Schipper states that Chaucer's use of L'envoi was different from the Old French. Chaucer's ballades are given in Vol. 1 of the Skeat text.



ing the same rimes and the same last line in each stanza. The *envoi* is often employed, but not always.

It is a far cry from these highly literary ballads of Chaucer to the simple naïve "popular" ballads of Professor Child's Collection. Yet it was from the former that the latter got their name. This came about in the 16th century, long after the literary type had lost its definite character, and the name was used with extreme vagueness. But the two types had certain elements in common from the beginning. Both were sung and danced. For the literary ballad, Chaucer again may be called on for illustration. In the delightful prologue to the Legend of Good Women, we are told that nineteen ladies<sup>1</sup> in royal habit with an innumerable train of women following espy a daisy, and kneel.

“And after that they wenten in compas,  
Daunsinge aboute this flour an esy pas,  
And songen, as it were in carole-wyse,  
This balade, which that I shall yow devyse.”<sup>2</sup>

The ballad that follows consists of three stanzas, each ababb~~bc~~<sup>c</sup>. The first is as follows: x

“Hyd, Absolon, thy gilte tresses clere;  
Ester, ley thou thy meknesse al a-doun;  
Hyd, Jonathas, al thy frendly manere;  
Penalopee, and Marcia Catoun,  
Mak of your wyfhod no comparisoun;  
Hyde ye your beautes, Isoude and Eleyne,  
Alceste is here, that al that may desteyne.”<sup>3</sup>

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1—Twenty ladies including Alceste, but probably she did not dance.

2—Text A, ll. 199 ff. Skeat, Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer, Oxford, 1894.

3—The repetition “Hyd, Absolon,” “Hyd, Jonathas,” etc., as well as the repetition of the final line, hardly suggests the traditional ballad repetitions. More close to the latter are the repetitions in the Roundels.

The version quoted is from Professor Skeat's A text. The lyric in the B text reads somewhat differently, though it is essentially the same. The important difference lies in its setting. It is introduced not as being danced by ladies, but as a song said;<sup>1</sup> and at the conclusion it is spoken of as a ballad.<sup>2</sup> Here, then, even at this early day we have ballad and song used as interchangeable cognomens.

The successors of Chaucer seem to have had different conceptions of the metrical form of the ballad from those held by their master. The titles may in some cases not have belonged to the poem originally. This may well be true for "The Moral Balade" of Henry Scogan.<sup>3</sup> It is a long work of 189 lines, in which the stanzas are not in any way interlinked. The author himself calls it a "litel tretys," and surely it is not to be imagined as a dance song. But the title was given to it by John Shirley in the first half of the 15th century.<sup>4</sup> Shirley evidently had no feeling for the earlier technical meaning of the word. He calls a poem by Lydgate a ballad that is a work 140 lines in length with no interlinking of stanzas.<sup>5</sup> Lydgate, however, did on occasion approach the Chaucerian model, as is illustrated by his "Goodly Balade."<sup>6</sup> This seems to be a compound ballad, much on the plan of Chaucer's

1—B text, Skeat, Complete Works of G. Chaucer, ll. 247 ff.

"And therfor may I seyn, as thinketh me,

This song, in preysing of this lady fre."

2—Or "balade," to be accurate, l. 270. "This balade may ful well y-congen be."

3—Skeat, Chaucerian and other pieces, being a supplement to the Complete Works of G. Chaucer, Oxford, 1897, p. 237.

4—Ascription of the title to him by Skeat, p. xli. Shirley died 1456, Dictionary of National Biography.

5—"A Balade: In Commendation of Our Lady." Skeat, Chaucerian and Other Pieces, p. 275.

6—Skeat, as before, p. 405.

“Fortune.”<sup>1</sup> But even here the second group is irregular. Lydgate’s “Ballade of Good Counsel”<sup>2</sup> follows Chaucer in so far that it uses the same last line for all stanzas except the two final, which I suppose may be thought of as a double *envoi*; but on the other hand it is a long poem of 133 lines. Another “Balade Warning Men to beware of Deceitful Women”<sup>3</sup> is similar in structure and only extends to seven stanzas.

Hoccleve uses still a different metrical plan for several of his ballads. Again I am not sure whether he himself gave the title to his poem, but all that I am considering are to be found in the Phillips’s MS. 8151, dated by Dr. Furnivall at about 1450.<sup>4</sup> This new type of ballad form<sup>5</sup> consists of an interlinking of stanzas, not by line repetition but by having similar rimes all the way through, each stanza, however, reversing the order of rimes found in the stanza before: thus ababbcbcbcbabababab, etc. Hoccleve has several ballads of this type, but he has also ballads of a looser structure. One ballad of twenty stanzas has no interlinking of any sort. It begins with the commonplace:

“As pat I walkid in the monthe of May  
 Besyde a groue in an heuey musynge,  
 Floures dyverse I sy, right fressh and gay,

1—Skeat, Complete Works, 1897, pp. 119-20.

2—Chaucerian Pieces, Skeat, pp. 285 ff.

3—Skeat, ditto, p. 295.

4—F. J. Furnivall. Hoccleve’s Minor Poems, E. E. T. S. Extra Series, No. lxi., p. 1.

5—That is as far as we are concerned. Of course we are not trying to determine who introduced types, or who first made changes. We are merely dealing with typical forms in the different ages. An illustration of the type is the balade beginning “The Kyng of Kynges regnyng over al.” Furnivall, p. 39; 5 stanzas.



“ And briddes herde I eek lustyly synge,  
 Tpat to my herte yaf a comfortynge.  
 But euere o thocht me stang into the herte,  
 Tpat dye I sholde, and hadde no knowynge  
 Whanne, ne whidir, I sholde hennes sterte.”<sup>1</sup>

From the citation already given it is perfectly evident that by the middle of the 15th century the literary ballad had ceased to be a rigid type.<sup>2</sup> It had become much simpler as an art form and much easier to construct. The older limitations as to length and stanza-interlinking were no longer felt as binding, and furthermore the eight-line stanza, a common form, approached the double quatrain closely enough that it might be thought of as such by an illiterate rimester.<sup>3</sup> Again, the dancing and singing qualities of the ballad must have varied greatly. Most of the early literary ballads that I have read suggest the ridiculous when one thinks of them as danced, and there are specimens which, in this unsinging age, it is hard to think of as

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1—Furnivall, ditto, p. 67. This mode of beginning seems to be a general commonplace. There are a great many similar beginnings in Richard Hill's *Common Place Book*. Balliol M. S. 354, E. E. T. S., ed. by R. Dyboski, 1907. Also one or two in Wright's *Songs & Carols*, Percy Soc. A number of traditional ballads begin in the same way. Child, No. 239 A, etc.

2—Of course it is not to be supposed that these new forms for the balade developed directly or indirectly out of the early complicated balade of Chaucer or the ballade, technically so called, of the French. There were poets having some of these new stanzas long before Chaucer,—cf. Hole's *Love Rune*, *Debate of the Body and the Soul*, etc. It is merely that the term ballad loses its technical meaning and becomes applied more and more loosely.

3—It is even difficult to say in many cases whether the ballads are to be considered as in 4- or 8-line stanzas. I should print many of the pieces in MS. Rawlinson C 813 in 8-line stanzas that its editor, Professor E. M. Padelford (*Anglia* xxxi, pp. 309 ff.) has printed in four. I should even print the “*Crow and Pie*” (Child No. 111, found in this MS.) in 8-line stanzas, against the authority of all earlier transcribers.

even sung.<sup>1</sup> And finally, the literary quality of some of these productions is not high. The type is approaching the doggerel of the stall-ballad. It is a far cry from Chaucer's "Fle fro the prees" to the "Twa Brothers" (Child, No. 49,) but it is only a stone's-throw from Hoccleve's "As that I walkid in the monthe of May" (just quoted in part) to the work of many a later ballad-monger, and the same is true of Lydgate's "A Ballad Warning Men to beware of Deceitful Women." These are not quite stall-ballads; and it must be said to the credit of Lydgate, that, in this piece at least, he does not hold up his own case as a terrible example in the way that a later ballad-writer would have done. The vulgarity, the sloppiness, the point of view of the tavern crowd,—traits very characteristic of much of the later balladry,—are found more clearly represented in some of the minor poems of Skelton.<sup>2</sup>

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1—Thus the "Moral Balade" of Seogan, lately mentioned, is called by the author a "tretys," and it has the style of a letter of advice, based on personal experience. Lydgate's balade in Commendation of Our Lady, p. 275, was certainly not danced, for he speaks of kneeling and "saying" (l. 21) a number of stanzas. It hardly seems to have been in the least intended for singing. Compare also Hoccleve's ballade beginning "Worshipful sir, and our freend special." Furnivall, p. 64 f. This is a reply to a letter, according to the first stanza.

2—Skelton's Poems, ed. by A. Dyce, 1855, Cambridge. The poem of which the introductory couplet is quoted is at p. 27. "Manerly Margery Mylk and Ale," p. 35, is a short piece with the last two lines the same in each stanza. It mentions "Jak of the Vale," which seems to have been some popular ditty. It is mentioned again at a much later date. See Dyce's note, p. 26. The piece sounds like a tavern song. The lament "Upon the Dethe of the Earl of Northumberland" (Dyce, p. 8) opens with a stall wail: "I wayle, I wepe, I sobbe, I sigh ful sore, / The dedely fate, the dolefulle desteny," etc. Dyce's note states that Jak of the Vale is found in Skelton's Magnificence, "some iangelynge Jacke of the Vale," v. 260, vol. 2, 14. He also gives the two later references: "I am not now to tell a tale, / Of George a Greene, or Jacke of Vale." The Odcmbian Banquet, 1611, sig. C. 3. "And they had leauer printed Jacke a Vale / Or Clim o' Clough," etc. J. Davies Other Ecologues annexed to The Shepheard's Pipe, 1614, sig. G. 4.

The latter seems to have been fairly familiar with the tavern poetry of his day, and such a piece as that introduced by the couplet,

“With lullay, lullay, lyke a chylde,  
Thou slepyst to long, thou art begylde,”

suggests slightly “The Broomfield Hill” (Child, No. 43).<sup>1</sup>

Most of the literary ballads, however, have little in common with the so-called traditional or popular ballads. Nor is it possible to bridge directly the gap. The early literary forms seem always to have had five beats to the line.<sup>2</sup> The narrative element, too, is practically wanting. As the type sank it gradually fell in with the stall and minstrel productions, and it was through the latter that it was finally able to transfer its name to what we now know as the ballad. Members of the Child type in the early references to them were never known by the same name.<sup>3</sup> Robin Hood ballads were spoken of as “rymes” in the *Piers Plow-*

1—When I first made this statement I was not aware that Prof. Gummere had said the same thing long before. See his introduction to *Old English Ballads*, 1903, p. xx, note.

2—In France there were numerous 8-syllabled ballades as well as 10. In the *Cent Ballades* there were even stanzas with short lines. Villon, *Ballade des Dames du Temps Jodis*, etc. *Les Cents Ballades*, Nos. xiii-xv, etc. *Société des Ancien Textes Français*.

3—At least, I know of no instances. In the *Interlude of the Four Elements* (dated by Schelling about 1517) there is an interesting passage about the singing of the ballad. (Halliwell Percy Soc. Reprint, p. 50.) Ignorance asks what they shall do while Sensuality has gone to get minstrels for comfort. Humanity suggests “Then let us some lusty balet syng.” (For Ignorance, Ign.)



man passage,<sup>1</sup> and Alexander Barclay in his translation of "The shyf of folys," printed by Pynson in 1508, refers to the Robin Hood poems as "jests," "fables," "tales."<sup>2</sup>

*Ign.*—Nay, syr, by the Hevyn Kyng!  
For me thynkyth it semyth for no thyng  
All suche pevysh prykeryd song!

*Hum.*—Pes, man, pvyksong may not be dispysed,  
For therwith God is well plesyd,  
Honowryd, praysyd, and servyd,  
In the churche oft tymes among.

*Ign.*—Is God well pleasyd? trowst thou thereby?  
Nay, nay, for there is no reason why,  
For is it not as good to say playnly,  
Gyf me a spade,  
As gyf me a spa, ve, va, ve, va, ve, vade?  
But yf thou wyll have a song that is good,  
I have one of Robyn Hode  
The best that ever was made."

The song that Ignorance sings is a medley, with only the first line from Robin Hood. But this passage shows clearly, I think, that Robin Hood was not thought of as a ballad even in 1517. And furthermore, it shows that ballads were often in tortured or "classical" music, and that the same kind of music was used in church songs. Sensuality says just before the passage quoted: "Then wyll I go incontinēt, / And prepare every thing, / That is metely to be done; / And for the lack of mynstrelles the mean season, / Now wyll we begyn to syng. / Now we wyll here begyn to syng, / For daunce can we no more, / For mynstrelles here be all lackynge; / To the taverne we wyll therefore." This suggests that dancing was not done to ballads at this time or place, but only to instrumental music. Compare also Skelton, *Dyce* 1, p. 40. *Bowge at Court*:

"Wolde to God it wolde you please some daye,  
A balade boke before me for to laye,  
And lerne me for to syng *Re, mi, fa, sol!*  
And when I fayle, bobbe me on the noll."

Quoted by Chappell, *Pop. Music*, 1, 52. Shelton introduces Harvy Hafter as one who cannot sing "on a booke," but he thus expresses his desire to learn; (verse as above).

1—Skeat, B text, *Passus V*, ll. 400-2. C text, *Passus VIII*, ll. 10-11.

2—The passages quoted in Ritson's *Robin Hood, Notes & Illustrations*, p. 71. London, 1884.

Having now shown the tendencies at work in the degeneration of the literary ballad, we are prepared to understand later developments, and especially the vague uses of the term in the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries. But before we present any of this later material let us turn to Scotland for a moment and consider what was the signification of the term "ballad" for Scotland's greatest early poet, William Dunbar.

Dunbar presents a great deal of interesting material, much of which is different from anything we have had before. He liked the metrical device of ending each stanza with the same line and he used it frequently all through his career, and for poems of very different stanza-length and structure. He used it for stanzas of eight, seven, six, five, and four lines in length,<sup>1</sup>—as great variety as one could well wish, a variety again intensified by his ingenious rime schemes and by the use of lines of both four beats and five. Aside from the use of identical last line, Dunbar is far away from the Chaucerian standard of the ballad. There is no limit to the number of stanzas: the line usually is made up of only four measures or beats; and there is no other stanza interlinking than that brought

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1—J. Schipper, *Poems of William Dunbar*, Vienna, 1891-3. Compare for illustration, *In Honour of the City of London*, p. 88, ababbebe, 5 beats. *The Tod and the Lamb*, p. 35, aabbebe, 4 beats. *To the King (The Petition of the Gray Horse, auld Dunbar)*, p. 274, aaabbb, 4 beats. *The Twa Cummeris*, aabab, 4 beats, p. 73. Later editors have named many pieces by him, ballads. The "ballad" of *Kynd Kittok* (p. 70) probably forces the term as much as any of his poems that now bear the name. It is a bob-wheel stanza of 13 lines, including the bob-wheel. There is no repetition, but the poem consists of three stanzas. The first 8 lines seem to be Alexanderines (though they are hard to scan) rimed abababab; the short line bob is rimed abba. "Ane 'Ballat' of our Lady" (p. 369), so named by its first editor Laing, is in "aureate terms." It is in 12-line stanzas abababababab, alternating four beats and three.

about by the last-line refrain. Dunbar, however, thought of the ballad as at least sometimes sung and danced, as he shows in a passage in the "Golden Targe" (ll. 129 f). In the Court of Cupid

"One herp, and lute, full merrely thay playit,  
And sang Ballattis with mighty notis cleir;  
Ladeis to danss full sobirly assayit,  
Endlang the lusty rever, so they mayit."

Of course these lines may possibly mean that the ladies merely sang the ballads and that they danced to the harp or lute, but that is hardly a fair construction. Nor need we be worried about the possible objection that not all the stanzaic poetry about which we have been generalizing was ever thought of as balladry by Dunbar. There is evidence that the poet did not use the word "ballad" in any strict or exalted sense. In a poem called "The Dream" (stanza 14) Dunbar makes reason say of him:

"For tyme war now that this man had sum thing,  
That long hes bene ane serwand to the king,  
And all his tyme neur flatter couthe not faine,  
*Bot humblie into ballet wyse complaine,*  
And patientlie indure his tormenting."

Also, we have a particular form spoken of as a "ballet" in the second of two poems upon James Doig, keeper of the wardrobe of the Queen's household. The two poems are precisely alike in form, and both play mercilessly upon the man's name, which, in Scotch, was pronounced like the word "dog." The first was written after the keeper had given offense to Dunbar and the second later, after he had made amends and had, to use the poet's words, "plesit him." The second poem caused Pinkerton, the first editor of it, to wonder whether it might have been most dangerous to please or

to displease Dunbar. We shall quote it as an example of early Scotch literary balladry. It will be noted that this poem is a four-beat quatrain, and though different absolutely in kind, it approaches the so-called traditional ballad more closely than anything heretofore treated:

## I

“O gracious Princes, guid and fair!  
Do weill to James zour Wardraipair;  
Quhais faithful bruder maist freind I am:  
He is na Dog; he is a Lam.

## II

Thocht I in ballet did with him bourde,  
In malice spack I newir ane woord,  
Bot all, my Dame, to do zou gam:  
He is na Dog; he is a Lam.

## III

Zour Hienes can nocht gett ane meter,  
To keip zour wardrope, nor discreter,  
To rule zour robbis, and dress the sam:  
He is na Dog; he is a Lam.

## IV

The wyff, that he had in his innys,  
That with the taingis wald brack his schinnis,  
I wald scho drownit war in a dam:  
He is na Dog; he is a Lam.

## V

The wyff that wold him kuckald mak,<sup>1</sup>  
I wold scho war, bayth syd and back,  
Weill batteret with ane barrow-tram:  
He is na Dog; he is a Lam.

## VI

He hes sa weill doin me obey  
Intill all thing, thairfair I pray  
That newir dolour mak him dram:  
He is na Dog; he is a Lam.’’<sup>2</sup>

1—Note the parallelism in stanzas 4 and 5,—almost incremental repetition.

2—Schipper, p. 201 f.



The use of the same last line for each stanza was a device employed often in the time of Elizabeth, but the resulting products, if they had any claim to literary merit, were likely to be called by some other name than ballad. The word "sonnet" often now did service. From this time on the term "ballad" or "ballet" was distinctly plebeian, suggesting as a rule the "poetry of the people" in a very different sense from that in which the phrase is now usually understood. But in this humble rank the word "ballad" was used with greater range than ever before. Professor Gummere in speaking of the confusion resulting from this range does not state the case too strongly when he says: "The main source of error lies in the application of the word however spelled, to almost any short narrative poem, to any short didactic poem, to almost any sort of lyric, and to almost every conceivable form of reviling or grumbling in verse. No better proof of this confusion can be found than in the Register of the Company of Stationers in London. Now and then we meet the traditional ballad of the people: 'a ballett of Wakefylde and agrene' (1557-58), is followed by 'a ballett of admonysion to leave swerynge' and 'a ballett called have pytie on the poore' (1559). John Alde pays his fee for 'pryntinge of a balett of Robyn Hod' (1562-3); but compare this batch of seven 'ballettes': *Godly Immes used in the churches; who are so mery as thay of ye low estate; The proverbe is tru yat weddyngge ys Destyne; The Robery at Gaddes Hill; holdeth ancer fast; be mery, good Jone; the panges of love.* Moral parodies of a popular song, hymns, satire and personal attack, rimes about a duke's funeral or a campaign in Scotland, or any nine days' wonder,—all these with an occasional

ballad of tradition, are entered in the registers under the convenient name."<sup>1</sup>

There are a few points that need to be emphasized in this impartial summary. In the first place no distinction is made between ballad and song,—but we found that the same thing was true for at least one case in Chaucer. In the second place we find that narrative is still not a distinguishing characteristic of balladry. Most of the actual pieces listed in the preceding account presumably told no story. In that, they fairly represent conditions in their period.<sup>2</sup> Next, the traditional ballad has at last fallen under the general name by which it was later to be known almost exclusively.<sup>3</sup> But note that it is only “now and then” that we meet with it. If we exclude the outlaw type, such as Robin Hood and Clim of the Clough, we find almost no traditional ballads at all, and yet there were thousands of the other sorts printed.<sup>4</sup> There is absolutely no proof

1—Gummere, *Old English Ballads*, pp. XVIII, ff. Professor Gummere's account is illustrated by Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale*, Act IV, sc. IV.

2—Professor Gummere a page or so later (*O. E. Ballads*, p. XXII) says that “Dunbar's frequently complicated arrangement of the stanzas, and a recurring refrain, suggest models far removed from the verses of that later rout whom Shakespeare knew, the ‘scald rimers’ who balladed out o’ tune.” But much of the later stall-balladry is in complicated meter, though the line-length tended to be short. Such a piece as the *Nut-Brown Maid*, for instance, if printed by the stall press would probably appear in short lines.

3—Still, Sir Philip Sidney speaks of the “old song of Percy and Douglas,” *Apologie for Poetrie*, Arber, p. 46. And Thomas Deloney in his *John Winchcomb* (*Siever's Reprint*, 195 f.), refers to the “Fair Flower of Northumberland” (*Child*, No. 9) as a song (ch. III, and at the end of chapter II of the same work he likewise called *Flodden Field* (168) a song. Martin Parker calls his Robin Hood story “a true tale.”

4—Chappell, *Roxburghe Ballads II*, 105 f. n. . . . “according to the registers of the Stationers' Company, 760 ballads were transferred to the new wardens of the Stationers' Company, for entry, at the end of the year 1560, and but 44 books.”

that to any of the Elizabethan writers the term "ballad" connoted a poem of the Child type. Before we finish our treatment I think I shall be able to show that up to 1765 it was difficult to obtain what we call traditional ballads, indeed as hard as it is for us to obtain broadsides. The term "ballad," then, in the time of Elizabeth was very loose in signification, but it was applied most often to poems of the various sorts, generally doggerel, that were printed as broadsides and sold in petty book-stalls, or hawked about the streets, or indeed sung by ballad-singers as a preliminary to a sale.

In the 17th century there were no important changes that I know of in the use of the term. Dr. Fritz Kühner<sup>1</sup> in a dissertation on the "Litterarische Charakteristik der Roxburghe-und Bagford Balladen" classifies the material of those collections into nineteen sorts. It is not necessary to present his list here. Suffice it to say that there was still extreme looseness in the use of the term, and that our favorite type, the traditional ballad, was still rarely to be met with.

In the 18th century the stall-ballad or broadside continued as the best known form, though with the rise of the newspaper<sup>2</sup> it began to lose its strong hold upon the humble public. But in the 18th century it got a new following in the literary circle, with results that completely revolutionized its whole status. We are not in this chapter writing a history of balladry, so that all that is necessary for us to say here is, that the ballad became again a cherished literary form. The products outside of the ballad opera—an 18th century

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1—Freiburg, i. B., 1895. His list of stall-ballad types is to be found on pages 15, 16.

2—At least that is one of the principal reasons for the change. Of course there were others.

creation.—were usually narrative and often sentimental. Tickell's "Lucy and Colin," Hamilton's "Braes and Yarrow," Mrs. Wardlaw's "Hardyknute," and pieces by Grainger, Glover, Shenstone, Percy, Goldsmith, and others.—not to mention Wordsworth and Coleridge at the end of the century—sufficiently illustrate the new literary ballad. Both stall and traditional pieces were made use of in forming this new type, and that must be borne in mind in judging the products. There had long been an antiquarian interest in the ballad. Captain Cox's ballads, it will be remembered that Laneham says in his letter (1575), were all ancient.<sup>1</sup> But in the 18th century, antiquarianism, joined to this new literary appreciation, made discoveries of material that completely changed the point of view for the type. All of these additions are directly due to the working of a new field. It was not until the 18th century that it was learned that Mopsa was wrong and that the "ballad in print" was not the best sort.<sup>2</sup> In the hundred years following 1765 we find a most extraordinary abundance of new old-ballads presented to the world, and most of them were obtained from living tradition in very remote places. They were immediately recognized as greatly superior to the average stall-ballad in their naïve charm, and furthermore they were perceived to have certain characteristics of manner that marked them off into a new type. Finally, Professor Child, largely on the basis of this newly acquired material, made his great definitive collection of English traditional ballads, and since then we, on this side of the

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1—Laneham's Letter from Kenilworth, 1575. Edited by F. J. Furnivall as *Captain Cox*, Ballad Society, 1871. It will also be remembered that in the 17th century, Shelden, Pepys, and Wood were extensive broadside collectors.

2—Winter's Tale IV, sc. 4, l. 252.



Atlantic, have hardly been able to think of popular ballads as anything different from those he has presented.<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile the stall productions lost favor. In the 19th century they practically ceased to be printed and they are now hard to obtain. When, therefore, we think of the ballad the stall types are not likely to be connoted. Some of us are even in danger of reasoning as if present conditions prevailed in the past with unfortunate results in historical appreciation. It is with a view to making sure that the perspective is right that I have given this brief introduction.

To-day we still have literary ballads, but there is no danger of confusing them with the traditional type. The latter kind stands apart as something no longer to be made and no longer successfully to be imitated.<sup>2</sup> Traditional balladry is a closed account,—though personally I cannot see that that means much in defining the origin of the type. The ballad is not the only poetry that presents a closed account. Chaucer, Spenser, and Shakespeare,—not to swell the list,—have all been imitated in the past, but never with results that would deceive an expert.<sup>3</sup> Still, whatever the conditions were that brought forth the peculiarities of the traditional ballad, they are at least now past and presumably beyond recall.

This last paragraph at once suggests the question: What are the characteristics of the traditional ballad? If a scientific answer is wished for, nothing more per-

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1—In England, scholars have not been so ready to follow Professor Child's lead. G. Gregory Smith, for instance, uses the term in a much older sense. He calls the Bloody Sark a true ballad.

2—Gummere, *the Popular Ballad*, 1907, pp. 14 and 313 f.

3—It seems even probable that the ballad has been more successfully imitated than these poets. If Scott made Kinmont Willie, he certainly did very well.

plexing could be asked. It is clear from a study of the specimens in the Child Collection that we are not there dealing with an absolutely homogeneous type.<sup>1</sup> It is not that Professor Child's critical instincts were at fault, but rather that the traditional ballad comprises a family, not a mere species; and in the present imperfect state of the remains it is very difficult to say just what is the unifying principle. It is not tradition alone, for there are lots of other things that are traditional that are not ballads.<sup>2</sup> It is not the narrative element, for not all ballads are narrative.<sup>3</sup> It is not the verse form,<sup>4</sup> nor necessity of a communal throng, nor any definable naïve quality, nor any particular mode<sup>5</sup> of construction. And yet at least several of these elements, though not always the same ones, seem to be required to make a poem a "traditional" ballad. That is not a very precise statement, and it is entirely unscientific. Nevertheless it is about as close as I shall try to come in the matter of definition. For our purpose it is unnecessary to consider ballad types as encompassed by hard and fast lines; and as a note toward historical accuracy we may add that they are not really thus encompassed anyway. It is quite suf-

1—W. M. Hart, in his thesis *Ballad and Epic*, Harvard Studies, v. XI, shows what distinct narrative methods have been employed in different classes of ballads. Professor Gummere, in his *Popular Ballad*, 1907, chapter II, discusses the differences in ballads in still other ways.

2—For most of the oldest ballads there is no direct proof of a traditional provenance. They were found in very untraditional company. Also many old carols and songs, quite dissimilar to ballads, have a good right to be called traditional, not to mention children's games and nursery rimes.

3—Both Hart and Gummere show that the "simple" ballad may present a mere situation.

4—The verse form has been discussed by Gummere, *O. E. Ballads*, p. 307 f.

5—I cannot see that incremental repetition is any sure criterion.

ficient to group ballads into three loose genera: the literary, the stall, and the traditional. The name in each case ought to be almost sufficient to suggest the characteristics of the division. By the literary we shall mean those, of whatever age or form, that have been written for the higher classes, that have pretended to literary excellence, and have been supposed to be art products. In future we shall have nothing to do with these ballads, except when they can be made to throw light upon the other types.

By the stall ballads we shall mean such rimed pieces as were made to be sung or recited to or by the common people. Generally they are the work of cheap minstrels or ballad-mongers, and there is about them usually the taint of a professionalism of a low order. In later times they were printed as broadsides and sold at cheap book-stalls—hence the name,—but I believe it can safely be affirmed that the type may be traced long anterior to the invention of printing. Of course it is a loose type, like the others, and far from homogeneous. The specimens are very numerous and often completely uninteresting. They were very popular, however, in their own day, and some of the pieces got into tradition.<sup>1</sup> Though I have skimmed through several hundred specimens, and have read a good number carefully, I make no pretence to anything more than a general knowledge of the type. It, too, will be used in a subordinate way as a background for the next division, though it will receive more attention than the literary ballad.

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1—The word “popular” has caused a great deal of trouble. The Child ballads have no exclusive right to the term. Popular origin may be ascribed to a large amount of song material of different types. It is not to be supposed that popular taste has ever been uniform or has remained exactly stationary.

Last of all there is the traditional ballad, by which we shall understand the general type presented practically in its entirety in the Child Collection. If this last statement necessitates an assumption, I cheerfully make it, though I may again assure the ultra cautious that the assumption is not at all requisite to the establishment of any of my conclusions. I am not in this thesis championing any theory of ballad origins, and I shall endeavor all along to handle my material freely. The type, though not absolutely homogeneous, is more so than either of the others. It seems hardly necessary to discuss at length its characteristics: especially since the latter have been given such full treatment by Professors Gummere and Hart. While independent of these writers, I shall follow their generalizations to a considerable extent in my own analyses of specimens.



## CHAPTER II

### *English Balladry to the End of the Fourteenth Century*

THE history of early English balladry has always been and is likely to remain an extremely obscure subject. Ballads may well have existed in Anglo-Saxon times, but if so what their nature was is now absolutely a matter of conjecture. The ballads of the Child Collection practically begin with the 15th century. There seems no good reason in theory why that should mark the boundary, and indeed, one lone specimen, the "Judas,"<sup>1</sup> found in a manuscript of the 13th century, does help, though somewhat lamely, to carry ballads back into the heart of the Middle Ages. Still, the most that can be said for early epochs is mere surmise or theory. Professor Gummere has gone over this field so thoroughly and has stated the facts so simply and clearly in his new book, "The Popular Ballad,"<sup>2</sup> that it is hardly possible to do better than to present the sum of his conclusions. For the Old English period he says:

"Absolutely no Anglo-Saxon verse which has come down shows a shred of structural and formal identity with the actual ballads; there is no strophic division, no refrain, save in the song of Deor,—and that pretty lyric denies balladry in every syllable. Something like the ballad . . . our ancestors must have had; but nothing can be restored and little can be guessed. Certainly neither 'Malden Fight' nor a poem from the

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1—No. 23, in the Child Collection. From MS. B14, 39, Library of Trinity College, Cambridge.

2—Houghton, Mifflin & Company, 1907. The Types of English Literature Series.

Chronicle like 'Brunanburh' can pass as a traditional ballad. . . . They are both made on the epic pattern dominant everywhere in Anglo-Saxon verse; and, indeed, the uniform style and the slight differences in metrical form which all the poetry reveals make one of the marvels of literature. Such a lyrical subject as 'The Wife's Complaint,' for instance, should lend itself admirably to the ballad style, and ought to differ structurally from epic; but how traditionally epic are its phrases, how sophisticated its variations and metaphors, how intricate and interlaced its stichic verses, and how remote it is from actual singing, compared with the simplicity of style, the choral suggestion of structure, the repetitions, and the irresistible lilt, in a real traditional ballad of later time but similar theme!"<sup>1</sup> He quotes from the ballad, 'The Queen of Effan's Nourice,' to support his contention.<sup>2</sup>

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1—The Popular Ballad, pp. 34, 35.

2—No. 40, Child. From Skene MS., early 19th century. It is well to quote Gummere's comparisons. From the Wife's Complaint; the banished wife in the morning must go.

"Under the oak to the earth-caves lone,  
there must I sit the summer-long day,  
there must I weep my weary exile,  
my need and misery. Nevermore  
shall I cease from the sorrow my soul endureth,  
from all the longing this life has brought me!"

Of the landscape she says:—

"Dim are the dales, the dunes are high,  
bitter my burgwalls, briar-covered,  
joyless my dwelling."

Contrast with this the ballad:—

"I heard a cow low, a bonnie cow low,  
An' a cow low down in yon glen;  
Lang, lang will my young son greet  
Or his mither bid him come ben.  
I heard a cow low, a bonnie cow low,  
An' a cow low down in yon fauld;  
Lang, lang will my young son greet  
Or his mither take him frae cauld."

Professor Gummere has considerable more to say about the relation of Anglo-Saxon poetry to the ballad, but all tells the same story. The Child ballad has absolutely no likeness to anything found in that whole range of verse. Furthermore, if our traditional ballad, recovered in modern times, is to be thought of as a form survival from a remote period of communal civilization, we have not at all got back to that period when we reach the Anglo-Saxons. Compared with that primitive stage, they too were moderns.<sup>1</sup> Improvisation in poetry, to be sure, played a much larger part then than later, but there is not the slightest evidence to show that the verses improvised differed in the least from specimens of the poetry that have come to us. In fact, all the evidence we have points the other way.<sup>2</sup> If the Child ballad existed among the Anglo-Saxons, it must have been about the same status as later. It was not a standard, literary form, cultivated or favored by the court or among the learned. It was leading a humble Cinderella life, quite apart from public consciousness. It was not respected and hence recorded.

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1—Music must have been much cherished among the Anglo-Saxons if we are to judge from the numerous references to it in the poetry. For a list of the music instruments, compare the following from the Phoenix (Thorp's translation, Codex Exoniensis. London, 1842): "Its voice's sound is / than all vocal music / sweeter and finer, / and more delightful / than any artifice: / that sound may not equal / trumpets nor horns, / nor the harp's sound, / nor voice of men, / any on earth, / nor organ's tone, / song's melody, / nor swan's plumes, / nor any of those sounds, / that the Lord hath created / for delight to men, / in this sad world."/

2—Compare the Cædmon material. Putting aside the Junius MS. we still have the so-called Cædmon hymn. This is to be found in a version dated 737, (cf. Sweet Anglo-Saxon Reader, 1894, 7th ed., p. 224.) However apocryphal the story of its authorship, the hymn itself may be held to illustrate what was thought of as improvised verse. Compare also the account in Beowulf, vv. 865 ff. Professor Gummere discusses the latter reference in his Popular Ballads, pp. 40-41.

But we are not at the end of our difficulties yet. It is not sufficient to assign the Anglo-Saxon ballad, granting that it existed, "the same status as later." What was the verse form? If alliterative, it is hard to explain the transition to the rimed meter.<sup>1</sup> The difficulty is greater than for learned poetry.—for we are supposing the ballad to be a traditional form, a literary fossil, preserving the art of an earlier epoch, and enduring an existence quite out of the current of progress. Yet rime is very closely bound up with all specimens of English balladry that have come to us.<sup>2</sup> The explanation that the change was brought about by way of religious verse and music is not entirely satisfactory.<sup>3</sup> In

1—The subject of early English meters is, of course, too complicated to receive treatment here. The subject is very intangible, and there is no agreement among scholars as to the method of reading the standard forms. Opposed to the Siever's type-system is the four-beat system; cf. Max Kaluza, *Der altenglische vers; eine metrische untersuchung*, Berlin, 1894.

2—Gummere, *Old English Ballads*, Ginn & Co., 1903, p. 304. "All our ballads employ rime in its modern sense . . . (see Schipper, *English Meter*, ll. 83 f., 309 f.). Indeed, rime marks nearly all ballad-poetry known to us, Germanic, Celtic, and Romance (Wolf, *Lais*, p. 162): for the regular assonance in place of rime, found in Spanish ballads, is not original, but was once a matter of chance, as in English, becoming normal in the 16th century; Wolf, *Romanzenpoesie d. Spanier*, *Wiener Jahrbuch CXVII*, 112 f., 121."

3—Gummere, *O. E. Ballads*, p. 303. "The prevailing view that the metrical scheme came from the Latin hymns of the church, and the irregularities of practice from influence of older native verse (Brandl): but there are difficulties even in this simple assumption. For example, the *septenarius* was not used in England until the twelfth century, and it is absurd to suppose that England had no ballad until that date. In what meter were the earlier ballads? Müllenhoff, *Sagen, Lieder*, u. s. w., p. XIII, says that in Germany the old alliterative verse died a natural death, so that in the course of the tenth century popular poetry had to take up rime. In England, however, alliterative poetry was not at all dead when the ballad meter began. There is a possibility that these popular meters, like the refrain, which came out of the church to the people, had previously gone out of the people into the church; and we may thus think of a continuity in meter from



most cases there is a question of imitation; it is the religious that has made use of the secular. Not only is that true of the imagery but also of the actual verse form, and it holds good for almost any century from the Middle Ages to the present day.<sup>1</sup>

It is not impossible to assume that rime is as primitive as alliteration.<sup>2</sup> The metrics of the ballads cannot

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older ballads: see Luick in Paul's *Grundriss*, ll. 1, 997. The stanza certainly seems a necessity in ballads, and hence we are not to look to the older recited and continuous verse of Anglo-Saxon records. We have seen that there is the same metrical gap in the case of Scandinavian ballads and the older poetry; Steenstrup, *Vore Folkeviser*, p. 123 f., 322, and Lundell in Paul's *Grundriss*, ll. i, 728 f." It may be added that the typical early religious song is the carol, fairly popular at times in tone and content, and the typical carol stanza differs entirely from the ballad stanzas. It is an aaab form. Prof. Padelford, (*Cambridge Hist. of English Literature*, vol. II, chap. XVI, p. 378, 429,) suggests: "It may be that carols were written to divert interest from those pagan songs with their wild dances, which even as late as the 15th century made Christmas a trying and dangerous period for the church. Certainly, the folk-song element in carols suggests the probability that at one time they were accompanied by dancing."

1—This is a bold statement, but I believe not without justification. For the Middle Ages much material may be found in Prof. Schofield's *English Literature from the Norman Conquest to Chaucer*, 1906; cf. the transformation of the Graal cycle from the secular to the romance religious; cf. the chapter on Songs and Lyrics, chapter X, p. 434 f. The beginnings of two religious songs of the early 14th century are quoted in this thesis, chapter 2, pp. 69-70. For the 16th century compare the Gude and Godly Ballads, treated in chapter V; they afford numerous examples. In the 18th century, Charles Wesley's "Jesus, Lover of my soul, Let me to thy bosom fly," had been frequently changed because editors thought imagery unbecoming. But in the 19th century it is well known that the Salvation Army has made secular music the basis of many of their religious songs.

2—F. Kluge, *Zur Geschichte des Reimes in Altgermanischen*, Paul u. Brannis Beiträge IX, 422, presents much material showing evidences of a feeling for rime in the Anglo-Saxon period. A great part, however, is not rime in the modern sense, and really not a structural element, but merely ornamental, as alliteration is now with us. It hardly seems that if there was an Anglo-Saxon ballad, it had the same kind of rime as that found in what we know as the traditional ballad.

compare in intricacy with the metrics of the Anglo-Saxon verse that has come down to us. Of course civilization did not begin with written history, and in the long dawn before our records there was plenty of time for many styles of verse form to have been tried. The ballad meter may have been one of them, long since abandoned by the cultured and the learned. I say this is not impossible, but it is all conjecture. Neither rime nor a stanza form is standard at any time in the Anglo-Saxon period. On the contrary, there was a very elaborate and a very stereotyped system of alliterative verse all along in vogue. Rime did occasionally appear,<sup>1</sup> but it is always something unusual, worthy of remark each time when found.

Many of the best ballads, also, are in the four-stressed couplet. Something approaching this form is likewise found occasionally in late Anglo-Saxon literature, but it is clearly not standard. As in the case of rime, its introduction is ascribed to the church. Trautmann,<sup>2</sup> in an article on four-stressed verse in Anglo-Saxon poetry, enumerates several poems dating from the time of Alfric and later, that employ this four-beat verse, some with rime and some without. In some of these pieces alliteration plays no functional part,—that is, it appears to be accidental; it does not join lines together. It is, indeed, no more prominent than in some of the traditional ballads,<sup>3</sup> and not nearly so

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1—F. Kluge, *Zur Geschichte des Reimes in Altgermanischen*, P. B. B., IX, 422, gives references to considerable material; cf. also the poem in the Laud MS. of the Chronicle, year 1086; also MS. C. year 1036, etc.

2—Anglia, vol. VII. Anzeiger, pp. 211 f. 1884.

3—Compare the material in ballads suggested by Gummere, (O. E. Ballads, p. 305,) with the poems quoted by Trautmann, or with such a poem as the following, under the year 1086, Anglo-Saxon Chronicle:

prominent as in some modern verse.<sup>1</sup> Now this is true of some of the earliest four-stressed verse we can find in English. It stands entirely apart from the alliterative meter. Where did it come from? Is it a new verse form that domesticated itself with great rapidity and very early got possession of the traditional poetry of the song and dance? If so, what was the dancing meter before its advent? Surely the alliterative verse with its irregularly compounded types, does not seem ideally suited to dance rhythm. Or is the four-stressed verse a traditional survival just as the ballad technique is supposed to be? I make no attempt to answer. All this is in the realm of conjecture, and it has been brought in only to show how obscure and how difficult are many of the problems of early balladry.

The Anglo-Saxons were not a primitive people, and if they possessed the ballad, they did not esteem it enough to make it a part of their literary records. Yet they have left us much poetry, some of it secular, much traditional, and in one sense most of it popular. It is unfortunate that the term popularity has several meanings open to confusion. Surely none of the Anglo-Saxon poetry is popular in the sense of origin. It is all derived from the higher social orders, the largest part from the monastic. It would not be safe to

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“Castelas he [William] let wyrcean  
 Tearme men swide swencean  
 Se cyng woes swa swide steare  
 Thenam of his undespeodan man  
 manig mare goldis [corrupt reading]  
 Tma hundred punda seolfres,  
 [pet he nam he wrihte] mid mycelan imrihte  
 of his land leode, por litte[l]re neode,” etc.

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1—Compare Swinburne's Chorus from the *Atalanta in Calydon*, beginning

“When the hounds of spring are on winter's traces  
 The mother of months in meadow or plain.”

ascribe any of it to communal authorship. But much of the Anglo-Saxon poetry that we have was no doubt once very popular in the sense that it was widely known<sup>1</sup> and probably current in several versions. This is reasonable to suppose from the fact that so much of our verse from that period has reached us in a dialect different from that in which it was written and in manuscripts much later than the age in which the poems were presumably composed. That much of this poetry was traditional also, can hardly be doubted. It is not too much to suppose that for the Beowulf material,—for the actual Widsith, and for other verse. Widsith is especially interesting in this connection, for not only is it reckoned by many as our earliest Anglo-Saxon poem,<sup>2</sup> but it is thoroughly professional. Professor Gummere somewhere happily calls it “journalistic.” Widsith seems to have been a traditional minstrel poem that was a part of the stock in trade through several generations. It shows us that professionalism in English literature was a well-established fact from the earliest recorded times. That is something to be remembered in our later treatment.

It is a caution especially to be borne in mind for the whole Middle English period. There we are troubled with the same difficulty in obtaining substantial facts about English balladry. But our troubles are increased by the fact that medieval chroniclers often confess that they have been making use of popular songs for various parts of their narrative. But what kind of popu-

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1—In this second sense the Child ballad has not been so popular—that is, at no historic period, unless it be the last century or two, has it been the special favorite of all classes of people.

2—Stopford A. Brooke, Chambers's Cyclopædia of English Literature, I, p. 4. “Complaint of Deor” is also mentioned by R. Garnett, English Literature, An Illustrated Record, vol. I, p. 8.



lar songs? we have a right to ask. Minstrel ballads, or ballads like those found in Professor Child's Collection? It is not safe to judge from the subject-matter, nor may we take the chronicler's own word for it. They did not classify songs according to poetic origins in those days, and minstrel and communal ballads would have been alike to them. With professionalism all along prominent, only the actual possession of a song can enable us to say whether or not it is of the Child type.<sup>1</sup>

We may best illustrate our remarks by recourse to William of Malmesbury. What could be more explicit than the latter's statement near the end of his account of Athelstan?<sup>2</sup> "Thus far relating to the king," he says, "I have written from authentic testimony: that which follows I have learned more from old ballads, popular through succeeding times, than from books written expressly for the information of posterity. I have subjoined them, not to defend their veracity, but to put my reader in possession of all that I know." Admirable caution we may exclaim, just the attitude an historian would naturally take in dealing with ballad material; but would not the attitude be equally natural in dealing with songs of minstrelsy? At least the material that follows gives us no decisive answer. Some of it may conceivably have been taken from ballads of the Child type. The account of the birth of Athelstan,

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1—Professor Gummere emphasizes this point often in his *Popular Ballad*. He mentions William of Malmesbury.

2—Lib. II, §138, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, Ed. by T. D. Hardy, 1840, p. 222. *Et haec quidem fide integra de rege-conseripsi: sequentia magis cantilensis per successiones temporum detritis, quam libris ad instructiones posteriorum eluebratis, didicerim. Quae ides opposui, non ut earum veritatem defendam, sed ne lectorum scientiam defraudem.* The translation above, is the Rev. John Sharpe's, Lond. 1815, p. 160.

for example, is near enough to the miraculous to suggest borrowings from folk-lore. But if Malmesbury did obtain this story from a ballad of the Child type, he must have touched up his material considerably. As it now reads it is much too circumstantial: it resembles a tale more than a ballad.<sup>1</sup>

William of Malmesbury has several other specific references to ballads,<sup>2</sup> but nothing that is at all decisive in showing the actual form of the material from which he was drawing. He also relates stories with plots at least suggestive of ballads in the Child Collection. The first impulse in any such case is to assign the material to ballad origin. But that is always hazardous. Identity of subject-matter creates no presumption of identity of form. The fiction which Malmesbury tells of Gunhild,<sup>3</sup> daughter of Cnut and wife of the Emperor Henry III, parallels in some essentials the story on the

1—Lib. II, 139, Hardy 222.

2—With reference to Edgar after telling how he favored foreigners (Hardy, p. 236, §148): “Inde merito jureque culpant eum literae; nam caeteras infamias, quas post dicam, magis resperserunt cantilenaē Sed Arturis sepulchrum unsquam visitur, unde antiquitas noeniarum adhuc eum venturum fabulatur.” But minstrel prophecies were not uncommon in the Middle Ages.

3—Gesta Regum Anglorum, ed. T. D. Hardy, 1840, Lib. II, §188, vol. I, pp. 321-2. Caeterum, ut dicere coeperam, Hardecnutes Gunhildam sororem suam, Cnutonis ex Emma filiam, spectatissimae speciei puellam, a multis prociis tempore patris suspiratam, nec impetratam, Henrico imperatori Alemannorum nuptum misit. Celebris illa pompa nuptialis fuit, et nostro adhuc seculo etiam in triviis cantitata, dum tanti nominis virgo ad navem duceretur; stipantibus omnibus Angliae proceribus, et in expensas conferentibus quicquid absconderat vel morsupium publicum vel serarium regium. Ita ad sponsum perveniens, multo tempore foedus conjugale fovit: postremo, adulterii accusata, puerulum quandam sturni sui alummum, quem secum ex Anglia duxerat, delatori, giganteae molis homini, ad monomachiam apposuit, caeteris clientibus inertii timore refugientibus. Itaque, conserto duello, per miraculum Dei insimulator succiso poplite enervatur.

popular ballad of Sir Aldingar.<sup>1</sup> If similarity of plot indicated anything about the form, we should have a perfect right to say with Professor Child that here "William is citing a ballad." But the danger of so concluding is apparent from another statement that Professor Child himself made shortly before this last one: "Tales of the same general description as Sir Aldingar are extremely often to be met with in ballad, romance, chronicle, and saga." Under such conditions the nature of the subject-matter shows nothing. Professor Gummere,<sup>2</sup> further to emphasize the point for his specific passage in Malmesbury, adds: "We hear in the fourteenth century of such a ballad (that is, with

1—Child Collection, No. 59. The remarks of Professor Child about Gunhild are to be found in the introduction to this ballad.

2—The Popular Ballad, 1907, pp. 53, 54. Gummere refers to Warton, *History of English Poetry*, ed. 1840, pp. 81, 82. I do not know where he gets his statement about the spectators praying for the queen. Hazlitt's edition of Warton, 1871, ll. 96-97, which I used, does not seem to contain it. The statement there is: "It was not deemed an occurrence unworthy to be recorded that when Adam de Orleton, bishop of Winchester, visited his cathedral priory of Saint Swithin in that city, a minstrel named Herbert was introduced who sang the *Song of Colbrand*, a Danish giant, and the tale of *Queen Emma, delivered from the ploughshares*, in the hall of the prior Alexander de Herriard, in the year 1338." There is then quoted the Latin for the last part of the statement from the register of the priory. A note adds: "These were local stories. Guy fought and conquered Colbrand, a Danish champion, just without the northern walls of the city of Winchester, in a meadow, to this day called Danemoreh: and Colbrand's battle-axe was kept in the treasury of St. Swithin's priory till the Dissolution. . . . This history remained in rude paintings against the walls of the north transept of the cathedral till within my memory. Queen Emma was a patroness of this church, in which she underwent the trial of walking blindfold over nine red-hot ploughshares." Professor Gummere's guess that the "Deu vous saue, dam Emme!" of *Piers Plowman* (A text, Skeat, l. 103) seems to me to have a fair chance of being true. Skeat in a note to the line makes it—"Evidently the refrain of some low popular song," and suggests a connection with the "shordyche dame emme," mentioned in the B text, XIII, l. 340. I think there is small likelihood that Skeat is right.

similar material to the Gunhild) in professional hands. In 1338 the prior of St. Swithin's at Winchester entertained his bishop by letting a minstrel, *jeculator*, sing in hall the ballad of Emma, Gunhild's mother, who triumphed in her ordeal for adultery. During the progress of this ordeal the spectators are represented as praying for the queen and exhorting her to be firm. A refrain, *Dieu vous save, Dame Emma*, seems to belong to a version of this ballad and was sung by the common laborer in the days of 'Piers Plowman.' " "If we had no better evidence," concludes Gummere, "we should be tempted to hand over 'Sir Aldingar' to Herbert the minstrel."

All this is illuminating negatively, for the Middle English period. It shows us how helpless we are in arriving at any safe generalizations because of our lack of material.<sup>1</sup> Professor Gummere—it seems as if I have to quote his name almost constantly for this early work—thinks that the so-called Cnut's Ballad is the first glimpse of actual ballad structure, which is to be met with in English records.<sup>2</sup> That is a fragment of four lines quoted in a Latin *Historia Eliensis*.<sup>3</sup> This

1—Professor Gummere suggests considerable other material equally inconclusive, as he shows. He mentions, for instance, Henry of Huntington's account of the battle of Brunanburh and shows it is founded on the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. Henry's own words of introduction, however, would be sufficient to show that he was not using a ballad of the strictly popular type. Fabyan's account of the songs that were made after Bannockburn "in daunces, in the carols of the maidens and minstrels of Scotland," is damaged not so much by the collocation . . . as by the specimen of the verse itself (see p. 55). Gummere might have added the bits of English song found in Langtoft's Chronicle. (See Wright, *Political Songs*, pp. 286, 293, 295.) They are examples of toiled rime in the flytting type; not like the ballad in the least.

2—Popular Ballad, pp. 58 f.

3—II, 27, Gale, "*Historiae Britannicae* . . . scriptores XV, 1691, vol. I, p. 505.



chronicle is a work, according to its editor Gale, by Thomas of Ely, who lived and wrote in the second half of the 12th century. "Cnut, with his queen Emma and divers of the great nobles, was coming by boat to Ely; and, as they neared land, the king stood up, and told his men to row slowly while he looked at the great church and listened to the song of the monks which came sweetly over the water. Then he called all who were with him in the boats to make a circle about him, and in the gladness of his heart he bade them join him in song, and he composed in English a ballad which begins as follows:—

Merie sungen the Muneches binnen Ely,  
 Tha Cnut ching rew ther by.  
 'Roweth, cnihtës, noer the land,  
 And herë we thes munechës sang."

## ELIENSIS.

Quodam vero tempore, cum idem Rex *Canutus* ad Ely navigio tenderet, comitante illum Regina sua *Emma*, & optimatibus regni, volens illic juxta morem purificationem Sanctæ Mariæ solemniter agere, quando Abbates Ely suo ordine incipientes ministracionem in Regis curia habere solent, & dum terræ approximarent, Rex in medio virorum erigens se, nautis innuit ad *portum Pussilum* ocius tendre, & tardius navem in eundo pertrahere jubet, ipse oculos in altum contra Ecclesiam, quæ haud prope eminet in ipso Rupis vertice sita, voces undique dulcedinis resonare sensit, & erectis auribus quo magis accederet amplius melodiam haurire cœpit; percepit namque hoc esse Monachos in cœnobio psallentes, & clare divinas horas modulantes, cæteros qui aderant in navibus per circuitum ad se venire, & secum jubilando canere exhortabatur, ipsemet ore proprio jocunditatem cordis exprimens, cantilenam his verbis Anglice composuit, dicens, cujus exordium sic continetur...

Quod latine sonat, *Dulce cantaverunt Monachi in Ely, dum Canutus Rex navigaret prope ibi, nunc milites navigate propius ad terram, & simul audiamus Monachorum harmoniam, & caetera* quæ sequuntur, quæ usque hodie in choris publicæ cantantur; & in proverbii memorantur. Hoc Rex agitans, non quievit cum venerabili collegio pie ac duleiter concinere, donec pervenit ad terram, & quando cum processione, ut mos est principem aut celsiorem personam, à fratribus digne susceptus in Ecclesia duceretur; mox bona prædecessoribus suis Anglorum Regibus Ecclesiæ collata, suo privilegio & auctoritate ad perpetuam munivit firmitatem, & desuper altare majus, ubi corpus sacre virginis ac sponsæ Christi

*Ædeldredae* pausat in sepulchro, in faciem Ecclesiae coram universis jura loci perpetuo libera esse sancivit. Ad hanc igitur solemnitatem ipsum Regem aliquotiens præ nimio gelu & glacie inibi contigit non posse pervenire, usque paludibus & aquis gelatis, sed sic à bonitatis suæ studio Rex non mutatur, licet nimium gemens & anxius fuisset, in Domino Deo confisus, super mare de *Saham*, cum non cessaret vehemens pruina, usque in Ely trahere se in vehiculo desuper glaciem cogitavit, sed, siquis eum præcederet, securius & minus pavide esperum iter perficere, nec differre asseruit, casu enim astitit ibi vir magnus & incompositus ex insula quidam *Brihtmerus Budde*, pro densitate sic cognominatus, in multitudine & ante Regem se progredi spondit. Nec mora, Rex festinus in vehiculo secutus est, admirantibus cunctis, illum tantam audatiam præsumpsisse. Quo perveniens cum gaudio solemnitatem ex more illic celebravit. Nam sicut in *Sapientia* legitur, *fortis est ut mors dilectio, n̄ dilectio custodia legum est*, in sola dilectione ac devotione Christi virginis *Ædeldredae* Rex gloriosus nitebatur, & completur in eo illud Dominicum, *omnia possibilis credenti*. Ad gloriam bae tæ virginis narrare consueverat Rex sibi à Domino concessum fuisse, quod tam magnus Rusticus & incompositus per viam nullum offendiculum senserat, ut & ipse agilis, & mediocris staturæ, directe & intrepide subsequi licuisset, Rex namque liberalis animi atque munificus, laborem viri rependere volens, ipsum cum possessione sua æternæ libertati donavit, unde filii filiorum ejus usque ad diem hanc quieti consistunt.

The chronicler turns this into Latin, saying then, with unmistakable reference to popular tradition, "and so the rest, as it is sung in these days by the people in their dances, and handed down as proverbial."<sup>1</sup>

Possibly this is a ballad of the Child type. Yet even this fragment offers us nothing conclusive. In fact, to my mind it leaves the Middle English ballad question more in doubt than ever. If we are to trust the chronicler we have here a king composing a ballad, under choral conditions, to be sure, but not in the dance. Furthermore, the king is a foreigner. Does that affect the status of the "ballad"? Prof. Gummere thinks<sup>2</sup>

1—The English quoted is the condensed paraphrase of Prof. Gummere, *Popular Ballads*, pp. 58-59.

2—Ditto, p. 60. Grundtvig's view I have taken from Gummere, because I do not read Danish. Grundtvig's own statement (I owe the reference to Prof. Kittredge) is found in vol. III of his *Danmarks Gamle Folkviser*, p. IX f.

Grundtvig has shown that the four quoted lines are very probably the burden or chorus of the song itself, which may have carried them throughout, along with the improvised narrative verses which followed, or else let them alternate as full chorus after each new stanza. Grundtvig supports his opinion by many similar cases from old Scandinavian tradition. He thinks the missing verses were probably epic, and told of Cnut's conquest,—a chronicle-ballad in the grand style. I must confess that these conjectures seem very dubious. The story of the origin of the song must be taken with a grain of salt, and Professor Gummere is entirely willing to grant that. He holds, however, that the account presents "a true process if not a true fact, for it was evidently a method of poetical composition which excited no comment and was familiar to the twelfth-century writer of the chronicle." That may be true, and let it be granted: what follows? We have no hint of popular or communal authorship. Our throng is a group of nobles, and the ballad is all composed by a single individual—the greatest man present. The passage might as conceivably be held to support the individual authorship theory: it was only the great man who would compose the ballad. Furthermore, what hinders us from supposing that this method of composition was also used by the minstrel? In fact, granted poetic improvisation, what method could be more natural for composing a song! And yet what was this method? The description of the part played by the throng is so vague we can only surmise. Do we have quoted the beginning of the ballad proper, or only the refrain? If Grundtvig is right, and the words are all refrain, we have not here a characteristic English ballad. There is too much meaning in the words;

and besides, the refrain is longer than it ought to be.<sup>1</sup> But next, what is there in the lines quoted or in the setting to suggest that this is a chronicle-ballad of the grand style? I must confess I see nothing. Cnut and his company were visiting Ely for religious purposes. He hears the monks singing sweetly and merrily. Are these conditions likely to bring forth a song of personal triumph? Possibly, though not even a hint that the song was narrative can be obtained from the lines actually transmitted to us. For my own part I must confess myself utterly in the dark as to the nature of the rest of the song. Nor do I get much light from the verse form used in the poem. I am not quite sure of the meaning to attach to Professor Gummere's statement that "here for the first time occurs the two-line stanza."<sup>2</sup> Presumably he means the first time in a piece actually described as a dance, for sporadic rimed couplets are to be found as early as the time of Alfric,<sup>3</sup> and the division of the fragment into stanzas is of course the work of the modern editor. As for the ballad style, which Professor Gummere also ascribes to this piece, that too does not impress me. Perhaps if

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1—I do not recall any English ballad with a refrain similar. Surely the four-line refrain in the *Twa Magicians* (Child, No. 44) is entirely different. Also that in *Captain Car* (No. 178, A) has but one idea with much repetition.

2—Popular Ballad, p. 60.

3—See chapter 2, p. 44 (this thesis). In the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* under the year 1075 (1076) there is a couplet which, joined with the context, is suggestive of song. "The king gave the daughter of William Fitz-Osberne in marriage to earl Ralph:

‘There was that bride-ale  
The source of man’s bale.’

For earl Roger and earl Waltheof were there, and bishops, and abbots, and they took counsel to depose the king of England." Then follows the account of the ill-success of the conspiracy.



one could be sure what the lines were trying to do, the case would be different. As it is, it is only the words of the chronicler that it was sung *usque hodie in choris publice* that make us suspect any connection with the Child type of ballad. And even with these words I am very doubtful whether it was a narrative song. The chronicler speaks of the piece as proverbial.

The first ballad of whose form anyone has a right to feel sure is the "Judas" printed as No. 23 in Professor Child's collection. This we have perhaps in its entirety. It is found in the 13th-century manuscript belonging to the library of Trinity College, Cambridge (MS: B 14, 39). The piece is unique in several particulars. In date it stands absolutely apart from all other ballads. Nothing else so ballad-like is to be found for upwards of two centuries. The historical interest of the poem is therefore considerable. If its claims are accepted it helps us carry the Child type of ballad back deep into the Middle Ages. The intrinsic merits of the piece too are not to be despised,—so that taking it all in all, this earliest preserved ballad deserves and well repays very careful study. It reads as follows:

Hit wes upon a Seereporsday pat vre louerd aros :  
 Ful milde were pe wordes he spec to Iudas.  
 'Iudas, pou most to Iurselem, oure mete for to bugge ;  
 Pritti platen of seluer pou bere up opi rugge.'  
 'Pou comest fer ipe brode stret, fer ipe brode strete ;  
 Summe of pine tunesmen per pou meist i-mete.'  
 Imette wid is soster, pe swikele wimon :  
 'Iudas, pou were wrepe me stende pe wid ston ;           ii  
 For pe false prophete pat pou bileuest upon.'  
 'Be stille. leue soster, pin herte pe tobreke !  
 Wiste min louerd Crist. ful wel he wolde be wreke.'  
 'Iudas, go pou on pe roc, heie up-on pe ston ;  
 Lei pin heued i my barm, slep pou pe anon.'  
 Sone so Iudas of slepe was awake,

Pritti platen of seluer from hym weren itake.  
 He drou hym selue bi pe cop. pat al it lauede ablode;  
 Pe Iewes out of Iurselem awenden he were wode,  
 Foret hym com pe riche Ieu pat heiste Pilatus;  
 'Wolte sulle pi louerd, pat hette Iesus?'  
 'I nul sulle my louerd for nones cunnes eiste,  
 Bote hit be for pe pritti platen pat he me bi-taiste.'  
 'Wolte sulle pi lord Crist for enes cunnes golde?'  
 'Nay, bote hit be for pe platen pat he habben wolde.'  
 In him com ur lord gon, as is postles seten at mete:  
 'You sitte ye, postles, ant wi nule ye ete? ii  
 Ic am iboust ant isold to day for oure mete.'  
 Vp stod him Iudas: 'Lord, am I pat [fрек]?'  
 I nas neuer ope stude, per me pe euel spec.'  
 Vp him stod Peter, ant spec wid al his miste.  
 'Pau Pilatus him come wid ten hundred enistes.  
 Yet ic wolde, louerd, for pi loue fiste.'  
 'Still pou be. Peter, wel I pe i-enowe;  
 Pou wolt fur-sake me prien ar pe coc him crowe.'

In the preceding transcript I have used Professor Kittredge's punctuation,<sup>1</sup> but have followed the line arrangement of the original manuscript. There the poem is printed in long lines and without stanza division. After lines 8, 25, and 30, the manuscript has a mark, *ii*. At each of these places there stand three lines riming. Professor Skeat has thought that the mark merely signifies "that there are here two second lines."<sup>2</sup> It is therefore without effect upon the reading. This interpretation has been followed by Mr. Sidgwick in his collection of "Popular Ballads of the

1—One-volume edition of English and Scottish Popular Ballads, Sargent and Kittredge, 1904, p. 41.

2—The MS. was long lost from the library, and Professor Child first printed the piece from Wright and Halliwell's *Reliquiae Antiquae*, 1845, v. 1, p. 144. On the MS. being recovered, Professor Skeat collated the piece and sent his copy to Professor Child, adding this interpretation by way of note. See *Child Ballads*, V, p. 288.

Olden Time,'<sup>1</sup> where he prints the piece. He uses stanzas of two lengths; some of four, and some of six short lines. This may be right. Similar structure is found frequently in other ballads.<sup>2</sup> In the one-volume edition of English and Scottish Popular Ballads, however, Professor Kittredge has offered another explanation, which seems more likely to be correct.<sup>3</sup> It is that the *ii* "appears to indicate that this line is to be repeated. . . . It will be observed that this makes the stanzas regular throughout." This repetition has been paralleled on a small scale in I.5, and in each case it fits the idea to be expressed very well. But I cannot feel that this is any naïve repetition. To me it seems like an artful method of emphasis, and I am not sure that its use brings the piece any nearer to the ballad type. It is something quite different from what is known as incremental repetition.

But this piece is unique in several particulars. According to Professor Child, this ballad is isolated in tradition as well as in date.<sup>4</sup> Nor does it seem to present to us a consistent whole. At least much is left obscure. Professor Child points out that the passionate behaviour of Judas, I.16, goes beyond all apparent occasion. And why does he insist to Pilate on the very thirty pieces he had lost, rejecting every other

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1—F. Sidgwick, *Popular Ballads of the Olden Time*, 1906 (?), second series, p. 147. Saintsbury also accepts this interpretation, *History of English Prosody*, vol. 1, p. 251 n., 1906. However, he later took his material from the *Reliquae Antiquae*, and probably neither Saintsbury nor Sidgwick was aware of Professor Kittredge's interpretation.

2—Hunting of the Cheviot, Child No. 162; Robyn and Gandelwyn, No. 115. These are both early, but it is used also in late ballads; cf. Fair Annie, No. 62, A. E., etc.

3—Appendix, one-volume edition of English and Scottish Popular Ballads, p. 644.

4—Child, *Ballads*, volume 1, pp. 242-3.

form of payment? Professor Child suggests indirectly that perhaps these were the oft-used fated pieces destined to be the price of him that was valued. Personally I have a growing impression that the fifth and sixth lines are more significant than has hitherto been pointed out. To me they suggest not a mere statement of fact, as Mr. Sidgwick's paraphrase would suggest,<sup>1</sup> but rather a warning: "Thou comest far—very far—in the broad street.—beware! some of thy townsmen there thou mayst meet." In the ballad Christ is not the all-forgiving master, as is shown in the words of Judas to his sister. And it may be because he had neglected the warning that Judas is so beside himself, and it may then be to cover up the fact that he is so anxious to get back the particular thirty pieces.<sup>2</sup> That seems to me the simplest solution.

However, uniqueness in tradition and such obscurities do not in the least damage the status of this piece as a ballad. Indeed, variance with facts and narrative confusion are conspicuous characteristics of the type.<sup>3</sup> But what can be said of the form of this poem?

1—Reference as before.

2—On a review of the ballad I not only believe more thoroughly in my suggested interpretation, but I add the idea that the thirty platen were *plates* in the modern sense. They were not pieces of silver to give in exchange for food, but the dishes on which the food was to be brought back. Compare the lines:

"Pritti platen of seluer pou bere up opi rugge."

"Bote hit be for pe pritti platen pat he me bi-taiste."

"Nay, bote hit be for pe platen pat he hebben wolde."

In Chambers and Sidgwick, *Early English Lyrics*, p. 142, there is a poem quoted from Balliol 354, 16th century, that deals with Christ's betrayal by Judas. There the thirty plates are of money (L5), but the latter poem is not strictly popular, and many represent quite other traditions.

3—Dr. W. M. Hart, in an article "Professor Child and the Ballad," (*Publications of the Modern Language Association*, XXI, 775,) lists a number of statements from Prof. Child to the effect



In the manuscript the piece is written in long lines without stanza division. If it were to be taken down now from tradition there is no doubt but what it would be written as short-line quatrains. The verse approaches closely the so-called stanza,—not that of the Cnut fragment, but that of Robin Hood, Chevy Chase, and so many others. I doubt, however, if it is to be counted as in precisely the ballad-stanza form. Unevenness of rhythm marks a great deal of popular poetry as we have it, but the Judas lines exhibit something more than mere unevenness of rhythm.<sup>1</sup> There seem, indeed, to be two kinds of verses: one illustrated by “Hit wés upón a Scereporsdáy pat vre louerd arós,” and the other by such a line as “Imétte wíd is sóstèr, pe swikelé wimón.” The latter seems to me a distinctly separate type of rhythm.<sup>2</sup> There are too many such lines in the poem to let them be dismissed as faulty meter. Furthermore, the type has survived in such popular nursery rimes as “Sing a song a sixpence, pocket full of rye” and “Goosy, goosy, gander.” I think all the short lines can be read in this rhythm, and with the effect that they seem to have the same weight as the others. If the ballad was sung, some equalization of the kind must have been used. Short lines mixed with long are to be found sporadically in other

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that accuracy is not a good sign; cf. also Prof. Kittredge, *English and Scottish Popular Ballads*, p. XVI. As for narrative confusion, that must be connected with ballads as we have them. Numerous ballads have reached us in a confused state. Compare the different versions of the *Lass of Rock Royal*, for example.

1—In fact, if read in the way I shall suggest, I think it has considerable smoothness. The rime in this piece is not primitive.

2—The question here is not one of the shifting of accent. It is the getting the right number of accents or the right weight to the line. Nor is the question one of missing light syllable. It is the peculiar and individual rhythm.

ballads,<sup>1</sup> but it is very unusual to find them in such great numbers. The "Judas," therefore, seems a little apart from the usual ballad structure. Nor does the peculiarity seem to be due entirely to the early age at which the poem was taken down. "The Moral Ode," possibly a century older, has irregularities in meter, but in so far as I have scanned it, no lines of the Sing a Song a Sixpence type.<sup>2</sup> But among early works, the rhythm is by no means limited to the "Judas." Robert of Gloucester's Chronicle,<sup>3</sup> The Life of "Seynt Mergrete"<sup>4</sup> in the Auchinleck MS., The Tale of Gamelyn,<sup>5</sup> and other pieces,<sup>6</sup> all show an extensive use of the meter. It is not, however, a particularly popular affair, in the folk sense, and though there are other ballads that use it, the number is limited and the best two examples are also religious pieces. "The

1—The Hunting of the Cheviot, No. 162. "That he wold hunte in the mowntayns" "In the magger of doughtö Dogles." The scansion given for the first of the two lines by Saintsbury, History of English Prosody, I, p. 252. See also the page following.

2—I have merely scanned the selection in Emerson's Middle English Reader, 1908, pp. 176 f. Something over a hundred lines are there given. The MS. followed is the Edgerton *e*, said by Emerson to be the best. He places the date at about 1170.

3—The selection given in Emerson's Reader, p. 203 f., "How the Normans came to England," ll. 73, 95 ff., does not contain any "Judas" lines at the beginning, but toward the end of the passage there are numerous lines of the sort. "In pē zēr of grāce as it vël alsō," etc., p. 209.

4—MS. Auchinleck, fol. 16 b. (c.1310) in Horstmann, *Altenglische Legenden*, 1881, s. 225 f., cf. And for hir michel feirhed, / zif sehe be born of pral, l. 33. Wele y schal hir clope / in sikelatoun and pal. . . . etc., l. 35.

5—Skeat, Clarendon Press, 1884. Also in the Oxford Chaucer, appendix to vol. IV, pp. 645 ff.

6—Several pieces in the 15th century use it; cf. "I have a zong suster," Sloane MS. 2593, edited by Wright; Songs and Carols, Warton Club, 1856, p. 33. There are also pieces in the *Reliquae Antiquae*; cf. Ballad of a Tyrannical Husband, II, p. 196 f., etc.

Cherry Tree Carol" (No. 54), and "The Carnal and the Crane" (No. 55).<sup>1</sup>

We have already noted that the probable repetition after lines 8, 25, and 30, are not cases of incremental repetition. But "Judas" has the latter variety also, and that of course is very important in determining the poem's status. The question "Wolte sulle pi louerd . . . ?" is repeated two stanzas later with an increment. But the case is not one of the simplest ballad type. In fact, what I have called the increment is the shorter answer. The method strikes me as artful. I have a like impression from the other case of incremental repetition in the ballad: "Vp stod him Iudas..." repeated in the next stanza by "Vp him stod Peter..." As good examples can be found in other early poems quite out of the range of balladry. Compare for instance this case from the "Moral Ode," certainly not at all ballad-like, though it may well have numerous popular elements:

"Þider wē scolden dražen and dōn wēl oft and wēl  
 ȝelōme,  
 For þēr ne sceal me us naht binime, mid wrancwīse  
 dōme.  
 Þider wē scolde ȝeorne dražen, wolde ȝē mē ilēve,  
 For ðēre ne mei hit binime ēow þē kīng ne sē irēve."<sup>2</sup>

1—The Boy and the Mantle (No. 29) suggests that it was once of this meter. Judas is not in the typical early carol meter. That tends to the rime scheme, aaab.

2—MS. Egerton c, Emerson's Middle English Reader, p. 177, ll. 47 f. There are other passages in this same poem that are somewhat incremental; cf. ll. 90 f.

"Wē þe brekeð Godes hēse, and gūltet swā ilōme,  
 Hwet seule wē seggen oðer dōn at ðē mūchele dōme?  
 Ða ða luveden unriht, and uvel lif ledde,  
 Hwet seule hī segge oðer dōn ðer engles bēod ofðredde?"

There is a great deal of incremental repetition to be found in works non-ballad after 1400, but compare passages from the

None of this sounds primitive or elemental. Ballads taken down in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries often suggest more strongly the beginning of things.<sup>1</sup> However, without any doubt, Judas is a ballad. In its impersonality, its directness, its abundance of untagged dialogue, its abrupt transitions, we find ballad traits that are unmistakable. The lack of primitiveness at times suggested may be due to the source: we have no proof that the piece is directly from tradition.

This lack of primitiveness, however, illustrates a paradox that we shall find true again and again,—one especially interesting for the historical consideration of the ballad type. As a rule, the ballads that got recorded in early epochs are not as good representatives of the qualities that strike us as primitive as are many of the ballads obtained from oral tradition within the last one or two hundred years. The ballad type cannot be traced toward a prehistoric origin by the facts of chronology. Those who try to connect balladry with primitive conditions throw chronology to the winds or at least ignore it. The simplest example is found in Professor Hart's recent study in *Ballad and Epic*.<sup>2</sup> There he classifies many ballads, though not all, according to their stage of narrative simplicity. He shows there is considerable difference between the simplest

Auchinleck, Arthur and Merlin, E. Kölbing, Leipzig, 1890. They are hardly incremental, but suggestive of it, and there are several passages. cf. the end of the list of forty-two knights ll. 5403 ff. cf. the list ll. 8695 ff. Or take the passage beginning with l. 7173, or the passage l. 3725 f. Much of this material naturally falls into stanzas; cf. 3725.

1—Cf., for instance, lines quoted by Gummere and given in a note above, chap. 2, p. 40.

2—Ballad and Epic, A Study in the Development of the Narrative Art, Harvard Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature, 1907.



of ballads and the most developed. For the first he lists seventy-two ballads from the Child collection as his basis for generalization;<sup>1</sup> but only three of this number, in the form we have them, are older than the 17th century, and about three-fourths of this same list date from the 18th and 19th centuries.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand Adam Bell and the Gest of Robin Hood, two of the most highly developed ballads, and well on the way toward epic, have come to us from the beginning of the 15th century, and are thus among the ten earliest ballads that have reached us. And finally his English example of the epic is the *Beowulf*, a piece that actually goes back to the Anglo-Saxon period.

The temptation may be strong to make much of this paradox—this lack of accord between chronology and the degree of ballad simplicity. But one here may well be cautious. The phenomenon is striking enough, after it has once been noticed, but after all there is not enough material that has reached us from the Middle Ages either to establish or overthrow any theory on the basis of chronology. As has been stated previously, if we are seeking the origin of the ballad type in an epoch truly primitive, we do not find such conditions in the Middle Ages nor at any time in English history. Professional minstrelsy is to the front as far back as we can go in literary records. On the other hand, the artistry found in “*Judas*” offers small help to one who would deduce the ballad type from some well-known medieval form. In so far as I know the contemporaneous literature—I admit my knowledge is limited—“*Judas*” stands apart from its fellows. In spite of its artistry

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1—P. 314. The three early ballads given are *St. Stephen and Herod*, No. 22, 15th century, *Captain Car* (No. 178), and the *Fair Flower of Northumberland* (No. 9), both of the last quarter of the 16th century.

it is not so much like the romances, the *fabliaux*, or church poems as it is like later ballads of the Child type. The artistry may be "improvements" of the recorder.

Early English song material is exceedingly scarce, no matter what type one may be seeking. There are small collections of religious songs in several manuscripts, such as the Vernon and Digby, and there are a very few scattered secular lyrics.<sup>1</sup> The material, however, is surprisingly limited. There is but one truly representative short-poem collection that has reached us in a manuscript earlier than the 15th century. That is found in the Harleian MS. 2253,<sup>2</sup> assigned to the first quarter of the fourteenth century.<sup>3</sup> This is a remarkably varied miscellany of prose and verse, both secular and religious, in Latin, French, and English. Thomas Wright has shown with some probability that the collection was gotten together in the Abbey at Leominster in Herefordshire—he thinks by a secular clerk there.<sup>4</sup> Dr. Bøddeker adds as his opinion that the collector had

1—As for instance, the well-known Cuckoo Song.

2—Most of the English verse was edited by Dr. Karl Bøddeker as "Altenglische Dichtungen des MS. Harleian, 2253, Berlin, 1878. Mit Grammatik and Glossar." Wright published many of the lyrics in his collection of "Lyric Poetry" for the Percy Society, No. 19. He published the political songs in his "Political Songs" for the Camden Society, 1839. Some of the songs and poems in the MS. have often been reprinted.

3—Wright (*Lyric Poetry*, Introduction) assigned the MS. to within or very soon after 1307. Bøddeker placed the date at 1310; Ward, *Catalogue of Romances*, 1447, found a reference in Thomas of Erceleddon's prophecy of the Battle of Bannockburn, 1314, so that that part of the MS. at least must have been written as late as that date. I can see no good reason—certainly none has been adduced—for assigning the writing of the whole MS. to any one year. Percy published two poems from the MS. in his *Reliques*. He was of the opinion that the date was not later than Richard II.

4—Introduction to *Lyrical Poems*, Percy Society.

not spent the best years in a cloister but had been out in the world much in earlier life. At least we may state as reasonably certain that the collector was no recluse, but a man of cultivated worldly tastes and varied interests. His miscellany resembles what in later times would have been known as a "commonplace-book." It begins with a French poetical "Vitae Patrum," a prose "De la Passion Jesu," and other French works of the sort. Then follows a "Praise of a Lady," a "Strife between Summer and Winter," both in French verse; next a number of receipts "Vor te make Cynople," etc.; then a Latin prose, "Vita Sancti Ethelberti II," etc. The first twenty pieces are of no particular interest. No. 21 in the collection is a dramatic account of Christ's Journey to Hell. It is in English, and some would make of it the first English miracle play.<sup>1</sup> But this is the way in which it begins:

"Alle herknep to me non,  
 a strif wolte y tellen on  
 of iesu ant of sathan,  
 þo iesu wes to helle ygan." . . .

The prologue ends:

"In godhed tok he þen way  
 þat to helle gates lay.  
 Þen he com perr þo seide he  
 asse y shal noupe telle þe."

Then follows material in a dramatic form. The "me's" and "y's" are troublesome in this prologue. They seem to indicate that all the parts were taken by the same speaker—a minstrel, shall we call him? The last ten lines, a sort of epilogue, show the same thing. How did he present this material? Dramatically, or as

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1—Cf. Bøddeker's introduction to the poem, p. 270 f.

if it were mere narrative?<sup>1</sup> And more important, where did he get it in the first place? Has he borrowed some miracle play and adapted it to personal recitation? These questions are not so remote from balladry as they may seem. Many a ballad contains the same perplexing union of dramatic and narrative elements. The subject if carried into the realms of balladry, however, is too large to be properly discussed here.<sup>2</sup>

Following this piece in the manuscript there is another dialogue, an English "Debate between the Body and the Soul." Next there is an English satirical song on Richard of Cornwall; then some more French verse on the Battle of Evesham, an English song on the execution of Sir Simon Fraser, and a poem on the luxury of women. No. 27 is an English religious song, "Middelerd for mon wes mad." Then follow three exquisite English lyrics, including "Alysoun." Then follows an English "Lament of the Husbandman." Next comes Marina, an English legend, then some more lyrics, and so on. It would keep us too long to analyse the rest of the manuscript with the same detail. In all, according to Bøddeker's list, there are 116 pieces. Of those that are English, eight are political songs, fourteen secular lyrics, and eighteen religious songs or lyrics. Then, too, besides what we have already men-

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1—Is it material of this sort that led Percy, in the early editions of the *Reliques*, to ascribe dramatic action to minstrels, a statement so harshly attacked by Ritson that it was modified in the fourth edition?

2—Mr. G. M. Miller has made an interesting contribution on "The Dramatic Element in the Popular Ballad," *University of Cincinnati Bulletin*, No. 19. But he has not exhausted the subject, as he himself is perfectly aware. Mr. E. K. Chambers, in "The Medieval Stage," 1, pp. 81-83, says that the "Harrowing of Hell" is not a miracle play, but an *estrif*. He thinks it, like others of its class, "to have been recited by a single minstrel with appropriate changes of gesture and intonation."



tioned, there is in this manuscript the English "Gest of King Horn;" also a minstrel ballad called "Maximion;" and the "Sayings of Hendyng." We thus see that this is a remarkably rich collection. Indeed, it stands among the best of the English miscellanies. For some departments of literature it offers us all that we have for the period. This is notably true of the political songs and the love songs. Some of the latter, in their thoroughly lyric quality, have no equals up to the time of Elizabeth. Perhaps a majority of the pieces in the collection are religious, but the collector's taste was not at all circumscribed by feelings of piety. If we may judge from the list of contents, revised by Bøddeker from the list in the Harleian Catalogue, our collector even liked French tales of ribaldry. "A smutty ballad of a Squire and a Lady's Woman" is one of the titles. And yet in all this widely representative collection there is not a single piece that at all resembles a Child ballad. This seems at first surprising, but a careful weighing of the material shows it is not so very strange a thing after all. This is a literary collection. The pieces vary greatly in merit, but on each is found the literary stamp. The artist or composer is ever prominent. Ballads of the Child type, including the "Judas," seem to belong to quite another world of poetry. Their absence is then not so remarkable that it can create any strong presumption against the prevalence of their type.

But what the collection lacks in Child balladry, it makes up for in specimens of the stall type. It is usual to associate stall productions with the 16th and 17th centuries, with cheap printing and with the decay of minstrelsy. But the Harleian MS. has several pieces with traits that closely resemble typical stall

ballads of the 17th century. It seems evident then that the stall type as a verse form long antedates the invention of printing. The respectability and social status may have changed in later times, but the type after all retained much of its ancient style and its mannerisms. Never did it produce exalted literature.

Two of the Harleian MS. political songs are reprinted in Percy's Reliques. They are a satirical account of "Richard of Almaine," and an elegy "On the Death of King Edward the First."<sup>1</sup> Neither impresses one with extreme age. If the language were modernized a little they might easily pass for stall productions. Compare the beginning of

"Sitteth alle stille, ant herkneth to me;  
The Kyng of Alemaigne, bi mi leaute,  
Thritti thousent pound askede he  
For te make pees in the countre,  
Ant so he dude more.

(Refr.) Richard, thah thou be ever trichard,  
Trichthen shalt thou never more,"

with the beginning of the stall "Cooper of Norfolk:"

"Attend, my Masters, and listen well  
Unto this my Ditty, which briefly doth tell  
Of a fine merry Iest which in Norfolk befell.  
A brave lusty Cooper in that Countie did dwell,  
And there he cry'd, Work for a Cooper;  
Maids, ha' ye any work for a Cooper?"<sup>2</sup>

As for the elegy, that surely does not stand apart. It is in the common four-beat abababab meter, and it does not differ much in sentiment from numerous later stall laments.

But other pieces have affinities with the stall type.

1—Both were originally published in volume two. I have used the 2-vol. edition of J. V. Pritchard, reprinted by Crowell, N. Y., pp. 144, 146.

2—Chappell, Roxburghe Ballads, 1, p. 99.

The "Debate between the Body and Soul" suggests the later debate between "Death and the Lady."<sup>1</sup> One piece commences "Lystneth, lordynges, a newe song ichulle bigynne." Many a stall ballad advertises that it is "new." If one thinks the old songs were so much better than the stall ballads as to belong to a different genus, let him read "Maximion," which begins:

Herkne to my ron,  
as ich ou telle con  
of elde al hou yt ges;  
of a mody mon,  
highte maximion,  
soþ wiþ oute les.  
Clerk he was ful god,  
so monimen vnderstod,  
nou herkne hou it wes; etc.

That author was certainly not inspired.<sup>2</sup> His poem, however, got into the miscellany. Furthermore, we find another peculiarity in the songs of the miscellany that reminds us of later conditions. Just as in late times worldly ballads were made over into "Godly ballads," so, even back at the beginning of the 14th century, worldly songs were made the basis of religious lyrics. Who would suspect from this first stanza,

"When y se blosmes springe,  
ant here foules song,  
a suete lovelongynge,  
myn herte þourh out stong,  
al for a loue newe,  
þat is so suete ant truwe,  
þat gladiþ al mi song;  
ich wot al myd iwisse.  
my ioie ant eke my blisse  
on him is al ylong,"

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1—Really it suggests at the beginning, Sir Thopno.

2—See Chappell, *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, pp. 164-168.

or from this third stanza,

“As y rod þis ender day  
by grene wode to seche play  
mid herte y þohte al on a may,  
suetest of alle þinge;  
Lyþe, and ich ou telle, may  
all of þat suete þinge.”

that the songs were to celebrate Christ and Mary?

Though there is not material enough to permit one to be dogmatic in opinions, all the facts that can be got together seem to show with fair clearness that the art of printing brought about no immediate revolution in the literary form of the song and ballad. We have every reason to suppose that long before the day of broadsides there were ballad-singers, and their effusions were not much better and not much worse than those of later date.<sup>1</sup> There were certainly street singers. The story in the Vernon MS. of the Child slain by the Jews makes that clear. To be sure the scene there is laid in Paris, but the place is not significant; it is the story that is important.

“þe child non oþer Craftus couþe  
But winne his lyflode wiþ his mouþe.  
þe Childes vois was swete and cler;  
Men lusted his song wiþ riht good cher;  
Wiþ his song þat was ful swete  
He gat Mete from strete to strete.  
Men herked his song ful likyngly:  
Hit was an Antimne of vre lady.  
He song þat Antimne everi-wher.  
I—called Alma Redemptoris Mater.”<sup>2</sup>

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1—The material to be presented for the 15th century will help to establish this point.

2—Minor Poems from Vernon MS., edited by C. Hortsmann, for the Early English Text Society, vol. 1, p. 141.



But this very period is represented by too little material to make theorising of much value.<sup>1</sup> There are at least two other collections—the Digby MS. 86<sup>2</sup> and the Vernon MS.—that offer examples of religious lyrics, but their songs need not detain us. To a certain degree they duplicate but with considerable variations the Harleian MS. we have just been discussing.<sup>3</sup> The variations seem to be due to oral transmission or tradition.

The only other song collection that we need to consider for the 14th century is the group of ten or eleven political ballads written by Lawrence Minot.<sup>4</sup> These are found in a manuscript of the early 15th century, but the songs clearly belong to the middle of the 14th. They are rousing war ballads, celebrating the victories

1—Professor F. M. Padelford, *Cambridge History of English Literature*, vol. II., p. 424 (*Transition English Song Collection*), quotes an early 14th century song from MS. Rawlinson D. 913. The song hardly seems complete and he describes it as a stray leaf. It is arranged in recitative, but he quotes it without repetition. It is plainly suggestive of the folk-song, and it may be part of one, even of a ballad. It does not tell any story nor suggest one directly, but that may be because it is a fragment, or it may not be.

“Maiden in the moor lay / Seven nights full and a day.

Well, what was her meet?” / The primrose and the violet.”

“Well, what was her dryng?” / The chill water of (the) well  
spring.”

“Well, what was her bower?” / The rede rose and the lilly  
flower.”

2—Some of the Digby MS. songs are printed in vol. 2 of the *E. E. T. S.* vol. just mentioned.

3—Böddeker, *Altenglische Dichtung*, p. vii, f., discusses the relations of the Harleian MS. 2253 to the Digby MS. 86, etc. In the *E. E. T. S.* vol., *Minor Poems of the Vernon MS.* songs in that MS., which are also in the Harleian 2253, etc., are given in parallel columns. See vol. II., p. 449, “*Suete Ihesu, king of blysse*, II, p. 451, *Ihesu, suete is þe loue of þe*,” . . . etc.

4—Poems were edited by Thomas Wright in his “*Political Songs*,” *Roll Series*, 1859, pp. 58 ff. He gives there a brief note of introduction. They have several times been printed at least in part.

of Edward III. Nothing is known of their author except his name and that he gave us himself in his poems. He is supposed to have been a professional songwriter,—“ein Spielmann, der auf dem Wege ist, Minstrel zu werden”<sup>1</sup> is the way Ten Brink describes him. He certainly showed power and he handled a variety of meters with much tunefulness. His work, however, does not in the least resemble the Child type of ballad. The affinities are all with professional stall songs of the best sort. Perhaps of later stall writers he may remind one of Thomas Deloney<sup>2</sup> and his ballads of 1588. He was a more skillful writer, though probably not so versatile. But whatever praise we may give to Minot, and some has been justly given, he remains after all but a professional ballad-writer of the days before the invention of printing.

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1—Geschichte der Englischen Litteratur, 1877, Band I, s. 403 f.

2—More personal and vigorous than Deloney. In these traits he reminds one very strongly of Skelton in his “Ballad of the Scottish King,” lf. 46 f.

## CHAPTER III

### *Ballad of Outlawry.*

IT is in text B<sup>1</sup> of *Piers Plowman* that we receive our first introduction to the ballad hero Robin Hood. We are assured of his popularity from the start, though it is a popularity that should reflect on him little credit;—<sup>2</sup> for it is Sloth who knew rimes of Robin Hood and of Randolf, Earl of Chester, better than he knew his paternoster. A lazy sponsor may have been too much for the Earl; at least his rimes have entirely disappeared and it is impossible to determine now which of the Randolfs it was.<sup>3</sup> But the woodland outlaw thrived after this introduction, and he has been the most renowned of ballad heroes ever since. Text B, according to Professor Skeat,<sup>4</sup> and

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1—Passus V., ll. 401 f. W. W. Skeat. C text. Passus VIII. ll. 10-11, p. 166 of vol. 1. *The Vision of William Concerning Piers the Plowman*, Clarendon Press, 1886. B text reads:

“I can nouȝte perfytly my pater-noster . as þe prest it syngeth,  
But I can rymes of Robin hood . and Randolf erle of Chestre,  
As neither of owre lorde ne of owre lady. þe leste þat euere was  
made.”

The C text is essentially the same, though not identically. It is not in A text.

2—A large part of the references to Robin Hood show contempt for him. I have not made enough out of that in my treatment.

3—The rimes might have been about either Randolf II. or III. The first lived in the time of Stephen, and the second in the days of Richard I. Dr. W. H. Clawson, in an unpublished thesis in the Harvard library, the *Robin Hood Ballads*, discusses the probabilities without arriving at any convincing conclusions. According to his statement the majority of opinions favor Randolf III., including Ritson, Hales, and Skeat. Only Wright favors Randolf II. Dr. Clawson believes the two may have got mixed in tradition. Professor Gummere also suggests that possibility. All is conjecture, however.

4—*Piers the Plowman*, Clarendon Press, 3 texts, vol. 2, p. XII.

Professor Manly retains the date,<sup>1</sup> was written about 1377. We thus know that Robin Hood material was popular long before the close of the 14th century, but we are treading on rather dangerous ground if we try to claim much for the hero before the known date. Robin Hood is no humanized Odin,<sup>2</sup> and if he ever were a real person, a not improbable supposition,<sup>3</sup> he was not of sufficient importance to have his name recorded in authentic history.<sup>4</sup> As we know him, "Robin Hood is absolutely a creation of the ballad-muse." He is several times mentioned in the 15th century,<sup>5</sup> but "the

1—"Piers the Plowman" and its Sequence, chapter 1, of vol. II. of the Cambridge History of English Literature, 1908, p. 26.

2—Professor Child, *Ballads*, vol. III, p. 47 f., discusses the evidence for a mythical origin for Robin Hood. His opinion is summed up in the following sentence (p. 48): "I cannot admit that even the shadow of a case has been made out by those who would attach a mythical character either to Robin Hood or the outlaws of Inglewood, "Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough, and William of Cloudesly."

3—This is Dr. Clawson's view and Professor Gummere's and Professor Hale's, *Introduction to Robin Hood Ballads*, p. 5 of vol. X, of the *Percy Folio MS.*, 1867. There is nothing inconsistent between it and Professor Child's statement that "Robin Hood is absolutely a creation of the ballad-muse" if we but make sensible proviso, "as we know him."

4—Various ingenious attempts have been made to identify him with known personages, as Professor Child points out (v. 3, p. 43 n.). Professor Child refers to Lieutenant-Colonel Prideaux's suggestion that Robin Hood may have been borrowed from Fulk Fitz-Warine (n. and 2, 7th series, II, 421 ff.). Professor Child comments, "Undoubtedly this might be, but both may have been borrowed from the common stock of tradition." Dr. Clawson handles the work of Prideaux at greater length, and shows that the Colonel makes many far-fetched identifications. His conclusion is even less favorable than Professor Child's. Hunter's views in "The Ballad-Hero Robin Hood" are discussed at pp. 43 and 55 f. Professor Child says that Hunter "could have identified Picrogromitus and Quinapalus, if he had given his mind to it." Child shows the absurdity of a part of Hunter's conclusion that Robin Hood was one of the "vadlets, porteurs of King Edward II. receiving 3d. a day for his service."

5—Child mentions nine or ten references to Robin Hood in the 15th century.



only two early historians<sup>1</sup> who speak of him as a ballad hero (Bower, writing 1441-47, and Major, born ca. 1450) pretend to have no information about him except what they derive from ballads,<sup>2</sup> and show that they have none other by the description they give of him; this description being in entire conformity with ballads in our possession, one of which is found in a manuscript as old as the older of these two writers.

“Robin Hood is a yeoman, outlawed for reasons not given, but easily surmised, courteous and free, religious in sentiment, and above all reverent of the Virgin, for the love of whom he is respectful to all women. He lives by the king’s deer (though he loves no man in the world so much as his king) and by levies on the superfluity of the higher orders, secular and spiritual, bishops and archbishops, abbots, bold barons, and knights, but harms no husbandman or yeoman, and is friendly to poor men generally, imparting to them of what he takes from the rich. Courtesy, good temper, liberality and manliness are his chief marks; for courtesy and good temper he is a popular Gawein. Yeoman as he is, he has a kind of royal dignity, a princely grace, and a gentleman-like refinement of humor. This is the Robin Hood of the Gest especially;

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1—All this quoted material is taken directly from Professor Child, as presented, however, in the Sargent and Kittredge one-volume edition of the English and Scottish Popular Ballads, 1904. Much more proof is presented wherever needful in Professor Child’s complete work.

2—Professor Gayley (Representative Comedies, p. XI), however, says: “With all deference to the best of authorities, Professor Child, I cannot but think that when Bower wrote . . . of the popular ‘comedies and tragedies’ of Robertus Hode et Littill Johanne,” he had reference to acted plays, since he took the pains to specify in his account of them the *mimi*, as well as the *bardani* who chanted them.”

the late ballads debase this primary conception in various ways and degrees."

Such is Professor Child's characterization. Robin Hood is a typical outlaw, though probably not the first of whom ballads were sung. But whether any of the earlier heroes were celebrated in ballads of the Child type is entirely a matter of conjecture. In the Harleian MS. 2253, of which we have already said so much, there is an outlaw poem in French, which though it lacks entirely the "popular" note, has certain lines and sentiments that may suggest the existence of the outlaw type of ballad.<sup>1</sup> It is no fanciful tale of the delights of the woodland, but an attack on the laws of the time. If these do not change, men will become robbers who were never so before. If a man is a good companion and knows archery his neighbors will say, "This man belongs to a company to go hunt and do other folly." The author is an outlaw who has served his king in peace and war. He invites all who are indicted to come to the greenwood of Beauregard. It is better to dwell with him in the wood, than to lie cast in the bishop's prison. The poem claims to have been written on parchment and left in the highway that people might find it. It contains one or two woodland pictures<sup>2</sup> sug-

1—Wright, *The Political Songs of England from the reign of John to that of Edward II.* Camden Society, 1839, pp. 231 ff. It is entitled there, "The Outlaw's Song of Traillebaston." The date 1307 has been assigned to it. It is on folio 113 of the MS

2—

"Cest rym fust fet al bois desouz un lorer,  
 La chaunte merle, russinole, e cyre l'esperver;  
 Eserit estoit en parchemyn pur mout remembrer,  
 E gitté en haut chemyn, qe um le dust trover.  
 Pur ce me tendroi autre bois sur le jolyf umbray;  
 La n'y a fauceté ne nulle male lay;  
 En le bois de Belregard, on vole le jay,  
 E chaunte russinole touz jours sant delay."

gestive of the openings of some of the Robin Hood ballads, but they are merely suggestive, and the woodland description is also to be found in romances, notably the Auchinleck version of Merlin.<sup>1</sup>

Outlaw material of one sort or another is very common in the Middle Ages and has been given considerable scholarly treatment. The last to make a thorough investigation is Dr. W. H. Clawson,<sup>2</sup> who has embodied his results in an unpublished thesis in the Harvard Library. He has treated Hereward, Edric, Waltheof, Eustace the Monk, Fulk Fitz-Warine, the second and third Randolfs, Earls of Chester, Sir William Wallace, besides the early outlaw ballads and the pseudo-ballad "The Tale of Gamelyn." He has shown the simi-

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1—Professor Child has noted the similarity of the beginning of the French prose romance of Fulk Fitz-Warine, to the woodland beginnings in Robin Hood ballads. Child, *Robin Hood and Monk*, III, p. 95. For the Arthur and Merlin, I first noted the trait in the quotations in Ellis's *Early English Metrical Romances*, Bohn edition, pp. 107, 115 ff. Ellis divides the poem into cantos with these descriptions as openings. Kölbing, in his edition of the poem (*Arthour and Merlin*, Leipzig, 1890), makes no such canto division. His line numbers are 3059 f., 4199 f., 4675 f., 5349 f., 6595 f., 7397 f., 7619 f., 8657 f. Here are two openings as quoted in Ellis:

"Mirie it is in time of June,  
When fenil hangeth abroad in toun;  
Violet, and rose flower,  
Woneth then in maiden's bower.  
The sonne is hot, the day is long.  
Foulis maketh miri song.  
King Arthour bar coroun  
In Cardoile that noble town."

Canto II. (l. 3059 f.).

"Miri is th' entré of May;  
The fowles make mirie play;  
Maidens singeth, and maketh play;  
The time is hot, and long the day,  
The jolif nightingale singeth,  
In the grene mede flowers springeth."

(Canto IV. (l. 4675 f.).

2—Robin Hood Ballads, 1907, Harvard Doctorate Thesis.

larities of all this to Robin Hood material. The parallels are in some cases or in some incidents remarkably close,<sup>1</sup> but in spite of that fact, and in spite of the extensiveness of the evidence, unless one wishes to grant that the Robin Hood ballads are a product of minstrelsy—a not impossible supposition<sup>2</sup>—it is hard to see that Dr. Clawson has presented a single indubitable proof that any of these heroes were sung in ballads of the Child type. Many of them were celebrated in songs or poems of some kind. Hereward had his exploits sung at the cross-roads in the days of Ingulf of Croyland,<sup>3</sup> but that plainly suggests that it was the minstrel who did the singing. And the suggestion weakens what would otherwise be the force of another statement in the same forged chronicle, that “women and maidens sang in their dance”<sup>4</sup> these exploits.

Professor Gummere, treating nearly the same list of warrior heroes, shows conclusively how almost impos-

1—Cf. Hereward's disguise as a potter, Clawson, pp. 25 and 45. There is also a potter episode in Eustace, as Dr. Clawson points out. Also see Clawson, p. 65, for the habit of Eustace of robbing only those who lied about the amount of money they had. Compare the Gest, sts. 40 f. and 243 f. Dr. Clawson has treated the parallels extensively. I think he has overworked his subject. I cannot see that he has proved anything beyond what Professor Child did. The emphasis on noble birth, strength of the hero, the use of disguise, similarity in woodland dinners, visits of an outlaw to a hostile town, robbing of convoys, the perfect discipline, etc. may easily be too strong. Such matter does not prove much.

2—Professor Child (III, 49) says that “The Gest is a popular epic, composed of several ballads, by a poet of a thoroughly congenial spirit.” But it is not necessary to suppose all minstrels were alike, and some in the remoter districts may have been thoroughly under popular influence. I cannot see that communal composition, in the sense that the throng has taken part to make the ballad, can be claimed for any of the Robin Hood material as we have it.

3—Clawson, p. 8. His authority is the false Ingulf's *Historia Croylandensis* in Gale's *Rerum Anglicorum Scriptores*, vol. 1, p. 68.

4—Clawson, p. 14. These facts also mentioned by Professor Gummere, *Popular Ballad*, p. 47.



sible it is to infer anything about the nature of these songs. "Minstrels," he says,<sup>1</sup> "are not a remote conjecture for some cases. Randolf is actually said to have been rescued by a 'rabble of minstrels,' to have given them privileges, and to have been sung by them. Waltheof, contemporary with Hereward as well as with Eadric the Wild, was sung, says Freeman,<sup>2</sup> 'in the warlike songs of the tongues of both his parents'; but one of these songs is preserved and is plainly by a minstrel, a scald, with no trace of the popular ballad about it. The account of Waltheof's doughty deeds at York given by William of Malmesbury, a fine bit of description, Freeman thinks to be plainly 'taken from a ballad.' What sort of a ballad? Henry of Huntingdon takes an account of the battles of Brunanburh from a 'ballad,' too; but the source in this case is easily recognized as that fine battle-poem in the Chronicle, and is no ballad at all."

It is the possibility of minstrel songs and even of romances that renders doubtful many of the conclusions of Dr. Clawson. Take the case of Randolf, Earl of Chester, as an example. None of the "rimes" mentioned in "Piers Plowman"<sup>3</sup> have come down to us. We do not even know which earl was meant, for either the second or the third Randolf had a sufficiently heroic life to have been a fit subject for poetic treatment. Perhaps there was a fusion of the two earls, as Dr. Clawson and Professor Gummere both suggest.<sup>4</sup> All

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1—Popular Ballad, p. 50.

2—It must be borne in mind that Freeman had a very much looser conception of the nature of the ballad than Professor Child or Gummere. To him it was merely a narrative song by the popular minstrel. (Norman Conquest, V., pp. 586 ff.)

3—See chapt. 3, p. 73, of this thesis.

4—Clawson, pp. 121-122. Gummere, Popular Ballad, p. 274.

is conjecture. With things in such a state, it is hazardous to affirm as reasonably certain that because in Piers Plowman Robin Hood and Randolf are mentioned together as known in rimes to Sloth, therefore the rimes must have been of the same nature, and therefore there must have been ballads or a ballad cycle about the Earl of Chester. Yet that is the inference. Once again Professor Gummere can help us to an answer, though indirectly. In discussing the rank of the two men he says:<sup>1</sup> "Identifications of the rank of these two, often attempted, is absurd on the face of it; for the cycles differed utterly. Sloth evidently held at command two groups of songs, one of battle and feud, in which the great earl spent his half-century full in the public eye, and one of humbler origin. . . We should say now that Sloth had an equal liking for history and romance." In fact, what proof is there that these rimes were not in themselves mere bits of historic romance? The linking of the names of Robin Hood and Earl Randolf proves nothing more about the nature of the poetic form than it does about the rank. If one but look through a collection of Robin Hood references, such as that found in Ritson's Introduction,<sup>2</sup> he will find that our ballad-hero is often listed with characters quite out of the range of balladry.

1—Popular Ballad, p. 273.

2—Robin Hood, Routledge, 1884. Introduction, Notes and Illustrations, especially note X, p. 69 f. Ritson is not here trying to show what I say the material does show. I think he could have presented a still more formidable list if that had been his intention. For instance, under note A. A. he quotes an old libel upon the priests, entitled, "I playne Piers which cannot flatter," ol. l. n. d., in which there is the following in verse, but printed as prose: "You allow they saye *Legenda aurea*, *Roben Hode*, *Bevys*, and *Gower*, and all bagage be syd, But *gods word* ye may not abyde."

It is a curious fact, perhaps a mere accident, though it hardly seems so, that none of the very early outlaw ballads, which have come to us, deal with historical characters. On the other hand, when historic figures have been the basis of poetic treatment, their stories, where preserved, have been cast largely in the form of romance. No actual ballads of the Child type have come down to us, though we have a number of political songs, such as those in the Harleian MS. 2253,<sup>1</sup> and those of Minot, which are not at all ballad-like. Under these conditions it seems to me unwise to presuppose ballad cycles for any specific historical material. I think Dr. Clawson has gone too far in this direction. Even setting aside the principle, already urged, that identity of subject-matter proves nothing for identity of form, one may suggest that though there are striking parallels between Robin Hood ballads and other outlaw material, there are also striking differences. The early Robin Hood is a yeoman archer, not a knight or noble, and he is entirely unknown to history. He is not opposed to his king, but to the sheriffs and some of the churchmen. Stories about such a hero may well have arisen in an entirely different rank of society from the tales of great lords, outlawed for opposing their sovereign. The similarities between the two types may sometimes be the result of borrowing, and borrowing of ballad from romance. Robin Hood material is not of the kind found in the simple ballad. The Gest is well on the way toward epic and romance. Some of the similarities, on the other hand, may be due to identity of

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1—See chapter 2 for the treatment of this MS. and the songs of Minot. Cf. the song on Richard of Cornwall, quoted in Percy's *Reliques*, as an example.

experience. Outlaw experience naturally tends to repeat itself.

Stories of adventure were very popular in the Middle Ages, just as they have been ever since. With so many in existence it is no wonder if they influenced one another and tended to fix certain type ideals. In order to make a sympathetic appeal there were some things, for instance, that every heroic outlaw ought to be and do. The story ought to make him an exponent of the class that was to hear about him. He ought to have engaging personal traits. He ought to have certain typical adventures. He ought to be able to win renown for himself and at last be recognized and accepted by the king. All of this is abundantly illustrated in Dr. Clawson's collections. The material is largely romance. Without doubt Robin Hood was directly influenced by some of this stock of traditions, and as time passed became more and more so. The influence of romance can be seen by comparing early and late ballads of this hero. For example, it must be remembered that it is only in late ballads that Robin is made of noble birth, is made to fall in love or is made to have marvelous adventures. All of this may easily be due to romance accretions. Furthermore, it is not necessary to suppose that it is merely outlaw material that has thus exerted an influence. Some of the traits common to the Robin Hood ballads and to outlaw romances are found in other romances as well. Strength and valor in the hero are practically universal. In fact, Robin Hood is hardly strong and valorous enough. Robin Hood meeting his match, rehearsed again and again in later ballads, is also the story of the first part of Robin Hood and the Potter (121), next to the oldest Robin Hood ballad that has survived. To me



this seems a plebeian trait and may well have been original.<sup>1</sup> Also, the disguise expedient is not in the least distinctive of outlaw material. Bevis of Hampton,<sup>2</sup> for instance, often uses disguises. Again, near the beginning of the Auchinleck Merlin,<sup>3</sup> that wizard amuses himself by assuming three disguises in immediate succession. And perhaps it may be well to suggest that even today in detective stories, both villains and heroes frequently disguise themselves and even venture into the presence of their enemies.<sup>4</sup> Disguise is not peculiar to any type of literature nor to any age. Several other correspondences pointed out by Dr. Clawson are likewise not peculiar to outlaw ballads nor even to the general field of romances. Vague correspondences in woodland dinners mean nothing,<sup>5</sup> nor secret

1—It seems to me it is not so much the princely qualities of Robin Hood that should be emphasized, but rather his qualities of good-fellowship, give and take.

2—Using the summary in Ellis's *Early English Metrical Romances*, Bohn edition, 1848, disguise is used at least the following number of times: P. 260, B. exchanged clothes with a palmer; p. 275, Josyan disguises herself with an ointment; p. 276, Sir Saber as a pilgrim; p. 278, B. put on the armour of his adversary. There are other similarities in this romance to ballad plots. Compare the childbirth in the woods, p. 273.

3—Hardly the beginning: ll. 1977-1985.

4—Melodramas illustrate the same thing.

5—P. 154. Dr. Clawson treating Sir William Wallace says: "The attack and plunder of a convoy is one of the most characteristic exploits of the outlaw." Instances in the case of Fulk Fitz-Warine and Robin Hood have been already noted and the resemblances between them indicated. This adventure of Wallace agrees with them in that a well-guarded train of valuable baggage is stopped by an inferior force, and after the defeat of the guard is plundered in a forest. In each case a dinner in the woods follows the robbery. (Why not?) P. 155: If further proof of Wallace's outlaw character were needed it would be furnished by his skill at the bow, his love of good venison, and his dinners with his men in the greenwood. Dr. Clawson here draws a parallel between a dinner in Wallace and in Robin Hood. The correspondences are not close, and may be entirely the result of the limited range of possibilities.

visits to hostile towns. Modern picnics are tediously alike, and even outlaws have to get the supplies of civilization once in a while. Nor was there anything strange about the fact that a few of Robin Hood's band held up a large convoy; today it requires no more than two real bandits, or even one, to hold up an entire train.

As to the early popularity of the various heroes of the Robin Hood cycle, it must have been great,—if we are to judge at all from the numerous references found in both the 15th and 16th centuries.<sup>1</sup> No other ballad names can for a moment compare in frequency. Robin Hood is mentioned a dozen times in the 15th century<sup>2</sup> and very often indeed in the 16th. Yet the number of early versions of the ballads that have survived to us is astonishingly small. Besides the *Gest*, for which there are several early prints, there are but two Robin Hood ballads that date in the form we have them, before the 17th century.<sup>3</sup> These are "Robin Hood and

1—Child, III, 46. "That ballads about Robin Hood were familiar throughout England and Scotland we know from very early testimony. Additional evidence of his celebrity is afforded by the connection of his name with a variety of natural objects and archaic remains over a wide extent of country." There is much material mentioned.

2—Professor Child cites almost that many references, and there are a few other unimportant references, such as two in vol. I of the *Reliquiae Antiquae*, pp. 81 and 84, both burlesques. "The sow sate on hye benke, and harpyd Robyn Howde." "How Reynall and Robyn-Hod runnon at the gleyve."

3—Professor Child (vol. III, p. 42) states in a summary the principal facts. In his list of ballads in a comparatively ancient form, he pays no attention to actual chronology, believing some of those in the *Percy Folio MS.* to be actually older in form than the *Potter*, No. 121. In this he was of course entirely justified. The date at which a ballad was taken down proves nothing except the latest date possible for the composition. Some of the Robin Hood ballads in the *Percy Folio*, 1650 (such as *Guy of Gisborne*), are precisely in the manner and style of the Robin Hood and the Monk of 1450.

the Monk" (119), found in a fragmentary state in two different manuscripts of about 1450, and "Robin Hood and the Potter" (121), found in another manuscript of about 1500. Many of the best specimens of the cycle, sometimes in unique versions, are found in the Percy Folio, which dates well along in the 17th century. Most of the other versions are from late broadsides, garlands and chapbooks. Practically none of the versions have been taken down from modern tradition; the few exceptions are doubtful.<sup>1</sup> Also, none of the ballads in the shape we have them can be claimed for communal composition. All show the hands of authors or editors, and in one or two cases we have even the name. The "True Tale of Robin Hood" (Child, 154)<sup>2</sup> was written by Martin Parker, and the "Foolish Ditty," as Mr. Child calls it, of "Robin Hood and Maid Marion" (150),<sup>3</sup> was signed by one S. S. Such pieces as the latter, however, are not to be thought of as traditional ballads. They are out-and-out stall productions, made expressly for the ballad press. Professor Child has recognized two ages for the Robin Hood cycle,<sup>4</sup> the "golden" and the "iron or cast-iron age." Unfortunately, too many of the surviving ballads represent the latter.<sup>5</sup>

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1—Cf. the introductions to Nos. 132, 134, 135, 138, 140, 144, in the Child Collection.

2—Child, vol. III, 227 f.

3—Child, vol. III, 218 f.

4—Child, vol. III, 159. He has also recognized two cycles, with reference to place: Barnsdale and Sherwood. The two are confused in the Gest. See Child, III, p. 51.

5—E. K. Chambers seems to place all Robin Hood ballads under the latter category. "The extant Robin Hood ballads are certainly not carols; they are probably not folk-song at all, but minstrelsy of a somewhat debased type." *Medieval Stage*, vol. I, ch. VIII, p. 178.

But Robin Hood was not only a subject for ballads;<sup>1</sup> his exploits were early made use of as the material for plays. As early as 1473, Sir John Paston<sup>2</sup> complaining of the ingratitude of his servants, mentions one who had promised never to desert him, "and ther uppon," says he, "I have keypyd him thys iii yer to pleye seynt Jorge and Robyn Hod and the shryff of Nottyngham, and now when I wolde have good horse he is goon into Bernysdale, and I without a keeper." It is not improbable that we have a fragment of this very Robin Hood play.<sup>3</sup> It is crude, and of a different meter from any of the ballads of the cycle. The material without much doubt is the same as that in Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne (118), though the name of the latter is not mentioned. Two other early Robin Hood plays are printed at the end of Copland's edition of the Gest (ca. 1550).<sup>4</sup> These are founded on "Robin Hood and the Potter" (121) and on "Robin Hood and the Curtal Friar" (123). In neither does the outlaw act an heroic part. In the first he is especially ignominious, for he

1—The Robin Hood idea had marvelous attracting power. The name was surely one to conjure with. Interesting evidences of the power of the name to bring outside material into the cycle is to be seen in the following: The story of "Erlington" in version (Child, No. 8, vol. I) has been made into a Robin Hood ballad. In Munday and Chettles Downfall of Robert, Earl of Huntington, besides other material there is what seems to be a clear reference to the Friar in the Well as a Robin Hood story: "For merry ieasts, they have been showne before, / as how the Friar fell into the Well, / for love of Jinny that faire bonny belle," etc.

2—The words of Paston here quoted from Ritson, Robin Hood, p. 96.

3—The play is quoted in Child III, p. 90 f., also in Manly's Specimens of Pre-Shakespearian Drama, I, 279 f. The original was formerly among Sir John Fenn's papers. He was the early editor of the Paston Letters. He may therefore have got this sheet from Paston's papers.

4—Both reprinted in Child III, p. 127 f. and 114. Also in Manly, p. 281 f.



is made to pick his quarrel not with the Potter but with the Potter's boy. Both pieces show the changes in plot and meter from the companion ballads. Each, however, is much more ballad-like than the first dramatic fragment mentioned. Perhaps all these plays were intended for acting at the May games. At least Robin Hood became a stock figure in these popular entertainments by the first half of the 16th century.<sup>1</sup> He even got connected with the Morris-dance and with Maid Marion.<sup>2</sup>

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1—Cf. Child III, pp. 44 f. Ritson had much to say about the subject. See his *Robin Hood*, notes and illustrations, E. E.

2—Mr. E. K. Chambers, in his *Medieval Stage* (Oxford, 1903), vol. I, chapt. VIII, p. 175 f., discusses this phase of the subject. He explains how in his opinion, Robin Hood and Maid Marion became connected in balladry. He says: "It is noticeable that whereas in the May-games Robin and Maid Marion are inseparable, in the early ballads Maid Marion has no part. She is barely mentioned in one or two of the latest ones. Moreover, Marion is not an English but a French name; and we have already seen that Robin and Marion are the typical sheperd and sheperdess of the *pastourelles* and of Adam de la Hale's dramatic *jeu* founded on these. I suggest, then, that the names were introduced by the minstrels into English and transferred from the French *Fêtes du mai* to the 'lord' and 'lady' of the corresponding English May-games. Robin Hood grew up independently from heroic *cantilena*, but owing to the similarity of name he was identified with the other Robin, and brought Little Jack, Friar Tuck and the rest with him into the May-games. On the other hand, Maid Marion, who does not properly belong to heroic legend, was in turn naturally enough adopted into the later ballads." A long list of songs and of references to "Robin," not the ballad hero, could be made up, ranging from Chaucer on. Not every Robin was Robin Hood. There was thus much opportunity for confusion. Cf. Chaucer *Troilus* V, l. 1174:

"From hazel-wode, ther Joly Robin pleyde,  
Shal come al that thou abydest here;  
Ye, fare-wel al the snow of ferne yere!"

This speech of Pandarus is explained by Skeat in his note to the passage as a jocular form of expressing unlikelihood. He says there is evidently a reference to some popular song or saying. He cites the *Romaunt of the Rose* 7455, as containing an allusion to a joly Robin who was a gay dancér and a minstrel, and the exact opposite of a Jacobin Friar. In the *Romaunt* passages Joly Robin

Toward the end of the 16th century Robin Hood entered the literary drama. Ritson has printed extracts and synopses of several plays in which he figured, as well as the names of a number of later operas in which

seems to be the name of a dance or character in a dance; Skeat makes it a character in a rustic dance:

"That he, the whylom was so gay,  
And of the daunce Joly Robin,  
Was tho become a Jacobin."

In "King Edward III and the Shepperd" in a MS. dating about 1450 (Ff. 5. 48b., Cambridge University Library), the king in reply to the shepperd gives to himself the name of Joly Robin. In "King Edward and the Hermit," a story of about the same type and age, the king goes to Sherwood forest to hunt. The same is true for "King Henry II and the Miller of Mansfield."

"Joly Robin" poems are very common in the 16th century. The clown in Twelfth Night (Act IV, sc. 2) sings of a "jolly Robin" whose lady "loves another." And Ophelia sang "bonny sweet Robin is all my joy." These songs are found elsewhere. There are two versions of the music in William Ballet's Lute Book, one entitled "Robin is to the greenwood gone," and the "Robin Hood is to the greenwood gone."

There is a reference to "Joly Robyn lend to me the bowe," in Harleian MS. 7578. This is of the time of Elizabeth, but in Bassus, 1530, there is a reference in a medley, "blow my horne behynde cū blow. A torne agayne robyn and bende on thy bow wt toone ageyne Robyne and bend on thy bow." (See Flügel's Anglia XII, 589 f. (?), 597.)

In Jonson's Sad Sheperd, Robin Hood is referred to at the beginning of the second act as "the jolly Robin."

Robin Hood may be mixed up with some of the songs, but not all. Cotgrave in his *dictionnaire* of 1611 defines *Chanson de Robin* as a "merrie and extemporall song, or fashion of singing, whereto one is ever adding somewhat, or may at pleasure, what he list." This is for France, of course, but it fits very well what we might suppose an English communal ballad might be.

As for Lyttell John, he gives his name to a "book of courtesy." See vol. III of Early English Text Society, Extra Series. Probably no connection with the ballad Little John.

Another Robert than our hero seems to be referred to in numerous passages about "Robertes men," that have come to us from the 14th century. There is a reference in text A of Piers Plowman:

"Bidders and Beggars faste aboute eoden, / Til heor Bagges & heore Balies, weren [bratful] I crommet; / Feyneden hem for

he was given a rôle.<sup>1</sup> While some of this material affected the stall tradition and changed over the characteristics of the hero somewhat, the changes are not of enough importance to traditional balladry to warrant discussion here.

We have said much about the popularity of the Robin Hood ballads, but from the very beginning there were many people, especially of the graver sort, who heartily despised them. Thus the author of the *Piers Plowman* passage is clearly not in sympathy with the outlaw hero, and from that reference on down through the centuries a large proportion of the notices are either hostile to the far-famed Robin or at least they make

heore foode fouzten atte alle; / In Glotonye, God wot, gon heo to Bedde, / And ryseth vp wip ribaudye pis Roberdes knaues:” Prof. Skeat, ll. 40 ff. Skeat in his separate edition of text B for the Clarendon Press, 1888, has this note to the passage: “Compare ‘And ryght as Robertes men raken (wander) aboute,

At feires & at ful ales & fyllen the cuppe.’ *Piers Plowmans Crede*, l. 72.

“Robartes men, or Roberdsmen, were a set of lawless vagabonds, notorious for their outrages when *Piers Plowman* was written. The statute of Edward III (Annual Register 5 c, XIV) specifies “divers manslaughters, felonies, and robberies, done by people that he called *Roberdesmen*, *Wastours*, and *drawlatches*,” and the statutes of Richard II (An. Reg. -7, c. V) ordains, that the statute of King Edward concerning *Roberdesmen*, and *drawlacches* should be vigorously observed. Sir Edward Coke (Instit. III, 197) supposes them to have been originally the followers of *Robin Hood* in the reign of Richard I. See Blackstone’s Comm. bk. IV, ch. 17, Warton’s Hist. of English Poetry, vol. II, p. 95, ed. 1840. William of Nassyghton says that they tried the latches of people’s doors, contrived to get into houses, and then extorted money, either by some lying tale or playing the bully.”

In the 5th Passus, the same Passus that contains in text B the Robin Hood reference, there is an account of “Robert the robber,” ll. 469 ff. If there is any connection between these Roberts and Robin Hood I should be inclined to think the Robin Hood the suggesting power, but that is mere conjecture.

1—Robin Hood, Note W, pp. 45 ff. Compare also Child III, p. 46.

light of him.<sup>1</sup> Ritson quotes a great deal of material that illustrates this other side.<sup>2</sup> Robin Hood also very

1—In the "Image of Ypocresye," 1533, (Ball. Soc. Ballads from MS. 1, pp. 181 ff.,) there occurs an interesting reference at ll. 1530 ff., which shows a love of the clergy for the hero, and also that the stories were then felt to be as old as Noah's flood. The author says against preachers:

Thus these systmatickes (1522)  
 And lomsy lunatickes  
 With spurres and pricketes  
 Call true men heretickes.  
 They finger ther fides,  
 And cry in quynibles,  
 "Away these bibles  
 For they be but ridles!  
 And give hem robyn whode, (1530)  
 To red howe he stode  
 In mery grene wode,  
 When he gathered gode  
 Before noyes fflode!"

Also in Ray and Barlowe's *Red me and be nott wrothe* (Strasburg, 1528, Arber Reprint) there is a similar kind of allusion. In a brief dialogue between the priest's two servants Watkyn and Jeffraye there is a discussion of the Mass "with its abominable ministers," Popes, Cardinals, Bishops, etc. Toward the end of the 1st part Jeffrey speaks of the restraints the bishops try to impose upon reading:

"Wherefore they have now restrayned  
 Under the payne of courssynge  
 That no laye man do rede or loke  
 In eny frutfull englisshe boke  
 Wholy scripture concernynge.  
 Their frantyke foly is so pevissh  
 That they contempne in Englisshe  
 To have the newe Testament.  
 But as for tales of Robyn hode  
 With wowther jestes nether honest nor goode  
 They have none impediment.  
 Their madde unsavery teachynges  
 And theyr fantasticall preachynges  
 Among simple folk to promote,  
 For no cost they spare nor stynte  
 Openly to put them in prynte  
 Treadynge scripture under their fote."

Alex. Barclay also has material showing what a favorite Robin Hood was with the clergy; cf. *Shyp of Folyes*, Janison's ed. Edinburgh 1874, I, 71-74. In II, 153-157, we are told that even the priests in the choir during divine service could not resist the temptation to tell each other of the exploits of Robin Hood.

2—Robin Hood, Introduction, passim.



early got into burlesque medleys without point or sense, and continued in them, and is there often found in literary company passing strange. The *Reliquiae Antiquae*<sup>1</sup> contains at least two such pieces from a 15th-century manuscript in the Advocates Library in Edinburgh. In both alliteration plays a conspicuous part, in one almost to the exclusion of rime. They read in immediate context:

“The breme went rownd abowte, and lette hom all  
blode;  
The sow sate on hye benke, and harpyd Robyn Howde.”

And

“Kene men of combur comen belyve,  
For to mote of mychewhat more than a lytull,  
How Reynall<sup>2</sup> and Robyn-Hod runnon at the gleyve.”

The *Reliquiae Antiquae* contains a medley from the early 16th century that is just about as edifying:<sup>3</sup>

“Robyne is gone to Hu[n]tyngton,  
To bye our gose a flayle;  
Lyke Spip, my yongest son,  
Was huntyng of a snalle.  
Newes! newes!”

The medley toward the end of the “Interlude of the

1—*Reliquiae Antiquae*, Scraps from Ancient Manuscripts, edited by Thomas Wright and J. O. Halliwell, 2 volumes, 1845. Vol. I, pp. 81 and 84. From MS. Jac. V, 7, 27.

2—Reynold is mentioned in the Gest, as the assumed name of Little John, Third Fit; also as the name of a separate outlaw in the Fifth Fit, st. 293.

3—Vol. I, p. 239. MS. Cotton Vespas, A. XXV. fol. 135 temp. Henry VIII. The reference to Huntington is interesting because Robin in the last part of the 16th century was supposed to have been the Earl of Huntington.

Four Elements" has frequently been referred to and quoted for its beginning line:<sup>1</sup>

“Robyn Hode in Barnysdale stode  
And lent hym tyl a mapyll thystyll;  
Then cam our lady and swete saynt Andrewe;  
Slepyst thou, wakyst thou, Geffrey Coke?” etc.

These lines echo the Gest, though they do not quote it. They are not, however, sober enough to warrant the belief in any lost ballad or even in any variant of what we have. They are merely early examples of the dregs of song material. Robin Hood, at once extremely popular and much despised, was just the right sort of figure to be introduced and lightly handled in that sort of trash.<sup>2</sup>

In this chapter we are not interested in any sort of ballad material except that dealing with outlawry, and besides Robin Hood and his companions, the only other early ballad outlaws are the three who jointly give their names to the miniature “gest” of “Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough, and William of Cloudesly” (Child, 116). Of course “Robyn and Gandeleyne”<sup>3</sup> have been branded as outlaws too, but merely for the sake of getting them into more famous company. Of course the name Robyn in Robin and Gandeleyne is somewhat like Gamelyn, but that is the only evidence against them. We are distinctly told they were not strong thieves,<sup>4</sup> and that the deer Robin shot was not marked. They were no more

1—Ritson, *Robin Hood*, note X, pp. 76, 77. Also Percy Society, No. 74, edited by J. O. Halliwell.

2—There are still other such medleys: Bassus (1530), reprinted by Flügel, *Anglia*, XII, 589 f. (See note to Chapt. 3, p. 87 of this thesis.)

3—Child, No. 115.

4—Sts. 2<sup>1</sup> and 4<sup>1</sup>.

outlaws than was Johnie Cock,<sup>1</sup> though they may have been poachers.<sup>2</sup>

The "Adam Bell" ballad has many points of similarity with the Gest of Robin Hood. Neither is a simple ballad, nor made up directly of what Dr. Hart would classify as simple material. Both show considerable epic development as well in plot as in the settings, characterization, and other phases of handling material. For neither have any original simple ballads survived. Both got into print early<sup>3</sup> and have survived to us only in that form.<sup>4</sup> There is similarity also in general point of view, and there is even some parallelism in the material used.<sup>5</sup> More stress in the Adam Bell is laid on town and court and not so much on the greenwood. Also the cult of the Virgin is lacking. Otherwise it would seem that Adam Bell grew up under about the same conditions as the Gest. In geographical situation it belongs to nearly the same part of England,<sup>6</sup> though again no more of an historical basis can be assured for it than for the Robin Hood

1—Child, No. 114.

2—There are numerous Forester poems; cf. Chambers and Sidgwick, *Early English Lyrics*, for their examples. Notice especially No. CXLV, which has parallel questions beginning each stanza. "The King and the Shepherd" and the "King and the Hermit," might well be counted "poacher poems," though not ballad-like in structure.

3—They are the two earliest ballads printed. The Gest goes back to sometime before the beginning of the 16th century, the Adam Bell to two fragments of an edition of John Byddell, London, 1536.

4—Adam Bell is found also in the Percy Folio MS.

5—Professor Child points out resemblances in the Introduction to Adam Bell, No. 116, III, p. 16, and p. 22.

6—Scene laid at Inglewood and Carlisle; that is, the northwest part of England.

cycle.<sup>1</sup> Nor does there seem to be any probability that it has a mythological basis.<sup>2</sup> As we have it the "Adam Bell" seems no more than an interesting story that may have originated before, at the same time, or later than the first Robin Hood ballads. There is nothing to fix the relative date. The "Adam Bell" group was very popular, though if we are to judge from the number of citations, it never had quite so extended a fame as the Robin Hood cycle.<sup>3</sup> Still, that is hardly a fair test. Robin Hood was early used for other literary forms than the ballad. Then, too, a large number of stories clustered about his name. We have no sure evidence for more than one extended tale<sup>4</sup> for the "Adam Bell"

1—Child (III, 21) seems to have effectually disposed of Mr. Hunter's attempt to prove Adam Bell a "genuine personage of history."

2—See Chapt. 3, p. 74, note 6, of this thesis.

3—The following are some of the chief early references: William Dunbar, Sir Thomas Norray, ed. by Schipper, p. 203, stanza V. "Was never wyld Robeine wuder hewch, / Nor zet Roger of Clekkniskleuch, / So bauld a barne as he; / Guy of Gisborne, na Adam Bell, / Na Simones sonne of Inhynefell, / At schot was never so slie." (Schipper suggests that Roger of Clekkniskleuch is possibly to be identified with "Clim of the Cleuch," but I see no compelling reason.) The family of Simones is also mentioned as the name of an old song in Cockerbie Sow, line 314. Inhynefell is Whinfele, a part of Inglewood. See Schipper.

4—Thinking over the references already quoted I think we may be absolutely sure that there were other ballads about these heroes. In the first place, the ballad we have is devoted almost entirely to William of Cloudeley. It is he that is married, he that makes the visit, is captured, and rescued, and it is he that plays the important part in the interview with the king. Clim of the Clough is a very subordinate figure, yet in the literary references it is Clim that gets most frequent mention. Gwalter Lynne, printer, 1550, wished all to read "the true beliefe in Christ and his sacramentes. Not as they haue bene tofore accustomed to reade the fained storyes of Robin-Hode, Clem of the Cloughe, wyth such lyke to passe the tyme wythal," etc. 3 Ritson, p. 77-78. Drayton, sixth eclogue, Ritson, p. 73: "And let us tell of Gawen, or Sir Guy, / Of Robin Hood, or of Old Clem a Clough." There is a reference in Nash Pierce Penilease His Supplication to the Divell, London, 1592, Collier reprint, p. 58, that I have never seen referred



group, though in the numerous references in the ballad sometimes it is one of the heroes and sometimes another that is mentioned. If there was but the one ballad current from the 16th century on, it must have been very popular. The one we have passed through many early editions, the earliest of the year 1536,<sup>1</sup> and it was still frequently reprinted in the 17th and 18th centuries.<sup>2</sup> Such is in brief the general history of the ballad.

We have finished now with the early outlaw ballads, but there remains one other very early poem dealing with outlaws and showing ballad affinities, though not itself a ballad, which deserves very careful attention. It is "The Tale of Gamelyn," found in over a dozen of the Chaucer MSS.<sup>3</sup> It is given as the Cook's Tale in the manuscripts, but not since the days of Tyrwhitt has any scholar believed it to be the work of Chaucer. The opinion of many scholars is that it was perhaps

to and I can make nothing out of it. The author is against drinking. This one vice obscures all virtues. Then—"Clim of the Clough, thou that usest to drinke nothing but scalding lead and sulphur in hell, thou art not so greedie of thy night gear. O! but thou hast a foule swallow if it come once to the carousing of human bloud; but thats but seldome, once in seaven yeare, when theres a great execution, otherwise thou art tide at rack and manger, and drinkst nothing but the *aqua vitae* of vengeance all thy life time. The proverbe gives it forth thou art a knave, and therefore I have more hope thou art some manner of a good fellowe: let mee intreate thee (since thou hast other iniquities inough to circumvent us withall) to wyepe this sinne out of the catalogue of thy subtilties: helpe to blast the vines, and sowre the wines in the cellers and merchant's storehouses."

1—Cf. Child, III, p. 14. Child states that "Seven reprints of the seventeenth century later than *d* (London, 1605) are noted by Mr. W. C. Hazlitt's Handbook, p. 35.

2—Adam Bell was one of the ballads mentioned by Gray in his notes entitled "Observations on English Meter."

3—Miss Hammond names 16 MSS. in her "Chaucer, a Bibliographical Manual," 1908, p. 425. The exact bibliography for all the facts presented are given by Miss Hammond at this place, pp. 425-6.

included among the latter's papers as the raw material to be worked over and assigned to some pilgrim (possibly) to the Squire's Yeoman. However that may be, the poem belongs to an entirely different world from anything in Chaucer; and in one or two of the sections gives us a very popular view of the woodland life. If it was among the Chaucer papers, the text as we have it must come from a manuscript of the 14th century, though it has not directly survived in any of that date. Several points about the story lead one to believe that it must have been put together early. While there is nothing to show that it arose before the individual ballads of Robin Hood, the mention of an unnamed "king of the outlaws" would point to its having taken shape before Robin Hood had acquired a national reputation. In later times the "king" would surely have borne the latter's name. As it is, the poem has nothing to do with the Robin Hood cycle, though there are many points of contact. There is no reason for identifying Gamelyn with Gamwell<sup>1</sup> or Gamble with Gold,<sup>2</sup> nor with still another ballad hero, Gandeleyne.<sup>3</sup> The story for each is different.

"The Tale of Gamelyn" is a right good narrative, and it is not to be wondered at if Chaucer did think of using it as the basis for work of his own. He is not the only one that the plot has attracted. It is good to read as it is, and it has acquired additional fame as being the source of Lodge's *Rosalynde* (1590)<sup>4</sup> and still later as the indirect and perhaps partly direct source

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1—Child, Nos. 149, 128, 129.

2—Child, No. 132.

3—Child, No. 115.

4—Thomas Lodge, *Rosalynde*: Euphues Golden Legacie, Cassell ed.

of Shakespeare's *As You Like It*.<sup>1</sup> The "Tale" is divided into seven rather loose sections, six of which begin with some such call for attention as—

"Litheth and lestneth and herkneth aright  
And ye schulle heere a talking of a doughty knight."

The opening line of two of the sections,

"Litheth and lestneth and holdeth your tonge,"

shows how uncourtly the piece is at times.

The story is as follows: Sir Iohan of Boundys had three sons. At his death the property, quite against his expressed desire, was divided between the elder sons, leaving the youngest, Gamelyn, out of consideration. When the latter grew up he rebelled at the tyranny of his oldest brother, and put the latter and his men to flight. Soft words and flattering promises, however, easily beguiled the youth, and the part ends with him satisfied. The next division (ll. 169-288) gives us the story of a wrestling match in which Gamelyn won a most notable victory. Part three (ll. 289-340) relates how Gamelyn returned home with a host of companions only to be denied entrance by the porter. Gamelyn kicked in the gate, caught the porter, broke his neck and threw him in a well.<sup>2</sup> Then the company feasted for a week on the brother's hoarded wine. In

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1—Zupitza, *Jahrbuch der deutschen Shakspeare Gesellschaft*, XXI, p. 69 f., argues that Shakspeare had as good a chance to know the tale directly as Lodge, and he thinks there are evidences that the dramatist used it directly as well as the *Rosalynde*.

2—This treatment similar to that bestowed on the porter in *Adam Bell*, stanza 65. Dr. Clawson calls attention to this similarity and adds another parallel, from the *Wallace*. *Harry*, V, 1020-23. He notes the situations are different, but thinks "the resemblance may be due to the fact that this was the traditional way for outlaws to treat hostile porters." (P. 184, Thesis.) However, it may be suggested that murderers at the present time often throw their victims' bodies in old wells, pits, and other out-of-the-way places.

the next part (341-550) Gamelyn, again deceived, allowed himself to be fettered to a post in the hall.<sup>1</sup> For two days and nights he had nothing to eat. People were told he was mad. At last, however, Adam Spencer came to his relief and the two executed dire vengeance on a considerable number of various orders of the clergy, who had come to dine at the invitation of the eldest brother. In part five (551-614) Gamelyn and Adam had to fight with the sheriff's men who came to the help of the deceitful brother. The two seeing the number too great for them made their escape to the woods. The sixth part (ll. 615-768) gives us a picture of the outlaw life. Gamelyn was received by the king of the outlaws and made master under him. The former soon afterwards made his peace with the law, upon which Gamelyn himself became head-master. News then reached the outlaws that the oldest brother had been made sheriff and had used his new power to indict Gamelyn and declare him a wolf's-head. The latter, vexed, was as heedless as ever. He visited the next shire-meet and was promptly captured. Sir Ote, however, the second brother, whose name now first appears, came to the rescue and got his release by standing security. In the last section (769-902) Gamelyn returned from the wildwood with his outlaw companions at the right moment to save the neck of Sir Ote,<sup>2</sup> who had been condemned to die in his place.

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1—Dr. Clawson states a parallel from the Wallace where Sir J. Menteith uses a similar device to bind that hero. Harry, XI, 1057 ff. Clawson, p. 184. Several other correspondences to Wallace and other romances are pointed out.

2—Dr. Clawson thinks this episode corresponds in motive to the rescue of Sir Richard at the Lee in the Gest, stanzas 340 f. I must confess I see no very close parallel. Another parallel is that between Gamelyn 826-8, and Robin Hood and the Monk (119) st. 71, 1-2. Clawson, 188. Adam Bell (116) st. 66.



Short work was made of Sheriff, Justice and the jurors. Gamelyn himself held court, condemned them all to be hung, and promptly executed the sentence.<sup>1</sup> Then the band of outlaws made peace with the king;<sup>2</sup> the latter loved Sir Ote and made him Justice. Gamelyn became Chief Justice of all his free forest, and the rest of the band were likewise rewarded with good positions. In course of time Gamelyn married, and later died, and so shall we all:

“God bringe us to the Ioye that ever shall be.”

Such is the “Tale of Gamelyn.” It is a vigorous enough story with plenty of boisterous action, but the intellectual appeal is nil. Not only does the hero accomplish all his ends by brute force,<sup>3</sup> but he fails on every occasion where brain work is necessary. Twice in the early part of the story does the oldest brother deceive him,<sup>4</sup> and it is Adam who, a little later, suggests the plan for testing friend and foe.<sup>5</sup> Gamelyn himself is without guile. He is a strong, crude man, who means to do right and has a naïve sense of justice. “We will slee the giltif and let the other go,” he

1—Dr. Clawson compares the Robin Hood Rescuing three Squires, (140) B, st. 29.

2—This trait is very common to outlaw stories, as Dr. Clawson remarks. In Hereward, Fulk, and Robin Hood.

3, 4—Compare vv. 117 f., where Gamelyn drives all the brother’s men to hiding with a pestle, and then allows himself to be duped by his brother, vv. 159 ff. Also, the wrestling-match would show physical prowess rather than intellectual; vv. 169 ff. After killing the porter he is obeyed through fear, but easily beguiled after the company has left; cf. part III, 341 ff. His part of the revenge on the clergy in part IV is the use of force. Gamelyn has no more sense than to go to the court of his brother without a following, and of course he is taken; vv. 715 f. He rescues his brother Ote by force; 821 ff. In fact, the whole story might be described as the combat of force versus guile.

5—W. 431 ff. It is Adam, also, according to Skeat’s punctuation—and it seems right—who suggests that they go to the greenwood when they find the sheriff’s men will be too much for them; vv. 601 f.

tells Adam near the end of the story,<sup>1</sup> but he then proceeds to hang Sheriff, Justice, and all of the jury. It is evident that this tale did not have its origin among the courtly or the educated classes; it is plainly of the people. The hero is not even as courtly a figure as the early Robin Hood, though the latter too is of popular origin.

The points of contact with the Gest are interesting. Like it, the story is a rather loose agglutination,<sup>2</sup> joined together with some attempt at conscious art. The central interest is not the same, for in Gamelyn the outlaw life holds a subordinate place. Yet the point of view and the general attitude toward the ruling powers are strikingly similar. As in the case of Robin Hood,

“Whyl Gamelyn was outlawed hadde he no cors;  
There was no man that for him ferde the wors,  
But abbotes and priours, monk and chanoun;  
On hem left he no-thing whan he mighte hem nom.”<sup>3</sup>

The clerical orders, indeed were roughly handled; and the author evidently felt joy in the pommeling.<sup>4</sup> As Lindner remarks,<sup>5</sup> the churchmen are the invited

1—V. 822.

2—The story of the wrestling-match, the feasting afterwards, and the woodland experience have no necessary plot connection, though that is not much felt in reading the story. In part IV, also, there is some confusion in the narrative. Gamelyn seems to be bound twice; cf. ll. 350 f., and 377 f.

3—There seems to be no opposition to wealthy or titled men in the story. It would fit the home of the country squire or knight as well as the group of plain yeomen. This quotation is from l. 779 to l. 782.

4—Cf. ll. 501 ff. and 781 f.

5—Englische Studien, II, s. 113. His exact words are: “Warum werden als gäste des ältesten bruders gerade geistliche gewählt und nicht andere leute? Offenbar nur um sich die gelegenheit zu verschaffen die geistlichen zu verspotten und lächerlich zu machen, und der dichter kann seine inner freude darüber dass dieselben ihre wohlgezählte tracht prügel erhalten, kaum verbergen.”

guests of the oldest brother at his banquet in the fourth part, with the express desire of making them the object of Gamelyn's wrath. The author might have chosen other social classes just as well. The attitude toward sheriffs and king also is the same as in Robin Hood ballads.<sup>1</sup> Toward the former there is perpetual feud, toward the latter a desire for reconciliation. It is not the king himself who was hated, but his various unscrupulous representatives. It is not a disrespect for law that is manifested, but rather, the feeling that in the absence of the king justice can be obtained by force alone. The king himself in the Tale of Gamelyn as in Robin Hood material proves gracious.

The next point of interest to consider in this story is that of metrical form. Here again we find manifestly popular elements. The rimes, though generally pure, are for the most part commonplace. Such pairs as halle: alle, the: me, other: brother, etc., are frequently repeated.<sup>2</sup> The author also sometimes runs a long series with the same vowel in the rime, as vv. 261-270: sore, more—ston, noon—more, sore—place, grace—schoon, idoon, etc.<sup>3</sup> Then, too, Lindner points out at least three cases of bad rime or assonance.<sup>4</sup>

1—Dr. Clawson, p. 188, compares the hanging of the justice, sheriff and jury, with the procedure in Robin Hood rescuing Three Squires, (140) B, st. 29. He remarks also that the reconciliation with the king brought into Gamelyn at the very end is also common to the stories of Hereward, Fulk, and Robin Hood.

2—Lindner, *Englische Studien*, II, ss. 101 ff., has classified all the rimes. In fact, most of the material right here is suggested by Lindner, with great wealth of examples. I have not thought it necessary to repeat more than one or two for each point, and these merely for illustration.

3—Lindner, s. 107-8.

4—Lindner, s. 107: wit, bet, 111; gate, skate, 575; nom, chanoun, 781. Even the last rime is not bad, as he notes on the basis of Ten Brink's *Studien zu Chaucer*, p. 178, an. 20.

There are also a number of stock phrases,<sup>1</sup> such as "ther he lay," "evil mot ye the," "whil he was on lyve," etc., that are often repeated. Often, too, a line echoes in its phrasing the line before, thus:

"And Gamelyn himselve to clothen and to fede  
He clothed him and fed him." vv. 10, 11.<sup>2</sup>

Or two halves of a line say the same thing, thus:

"Who is thy fader—who is thy sire?" v. 221.

"Tho were his bondmen sory and nothing glad."  
v. 699.<sup>3</sup>

There are even a number of cases of something that approaches incremental repetition. Take the following:

"For to delen hem alle to oon, that was her thought,  
And for Gamelyan was yongest he schulde have naught.  
Al the lond that there was they dalten it in two,  
And leeten Gamelyan the yonge withoute londe go."  
v. 43 f.

"Gamelyn came wel redy to the nexte schire,  
And ther was his brother bothe lord and sire.  
Gamelyn com boldelich in-to the moot-halle,  
And putte a-doun his hood among the lordes alle;"  
v. 715 f.

"Gamelyn stood on a day and, as he biheld  
The woodes and the schawes in the wilde feeld,  
He thoughte on his brother how he him beheet  
That he wolde be redy whan the Iustice seet;  
He thoughte wel that he wolde withoute delay,  
Come afore the Iustice to kepen his day." v. 787 f.

"Adam said to Gamelyn and to his felawes alle,  
Sir Ote stant y-fetered in the moot-halle.  
Yonge men, 'seide Gamelyn, this ye heeren alle;  
Sir Ote stant y-fetered in the moot-halle." v. 811 f.

"The Iustice and the scherreve bothe honged hye,  
To weyven with the ropes and with the winde drye;

1—Lindner, 109.

2—Lindner, s. 108.

3—Lindner, s. 112.



And the twelve sisours (sorwe have that rekke!)  
Alle they were hanged faste by the nekke." v. 879 f.

I have presented more cases of this last phenomenon,<sup>1</sup> because it is one that Lindner does not treat in his valuable study of the poem, and because incremental repetition is so strongly emphasized by Professor Gummere as a determining characteristic of the ballad type. These are not as perfect cases as we find in ballads taken down in late times, nor as good as the examples in *Robyn and Gandeley*,<sup>2</sup> but they are better approximations than anything in the *Gest*<sup>3</sup> or in most other early ballads. They are close enough to suggest that the tale of *Gamelyn* has marked ballad affinities.

The actual meter of the piece, too, suggests the same thing. The nursery-rime movement to the poem has been noted more than once,<sup>4</sup> and Professor Saintsbury has even scanned some of the lines in a way to show their distinguishing characteristics. Skeat, I think, has not done as well.<sup>5</sup> He would make the rhythm irregu-

1—There are still other cases about as good; cf. 821 f., 897 f., etc.

2—*Robyn and Gandeley*, No. 115, stanzas 9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17.

3—Dr. Hart states positively (*Ballad and Epic*, p. 100) that "The incremental repetition, the effective stanzaic groups, the refrain, important characteristics of the Simple Ballads, do not appear in the Cycle or the *Gest*." Of course some of the late Robin Hood ballads have refrain; cf. Nos. 122, B, 125, 126, etc.

4—W. W. Skeat, *Tale of Gamelyn*, Clarendon Press series, 1884, pp. XXIII ff. Clawson repeats the idea without elaborating. Saintsbury, independently, treats the meter in his *History of English Prosody*, vol. 1, 1906, pp. 254 f.

5—Probably this statement is not entirely fair to Skeat, because he was testing the poem by standards such as one would apply to Chaucer, because the poem was found in Chaucer MS. He classifies lines according to seven types, but I do not think that his observations amount to much. He scans lines as three-beat that ought to be four of the "Judas" lilt. Saintsbury emphasizes the regularity of the meter, when judged by its own standards and principles.

lar. Judged by the standards of its specific type, it is not irregular at all. It is merely another poem in what I have called the "Judas" meter, because that is the first ballad to use it. It belongs precisely to the type of

"Sing a song of six-pence, pocket full of rye,  
Four and twenty black-birds baked in a pie,"

where the lines are not the regular ballad four-beat plus three. The leaving out or crowding in of weak syllables does not make the swing of the line irregular, unless one tries to scan according to literary rules—encumbrances which do not apply to this poem. The meter has a good vigorous swing to it that carries one over all sorts of otherwise rough places. It does not break down or become merely formless. The Tale is written as continuous verse in long lines, riming in couplets. But without warping the form in the least, it might as well be written in short lines like the ballads; and since the pauses usually coincide with the couplets, the poem might equally well be divided into stanzas.

Yet in spite of all these likenesses to ballad structure, the Tale of Gamelyn is not a ballad,—though what it is, is hard to say. It does not seem to belong with any more propriety to the field of romances. It is a tale, but then, even Robin Hood was called a tale. There is much in the piece to suggest that the author was a man of the people, who partly improvised with his audience before him. He was not as courtly or refined a man as the author of the Gest. And yet, I say, in spite of all these approaches, the Tale of Gamelyn is not a ballad. It has enough crudities, but they are not exactly ballad crudities. It has too much plot, too much detail, too leisurely a movement, too few of the

narrative leapings to be classed with the type.<sup>1</sup> Robin Hood in the Gest strained the type a good deal: this poem has got over the boundary. Unlike the Gest, it hardly seems to be a cluster of made-over ballads, and it seems equally hard to believe it a ballad in the making. The Tale of Gamelyn is extremely interesting for its ballad affinities, but nevertheless it must be treated as standing somewhat apart.

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1—Unlike the Gest, it begins by telling of the hero's parentage, etc.—the method of romances, according to Dr. Hart, *Ballad and Epic*, p. 100.

## CHAPTER IV

### *Fifteenth Century*

WITH the 15th century we come upon an age fairly rich in contributions to balladry. In fact, it is the belief of several critics<sup>1</sup> that if this period did not see the actual beginning of the popular ballad, it at least first saw its extensive currency. The belief, however, is one incapable of proof. In the 15th and early 16th century there are at least a dozen secular song collections for one that had appeared before. What then if we do find in this greater abundance of material a half-dozen or more of ballads, and a number of other pieces that are somewhat ballad-like! The great trouble in theorizing for any of the earlier centuries is the absolute dearth of all kinds of song material. In the 15th and 16th centuries we are not quite so handicapped.

But as yet not much has been done with this song material, though most of it is now easily accessible to

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1—The statement is to be found in numerous literary histories. "Garnett and Gosse," 1, 296: "In general the 15th century may be regarded as the period when the ballad first took literary form." Saintsbury, *Short History of English History*, p. 201: "To the present writer the balance of probability seems to incline to the supposition that the 15th century was the special time of ballad production in England." Millar, *Literary History of Scotland*, p. 190: "While certain English ballads may possibly go back as far as the middle of the 14th century, it is a plain and solid fact that 'there remain but the merest fragments of anonymous popular Scots poetry which can be referred to the 15th century,' and even the greater bulk of what we possess does not exist for us at any time anterior to the 16th century." (He refers to Gregory Smith, 211.) F. J. Snell, *Age of Transition, 1400-1580*: "It may be confidently affirmed that this was the golden age of the English ballad," p. 197.



the scholar, and much of it to the ordinary reader. A goodly share, too, is intrinsically worthy of study. Fairly complete transcripts of most of the important early song collections have now been published in some form, either in volumes for learned societies such as the Percy,<sup>1</sup> the Warton,<sup>2</sup> the Early English Text,<sup>3</sup> or the Roxburghe,<sup>4</sup> or in philological periodicals such as *Anglia*<sup>5</sup> or *Herrig's Archiv*.<sup>6</sup> There are also two or three notable anthologies, including the still needful Wright and Halliwell's *Reliquiae Antiquae*<sup>7</sup> and the equally indispensable recent collection of *Early English Lyrics*,<sup>8</sup> by Chambers and Sidgwick. From these various sources can be collected several hundred different songs, including specimens of almost every type. There are also to be found now a few scholarly critical introductions to the field, such as Mr. E. K. Chambers's

1—Particularly noteworthy are the volumes edited by Wright: *Songs and Carols*, now first printed, from a MS. of the 15th century, 1847; and *Specimens of Old Christmas Carols*, 1841.

2—Again a volume entitled *Songs and Carols*, and edited by Wright, Warton Club, 1856.

3—Particularly Richard Hill's *Commonplace Book*, Balliol MS. 354, edited by Dyboski, 1907.

4—Particularly *Songs and Ballads*, chiefly of the reign of Philip and Mary, edited by Wright, from an Ashmolean MS., 1860. Richard Sheale's MS.

5—Especially the series published by E. Flügel, *Anglia* XII, 225, from Addl. 31922, ib. 256, from Royal Append. 58; ib. 585, from W. de Worde's *Christmasse Carolles*, Bassus, XXVI, 94, from Balliol, 354. Also F. M. Padelford in XXXI, 309 f., from Rawlinson, C. 813.

6—Now known as *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen u. Litteraturen*. Braunschweig, previously Elberfeld. B. Fehr has published a series CVI, 48 f. and 262, from the Fairfax MS. (Add. 5465) and Add. 5665; CVII, 48 f. from a number of MSS., CIX, 33, Sloane 2593.

7—*Reliquiae Antiquae*. Scraps from Ancient Manuscripts, illustrating chiefly Early English Literature and the English Language. Two volumes, 1841, 1843.

8—London, 1907.

“Some Aspects of Mediæval Lyric,”<sup>1</sup> and especially Professor F. M. Padelford’s chapter, “Transition English Song Collections,” contributed to volume two of the *Cambridge History of English Literature*.<sup>2</sup> The latter is as simple and clear a presentation of the field as anyone could desire. The chapter title, however, is something of a misnomer, for the discussion is not concerned with song collections but rather with the classification and illustration of the types of song material.

In none of these critical treatments, however, has the ballad received sufficient attention. All have placed the emphasis elsewhere. We, of course, shall take up this song material from the point of view of the Child Ballad. It is not to be denied that several works dealing with this period have chapters on the “popular” ballad, but these chapters are either too brief and too superficial, or too much concerned with minstrel and literary ballads to be of use in our own quest.<sup>3</sup> We

1—Published in the *Early English Lyrics*, just referred to, pp. 257 f. With reference to Mr. Chambers, it is of course necessary to mention his larger work on the Mediæval Stage, two volumes, Oxford, 1903. Though this centers its interest in the drama, there is a world of information relating to songs, ballads, and European folk-lore. The popular drama is not very far removed in some aspects from balladry. See Chambers’s index for specific references.

2—Chapter XVI, pp. 422 f.

3—None are strictly historical and none take Professor Child’s Collection as the norm. Courthope, in chapter XI of his *History of English Poetry*, vol. I (*The Decay of English Minstrelsy*), while emphasizing minstrelsy, does not analyze ballads with enough keenness. J. H. Millar is not only injudicial in his treatment (p. 181 of his *Literary History of Scotland*), but sometimes even positively unfair. Snell in his *Age of Transition* is superficial, and shows no extensive knowledge. G. Gregory Smith, *The Transition Period*, p. 180 f., says the ballad is not a popular genre. It is a literary product. But he sees no difference between the Child type and other pieces. The *Nut-Brown Maid* and *John the Reeve* are both to him ballads. His examples of 15th century balladry he takes from the *Percy Folio*, largely.

shall therefore do the work quite independently of all these forerunners.

The 15th century and the first half of the 16th present us not only with examples of several varieties of the Child ballad but also with a great abundance of pieces that show various degrees of approximation to the ballad type. This second class of material is quite as important to the ballad historian as the first. The period is therefore one of extraordinary interest.

Let us take up, first of all, the actual ballads of the 15th century. Four have up to the present time been recognized. They are: "Robin Hood and the Monk," (119,) (existing in two fragmentary copies of about the same age);<sup>1</sup> "Robyn and Gwendeleyne," (No. 115,) and "St. Stephen and Herod," (No. 22,) (both in one MS., Sloane 2593); and "Riddles Wisely Expounded," (No. 1,) only brought to light in the appendix to the last volume of Professor Child's collection.<sup>2</sup> All of these are to be found in manuscripts that approximate in date the middle of the century;<sup>3</sup> and each illustrates a different type of Child ballad. It is hardly necessary to say more about "Robin Hood and the Monk" than to repeat that it is one of the best representatives of its cycle. But it may be well to add here that the better of the two copies is found in a manuscript that also contains among other poems one on "King Edward

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1—"a. MS. Ff. 5, 48, fol. 128 b., Cambridge University Library; b. One leaf of a MS. of the same age, containing stanzas 69<sup>3</sup>-72, 77<sup>2</sup>-80<sup>2</sup>, Bagford Ballads, vol. 1, art. 6, British Museum."

2—"Rawlinson, MS. D. 328, fol. 174 b., Bodleian Library."

3—In the list of sources of the texts, Rawlinson MS. D. 328, from which No. 1 is taken, is said to be before 1445. But in his introduction to the ballad (v. 283) Prof. Child states about it that "It is from a book acquired by Walter Pollard of Plymouth, in the 23d year of Henry VI, 1444-5, and the handwriting is thought to authorize the conclusion that the verses were copied into the book not long after."

III and the Shepherd,"<sup>1</sup> which, though not ballad-like in form, Professor Child connects in content with the "King and the Tanner," group (273,) nor is it necessary to say very much about "Robin and Gandeleyne" as a ballad. In the last chapter it was stated (after Professor Child) that it is not a member of the Robin Hood cycle. It is a forester poem like "Johnny Cock," (No. 114,) and of simple balladry surely as good an example. It has all the marks of the ballad straight out of tradition: naïve simplicity, the rapid leaping movement, considerable dialogue, somewhat irregular stanzaic structure, refrain, imperfect rime, and incremental repetition. It is clearly not of the literary style of poetry; but if any other fact were needed to show this, the very form in which it is written in the manuscript would be sufficient. The Sloane MS. 2593 is without doubt the most important ballad manuscript of its century. We shall have occasion to say more about it later. But in connection with "Robin and Gandeleyne" it may here be stated that the ballad is written in prose,—quite at variance with all the other pieces in the manuscript, most of which even have the stanzas marked off by a ¶ and the rimes bracketed. The ends of the long lines of Robyn are, to be sure, sometimes marked by a point and sometimes by a ||, but that does not bring the poem into harmony with the rest of the manuscript. One line, "Euyche at opis herte seyde wrennok ageyn," is repeated a couple of lines later instead of "And I xul zeve pe on befor seyde wrennok ageyn." The mistake is corrected. It looks like a visual error, but perhaps not. If it were

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<sup>1</sup>—For an account of the MS. see chapt. 4, p. 115, note 2 of this thesis.



not for this mistake it would seem probable that the ballad had been taken down into the song-book directly from tradition.<sup>1</sup> But even if copied its form would suggest that it had an ultimate original, written similarly, straight out of tradition, and not far removed.

St. Stephen (No. 22), which is to be found in this same manuscript, eight folios later, is a good illustration of the religious ballad.<sup>2</sup> It does not call for much comment. It is written as verse in long lines and has each stanza preceded by a  $\bar{\text{II}}$ . It reminds one strongly of Judas (No. 23) in its tone and its repetitions, and is perhaps even more ballad-like.

The fourth ballad, "Riddles Wisely Expounded," or as it is known in the manuscript, "Inter diabolus et virgo," is not so easily disposed of. As has just been stated, the 15th century version—the only one at all early<sup>3</sup>—was brought to light only in time to be printed in the appendix of the last part of the last volume of the Child Collection.<sup>4</sup> It had been published shortly before by Dr. Furnivall in *Englische Studien*, XXIII, 1897. "Inter diabolus et virgo" is undoubtedly the direct ancestor of the later versions of "Riddles Wisely Expounded." The similarity—even to absolute iden-

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1—The mistake might just as well have occurred in taking the ballad down from dictation or memory.

2—There are besides this ballad also carols on the subject; cf. Balliol MS., 354, No. 41, of Dyboski's edition.

3—Counting C and D together there are five versions of the ballad—A\*, A, B, C, (D), and E. A is found in broadsides of the 17th century; B, "The Three Sisters," is from Gilbert's Christmas Carols, 2nd ed. C and D from the Motherwell MS.; E is from Miss Mason's Nursery Rhymes and Country Songs. This was first printed by Child in the appendix to part IX.

4—Vol. V, pp. 283 f.

tity in some cases of the riddles,<sup>1</sup>—and the presence of the devil as the male character in C, D<sup>2</sup> and E, leave no ground to think otherwise. And “*Inter diabolus et virgo*” is itself a ballad. I confess I have had moments of doubt, when I have thought of numerous other 15th century pieces almost as ballad-like.<sup>3</sup> But the directness, the lack of detail, the dialogue, the meter, the connection with later undoubtedly genuine ballads.—all these things taken together are amply sufficient to place it within the type. But after all, when one compares it with the later specimens of the group, one misses certain ballad traits very evident in the others and in traditional ballads generally. It has no refrain, though that is likely accident and the fault of the transcriber. But it lacks absolutely the incremental repetition of the other versions, with the three sisters group,<sup>4</sup> and the trace of a corresponding series of questions.<sup>5</sup> And it lacks finally those characteristic

1—“*What ys hyer þan ys þe tre?*” 9<sup>1</sup>, D 1<sup>1</sup>, “*What ys dypper þan ys the see?*” 9<sup>1</sup>, D1<sup>2</sup>, A13<sup>2</sup>, B8<sup>2</sup>.

“*What ys sharpper þan ys þe þorne?*” A14<sup>2</sup>, B6<sup>2</sup>, C12<sup>1</sup>, D3<sup>1</sup>, E9<sup>2</sup>.

“*What ys loder þan ys þe þorne?*” A14<sup>1</sup>, B6<sup>1</sup>, C12<sup>2</sup>, D3<sup>2</sup>, E9<sup>1</sup>.

“*What [ys] bether than þe bred?*” C. 10<sup>2</sup>.

“*What [ys] longger þan ys þe way?*” A. 13<sup>1</sup>, B8<sup>1</sup> [broader] D14<sup>1</sup>.

Compare also, “*What ys rader þan ys þe day?*” with E10, “*What is brighter than the light?*” There are other similarities.

2—D seems fragmentary. It was given by the reciter as a colloquy between the devil and a maiden.

3—Cf. “*I have a 3ong suster,*” Sloane MS. 2593; St. Nicholas and three maidens, *ib.*; Nowel, *Mary moder cum and se*; *ib.* These are taken from the same MS. purposely. None are ballads, yet all have ballad traits.

4—Cf. *The Cruel Brother*, No. 11, *Babylon*, No. 14, are examples of the three sisters group.

5—In E, a children’s game, and adapted in tone and content accordingly, not only are the three daughters’ services listed incrementally, but he makes of them incremental demands. Of the first he asks answers to three questions, of the second, six, and of all together, nine. In A, the knight asks for answers for three questions, but propounds six. Perhaps there was some such incremental arrangement for that version too, originally.

ballad phrases such as "And pin'd the door with a silver pin."<sup>1</sup> Also, the story is troublesome. It is not much like that of A, and shows the good ending of the latter to be a perversion. Until the early version was brought to light, Professor Child thought differently, and surely it is the good ending that best joins the story with all similar tales mentioned in his introduction as found in continental literatures. All this makes of "Inter diabolus et virgo" a perplexing ballad; it is a clear case of an early version not being nearly so ballad-like as a whole group of later ones.

These four specimens of balladry are all that have survived to us from the 15th century.<sup>2</sup> Nor are there known any literary references to ballads<sup>3</sup> outside of those to the Robin Hood cycle. On the other hand, many romances and verse tales<sup>4</sup> have survived from

1—A, 5<sup>2</sup>. Compare also A 9. B likewise mentions barring the door with a silver pin, 2<sup>2</sup>.

2—Professor Child mentions "King Edward the third and the Shepperd," "King Edward and the Hermit," and "Ralph Coilyear," in connection with "The King and the Tanner" (No. 273), but it is merely because of similarity of story. None are at all ballad-like.

3—Cf. MS. Laud, 416, olim. C. 90, circa 1460. 3rd Commandment not to break the Sabbath. Quoted in *Reliquae Antiquae*, II. 27, 1st stanza.

Also use not to pley at the dice ne at the tablis,  
 Ne none maner gamys uppon the holidays;  
 Use no tavernys where be jestes and fablis,  
 Synging of lewde balettes, rondelettes, or virolois;  
 Nor erly in mornynge to feeche home fresch mois  
 For yt makyth maydins to stomble and falle in the breirs,  
 And afterward they telle her councele to the freirs.

Probably not the Child ballad referred to.

4—For instance, cf. MS. Cotton, Caligula A, 11, of the 15th century. It contains Eglamor, Lybeans disconns, Emare, Ypotis, Trentale sei Gregorii, The sege of Ierusalem, Chavalere assigne, Isumbras, and other pieces of a similar nature. Also MS. More, 690, or MS. Cantab. Ff. ii. 38, and Thornton MS. or Lincoln MS. A, i. 17, 1440. Both described by Halliwell in his edition of the Thornton Romances for the Camden Society, 1844.

the period, and very many carols and songs. With such facts confronting us it seems rather absurd to name the 15th century as the great epoch in balladry. The truth is, the facts are too meagre and uncertain to warrant any definite conclusion. But of poems that have ballad traits and which may thus be called approaches to the type, the 15th and the early 16th century offer numerous examples. Still the greater part are to be found in a very few manuscripts, and the number of pieces all told is not sufficient to mean much chronologically. The 15th is not the first century to use parallelism of line structure and incremental repetition. We have noted in a previous chapter<sup>1</sup> earlier cases in works both religious and secular. The carols, too, use these devices, and there is no ground for supposing that they began in the 15th century. Furthermore, much of the ballad-like material that has come to us from this time is undoubtedly traditional, and suggests an origin by no means recent. And with this statement we may well drop the matter.

In the 15th century there are only one or two collections that contain much ballad-like material. Of these the Sloane MS. 2593 is by far the most important. Presumably MS. F. f. 5, v. 48, of the University of Cambridge Library, in which "Robin Hood and the Monk" is to be found, is a close second—at least I know several interesting pieces from it<sup>2</sup>—but at the present time of writing I have no way of determining the whole of its contents. Some vandal has cut out from the British Museum copy of the Cambridge Library catalogue the pages containing the greater

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1—Chap. 2, pg. 39; pg. 61, text and note 2; chap. 2, pg. 71, note 1; (of this thesis).

2—Cf. 421 f. for an example.



part of this particular itemized description. I shall therefore devote my attention chiefly to the Sloane MS. at present, and add later in an appendix, descriptions of such other manuscripts as I find of moment.<sup>1</sup>

We have said enough about the ballads in the Sloane MS. We shall confine ourselves now to other things of interest about it. Its material has been twice printed;<sup>2</sup> once complete by Wright for the Warton Club, and again practically so by Fehr in the *Archiv*.<sup>3</sup> The latter has given a slight grammatical introduction and a brief analysis of the contents. A good compact description of the manuscript itself may be found in *Early English Lyrics*, p. 303. It is a small paper book,

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1—Since writing the text for this, I have seen the MS. itself. The description of the MS. might as well be given here briefly. All of the most interesting pieces had already been made public. The book may be described as a small quarto  $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$ , on paper, 132 leaves. The handwriting is not uniform throughout, though it seems to be through the first half of the book, at least as far as 65 a. This part is in a fairly neat hand, with the beginning capitals stroked with red, with some printed colophons, titles, etc., and with rimes bracketed by red lines. Generally there is but one column to the page, though King Edward and the Shepperd has two. The last part of the MS. is in a more careless hand than anything earlier, and the MS. itself has suffered much from damp, being brown with discoloration in large patches. "Robin Hood and the Monk" is the last piece. It is in the same hand as the poem preceding — a story of "the Lady and Thomas" — not ballad-like. The "ballad" "I have sworne hit whil I live" (cf. p. 421) is but a few folios earlier, but I am not sure of the handwriting. Among other interesting poems in the MS. is "The Turnament of Totenham." There are two or three poems of the Virgin, several prognostications, A song of the Nightingale, A course story of a Bason, etc. Nothing else ballad-like than that which I mention in this chapter.

2—Some of the individual songs have been many times reprinted.

3—*Archiv für das Studium der Neueren Sprachen u. Literaturen*, CIX, p. 33 f. Fehr does not print those songs accessible from other collections, but with the aid of *Early English Lyrics* the whole manuscript may be pieced out.

6 x 4½, compactly but neatly written.<sup>1</sup> It contains seventy-four pieces on thirty-four folios.<sup>2</sup> Wright considered it to be the song-book of a minstrel,<sup>3</sup> and he dated the handwriting as of the time of Henry VI,<sup>4</sup> but probably much of the material was then traditional.<sup>5</sup> The contents may be described as "Songs and Carols;" mainly religious and moral, but some trivial and satirical. There are three Latin pieces. The rest are English, but over a dozen have Latin refrains. Christmas carols of the usual types make up the bulk of the collection. But even these often have characteristics common to the ballad. The exquisite lyric, "I syng of a mayden," is too well known<sup>6</sup> to need quotation, and it will be remembered that that has incremental repetition. So has a carol beginning:

A new ȝer, a new ȝer, a chyld was i-born  
Us for to savyn that al was for-lorn,  
So blyssid be the tyme.

The fader in hevene his owyn sone he sent,  
His kyngdam for to cleymyn. So blyssid, etc.

Al in a elene maydyn our Lord was i-lyzt,  
Us for to savyn with al his myzt. etc.

1—Frequently there is more than one song on a page. In that case they are separated by a horizontal line. The first few pages even have a modest attempt at decoration. Red strokes are added to some of the letters, and all through there are occasionally little simple flower and other designs drawn in black ink.

2—There are really 37 folios in the book, but the last three pages are mostly blank.

3—Introduction to his edition for the Warton Club.

4—The British Museum Catalogue for the Sloane MS. puts it at the beginning of the 15th century. *Early English Lyrics* states, p. 303, that according to Bradley-Stratmann the MS. was written in Warwickshire at the beginning of the 15th century. I do not know the grounds for their conclusion.

5—One song Wright shows was probably written in 1362-9.

6—Found in several anthologies; cf. *Early English Lyrics*, p. 107.

Al of a elene maydyn our Lord was i-born,  
Us for to savyn that al was for-lorn. etc.

Lullay, lullay, lytil chyld, myn owyn dere fode,  
How xalt thow sufferin be naylid on the rode? etc.

Lullay, lullay, lytil chyld, myn owyn dere smerte,  
How xalt thow sufferin the sharp spere to thi herte?

Lullay, lullay, lytyl child, I synge al for thi sake,  
Many on is the sharpe schour to thi body is schape.

And so on through three more stanzas of similar structure, with then a conclusion. Neither of these examples is a ballad, nor is either likely to be mistaken for one, but they do both exhibit a certain approach to ballad method. The same is true of the carol with the burden,

Al the meryere is that place,  
The sunne of grace hym schynit in,

and of one or two other religious pieces. Especially to be noted in the song of St. Nicholas and the three maidens:

Alle maydenis, for Godes grace,  
Worchepe 3e seynt Nicholas.

Seynt Nicholas was of gret posté,  
For he worshepid maydenis thre,  
That were sent in fer cuntré

Common wommen for to be.

Here fader was man in powre aray,  
Onto his dowteres he gan say,  
“Dowteres, 3e must away,

Non lenger kepe 3ou I may.

“Dowteres, myn blyssing I 3ou 3eve,  
For catel wil not with me thryve,  
3e must with 3oure body leve,  
3our wordeze must dryve.”

The eldest dowter swor, be bred of qwete,  
“I have levere beggyn myn mete,

And getyn me good qwer I may gete,  
 Than ledyn myn lyf in lecherie."  
 The medil dowter seyde, so mote che the,  
 "I had levere hangyd and drawyd be  
 With wylde hors to or thre,  
     Than ledin myn lyf in lecherie."  
 The zongere lechery gan to spyse,  
 And preyid saynt Nicholas, as che was wise,  
 "Saynt Nicholas, as he was wyse, (*sic*)  
     Help us fro lecherie."  
 Saynt Nicholas. at the townys ende,  
 Consoylid tho maydenis hom to wynde,  
 And throw Godes grace he xulde hem synde  
     Husbandes thre good and kind

At the end of this same manuscript there is another song of St. Nicholas<sup>1</sup> that mentions this good deed along with a number of others, but it has not so much the ballad style. The poem we have just quoted is of course not a ballad. It is in the carol meter (though in theory that ought not to count against popularity), and besides there is a clear trace of literary workmanship. On the other hand, it is somewhat naïve; it has something of a story, which it tells partly by the incremental method.

The manuscript has other interesting religious poems, particularly the "Adam lay i-bowndyn" and the "Nowel, el, el, etc. Mary moder, cum and se." The latter is to be found elsewhere,<sup>2</sup> though I think the Sloane is the more naïve version. It is strongly dramatic and even ballad-like in the way it gets rid of the narrative non-essentials. Its closest analogy, however, is the miracle play, of which, except for one stanza, it

1—Wright, No. LXXIII.

2—English Poetry, l. 1, Wright, *Songs and Carols*, Percy Society, p. 38. The latter version is printed in *Early English Lyrics*, p. 146.



almost seems an example in miniature. It must not be forgotten that the miracle play sometimes has ballad affinities.<sup>1</sup>

But let us turn now to the secular poems of the manuscript. One or two are of extreme interest, and represent a much-used type, hard to evaluate. Take the following as an example:

I have a zong suster fer bezondyn the se,  
Many be the drowryis that che sente me.

Che sente me the cherye wythoutyn any ston;  
And so che dede [the] dowe withoutyn ony bon;

Sche sente me the brere withoutyn ony rynde;  
Sche had me love my lemmon withoute longgyng.

How xuld ony cherye be withoute ston?  
And how xuld ony dowe ben withoute bon?

How xuld ony brere ben withoute rynde?  
How xuld y love myn lemman without longyng?

Quan the cherye was a flour, than hadde it non ston;  
Quan the dowe was an ey, than hadde it non bon;  
Quan the brere was onbred, than hadde it non rynd;  
Quan the maydyn hazt that che lovit, che is without  
longyng.

This is clearly not a ballad: it is too personal, it has no story, nor does it suggest any, definitely. But it seems to be related at least slightly to "Captain Wedderburn's Courtship" (No. 46), and one might at first conjecture that this piece originally did have a story and was more ballad-like, and that what we have is a mere fragment, if it were not that there are other pieces of precisely the same style both in this manuscript and in others,

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1—The Brome Play, Abraham and Isaac, dated 1470-80, Manly, Pre-Shakespearian Drama, vol. I, p. 44, 50, 51, has cases of line repetition that suggest the manner of the ballad.

and if, furthermore, this very piece had not come down to us in practically the same form in a modern nursery rime.<sup>1</sup> Precisely similar in its lack of narrative is the

I have a gentil cock crowyt me day  
He doth me rysyn erly my matynis for to say.

This piece shows parallelism of stanza structure, more wonderful, and there are certain agreements with the cock described in Chaucer's *Nonne Prestes Tale*.<sup>2</sup>

Another poem with more story, but inclined to be vulgar, begins in the same way:

I have a newe gardyn, and newe is begunne;  
Swych another gardyn know I not under sunne.

The type is surely a strange one, but we shall meet with it later and may postpone further words until then.

There are a few other interesting poems in this manuscript, but save "Kyrie, so kyrie, Jankyn syngyt merie. with aleyson," (a poem with Judas meter and parallelism of structure,) there is nothing we need mention. Wright in his introduction to MS. Eng. Poet. e. l., Bodleian (*Songs and Carols*, Percy Soc., 1847), said there was only one other manuscript of the period that was

1—Quoted in a note to the poem in Wright, from Halliwell's *Popular Rhymes and Nursery Tales*, p. 150: The Four Sisters, still current in North England. I have four sisters beyond the sea, (Ref.) / And they did send four presents to me, (Ref.)

The first it was a bird without e'er a bone (Ref.) / The second was a cherry without e'er a stone (Ref.).

The third it was a blanket without e'er a thread (Ref.) / The fourth it was a book which no man could reade.

How can there be a bird without e'er a bone? (etc., each of the above put in a question?).

When the bird's in the shell, there is no bone....

When the cherry's in the bud, there is no stone....

When the blanket's in the fleece, there is no thread....

When the book is in the press, no man can read....

2—Passage quoted in Wright's note.

like it, and that was the collection he was then editing. But from our point of view the two collections are not similar. True, the two duplicate each other somewhat, but not in those poems that make the Sloane MS. for us most interesting. I am not saying that the Bodleian MS. is not itself a rich collection,—for its contents are just as varied as the Sloane, with particularly some satirical songs against the fair sex and several choice drinking-songs, but all lack those interesting affinities to the ballad.<sup>1</sup> In the latter respect the Sloane MS. is practically unique in its century, and it leads one to ponder on the reason. There are several possibilities. Perhaps it was because ballads were too well known and commonplace to suggest that they needed to be copied down, though in that case one might expect an occasional literary allusion. Perhaps they were despised, as we are assured they were in later centuries, but in this connection it must be remembered that it was against stall-ballads and their like that the later attacks were almost exclusively directed, and personally I am Puritan enough to believe the censure well deserved. Perhaps the Child ballad was not common

1—The nearest approach is the following:

Hey, howe, selymen, God helpe zowe,  
 Thys indrys day befel a stryfe,  
 Betwex an old man and his wyfe;  
 Sche toke hym by the berd so plyzt,  
     With hey how.  
 Sche toke hin by the berd so fast,  
 Tyll both hys eyn on water gan brast,  
     With hey how.  
 Howt at the dore as he gan goo,  
 Met with hys neybrys too;  
 Neybur, why wepyst soo, With hey how?  
 In my hows ys swyche a smeke,  
 Goo ondyr and ze schall mete, With hey how?

This is indeed a close approach to the ballad.

in the 15th century.<sup>1</sup> Though the Sloane MS. is the richest in balladry of any up to the Percy Folio, it nevertheless contains but two ballads and a number of approaches, which, however, are not in themselves as interesting from any point of view as is the average specimen in the Child collection. If the latter was so common indeed, why did not more of the real ballads get into the manuscript? The collector evidently had a taste for such things. From the evidence of this and other early collections, I am personally inclined to believe that the Child ballad even at this early century, though it may have been thought commonplace, was not very common, and that it was even then quite out of the world of "current" literature.

We have said that the Sloane MS. is practically unique for its century, in its contribution of ballad-like material. But here and there in other manuscripts will occasionally be found a poem of interest. Thus, in Cambridge University Library MS. Ff. 5, 48, containing "Robin Hood and the Monk," there is a rime too personal indeed for a ballad, and yet not far removed from the type in tone and parallelism of structure, and it suggests somewhat indecorously a story:

I have forsworne hit whil I life, to wake the well.  
 The last tyme I the wel woke,  
 Sir John caght me with a croke,  
 He made me to swere be bel and boke  
     I shuld not tell.  
 ȝet he did me a wel wors turne,  
 He leyde my hed agayn the burne,

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1—It is possible, of course, that the Child ballad was neither despised nor very common. It was known to some, but regarded as a thing of the past. Beloved, perhaps, but looked upon as something quite out of the current style. It was therefore thought that it could not possibly be of interest to still later generations.



He gafe my mayden-hed a sprne,  
 And ref my bell.

Sir John came to oure hows to play  
 Fro evensong tyme til light of the day;  
 We made as mery as flowers in May.

I was begyled.

Sir John he came to our hows,  
 He made hit wonder copious,  
 He seyð that I was gracious

To beyre a child.

I go with childe, wel I wot,  
 I schrew the feder that hit gote,  
 Withowtin hen fynde hit mylke and pape,  
 A long while ey.

This poem is not in the ballad stanza, but in another manuscript in the same library, MS. Ee. 1, 12, there is entered, apparently in a handwriting different from that on either side,<sup>1</sup> a rime in ballad couplet, which, though trivial in tone, and with too much incremental repetition, if such be possible, does possess enough ballad traits to give it fair claim to be considered a member of the Child type. It reads:

The fals fox camme unto oure croft,  
 And so our gese full fast he sought;  
 With how, fox, how, with hey, fox, hey;  
 Come no more unto oure house to bere oure gese aweye.

The fals fox camme unto oure stye,  
 And toke our gese there by and by; With how, etc.

The fals fox camme into oure yerde,  
 And there he made the gese aferde; etc.

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1—I have not seen the MS., and the description in the Library Catalogue is confused. The piece is found in folio 80b. Up to folio 80 the handwriting is uniform, and on 80a there is a colophon which should give the date 1492, though it has been purposely mutilated. The description, say from 81b to 105b, is in a different hand, though of the same general character, some of the pieces being mere transcripts of the first part. Much of the material is hymns.

The fals fox camme unto oure gate,  
And toke oure gese there where they sate; etc.

The fals fox camme to oure halle dore;  
And shrove oure gese there in the flore;

The fals fox camme into our halle,  
And assayled oure gese both grete and small;

The fals fox camme unto oure cowpe,  
And there he made oure gese to stowpe;

He toke a gose fast by the nek,  
And the gose thoo begann to quek;

The good wyfe camme out in her smok,  
And at the fox she threw hir rok;

The good man camme out with his flayle,  
And smote the fox upon the tayle;

He threw a gose upon his bak,  
And furth he went thoo with his pak;

The goodmann swore, yf that he myght,  
He wolde hym slee or it were nyght;

The fals fox went into his denne,  
And he was full mery thenne;

He camme ayene yet the next wek,  
And toke away both henne and chek;

The goodman saide unto his wyfe,  
This fals fox lyveth a mery lyfe;

The fals fox camme uponn a day,  
And with our gese he made a ffray;

He toke a goose fast by the nek,  
And made her to sey wheccumquek;

“I pray the Fox,” said the goose thoo,  
“Take of my feathers but not of my to.”

The story element in the piece is not convincingly

strong; the material indeed seems overworked. But it is not without communal tone, and its very clumsiness of structure suggests the possibility of an improvising through much more impressively than many a more neatly planned ballad.

The early 16th century has contributed but few ballads outside of outlaw material. "Robin Hood and the Potter" comes to us from a manuscript of about 1500. One or two prints of the Gest may be equally old. Two fragments of the "Adam Bell" are of an edition of 1536. If now we add to these the minstrel product "Crow and Pie" (No. 111) we have a complete list of all the ballad pieces of the time that Professor Child admitted into his collection. But in that list there surely ought to be placed one other, first recognized as a ballad by that acute discoverer of ballads, Mr. F. Sidgwick.<sup>1</sup> The new addition is "The Jolly Juggler," found in MS. Balliol 354. Besides these few actual ballads, the early 16th century has preserved for us also a number of other poems having ballad affinities, but here again we find most of them within a single manuscript, the one just mentioned—Balliol 354. The period has also contributed several other things of interest to the history of balladry. In particular there are one or two ballad<sup>2</sup> allusions such as that of Skelton to the "Friar in the Well" (No. 276):

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1—First identified in his *Popular Ballads of the Olden Time*, third series, 1906, London. He mentions his discovery in three different places in the volume, and prints the piece in the appendix, p. 211. It had previously appeared in *Anglia*, XXVI, 278. Sidgwick was also the discoverer of the "Bitter Withy," the only other ballad added by general agreement to the Child collection.

2—Of course there are numerous Robin Hood allusions, for which see the preceding chapter.

But when the freare fell in the well  
 He coud not syng himselfe therout  
 But by the helpe of Christyan Clout. vv. 879 f.  
 Colyn Cloute; quoted by Child, V., p. 100.

This allusion might be to some other verse form than the ballad,<sup>1</sup> but it seems hardly probable, when we recollect that Skelton's poetry itself has sometimes ballad affinities.<sup>2</sup> The early 16th century has contributed also considerable material concerning literary and professional balladry,<sup>3</sup> and our earliest printed copies of ballads of every type come from it.

The outlaw ballads just mentioned need no further discussion than that given them in a previous chapter.<sup>4</sup> It is well, however, to state in passing that the same

1—Child mentions that a somewhat similar story is "The Wright's Chaste Wife," by Adam of Cobsam.

2—Cf. chapter 1, pp. 25-26, and notes—this thesis. And also later 4, 142 f. See also Munday and Chettles, Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntingdon, pp. 6, 45 f.

3—There are many passages illustrating what was at this time meant by a ballad. See for example the account in the "Interlude of the Four Elements," quoted in a note to chapter 1, p. 26. note 3—this thesis. There is illustration also in Roy and Barlowe's *Kede me and be nott wrothe* of an actual ballad or balett sung. Of course it is not of the Child type. Barklay has considerable material scattered through his Eclogues, as in his 4th eclogue, for example:

"When your fat dishes smoke hot upon your table,  
 Then laude ye songs, and ballades magnific;  
 If they be merry, or written craftely,  
 Ye clap your handes and to the making harke,  
 And one say to another, Lo, here a proper worke!"

Quoted by Chappell, *Popular Music* 1, 53, Lydgate, Skelton; the romances also furnish material.

In the eclogue Codrus is anxious to hear Minalcas's "old ballades." What he hears is two pieces, called ballads, the first an "extract of sapience," which he stops after four stanzas; and the second a ballad of Hawonde, "His death complayning." Neither has a shred of popularity, and Minalcas gets no reward.

4—Chapter III, of course.



manuscript<sup>1</sup> that contains "Robin Hood and the Potter," likewise contains as its very next piece the interesting rime of "The King and the Barker." Professor Child has declined to give to the latter the status of a popular ballad, though he agrees<sup>2</sup> with Ritson that it is the undoubted original of the "History of King Edward the Fourth and a Tanner of Tamworth," which in its turn is the original of a popular ballad by that name (No. 273). "The ballad," as we have it, was made by abridging the fifty-six stanzas of the history to thirty-nine, with other changes. "Between the 'History' and 'The King and the Barker,'" Child says. Though the former has been freely treated in its remodeling, and has come to us in a mutilated condition, there remain a few verbal correspondences. The "King and the Barker" is hardly to be accredited to the list of ballads. However, it is almost as much of one—though of a very different type—as is the "Interdiabolus et virgo." I must confess that what Professor Child pronounces the popular ballad seems to

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1—This manuscript (University of Cambridge Library, El. IV, 35), according to the printed catalogue of the Library, is the first of two distinct MSS. bound in one volume. It is described as on paper 24 leaves, about 30 lines in each page, handwriting of the early part of the 16th century, mutilated in several places: the orthography corrupt. Eight pieces are listed, of which No. 4 is "The Cheylde and his Stepdame," No. 6, "Robin Hood," No. 7, "The Kyng and the Barker." The two MSS. are now bound separately. Ours is in an excellent state of preservation. The paper is thick and the handwriting bold and legible. It seems all to be the work of one man. The first folios have red strokes for beginning capitals, but there is nothing of the sort after that. The rimes also for the first few pages are bracketed with fancy brackets. Robin Hood begins at the top of folio 14b. It is written neatly, but without ornamentation and without stanza or rime indications. The King and the Barker seems in a somewhat more cramped hand, though the same. It too begins at the top of its page (folio 19b).

2—Child, V, 68 f. He refers to Ritson, *Ancient Popular Poetry*, 1791, p. 57.

me the work of a clever minstrel. The "King and the Barker" is more naïve than this real ballad, and less artful. It has the same style and meter as Gamelyn. There is much dialogue. One stanza is repeated,<sup>1</sup> and for three stanzas<sup>2</sup> there is good case of incremental repetition.

The only other ballad in the Child list is the "Crow and Pie" (No. 111), and of this, sadly enough, there is not much favorable to say. It is found in MS. Rawlinson C. 813, which has been printed in its entirety by Professor Padelford, in *Anglia*, vol. XXXI, pp. 309 ff. The piece, like everything else in its manuscript, is of a very mediocre caliber; but it alone shows any closeness to the Child type. The meter and stanza structure of much of this manuscript collection is not very sure. The verse hobbles and the rime varies in grouping. Much of the material is stallish in tone. Thus, No. 6 is a warning of a soul from hell, precisely in the manner of later stall pieces. Stallish, also, is the warning: "The Lamentatyon of Edward, late Duke of Buckyngham." As to the "Crow and Pie," Professor Child says that it "is not a purely popular ballad, but rather of that kind which, for convenience, may be called the minstrel ballad. It has, however, popular

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1—With a slight variation stanzas 9 and 23.

2—Stanzas 46, 47, 48. To them might be added 44.

With a stombellyng as he rode,  
ye þanner downe he cast,  
The kyng lowke and had god game,  
and seyde, Ser, þon rydyst to ffast.

The kyng lowke and had god game,  
and swore he be Sent John,  
Seche another horsman  
say y neuere none.

Owre kyng lowke and had god bord,  
and sware be Sent Jame,  
Y most nedys lawke,  
and thow were mey dame.

features, and markedly in stanzas 13, 14." To me the piece seems like a working over of popular material. It seems to be that rather than a ballad imitation or a piece with merely some lines and methods borrowed from the general popular type. I believe there are even left evidences of two different styles of verse form. It is not composed in either of the common ballad meters. Every line is supposed to have four beats, and I have not much doubt that its present author intended it to be written in eight-line stanzas with a twelve-line *envoi*. Such best fit the refrain and most of the rime, which runs in good part ababbc. But there are some of the stanzas that are ababeded, as if they had been built on an original four-line basis. There is, however, too much bad poetry in the whole collection to make any conclusion certain.

Passing now to the "Jolly Juggler," we reach very much more interesting material, not that the poem is in itself of any high excellence,—though I think it much better than the "Crow and Pie,"—but because it is always interesting to meet with a possible addition to the Child collection. This ballad has been discovered independently at least three different times. The account is not without interest, because it shows that though it is hard to define a ballad, the latter can be easily identified when a clear specimen is found. In the autumn of 1908, while at this work on ballads, I took occasion to read through the Early English Text Society edition of MS. Balliol 354, which had just appeared. On reaching the "Jolly Juggler" I was immediately aware I had found a ballad. The editor had practically nothing to say about it,<sup>1</sup> and Professor

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1—The editor merely says: "The next piece (98) is narrative again; how the fair baron's daughter was beguiled by a 'joly juggeler.'"

Flügel in *Anglia* had printed it without comment. I therefore thought I had made a discovery, and communicated the fact to Professor Kittredge. His reply was that the poem is undoubtedly a ballad, but that Mr. Sidgwick had previously discovered it, and I learned afterwards from that he had had the same experience as I when he first read it in *Anglia*. He too thought he had discovered a ballad until he read Mr. Sidgwick's prior claim.

"The Jolly Juggler" has been printed now at least four times,<sup>1</sup> and is thus easily accessible. Nevertheless, the interest attaching to it warrants its quotation here in full:

Drawe me nere, draw me nere,  
 Drawe me nere, þe joly juggelere.

Here beside dwellith a riche barons dowghter;  
 She wold have no man þat for her love had sowght her,  
 So nyse she was.

She wold have no man þat was made of molde.  
 But yf he had a mowth of gold, to kiss her whan she  
 wold,  
 So dangerus she was.

There of hard a joly juggeler þat layd was on þe gren,  
 & at this ladis wordis, ywis, he had gret tene:  
 And angrid he was.

He juggeled to hym a well good stede of an old horsbon.  
 A sadill & a brydill both, & set hym self þer-on;  
 A juggler he was.

He priked & pransid both beffore þat ladis gate,  
 She wend he [had] ben an angell was com for her sake:  
 A prikker he was.

He pryked & pransid beffore þat ladys towr,  
 She went he had ben an angell comen from hevyn  
 towre:  
 A praunser he was.

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<sup>1</sup>—It has also been reprinted on pp. 251 ff. of *Early English Lyrics*, 1907.



XX IIIIti<sup>1</sup> knyghtis lade hym in to the hall,  
 & as many squyres his hors to the stall,  
 & gaff hym mete.

They gaff hym ottis & also hay,  
 He was an old shrew, & held his hed a-vey:  
 He wold not ete.

The day began to passe; þe nyght began to com,  
 To bede was browght the fayr jentyll woman  
 & þe juggeler also.

The nyght began to passe, þe day began to sprynge,  
 All the brydis of her bowr, they began to synge  
 & þe cokoo also.

“Wher be ye, my mery maydyns, þat ye cum not me  
 to?

þe joly wyndows of my bowr lok þat you undoo,  
 þat I may see;

For I have in myn armes a duk or ellis an erle.”  
 But when she loked hym upon, he was a blere-eyed  
 churl;

“Alas!” she said.

She lade hym to an hill, & hangid shuld he be;  
 He juggeled hymn self to a mele pok; þe duste fell in  
 her eye;  
 Begiled she was.

God & owr Lady & swete Seynt Johan,  
 Send every gilot of this town such an-oper leman,  
 Evyn as he was!  
 Explicit.

There is no doubt, this is a ballad of the Child type. The tags at the end of each stanza are exceptional, but then they are not necessary to the sense and may have been added by some minstrel or singer. They do not

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1—I read it this way instead of XXIIIIti. Probably to be read “four and twenty.”

particularly fit the general tone.<sup>1</sup> The poem has a story that somewhat suggests the "Jolly Beggar" (No. 279), though it is not the same. Stanzas 5 and 6, and 9 and 10, are especially ballad-like. There is incremental repetition and parallelism of structure. The whole is a vigorous enough piece, quite in the ballad-manner.

From the ballad itself we may well pass to a consideration of the manuscript in which it is found,—for Balliol 354 is as varied and interesting a collection as any manuscript of the early 16th century. It has now in large part, been twice printed, first by Professor Flügel in *Anglia*,<sup>2</sup> and lately by Dr. R. Dyboski for the Early English Text Society.<sup>3</sup> The latter edition has considerable critical material, though it is by no means exhaustive.

MS. Balliol 354, or, as it is more generally called, *Richard Hill's Commonplace Book*, is described by Dyboski as a paper codex in oblong folio (11½x4½ in.). The handwriting of the chief poetical pieces is pretty uniform, and was identified by Coxe<sup>4</sup> (though Flügel thinks without reason)<sup>5</sup> with that of one John Hyde. The only name, however, that occurs in the manuscript itself, is that of its owner, Richard Hill, about whom and his children there are several memoranda, entered apparently by himself. The book consists of 4 + 253 folios. The period of its gradual composition is approximately fixed by some of the private memoranda as

1—Even the tag to stanza 9 ("& þe juggeler also") is not absolutely necessary. Its omission creates a little suspense. The tag to stanza 12 ("Alas! she said") seems to me quite inappropriate.

2—XXVI, 94 ff.

3—Extra series CI, 1907, issued in 1908.

4—Catalogus, Oxonii, 1852.

5—*Anglia*, XXVI, 94-5. I do not see any reason either.

extending over the earlier part of Henry VIII's reign.<sup>1</sup> The book is an interesting example of commonplace book—into which were entered, first, poems and songs which struck a man as worth transcribing and preserving for family use, and secondly, prose notes of a most varied character on anything of interest that he came across. Most of the material in the present manuscript is by no means unique. Thus, according to Dr. Dyboski's notes, the Bodleian MS. Eng. poet. e. l. contains nearly a score of pieces that duplicate poems in the present manuscript. In fact, over a third of the latter's poems are to be found elsewhere in a range of about a score of different collections.<sup>2</sup> The greatest part of the "Sacred Songs and Carols" are found together in the manuscript, and Dyboski thinks they were probably transcribed in one series from a then extant collection.<sup>3</sup> He thinks also that his Nos. 60-63 were transcribed in bulk from a Caxton quarto printed about 1479.<sup>4</sup> He notes about the large selection of tales from Gower's *Confessio Amantis* (which he leaves out), that the lan-

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1—The latest distinct date in the whole MS. is that of the last in a series of annalistic historical notes; it is 1536 (computed). Flügel thought (*Anglia*, XXVI, 188 f.) that since Hill styled himself (fol. 176) servant to Mr. Wynger, alderman of London, that this portion of the MS. must have been written before 1504, for that year John Wynger became Mayor. But Dyboski states on the authority of Dr. Wylie that mayors were only called by that title while they held office. However, Flügel cites from Stowe's *Survey*, 1603, p. 228, that John Wyngar was buried in St. Mary Woolechurch in 1505. This would seem to point that Flügel is practically right. It would hardly seem probable that Hill would continue calling himself servant to Mr. Wynger long after the latter's death.

2—Dyboski has made no lists. Most of the collections has not more than one or two in common. The Sloane MS. 2593 has at least five; English Carols, from a roll in Trinity College (Maitland-Rockstro), has three; Lambeth, S. 306, two.

3—Introduction, p. XVII.

4—Ib. He notes other indications of the sort, *passim*.

guage is modernized not only as to forms and endings, but also in the substitution of words more generally used in Hill's time for such of Gower's as had become obsolete or less intelligible.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Dyboski does not print the whole contents of the book, though everything is described in manuscript order in a valuable table of contents at the end of his introduction.<sup>2</sup> His edition contains everything that is of any moment to us, however, so that we need not go farther. He has classified and rearranged the material under six different heads, but in that we need not follow him.<sup>3</sup> It suffices to say that among other things there are numerous religious songs and carols—particularly Christmas carols,—that there are many moral, and didactic, and historical poems, (often minstrel pieces, no doubt, and much like later stall productions,)—and some few ballads, worldly songs, and humorous pieces. It will probably be best to take up the poems that concern us in the order in which they are found in the manuscript.

It is not until folio 165b that we meet with anything particularly folk-like, but the piece there found happens to be one especially interesting. It follows a "book of courtesy" entitled "Little John."<sup>4</sup> Our poem reads:

Lully, lulley, lully, lulley!

De faweon hath born my mak away.

He bare hym vp. he bare hym down,

He bare hym into an orchard brown. Lully, etc.

1—Ib., p. XXVIII.

2—Pp. XXXIV, ff.

3—1, Sacred Songs and Carols. 2, Religious Poems and Prayers in Verse. 3, Didactic, Moral and Allegorical Poems. 4, Historical Poems. 5, Ballads and Worldly Songs. 6, Proverbs, Sentences and Rules in Verse and Prose.

4—Cf. Early English Text Society, Extra Series, III. The name L. J. seems to be without significance.



In þat orchard þer was an hall,  
 þat was hangid with purpill & pall. Lully, etc.

And in þat hall þer was a bede,  
 Hit was hangid with gold so rede. Lully, etc.

And yn þat bed þer lythe a knyght,  
 His woundis bledyng day & nyght. Lully, etc.

By þat bedes side þer kneleth a may,  
 & she wepeth both nyght & day. Lully, etc.

& by þat beddis side þer standith a stone,  
 "Corpus Christi" wretyn þer-on. Lully, etc.<sup>1</sup>

Professor Flügel interpreted the poem as an allegory of Christ's passion, and his interpretation seems to be very strongly substantiated by a modern traditional carol contributed from North Staffordshire to *Notes and Queries*<sup>2</sup> in 1862. The two poems were compared by Mr. F. Sidgwick in *Notes and Queries*<sup>3</sup> in 1905. In the

1—On reading the verses over again, I am puzzled with the relation of the refrain to the text. Does *he* refer to the falcon? If so, there is surely no suggestion of the Grail story. It is merely an account of how the falcon took her mate to the bed-side of Christ.

2—Third Series, II, 103, by a correspondent signing himself F. T. K.

3—Tenth Series, IV, 181. The carol is quoted in a note to *Early English Lyrics*, p. 357, as follows:

1. Over yonder's a park, which is newly begun,  
*All bells in Paradise I heard them a-ring;*  
 Which is silver on the outside, and gold within.  
*And I love sweet Jesus above all things.*
2. And in that park there stands a hall,  
 Which is covered all over with purple and pall.
3. And in that hall there stands a bed,  
 Which is hung all round with silk curtains so red.
4. And in that bed there lies a knight,  
 Whose wounds they do bleed by day and by night.
5. At that bed side there lies a stone,  
 Which is our blessed Virgin Mary then kneeling on.
6. At that bed's foot there lies a hound,  
 Which is licking the blood as it daily runs down.
7. At that bed's head there grows a thorn,  
 Which was never so blossomed since Christ was born.

My mother used to sing me a song, purely secular, that also

modern version, however, there is nothing corresponding to the first stanza. It is only the latter that seems to suggest any story, though the vividness of the picture may help to contribute. Probably the poem is of the same type as the "I have a zong sister" and the "I have a gentil cook"<sup>1</sup> of Sloane MS. 2593, though if so, it is a far more impressive specimen. Dr. Dyboski thought the work probably fragmentary, and he had confessed that it reminded him strikingly of some features of the Holy Grail legend, as told in the French and German epics on the Quest: "of Perceval's meeting, on his wanderings, with King Amfortas' daughter, then with the King himself, who still looks up to the Graal for healing of his ever-bleeding wound." The parallels would indeed be suggestive if it were not for this modern version. Furthermore, in Wolfram's *Parzival* the Grail is a stone.<sup>2</sup> It is just possible that the poem shows a mixture of tradition and that there is a bit of the Quest legend still in it.

The "Lully, lulley" poem is followed on the same page by a Christmas carol, "Owt of þe est a sterre shon bright," which shows in stanzas 5, 6, and 7 considerable parallelism of structure.

fits in with this type. She learned it from her mother, who was brought up in Canada. The air sounds quaint and old.

1—They differ very materially in their extreme personal reference. Perhaps a nearer approach is a quaint old accumulative song sung by my mother's mother, "Upon a time there was a field," etc.

2—A. Nutt. *Legends of the Holy Grail*, Popular Studies in Mythology and Folk-lore, 1902, p. 18. In the same booklet, it is stated in Irish myth a talisman. The Cauldron of Dagda, from which a company used never to go away unsatisfied, is definitely associated with three other talismans: the sword of Lug, the spear Lug used in battle, and the Lia Fail, or Stone of Destiny.

About twelve folios later there is another poem that begins:

I have XII oxen þat be fayre & brown,  
 & they go a grasyng down by the town,  
 With hay, with howe, with hay!

Sawyste thow not myn oxen, þou littell prety boy?<sup>1</sup>

The first two lines are varied in succeeding stanzas to inform us the oxen "be fayre and whight," "fayre and blak," and "fayre and rede," and that they "go grasyng down by the dyke," "by the lak," and "by the mede." Utter nonsense, every bit of it! and yet it has interesting parallel structure; and it suggests it belongs to the "I have a gentill cook" group. Are these poems the remote ancestors of our modern nursery rimes? The idea is not impossible. Some lines from "The Image of Ypocresye,"<sup>2</sup> a satire not much later, suggest reference to "Goosy, goosy gander." But even this suggestion of nursery rimes does not carry us very far.<sup>3</sup>

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1—Quoted in full in *Early English Lyrics*, p. 250.

2—Printed in *Ballads from Manuscripts*, Ballad Society, pp. 181 ff., from Lansdowne MS. 794. The poem, dated 1533, is a long invective or satire by a layman, after the manner of Skelton. Speaking of the ignorance of preachers, he says, ll. 1556 ff.:

for doctoure bullatus  
 though parum literatus  
 Will brable & prate thus;  
 how Doctoure pomander,  
 As wise as a gander,  
 notes not wher to wander,  
 Whether to meander,  
 or unto menander;  
 For of Alexander  
 Irrefragable haies,  
 he can tell many tales,  
 of many parke pales,  
 Of Butgettes and of males,  
 Of Candy and of Cales,  
 And of west Wales.

This poem has an interesting Robin Hood reference at l. 1530.

3—It seems to me probable that the "I have XII oxen" rime was used for some game.

It does not explain why the poems were composed, or why they were included in a commonplace book instead of other pieces more worth while, such as Child ballads, for instance, if the latter were at all common.

Farther on, immediately following a poem on "The Seven Deadly Sins" (fol. 210a), is written what Professor Flügel has called the pearl of the collection: "The Nutbrown Maid." This of course is not a ballad in the Child sense, but it has generally been treated as one, and has played a conspicuous part in ballad history. Chambers and Sidgwick in an ample note to the poem as printed in their *Early English Lyrics*,<sup>1</sup> have given a list of the principal facts and dates of literary interest. In so far as known, it was first printed at Antwerp in "Arnold's Chronicle" or *Customs of London*, about 1502; (second edition, about 1521.) Dr. Dyboski thinks the poem was probably copied into the manuscript from this source during Hill's stay in Antwerp.<sup>2</sup> That is possible but not necessary to suppose,—for the poem was in circulation as a penny chapbook in 1520.<sup>3</sup> Frequent reference is made to the piece thereafter, but we have no need at present of quoting instances.

Beginning with folio 219b there is a large collection of "Hymns, Songs and Carols." One at least, "The Jolly Shepperd Wat." is of considerable interest for its naïve tone and for the parallelism running through the first few stanzas, thus:

1—Pp. 334 f.

2—Introduction, p. XXX.

3—A full account given in *Early English Lyrics*, note. Wright stated the fact in 1536, as something he had been told. It is number 294 of John Dorne's Day-book, Bookseller in Oxford, 1520. Oxford Historical Society Collectanea, First Series, 1885, Part III. Also not much later there was a close parody written on the poem and published in B. L. by John Scot. Edited and reprinted for the Percy Society by E. T. Rimbault.



The sheperd upon a hill he satt,..  
 The sheperd upon a hill was layd,...  
 The sheperd on a hill he stode.....

Of course he pays a visit to the Christ-child at the birth. It is told with considerable spirit, but it associates itself more naturally with the miracle plays.<sup>1</sup>

Another series of poems are—so Dyboski says—all written together in one hand and evidently at one time, on the last ten pages of the manuscript, (folio 248ff.) Several are to the discredit of women. One, a vulgar piece with a story somewhat like that of the Miller's Tale, is strongly suggestive of balladry in the first two stanzas.

Hogyn<sup>2</sup> came to bowers dore, [repeated]  
 Hr tryled upon þe pyn for love, } [repeated]  
 Hum, ha, trill go bell!  
 Up she rose & lett hym yn, [repeated]  
 She had a-went, she had worshipped all her kyn.  
 Hum, ha, trill go bell! [repeated as before.]

This is somewhat ballad-like, but even if it were more so, no one would quarrel to get it admitted to the type.

The new ballad, "The Jolly Juggler," is found in this same last group of songs (on folio 251). It stands just after a poem against putting trust in women and before a "Holly and Ivy" piece. It is thus near to the end of the collection, and its date of insertion may be regarded as fairly well along toward the middle of the century.

MS. Additional, 31922, of the British Museum, con-

1—F. Sidgwick, printed privately in the form of a B. L. broadside this piece, illustrating it with a French woodcut. It is a beautiful piece of work, on hand-made paper.

2—In 1537 a minstrel or fiddler was examined for singing a song against the Duke of Suffolk. The man's name was John Hogan. It was a political song that reflected, so it was thought, on the Duke. The tune was, "The Hunt is up." Cf. Chappell, *Popular Music*, 53.

tains several poems that show approaches to the ballad. They are distinctly literary, and more interesting for that very reason. The manuscript once belonged to Henry VIII, and dates from his time. A large percentage of the pieces are assigned to authors, many to the King himself, and several to Cornysh, etc. One by the latter is indeed for a few stanzas close to the ballad manner, but it soon drifts into allegory. It reads:

Yow and I and Amyas  
 Amyas and you and I  
 To the green wood must we go, alas!  
 You and I, my life, and Amyas.

The knight knocked at the castle gate;  
 The lady marvelled who was thereat.

To call the porter he would not blin;  
 The lady said he should not come in.

The portress was a lady bright;  
 Strangeness that lady hight.

She asked him what was his name;  
 He said "Desire, your man, madame."

She said "Desire, what do you here?"  
 He said "Madame, as your prisoner."

He was counselled to be brief a bill,  
 And show my lady his own will.

"Kindness," said she, "would it bear,"  
 "And Pity," said she, "would be there."

Thus how they did we can not say;  
 We left them there and went our way.<sup>1</sup>

The manuscript also contains several forester and greenwood pieces and one late example of a *pastourelle*<sup>2</sup>

1—I have quoted this from Chambers and Sidgwick's *Early English Lyries*, p. 56. They normalize the spelling.

2—Probably the *pastourelle* survives to us in the nursery rime beginning, "Where are you going to, my pretty maid?"

that sounds, in spite of its literary tone, as if it might have been influenced by the folk-song. It begins:

“I go to the medowe to mylke my cowe.”

I am not at present aware of any other ballad-like material that would justify discussion here. Songs and song-collections there are in plenty, and ballads of a literary or professional sort, but nothing like the Child ballad. But before closing this section, we must proclaim, though not loudly, the advent of the printed ballad, carol, and chapbook, and make obeisance, since they are to rule, for better or worse, the ballad world for some time to come. Popular literature was not as early in making its appearance in England as on the continent,<sup>1</sup> but we have surviving specimens from the beginning of the 16th century. Printing does not seem to have had any effect on ballads except eventually to lower their dignity and tone. Before the art of printing, ballads had long been written in single sheets. Thus Chappell<sup>2</sup> tells us that “Among the devices at the coronation banquet of Henry VI, (1429,) were, in the first course, a ‘sotiltie’ of St. Edward and St. Lewis, in coat armour, holding between them a figure like King Henry, similarly armed, and standing *with a ballad under his feet*. In the second, a device of the Emperor Sigismund and King Henry V, arrayed in mantles of garter, and a figure like Henry VI, kneeling before them *with a ballad against the Lollard*.<sup>3</sup> And in the third, one of Our Lady, sitting with her child in her lap, and

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1—“*Huth Ballads:*” *Ancient Ballads and Broad-sides*, 1867. Introduction, p. XVI f. It is here stated that France had an extensive literature of a popular character during the last twenty years of the 15th century.

2—*Popular Music*, p. 40.

3—Ritson printed a ballad against Lollards in his *Ancient Songs*, 1790, p. 63.

holding a crown in her hand. St. George and St. Denis kneeling on either side, presenting to her King Henry *with a ballad in his hand.*" Then, too, an internal examination shows that the ballad in manuscripts and those early in print are not much different.

Skelton has the distinction,—and the honor, too, if there is any,—of having published the first surviving stall-ballad. It is his "Ballade of the Scottysche Kyng,"<sup>1</sup> written, and printed, no doubt, in the year 1513. The ballad is a four-page black-letter affair, with a large woodcut at the beginning. The journalistic spirit is as strongly shown in this ballad as in any of the time of Elizabeth or James I. It is against the Scotch King and in favor of the English. Mr. Ashton says of it, that "indeed Skelton was in such haste to sing his pæan, that he evidently acted on the first (and incorrect) version of the victory. It is probable that he did not know of the death of King James: at any rate, he speaks of him all through as living as a prisoner at Norham. When Skelton rewrote the ballad, and published it years after, in 'Skelton Laureate against the Scottes,' he was aware of his anachronism, and altered it. Skelton evidently considered it important to be early in the field." It begins:

Kyng Jamy / Jomy your. Joye is all go  
 Ye sommnoed our kyng why dyde ye so  
 To you no thyng it dyde accorde  
 To sommon our kyng your souerayne lorde.  
 A kyng a somner it is a wonder

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1—A Ballade of the Scottysche Kyng, written by John Skelton, reproduced in facsimile with an historical and bibliographical introduction by John Ashton, London, 1884. In the second chapter of the introduction Ashton gives the romantic history of the piece, in so far as known. In the Garnett and Gosse's *Illustrated History of English Literature*, l. 300, there is a reduced facsimile of the first page of the ballad.



Knowe ye not salte and suger asonder  
 In your somnyngye ye were to malaperte  
 And your harolde no thyngye experte  
 Ye thought ye dyde it full valyauntolye  
 But not worth thre skppes of a pye/. etc.

Not many other pieces have survived to us from the period. We need not repeat what has been said about outlaw material, and besides that, not much that may be called balladry of any sort survives from prior to 1540. At that date there are a number of controversial stall-ballads about Thomas Cromwell to be found in the collection of the Society of Antiquaries.<sup>1</sup>

But stall-ballads must have been in print in considerable numbers, long before. We have already mentioned that the Nutbrown Maid was sold as a penny chapbook in 1520. Our source of information is a day-book of John Dorne, an Oxford book-seller, who recorded his sales from day to day for that year.<sup>2</sup> He sold many ballads and Christmas carols, and some other literature of a semi-popular nature. Unfortunately for ballads and carols, he did not specify names. He sold a "roben hod" for 2*d.*, which must have been the Gest, for his usual ballad price was a half-penny. There are over two score of entries of ballad sales, comprising 169 ballads in all.<sup>3</sup> They were bought throughout the year except for two periods, one from the beginning of May until the beginning of August, the other from the end of August until early in November;

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1—Listed and described in the Society's Catalogue, compiled by Robert Lemon, 1866. The Society has a number of earlier broadsides, but they are in all cases papal and other ecclesiastical indulgences.

2—Edited by F. Madan and published in Oxford Historical Society *Collectanea*, Series 1, Part III, 1885.

3—He made 1851 entries in the book, but the larger part of course are for large works, generally in Latin. The number of sales of ballads was larger than that of any other limited field.

but I doubt if full records of these periods were kept. Ballads were sold right up to Christmas, generally in lots of several at a time. Once as many as twenty-three were sold, and there were other sales of thirteen, twelve, eleven, and on down. He did not begin to sell Christmas carols ("kesmes corals," as he calls them) until after September 9, and then only one at a time. But no doubt, in their case, several carols were printed on a sheet, as the entries seem to indicate, and for which we have additional proof in two black-letter survivals of the period.<sup>1</sup> It is impossible to guess the nature of the ballads sold, though in one case, the fact that two are sold together with the romance "syr hisembras" might indicate that these at least were fairly popular. Of other popular literature in the day-book we have no room to speak. There are a few romances,<sup>2</sup> a few saints' lives,<sup>3</sup> lots of A B C's, and many almanacks and *prognosticons*. Of course most of the works listed are of a more important nature and are in Latin, but they do not at all concern us.

Henry VIII encouraged ballad production,<sup>4</sup> and wrote them himself, so that the author of the *Interlude of the Nature of the Four Elements* had cause to complain that "the most pregnant wits were employed in compiling ballads. while there were scarcely any works of connyng."<sup>5</sup>

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1—Two Douce fragments, one printed by Wynkyn de Worde, 1521. Both reprinted by Professor Flügel in *Anglia*, XII, 585 ff., together with *Bassus*, 1530, a song-book for that part.

2—Such as *Sir Eglamour*, *Sir Isenbras*, and *Robert the Devil*.

3—Such as *Life of St. Katherine*, *St. Margaret*, and *St. Roocke*. Allied is *Trentals of St. Gregory*. Other interesting entries are such as *Mundus*, *My Lord of Misrule*.

4—Chappell (*Popular Music*, l. 49) cites an item from the privy pursers of Henry VII, 1495, Nov. 27, that shows ballads were encouraged in the latter's reign also. To Hampton of Worcester, for *making of Ballads*, in reward £1. 0. 0.

5—This material, quoted in Chappell, *Popular Music of the Olden Time*, l. 252.

But later, when ballads were used against his policy in the Reformation, he tried to suppress them. In 1533 a proclamation was issued to suppress "fond books, ballads, rimes, and other lewd treatises in the English tongue." In 1543 an act of parliament was passed to a similar end. Later in the century, other acts were passed, and that is the reason why, probably, so few ballads of the early period have come down to us, though broadside ballads are a very perishable form of literature under the best conditions.<sup>1</sup>

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1—Chappell, *ib.*, l. 53-54.

## CHAPTER V

### *Preceding Decade and Elizabeth's Reign.*

THE decade just preceding Elizabeth's reign has left us considerable material relating to balladry in both manuscript and printed form. In a previous chapter we may have noted that from the press of Copland there still remains a copy of the "Gest," with an appended Robin Hood play,<sup>1</sup> as well as a copy of "Adam Bell." These must have come from this time or not much later. From the same decade, too, there are numerous copies of stall-ballads in print. If we use the word *ballad* as people of the time did,<sup>2</sup> over a score of printed specimens have survived,—a rather large number, when one considers the perishable medium and the government hostility.<sup>3</sup> They are chiefly to be found, however, in one collection, —that belonging to the London Society of Antiquaries.<sup>4</sup> The specimens fairly represent the stall type and are well distributed over the decade. Several, just like the

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1—Based on two ballads, Robin Hood and the Curtal Friar (123) and Robin Hood and the Potter (121).

2—That is, very loosely.

3—Another edict against ballads was published in Mary's reign. *Popular Music*, p. 55. Chappell quotes from Collier: "Ballads seem to have multiplied after Edward VI came to the throne; no new proclamation was issued nor statute passed on the subject, while Edward continued to reign; but in less than a month after Mary became queen, she published an edict against books, ballads, rhymes, and treatises, which she complained had been 'set out by printers and stationers, of an evil zeal for lucre and covetous of vile gain.' There is little doubt, from the few pieces remaining, that it was, in a considerable degree, effectual for the end in view.

4—This contains thirty or more examples. See the Society's Catalogue. Mr. Lemon's dating is not very certain, and perhaps the number is too large.



group of 1540,<sup>1</sup> belong to a controversial series,—this time between Churchyard and Camell. There are two or three merry ballads and as many moralistic or doleful ones, and one or two on historical events. None need discussion: they are not at all in the traditional manner, though one, indeed, does have a contemptuous reference to Robin Hood.<sup>2</sup> The number and variety are quite sufficient to show us that the stall-ballads of the time did differ essentially from those that went before and after.

The most interesting new material survives to us in manuscript form. "Otterburn" (No. 161), "The Hunting of the Cheviot" (No. 162), and a minstrel piece, somewhat in the ballad style of "Flodden Field," are the direct contributions. It is to be noted that all deal with Anglo-Scottish warfare. The first two are excellent specimens of genuine balladry, and they are supposed to be concerned with the same event. The battle of Otterburn was presumably fought on August 19, 1388.<sup>3</sup> It was not much unlike other border raids, but for some reason it seems to have especially interested the ballad-makers, for there were songs of the battle in both England and Scotland in the 16th century and probably long

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1—See chap. 4, p. 143 (this thesis). Mr. Lemon, in the preface to the Society's Catalogue, p. VI, says that the second series is the last of the kind in the collection. "Controversialists were taught by Martin Marprelate that for the diffusion of their coarse but pungent satire, prose was an easier vehicle than verse, and the printer a more certain disseminator than the minstrel, who, during the reign of Elizabeth, was restrained by law in the exercise of his wandering function.

2—According to Chappell, *Popular Music*, 1. 272, "A Replication to Camels Objection." 1552. No. 23 in the Society's Catalogue. It is by Churchyard. The lines run:

"The most of your study hath been of Robyn Hood:  
And Bevis of Hampton and syr Launcelot de Lake,  
Hath taught you, full oft, your verses to make."

3—Cf. Child III, p. 292.

anterior.<sup>1</sup> Of the two ballads the "Battle of Otterburn" is the older in story though not in grammatical form. In some shape Professor Child thinks it may have been current as early as 1400, though for that we have no direct or indirect proof.<sup>2</sup> "The Battle of Otterburn" survives in six versions, but only one is found in a manuscript of our period, the Cotton MS. Cleopatra, C. IV of about 1550.<sup>3</sup> Except for the ballad the manuscript is of little interest.<sup>4</sup> It is a miscellaneous collection of prose and verse, in English and Latin, and not all in the same handwriting. The ballad is written clearly enough, but in a hand different from that of the piece preceding, though probably the same as the one immediately following, a poem on the vanity of

1—It was given a vivid treatment also in Froissart, Berner's translation, bk. III, chaps. CXXXVII-CXLIII. Globe edition, pp. 370 ff. The chronicler stated: "Of all the battles and encounterings that I have made mention of heretofore in all this history, great or small, this battle that I treat of now was one of the sorest and best foughten without cowardice or faint hearts," p. 734. Child III, 292, note, quotes from Buchanan that the slaughter was "far beyond the usual proportion to the *no's* engaged," and that it probably pleased Froissart because "he saw in it a fight for fighting's sake, a great passage to arms in which no bow was drawn, but each man fought hand to hand; in fact about the greatest and bloodiest tournament he had to record." No doubt it was the same features that made the fight so popular everywhere.

2—Child III, 293. ". . . It would be against the nature of things that there should not have been a ballad as early as 1400. The ballad we have is likely to have been modernized from such a predecessor, but I am not aware that there is anything in the text to confirm such a supposition, unless one be pleased to make much of the Wednesday of the 18th stanza."

3—British Museum.

4—It is a very plain, unadorned MS. Several of the earliest pieces deal with York and Scotland, all in an ecclesiastical way. No. 9 in the MS., however, is a history of part of Henry V's reign. No. 10, names of mayors and sheriffs of London from 1419 to 1444. No. 11, on St. Dunstan. No. 12, Battle of Otterburn. In the latter part of the MS. are several prophecies. In the Museum Catalogue of Cotton MS. 55 items are listed. There are besides a number of letters in the MS. unlisted.

worldly affairs. It is written in short lines<sup>1</sup> very near to the left margin, so near in fact that on one page some of the writing has been pared off in binding. There is considerable margin at the right, and here, as if to attract the eye or impress the memory, some of the proper names, number of contestants, etc., are repeated in a similar hand, but with a different ink. It seems probable that the ballad was copied and preserved for its historical information. The author pretends to accuracy, hinting that the information was obtained from "the chronicle."<sup>2</sup> But in this the author seems to have been bluffing and the facts are not to be trusted. The ballad is distinctly English but not narrowly partisan, and there is about it all a delightfully noble air of generous impartiality.<sup>3</sup>

"The Hunting of the Cheviot" (No. 162), in the earlier and far better version, is preserved to us in a manuscript of not much later date,—the MS. Ashmole

1—No stanzas marked.

2—Battle of Otterburn, Child, No. 161, st. 35.

But nyne thowzand, ther was no moo,  
The cronykle wyll not layne;  
Forty thowsands of Skottes and foure  
That day fowght them agayne.

Judging from Froissart we may say that the "chronymle" did "layne." St. 4323 suggests that perhaps the author was a minstrel, but if so he was of a nobler sort than the Richard Sheale we shall soon discuss.

"Mynstrells, playe vp for your waryson,  
And well quyrt it schall be."

3—Version A is considerably removed from the simple ballad. None of the versions can be said to be simple, strictly, but A is hardly as simple as B or C. In A there is some literary description, as sts. 14 and 15. There are altogether too many details. Stanza 17, while adding to the heroic qualities of the piece, is surely literary. Sts. 51 and 52 again have literary qualities. However, it is not necessary to suppose that the composer was courtly or learned. Personally, I am inclined to think he was some kind of a minstrel.

48, of the Bodleian Library. Hume of Godscroft<sup>1</sup> thought the ballad "a mere fiction, perhaps to stir up virtue; yet a fiction whereof there is no mention either in Scottish or English chronicle." But Professor Child replies that the ballad can scarcely be a deliberate fiction.<sup>2</sup> The singer, while uncritical, supposed himself to be dealing with facts. Enough correspondences to the ballad of "Otterburn" are pointed out to make it appear probable that it and Cheviot are founded upon the same occurrence, "The Hunting of the Cheviot" being the later version of the two, and following in part its own tradition, though repeating some portions of the older ballad.<sup>3</sup> There is considerable pseudo-historical lore in the piece,<sup>4</sup> and fiction and fact are intermixed bewilderingly. The singer, however, does not mention the chronicles, but refers once to popular tradition as his authority.<sup>5</sup> From the reference to James as the Scottish king,<sup>6</sup> it is clear that the ballad was not composed before 1424, but how much later, it is impossible to say. The grammatical forms in the piece are much older than in "The Battle of Otterburn," and the style, while vigorous, is crude. In the form we have it, it is certainly considerably older than the date of its manuscript.

This introduces us at once to the question of authorship. The material in MS. Ashmole 48 seems to have

1—Quoted by Child III, 303, 304.

2—III, 304.

3—Child III, 304. Professor Child has noted numerous parallel stanzas.

4—Ib. 304.

5—Cf. st. 652. Old men that knowen the grownde well yenoughe call it the battell of Otterburn.

6—St. 59. 1424 was the year James I actually began ruling.



been collected by a minstrel named Richard Sheale.<sup>1</sup> Five out of the seventy-six pieces in the book, the minstrel claims as his own, and the "Hunting of the Cheviot" is one of them. Sheale, in another of his poems,<sup>2</sup> tells us he is a minstrel living near Tamworth, and probably a dependent on the Earl of Derby. His wife—so he says—gained money by going about to markets and fairs, such as those of Lichfield and Atherstone, selling articles made of silk and linen, and other merchandise.<sup>3</sup> By these and other means, chiefly borrowing,<sup>4</sup> they had been able to get together £60, a large sum at that time, which was destined for the payment of certain debts. Few who carried the harp were then suspected of possessing anything worth stealing. He therefore felt safe in carrying the money with him across Dunsmore Heath, but alas! he was held up there and robbed. His distress, however, was relieved by his friends, particularly the Earl of Derby. Richard Sheale must therefore have been as capable as the average man of his calling, and his song-book may be looked upon as a fair example of the average minstrel's stock in trade. Outside of the "Hunting of the Cheviot," the collec-

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1—I follow here Thomas Wright, who has edited the whole MS. for the Roxburghe Club, under the title "*Songs and Ballads*, with other short poems, chiefly the reign of Philip and Mary," 1860. He has an extended introduction.

2—Poem No. XLVI. Sheale says his memory after losing his money was so decayed that he could neither sing nor talk. The verse shows he is upset. It is not nearly so good as the earlier poem by him. Much of it is hard to scan. Part quoted by Chappell in *Popular Music*, 46.

3—Minstrels did the same thing down into the 19th century.

4—Sheale states that "people did not believe it was possible for a Minstrel so much money to have, and indeed, to say the truth, he never did have so much money of his own, but he had friends in London who had loaned him nine or ten pound." Sheale, as a woman would say, just like a man laid his having a debt to his wife, because she had had such a big trade and took in many a pound.

tion is not inspiring. It is written—according to Mr. Wright, who has edited the whole of it—mostly in one hand,<sup>1</sup> and was made up during the reign of Queen Mary and the first few years of that of Elizabeth.<sup>2</sup> About half of the pieces are ascribed to authors, most of them otherwise unknown. Sponar and Wallys have the greatest number assigned, but there is one piece by Lord Vaux, and one, the earliest surviving, by William Elderton<sup>3</sup> of later ballad fame. One interesting production by Wallys begins:<sup>4</sup>

Our Jockye sale have our Jenny, hope I,  
 Our Jockey sale have our Jenny;  
 I am well able for to cry,  
 Our Jocky sal have our Jenny.

It sounds distinctly Scotch, an interesting fact; and besides, the piece has a description of a dance woven into it. A good example of a minstrel ballad is the account of the fight of the Darcy brothers upon the Wests.<sup>5</sup> But none of this material approaches to the

1—Professor Skeat has described the MS. as a scribble, with the spelling very unsatisfactory.

2—Since the “Hunting of the Cheviot” is No. 8, in the collection, it is to be presumed it was written down near to the oldest date limit, and long before Sheale was robbed. The pieces earlier are mostly assigned, but this the first which he claims as his own. The next piece he claims is No. 18, and the next No. 46. No. 18 begins:

“Remember man thy frayle estate, repent thy follies past/  
 Refrayne thy mynde from world woes, for deth approchythe fast.”  
 This is a poem very different from “The Hunting of the Cheviot,” but not so bad as the later pieces. It lends a little color to his claim that after the robbery his mind grew feeble. It might be possible, therefore, that the Cheviot piece represents his better days. However, the language does not show his own period, and the most that can be said for him is that he has taken some version and worked it over.

3—A newe ballad entytuled, Lenton stuff, for a lyttell munny ye maye have inowgh; To the tune of the Crampe, No. LX.

4—No. XXXVI, p. 119 f., in Wright’s edition.

5—No. XVII, p. 46, Wright.

slightest degree the Child type. And yet Richard Sheale claimed the "Hunting of the Cheviot" as his own. Mr. Wright,<sup>1</sup> the late editor, and Hearne,<sup>2</sup> the first editor, were disposed to grant the claim, but it is manifestly absurd. Sheale may have modified the piece, and have introduced enough changes to satisfy his own conscience but not to satisfy us. The facts, that the language belongs to an earlier generation, and that there are traces here and there of the old Judas meter,<sup>3</sup> are alone sufficient to throw Sheale's claims out of court. But he has besides written four other pieces in the manuscript—all of such vastly inferior merit, that it is almost inconceivable that the same man could have written also the "Hunting of the Cheviot." A quotation of just a few lines from the one that most nearly approaches our ballad should suffice to make that clear. I take a few lines here and there from the "Epithe on the Countess of Darbe."<sup>4</sup> It begins:

O Latham, Latham, thowe moste lamente,  
for thowe haste loste a floware.

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1—Introduction, p. VIII.

2—Guilielmi, Neubrigensis Historia, 1719, p. LXXXII. Wright thinks Hearne never saw the actual MS. The latter's actual words are, "Out of an old MS. communicated to me by a learned friend." "Communicated" most likely means the whole MS. was communicated. See a quotation in the Century Dictionary for a precisely similar use of the word. At least Hearne's transcript is very accurate, judging by Wright's printed copy, and does not look like second-hand work. Then too Hearne says: "I find that this Rychard Sheale was living in the year 1588, and that he was the Author of many other Poetical Things." Where he got this information about this date, I do not know, but as to the other pieces, he may have found them in this very MS. The Crab Tree poem, No. LIII, is dated at the beginning 1558. Is it not possible that Hearne's date is a misreading, or a misprint?

3—The latter is not conclusive at all. Indeed there is a Judas line in the "Epithe on the Countess of Darbe," soon to be quoted; cf. "The noble yerle of Darbe," p. 154. Perhaps also "For Margaret the countess of Darbe," p. 155.

4—No. LVI, "The Hunting of the Cheviot," is only No. VIII.

For Margret the countes of Darbe in the yerthe hathe  
bylthe her bowar.

Dethe, the messenger off Gode, on her hathe wrought  
his wyll.

Whom all creatures muste nedys obay, whethar the be  
good or ylle.

Ther ys no emperowre, kyng, nor prince, his power  
can withstande,

But, when he commys, the muste obaye, no remedye  
can be fande.

A little farther on we have a number of separate paragraphs, each bidding farewell. "Farewell, my good lord and husband," said she, and much more; "Farewell, dowghetar Margret;" "Farewell Lady Mary, Jane, Lord Stanley, jentillmen and jentillwomen." Each has a farewell in a number of lines in a way very suggestive of the minstrel piece of Flodden Field. None of this of course bears the slightest resemblance to the "Hunting of the Cheviot," Farther on, however, the language seems almost reminiscent:

Nowe ys this noble lady dede, whom all the world dyd  
love;

She never hurte man, woman, nor childe, I dar well say  
and prove;<sup>1</sup>

She never hurte non off her men, in worde nor yete in  
dede,

But was glade allway for them to speake such tym as  
the had nede.

Latham allway bothe nyghte and day may morn and mak  
great mon,<sup>2</sup>

For the losse of this lady dear, whosse vertus wear well  
knowene.

The noble yerle of Darbe, I pray Gode save his lyffe,

1—Such padding as this is very common later on in the "Epithe." It is common also in the ballad of Otterburn: cf. st. 8<sup>2</sup>, 17<sup>2</sup>, 18<sup>2</sup>, 20<sup>2</sup>, 32<sup>2</sup>, 34<sup>2</sup>, 40<sup>2</sup>, etc.

2—Cf. "Hunting of the Cheviot," st. 58.



Hathe preparede a noble buryall for his moste lovyng  
wyffe.

Full ryally he hathe broughte here hom, lyk a man of  
mickle fame.<sup>1</sup>

This noble countes of Darbe his wyffe, Margret was  
here nam.

To Armeskyrke was her body brought, and ther was  
wrapped in clay;

Many was the wepyng ye<sup>2</sup> that ther was sen that daye.

And so on to the prayer at the end. This is just enough  
reminiscent to suggest a parody of the Child ballad  
rather than another example. "The Hunting of the  
Cheviot" may have been composed by a minstrel, but if  
so, he was a better man than Richard Sheale.<sup>3</sup>

We have mentioned a poem of "Flodden Field" as  
of this decade,<sup>4</sup> but it is clearly a minstrel product quite  
different from the true ballad of the name,<sup>5</sup> which is  
met with almost half a century later. It was no doubt  
preserved for its historical subject-matter.

In 1549 appeared the *Complaynt of Scotlande*,—a  
very important work. Its birthplace, as the title implies,  
was somewhere in the northern kingdom, perhaps near  
the border. The book contains the text of no ballad, and

1—Cf. *ib.* 63<sup>2</sup>, 27<sup>2</sup>.

2—Cf. *ib.* 57<sup>3</sup>.

3—Professor Child does not deny that the work may be the  
work of a minstrel; he merely denies it to Sheale.

4—That is Flügel, "Zur Chronologie der englischen Balladen,"  
*Anglia* XXI, 320, assigns it that possible date. He states: "Dies  
MS., ohne datum und verweis bei Child, ist in John Stowe's hand:  
ca. 1550 eher später." However, it is to be said that MS. Har-  
leian 367 is a miscellaneous collection and not all by any means  
by Stowe. There are even verses by Tom Coriat and verses on the  
fall of Bacon. In my own judgment I should not say that  
"Flodden Field" is in Stowe's handwriting. I think it a much  
coarser hand, though it is written neatly enough on lines. I should  
say it is a different hand from that of the piece before and after,  
but I think it is in the same handwriting as a poem on Lady  
Bessie, fol. 89. Flodden Field is in folio 120.

5—No. 168, in Deloney's *Jack of Newberry*. (1579.)

the only things in it that concern us are three remarkably long lists of tales, songs and dances, that were supposed to have helped make up the entertainment of a group of shepherds. There are several ballad titles in the lists, and that there are not more is probably due to the fact that the author and his shepherds are all very literary folk and the latter are not by any means the simple peasants they are supposed to be. Our section of the book is nothing more or less than the outline of a prose pastoral, and quite as artificial as if it were in verse. We are not therefore at liberty to deduce from it any far-reaching conclusions as to the prevalence of ballads at this time, though it does seem fair to suppose that ballads of the Child type were not known in very large numbers to people of the literary sort. For an interesting account of the genius of the *Complaynt* as well as for the complete list of tales, songs, and dances, the reader is referred to Mr. J. A. H. Murray's edition of the book for the Early English Text Society.<sup>1</sup> We shall have quite enough to do here to treat of the possible ballads.

The shepherds narrate first of all a vast number of tales, of which forty-eight are mentioned by name. These range in subject from translation of Ovid to poems or tales by Chaucer, Barbour, Douglas, and Dunbar, and from romances like *Ypomedon* or *Bevis of Southampton* to such nursery-like stories as "The taiyle of the reyde eyttyn vitht the thre heydis," or "The tayl of the giantis that eit quyk men."<sup>2</sup> A large majority have been identified by Dr. Furnivall, or his

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1—Extra Series, XVII, 1872, 1873. There is an introduction of CXXIII pp.

2—The author of the *Complaynt* tells us that some of the material was in prose and some in verse; some were stories and some "flet taylis."

predecessors, and are found in his edition of Captain Cox.<sup>1</sup> Many are well known. But in this first list there are five titles that have been thought to belong to ballads. Of these, the first (No. 9 in the list), "On fut, by forht, as I culd found," is certainly not of the Child type, though it may well be a minstrel or literary ballad. The next (No. 15), "The tail quhon the kyng of est mure land mareit the kyngis dochtir of vest mure land," is more doubtful to decide upon. Dr. Furnivall, following Leyden, asks, "Can this be the ballad 'King Estmere' (No. 60), whose earliest version we have now only in a cooked copy by Percy?" "Fause Foodrage" (No. 89) has also been suggested as the possible original. The title surely seems to belong to a ballad, but not necessarily to anything that we have. Professor Child's comment is: "There has been considerable speculation as to what this tale might be, and as to what localities Estmure Land and Westmure Land might signify. Seeing no clue to a settlement of these questions, I pass them by, with the simple comment that no king of Estmure Land marries the king of Westmure Land's daughter in this ballad (Fause Foodrage) or any other."<sup>2</sup>

No. 24, "Arthour knyecht, he raid on nyecht, vitht gyltin spur and candil lycht," has been thought by Dr. Furnivall to be another ballad. Leyden, in his own

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1—*Captain Cox, his Ballads and Books*; or Robert Lancham's Letter. Ballad Society, 1871. The list, however, as annotated is republished in Mr. Murray's edition of the Complaint, pp. l. XXIII ff. In giving credit the edition of Dr. John Leyden must not be neglected. It belongs to the earlier days of ballad scholarship, to be sure, but it contains for all that a very large quantity of valuable explanatory and illustrative material, much of it not to be found elsewhere.

2—Ballads, II, p. 296.

excellent edition of the *Complaynt*,<sup>1</sup> says that he often heard lines somewhat like these repeated in a nursery tale. While his quotation is not very close, I must confess that the words of the title suggest the nursery more than anything else.<sup>2</sup> No. 30 in the list, "Robene hude and litil ihone," is the ballad title without question. So also, I think, is No. 32, "The tayl of the zong tamlene," though the first surviving version of the ballad does not go back much beyond the 19th century.<sup>3</sup> Out of this list of forty-eight tales there are, then, five that have been mentioned as possibly Child ballads, but only three are probably of the type.

But our group of the shepherds, not having exhausted their desire for artistic entertainment, began "to sing sueit melodius sangis of natural music of the antiquite. The foure marmadyns that sang quhen thetis vas mareit on month pillion, thai sang nocht sa sueit as did thir scheiphyrdis . . . for thir scheiphirdis excedit al thir foure marmadyns in melodius music. in gude accorddis and reportis of dyapason prolations, and dyatesseron."<sup>4</sup> The author remembers thirty-eight titles, and these are only "sum of the sueit sangis" he heard. Not so many from this list have been identified, but still there is a goodly number. The first song is the well-known "Pastime with good company" of Henry VIII. In the list there are several ballad possibilities. The first, No. 62. "Brume, brume on hill." is without doubt the begin-

1—Chick my naggie, chick my naggie!

How mony miles to Aberdegie?

This eight, and eight, and other eight,

Will no win there wi' candle light.

These are all the lines of the nursery tale he can remember.

2—They certainly do not suggest to me a ballad.

3—Johnson's Museum, 1792. Communicated by Robert Burns. We shall meet with Tam Lin several times shortly.

4—Murray's Edition, p. 64. E. E. T. S. E. S. XVII—XVIII 1873.



ning line of the song-foot quoted in Wager's comedy, "The longer thou livest, the more fool thou art."<sup>1</sup> As we shall soon find, it may just possibly belong to the ballad of "Broomfield Hill" (Child, No. 43).

No. 74 is "The battle of the hayrlau," very probably the early traditional ballad on the subject. The only traditional verses we now have (Child, No. 163) were not obtained until the 19th century. The "ballad" much current in the 18th century is not at all of the traditional type and may have been an out-and-out concoction of Ramsay. No. 75 is styled "The hunttis of chevet," and must have been a version more or less similar to our ballad by that name. No. 81 is entitled "The perssee and the mongumrye met." This seems to be from a Scotch version of the "Battle of Otterburn" (Child, No. 161). In texts B and C, both Scotch, there is a line corresponding to this title,<sup>2</sup> and we may add that in B the main narrative interest is not in the general battle but in the meeting of these two men. No. 82 reads "That day, that day, that gentil day." It does not seem very clear what should be the reason for laying so much emphasis upon a "gentil day," and it has been suggested<sup>3</sup> that for "gentil" we should read "dreadful"; thus making this another reference title for the "Hunting of the Cheviot," which has just

1—Published about 1568. See chap. 5, p. 172 f. of this thesis.

2—Cf. Herd's version and Scott's version.

3—Furnivall credits the suggestion to Child, and says the idea was accepted by Hales. What Child really said is: "'That day, that day, that gentil day,' is in the *Complaynt of Scotland* (II, 101), not, we imagine, as the title of a ballad (any more than 'The Persee and Mongumare met,' (ante, p. 19) but as a line by which the song containing it might be recalled." This statement is in Prof. Child's first collection of ballads for the series of *British Poets*. Nothing of the sort, I believe, is to be found in the standard edition. And furthermore, I cannot see that Child's words can be fairly construed to mean all that Furnivall suggests.

such a line at the end of the first fit. But such an explanation is not satisfactory.<sup>1</sup> For, why this ballad should be mentioned again, and by a line from this particular place, is no more clear than the first reading. It is just possible we have here a ballad parody. At least several of these songs were godfied at about this time<sup>2</sup> and I see no reason why some might not have been given the opposite sort of treatment. Out of the thirty-eight pieces that are named in this second part of the list, there are, then, only three that one may be fairly sure are ballad titles.

But these shepherds have not yet exhausted themselves, though evidently they were getting stiff in the legs, for having finished the songs they began to dance in a ring. “Euyrie ald scheiphyrd led his vyfe be the hand, and euyrie zong scheiphird led hyr quhome he luffit best. There vas viij scheiphyrdis, and ilk ane of them hed ane syndry instrument to play to the laif. the fyrst hed ane drone bag pipe, the nyxt hed ane pipe maid of ane bleddir of ane reid, the thrid playit on ane trump, the feyrd on ane corne pipe, the fyft playit on ane pipe maid of ane gait horne, the sext playit on ane recordar, the seuint plait on ane fiddil, and the last plait on ane quhissil . . . i beheld neuyr ane mair dilectabil recreatione. for fyrst thai began vith tua

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1—Furnivall does not believe it either. He adds in his note that Danney, *Ancient Scottish Melodies*, 1838, runs this line together with the preceding, but that would mean that there must have been still another ballad, which Furnivall thinks is no easier than supposing 82 to refer alone to some lost ballad. He mentions also that material reasons also argue against Danney's supposition.

2—D. Laing, in his edition of the *Gude and Godly Ballates* first put together not much later, mentions seven such religious parodies. The Nut-Brown Maid was godfied also at about this time. Chevy Chase was frequently parodied in the 18th century, perhaps earlier.

bekkis and vitht a kysse. euripides, iuuenal, perseus, horasse, nor none of the satiric poiettis, quhilkis mouit ther bodeis as thai hed bene dansand quhen thai pronuncit ther tragiedeis, none of them kepit moir geometrial mesure nor thir scheiphyrdis. . . . it vas ane celest recreation to behald ther lycht lopene, galmondng, stendling bakuart & forduart, dansand base dansis, pauuans, galzardis, turdions, braulis and branglis, buffons, vitht mony vthir lycht dancis, the quhilk ar ouer prolix to be rehersit."<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless the author sees fit to rehearse thirty of the dance names. A few of them are well known from other sources, but the number is proportionately smaller than for either of the other lists. Three have ballad names in their title. No. 92 is "Robene hude;" No. 93 is "Thom of lyn," for each of which we have already had a "tayl" in the first list. No. 108 is "Thonne ermistrangis dance." All these may well be the airs that belonged to the traditional ballads.<sup>2</sup> But it is clear, after reading the preliminary list of musical instruments, that in this company of cultivated shepherds there would be nothing so primitive as dancing to the mere words of the song.<sup>3</sup>

Such are the titles of ballads and ballad possibilities in the three long lists of the *Complaynt of Scotland*. We may wish that the shepherds had been less learned and more real, but after all, we have not, ourselves, much cause to complain. This is much the richest early list that has survived to us. There is but one other that can compare with it in length or interest, and that is the equally famous list—a quarter of a century later—of Captain Cox's books and ballads.<sup>4</sup>

1—Murray's Ed., pp. 65-66.

2—Tom of lyn is the most doubtful of the three.

3—Of course, the ladies may have contributed singing.

4—Cf. Ch. 5, 179 ff. There is an interesting list in the Cockerly

Passing on now to the next period, we do not find conditions in the reign of Elizabeth—or at least not at the beginning—differing materially from the periods preceding. Mr. Chappell tells us that during this long reign “music seems to have been in universal cultivation, as well as in universal esteem. Not only was it a necessary qualification for ladies and gentlemen, but even the city of London advertised the musical abilities of boys educated in Bridewell and Christ’s Hospital, as a mode of recommending them as servants, apprentices, or husbandmen. . . . Tinkers sang catches; milkmaids sang ballads; carters whistled; each trade, and even the beggars, had their special songs; the bass-viol hung in the drawing-room for the amusement of waiting visitors; and the lute cittern, and virginals, for the amusement of waiting customers, were the necessary furniture of the barber’s shop. They had music at dinner; music at supper; music at weddings; music at funerals; music at night; music at dawn; music at work; and music at play.”<sup>1</sup> But one is not to be misled by this description into the belief that the age has presented us with a rich contribution to balladry. The second half of Elizabeth’s reign has, indeed, left us several traditional ballads, but the first half has preserved for us never a one. Perhaps for this, the very intensity of the musical cultivation may be largely responsible. During the reign of Henry VIII the most pregnant wits had been employed in compiling ballads,<sup>2</sup> and at

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Sow, but nothing of a ballad nature is there mentioned. Romances and literary poems frequently have short lists, but nothing of interest to balladry unless it be a reference to Robin Hood or Adam Bell. The Cockelbie Sow is to be found in Hazlitt’s reissue of Laing’s *Early Popular Poetry of Scotland and the Northern Border*, 1895, vol. 1, 179.

1—Popular Music of the Olden Time, 1855, vol. 1, p. 98.

2—Ib., p. 252.



least one royal manuscript of the time of Henry<sup>1</sup> shows a pronounced influence of traditional poetry. But in the time of Elizabeth music seems to have developed in other directions. Mr. Chappell tells us: "No line of demarkation could be more complete than that between the music of the great composers of the time, and what may be termed the music of the people. . . . Musicians held ballads in contempt, and the great poets rarely wrote in ballad meter."<sup>2</sup>

For some-such reason as we have suggested, the first half of the reign of Elizabeth is of not much importance in the history of balladry. Perhaps the main change to note is the growing commercialism of the stall type,—not that there had not been numerous stall-ballads printed before, and not even that there had not been previously more or less professional ballad-writers. From as early as the 15th century there is preserved to us an epitaph on a ballad-man.

"Here lyeth under this marbyll ston,  
Riche Alane, the ballid man;  
Whethar he be safe or noight,  
I reche never, for he ne roght."<sup>3</sup>

1—Cf. chap. 4, pp. 139-40 of this thesis.

2—Popular Music, 1, 105. He adds: "Perhaps the only instance of a tune by a well-known musician of that age having been afterwards used as a ballad tune, is that of *The Frog Galliard*, composed by Dowland." This is, of course, no traditional ballad. In fact, Chappell uses popular not in the Child sense at all. With him it means current among the people. Mr. Chappell also says: "The scholastic music of that age, great as it was, was so entirely devoted to harmony and that harmony so constructed upon old scales that scarcely anything like tune could be found in it—I mean such tune as the uncultivated ear could carry away."

In the whole of the first volume of Chappell's work only ten ballads found in the Child collection are given any extended treatment, though there are many times that number of other songs treated.

3—Wright and Halliwell, *Reliquiae Antiquae*, 1845, vol. II, p. 179. From MS. Harleian, 665, folio 294.

But probably in the reign of Elizabeth stall-ballads increased in number and in commercial tone. During the first decade the names of about forty printers, from whose presses were issued ballads, appear in the registers of the Stationers' Company, and other names of ballad-printers are met with which are not to be found in the registers.<sup>1</sup> But unfortunately we have nothing to compare with this list in the reigns preceding. However, the number of printers then was not negligible. In the collection of the Society of Antiquaries, though many of the ballads are without imprint, and a number of others belong to two rather narrow personal controversies, there are from 1540 to the reign of Elizabeth sixteen names of publishers of popular broadsheets.<sup>2</sup> The growing commercialism of ballads is perhaps best evinced by the number of broadsheets about monstrosities and strange news. The Huth collection contains nearly a dozen broadsides descriptive of monstrous children and pigs and fish, each generally accompanied with a picture. No less than five belong to the year 1562.<sup>3</sup>

A considerable number of stall-ballads have survived to us from the first half of Elizabeth's reign. There are about a dozen broadsheet songs or ballads in the collection of the Society of Antiquaries.<sup>4</sup> There are a few at least in the Pepys.<sup>5</sup> Mr. Chappell mentions as in the Roxburghe collection seven printed in Edinburgh

1—*Ancient Ballads and Broad-sides*, 1867, introduction, p. XXIII.

2—Cf. the ballads as listed in the Society's Catalogue.

3—*Ancient Ballads and Broad-sides*, 1867, passim, and *Intro.*, p. XXX.

4—See their Catalogue, 1866.

5—G. Daniel, *Elizabethan Garland*, p. X: "A few were very ancient and were put forth by the well-beloved Richard Laut, of black-letter memory, and that 'courteous dame' the celebrated Widow Teye."

in 1570, shortly before the date when every endeavor was made to silence the Scottish-ballad muse in Scotland.<sup>1</sup> And there are a few other scattered copies of the period. But by far the largest number were obtained in a windfall of the early 19th century. This is the famous Suffolk collection, which seems originally to have numbered from 175 to 200 ballads.<sup>2</sup> The editor of the Huth part of the collection<sup>3</sup> in his preface thus states the early history: "Between thirty and forty years ago (that is, reckoning from 1867) a person at Ipswich, well known in the neighbourhood as a collector of old books and antique relics, bought for a trifle of one of the rustics attending the market, what was described by the vendor as a 'bundle of old songs.' They were wrapped up in a skin of parchment, and tied with whipeord. It may be questioned whether the purchaser was fully aware of the prize he had secured, for he sold the entire parcel shortly afterwards to the late Mr. George Daniel for a sum of money very much below its real value. This 'bundle of old songs' turned out to be the only large collection of printed English ballads and broadsides of the reign of Queen Elizabeth ever discovered. A small number of them were allowed by Mr. Daniel to pass into the hands of Mr. Thorpe, the bookseller, in exchange, I believe, for some early editions of Shakespeare. These subsequently became the property of Mr. Heber, and are now in the

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1—The Roxburghe Ballads, vol. 1, Intro., pp. III-IV.

2—Ib., p. IX.

3—The Huth collection is a part of the Suffolk collection; 79 of the ballads were printed in a very limited edition for the Philobiblon Society: *Ancient Ballads and Broadsides*, published in England in the 16th century, chiefly in the earlier years of the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Reprinted from the unique original copies, mostly in the black-letter, preserved in the library of Henry Huth, Esq., London. Printed by Whittingham and Wilkins, 1867.

Christie-Miller collection. All the rest were collected into a folio volume, which was purchased by me at the dispersion of Mr. Daniel's library in 1864."

Mr. Huth has published seventy-nine of them, chiefly from the earlier years of the reign of Elizabeth. There is absolutely nothing in his collection at all like the Child ballad. I think there is not even anything in the ballad quatrain. Some of the poems, I know, have long and complicated stanzas.

From the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, the registers of the Company of Stationers may be used to throw considerable light upon ballad publication.<sup>1</sup> We do not find entries for all the surviving ballads,<sup>2</sup> but we do for a goodly number. The entries are especially valuable in dating ballads without full imprint,<sup>3</sup> and in giving early dates for such as may have survived only in late editions. A few Child ballads are entered from year to year as a sort of testimonial to us that they did occasionally get into print, but the number is very limited. All that have the least chance of being related

1—Edward Arber, *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London, 1554-1640*. Privately Printed, 1875. The Company was incorporated in 1556, but it had existed as a brotherhood or craft very long before that. As early as 1403, there had been a similar society of manuscript producers. There had been practical copyright before the incorporation. See the *Catalogue of the Collection of the Society of Antiquaries, the ballads before 1556*.

2—A few in the *Collection of the Society of Antiquaries*, for instance, No. 47. A Song between the Queen's Majestie and Engl. Impr. by William Pickering, 1558; Not registered, though P. has several licensed this year and afterwards. Thus Arber, 1, 74, 1, 78. Also 53. A Prayer of Supplication, 1560, March 23, Impr. by Wm. Herforde. No entry in Stationers' Register to correspond. Arber gives him in a list of London publishers (1553-1640) (V, Index, p. XCIV) as having published without making any entries. And his date there is given as 1553?-1559. I think there are others.

3—They show some of Mr. Lemon's dates in his catalogue for the *Society of Antiquaries*, to be in error. Thus 58.



to traditional ballads have been noted by Professor Child at appropriate places in his collection. The year 19th July, 1557—9th July, 1558, is the first for which there is any extended list of entries.<sup>1</sup> In this year there are thirty-three items specifically named ballads, thirty-one of which, however, are in single entry. There is besides a little other material of a popular nature. "Adam Bell" is licensed to King John as a book,<sup>2</sup> and in another entry, the same man is licensed to print "syr Lamwell" and "a Jest of syr Gawayne." The most interesting entry is the group of thirty-one ballads licensed to John Wallye and Mistress Toye.<sup>3</sup> They seem fairly representative of the taste of the age. Here is the list: "Women be beste / when thay be at Rest, A mayde that wolde mary with a servynge man, I will have a Wydow yf ever I marye, Whan Ragynge love, The Daye of the larde ys at hande, who lyve so merry and make such sporte / as they yat be of the poorest sorte, A ballett of Thomalyn, betwene a Ryche farmer and his Doughter, An Epytaph upon the Death of kynge Edwarde ye Sexte, a ballett of the talke betwene ij maydes, a ballett of good wyves, The mournynge of Edwarde Duke of Buckynham, a ballett of the lover and of the byrde, Tomorrow shalbe my fathers wake, a ballatt of a man that wolde be vnmaryed agayne, of the Ryche man and poore Lazarus, A ballett of the a b c of a preste Callad Heugh Stourmy &c, A ballytt of (?) made by Nycholas Baltroppe, The aged mans a b c, A ballett of Wakefylde and agrene, A ballett of a mylner, A ballett god sende me a wyffe that will Do as I saye, A ballett I will no more go to the ploughe

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1—Arber, 1, 75f.

2—Ib. 1, 79.

3—Ib. 1, 75.

with a nother new ballett annexed to the same, A ballett of admonyssion to leave swerynge, A ballett for my solas, A ballett in wynters Juste Retorne, A ballett yf ever I mary I will mary a mayde, A ballet then and in those Dayes then I saye then knaves that be now wilbe comme honeste men, A ballet yt was a man in age truly, A ballett the Rose ys frome my garden gonne, and in ballettes yf Care may Cause men crye, The sorrowes that Doth increase." In the list there are only two probable ballads, "Thomalyn" and "Wakefylde and agrene." It is possible that the account "of the Ryche man and poore Lazarus" is another, but it is quite as likely that it is a special stall-ballad production.<sup>1</sup>

The next year not many ballads are entered as licensed. A single lot of seven make up most of the number.<sup>2</sup> Owyn Rogers is fined two or three times for printing without license, and once XX d. "for pryntinge of halfe a Reame of ballettes of another mans Copye by waye of Desceate."<sup>3</sup> In the same year one or two other ballad publishers are fined.<sup>4</sup> It is not reasonable to suppose that these were the only ballads published during the year. Nor are there entered many ballads for license the next year, 1559-1560, and perhaps no fines for lack of license. But there is a statement at the close of the year that shows it may have been only the exceptional ballad—one that for some reason had to pay a fee—that was regularly en-

1—There are several stall-ballads about Bible stories to be found in the Roxburghe collection. Compare Elderton's ballad "The Constancy of Susanna," vol. 1, p. 190, Chappell, and "The Story of David and Berseba," 1, p. 270, Chappell.

2—Ib., 1, 96. To William Redle and Rychard Laute.

3—Ib., 1, 101.

4—"John kynge ys fyned for that he Ded prynte the nutbrowne mayde without lycense, iis vj d." Arber, 1, 93.

tered in the registers. The statement was first published in Mr. Collier's Extracts:<sup>1</sup>

“The nombre of all suche Copyes [of books] as was lefte in the Cubborde in our Counsell chambre at the compte gyven by Mr. Loble and Mr. Duxsell as apereth in the whyte boke for that yere *anno* 1560 [14 July, 1559-5 July, 1560] . . . . XLIIII.”

“Item in ballets the same Daye . . . . vij iiijxx and xvj.” That is, in this accounting there had appeared 796 ballads and 44 books. Unfortunately the “white book” has been lost, but it is not necessary to suppose that the 796 means that many ballad titles or imprints.<sup>2</sup> Still the number gives us every reason to suppose there were many ballads published during the year. Perhaps, also, not every ballad printer was made to register his wares, for in Arber's list of London publishers from 1553 to 1640<sup>3</sup> there are over thirty names of men who, before 1580, avowedly published in the metropolis printed matter without registering the same at the Hall.<sup>4</sup>

Of other ballad entries up to 1580, there are not many that need concern us. In the year 1560-61 John Sampson is licensed to print “a ballett of The Lady Jane” and another of “The Lamentation of quene Jane.”<sup>5</sup> Perhaps one or both may have to do with the ballad in the Child collection, “The Death of Queen

1—Extracts from the Registers of the Stationers' Company, Shakespeare Society, 1, 28.

2—Cf. Arber, 1, 143.

3—Transcript, vol. V, p. lxxxii ff. I did the counting.

4—Many of these were foreigners. It is also to be noted for broadsides that there were numerous pieces published without imprint. Probably many of these were unlicensed.

5—Arber, 1, 151, 152.

Jane" (No. 170).<sup>1</sup> In 1562-3 there is a ballad of "Robyn Hod" licensed to John Alde.<sup>2</sup> "The best one would expect of this would be a better copy of some later broadside," is Professor Child's comment.<sup>3</sup> In 1564-5 Owyn Rogers is licensed to print "a ballet intituled The Blende Harper," and the next year a license is given to Lucas Haryson to print "a ballet intituled The Blynde Harpers, with the Answer."<sup>4</sup> It would be a hazardous conjecture even to identify the first of the two entries with the Scotch "Lochmaben Harper" (Child No. 192),<sup>5</sup> and the second seems out of the question. There were too many blind harpers in London.<sup>6</sup> A "book" entitled "The story of Kynge Henry the iijth and the Tanner of Tamowthe" was licensed to William Greffeth late in 1564.<sup>7</sup> It was no doubt one of the numerous king and peasant stories of which "King Edward IV. and the Tanner of Tamworth" (No. 273) is the ballad representative. A similar story, "A merry Songe of a Kinge and a Shepherd," was licensed to Richard Jones, Sept. 25, 1578.<sup>8</sup> The northern rebellion of 1569 called forth a great number of stall-ballads. Almost a score are entered in the registers to various printers.<sup>9</sup> A few of the pieces have survived. There is one, for instance, by

1—However, in 1562-3 John Tysdale has the license to print a "lamentation of the ladye Jane made sayinge my fathers proclamation now I must lose my hede." Arber, 1, 209.

2—Arber, 1, 204.

3—Arber, 1, 260.

4—Arber, 1, 294.

5—Many Englishmen might consider it offensive, it being told as a joke on one of their late kings.

6—Arber, 1, 264.

7—Arber, 2, 338.

8—Arber, 1, 404-6, 407-9, 413-15.

9—No. 60, in their Catalogue, p. 20: "Newes from Northumberland." All that I have seen of it is to be found in the few lines there quoted.



William Elderton still preserved in the collection of the Society of Antiquaries.<sup>1</sup> It is not to be supposed that it has any likeness to the Child type. We do have one Child representative of this rebellion. It is the Percy MS.<sup>2</sup> ballad of the "Rising in the North" (No. 175). While it is the work of a minstrel, it is the work of a minstrel well acquainted with other ballads of the Child type. It uses that as a model.

The William Elderton, just mentioned, is the representative "ballad-writer" of the period. Several of his ballads have survived,<sup>3</sup> as well as a few contemporary allusions, generally derogatory.<sup>4</sup> The Stationers' Register contains a document concerning him in 1570.<sup>5</sup> It concerns one of his ballads entitled *Doctor Stories Stumbling into Englonde*. The Queen's ministers found that while "the substance thereof seemed to cause therewith a certain zeale and good meaninge towardes the ffurtherance of trewe Religion and defaceing of Papestrye, yet did they find that some partes of the same did particularye tōuche by name certeyne psonages of honour and reputation

1—Chappell, *Popular Music*, v. 1, p. 108: "As minstrelsy declined, the harp became the common resource of the blind, and towards the end of the reign of Elizabeth harpers were proverbially blind:—'If thou'lt not have her looked on by thy guests, Bid none but harpers henceforth to thy feasts.' " Gilpins, *Skialetheia*, 1598: "There were many ballads about blind harpers, and many tricks were played upon them, such as a rogue engaging a harper to perform at a tavern, and stealing the plate, 'while the unseeing harper plays on.' "

2—Of the next century, of course.

3—Several are mentioned in the life in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. I do not know that the list aims to be complete.

4—Compare the passage quoted in Chappell's *Popular Music*, I, 107. Also the satirical ballad by William Fulwood to be found in Collier's collection of "Old Ballads," for the Percy Society, 1. His red nose and tipping propensities are generally emphasized.

5—Arber, V, p. lxxvi.

tending also to the descreditt of some prences with whom the Queen's Matie standeth presently in terms of amytie." The ballad was therefore to be withdrawn and copies already dispersed to be diligently called in. It was probably not the only experience Elderton had of the sort.

In 1570-71 William Pekerynge was licensed to print "a ballett, Dyves and Lazarus,"<sup>1</sup> and the same ballad is licensed to H. Carre in 1580.<sup>2</sup> This may possibly be a version of the traditional ballad of the name, but there is no certainty. We may, however, be practically sure of another entry for the year 1580. On Oct. 6, Master Walley got a license for "The Lord of Lorne and the false Steward" with two other ballads. The first is without doubt the Child ballad of the name (No. 271). With this we exhaust the lists of the Stationers' Company of all possible Child ballad entries down through the year 1580. Our harvest has not been a very rich one. It is, however, thoroughly characteristic of all gleanings saved from the first half of the reign of Elizabeth.

About 1568 we have some so-called ballad material quoted in a play, but it is not much more satisfactory. In W. Wager's "very mery and pythie commedie, called The longer thou livest, the more foole thou art,"<sup>3</sup> Moros is the fool who well justifies the play's title. At the beginning he enters, "counterfaiting a

1—Arber I, 436.

2—Ib. II, 376.

3—A very mery and Pythie Commedie, called The longer thou livest, the more foole thou art. A myrrour very necessarie for youth, and especially for such as are like to come to dignitie and promotion: As it maye well appeare in the Matter folowyng. Newly compiled by W. Wager. Imprinted at London, by Wyllyam How for Richarde Johnes: and are to be solde at his shop under the Lotterie house.—n. d. Bl. L. Brit. Mus.

vaine gesture and a foolish countenance, Synging the foote of many Songes, as fooles were wont." Here in a condensed form is what he sang :

Brome, Brome on hill,  
 The gentle Brome on Hive hill :  
 Brome, Brome on Hive hill,  
 The gentle Brome on Hive hill,  
 The Brome standes on Hive hill a.

Robin, lend to me thy Bowe, thy Bowe,  
 Robin the bow, Robin lende to me thy bow a :

There was a Mayde come out of Kent,  
 Deintie love, deintie love . . .  
 Fayre, propre, small and gent.  
 As euer upon the grounde went,  
 For so should it be.

By a banke as I lay, I lay,  
 Musinge on things past, hey how.

Tom a lin and his wife, and his wiues mother,  
 They went over a bridge all three together ;  
 The bridge was broken, and they fell in :  
 "The Deuil go with all ! " quoth Tom a lin.

Martin Swart and his man, sodledum, sodledum . . .

Come ouer the Boorne, Bessie . . .

The White Doue sat on the Castell wall,  
 I bend my Bow, and shoote her I shall,  
 I put hir in my Gloue, both fethers and all.  
 I layd my Bridle upon the shelve ;  
 If you will any more, sing it your selfe.

*Discipline* : O lorde, are you not ashamed,  
 Thus vainly the time to spende ?

*Moros*: I have twentie mo songs yet,—  
 A fond woman to my Mother,  
 As I war wont in her lappe to sit,  
 She taught me these and many other,  
 I can sing—song of Robin Redbreast,  
 And my litle pretie Nightingale,  
 There dwelleth a iolly Foster here by  
                   west;  
 Also, I come to drink som of your  
                   Christmas ale.  
 When I walke by myselfe alone,  
 It doth me good my songs to render.  
 Such pretie thinges would soone be gon,  
 If I should not sometime them remem-  
                   bre.

It is doubtful, however, if this be not vain boasting,<sup>1</sup> for later he and three of his companions, Idleness, Incontinencie, and Wrath (it may be remarked in passing that his servants are Pastime, Pleasure, and Robin-hoode)<sup>2</sup> try seriously to sing a song with the following results:

*Moros*: Before you go let us have a song,  
 I can retche up to sing sol fa and past.

*Idleness*: Thou hast songes good stoare sing one,  
 And we three the foote will beare.

*Moros*: Let me stody it will come anone,  
 Pepe la, la, la, it is to hye there,  
 So, ho, ho, and that is to lowe,  
 Soll, soll, fa, fa, and that is to flatte,  
 Re, re, re, by and by you shall knowe,  
 My, my, my, how saye you to that.

1—Idleness says of *Moros*:

Tell him one thing twenty times,  
 And he will forget it by and by God wot,  
 Yet can he sing songes and make rymes.

2—On being introduced to *Wrath* as "*Master manhode*" *Moros* by mistake calls him *Master Robinhode*. This misremembering of names is a stock comedy element in the play.



*Idleness:* Care not for the true but what is thy  
 song,  
 No remedie thou must first beginne.

*Incontinence:* I will be gone if you tarry long,  
 Whan we knowe how we shall come in.

*Moros:* I have a pretie tytmouse,  
 Come picking on my to,

*All iiii the same:* Gossuppe with you I purpose,  
 To drinke before I go.

*Moros:* Litle pretty nightingale  
 Among the braunches greene,

*All iiii the same:* Geve us of your Christmasse ale,  
 In the honour of saint Steuen.

*Moros:* Robyn readbrest with his noates,  
 Singing a lofte in the quere,

*All iiii the same:* Warmth to get you frese coates,  
 For winter then draweth nere.

*Moros:* My bridle lieth on the shelve,  
 Yf you will have any more,  
 Vouchsafe to sing it your selfe,  
 For here you haue all my stoare.

*Wrath:* A song much like thauthour of the same,  
 It hangeth together like fethers in  
 the winde.

*Moros:* This song learned I of my dame,  
 When she taught me mustardsede to  
 grinde.

The first and second attempts of Moros are enough alike in their fragmentary character to justify a suspicion against Moros' claim to a large song repertory.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>—It will be noted that of his twenty songs, he elaborates "Robyn Readbrest," and "the litle pretty nightingale," and perhaps, "I come to drink some of your Christmasse ale." Also the two medleys end in practically the same way.

At least the author of the piece had no intention of being complimentary either to Moros or to song-lore. Several of the fragments seem to belong to very popular songs. Some have had a long currency. Professor Child quotes Mr. Halliwell-Phillips as saying that there was still<sup>1</sup> an immense variety of songs and catches relating to Tommy Lin known throughout the country. And Martin Swart was referred to by Skelton.<sup>2</sup> "Brume, brume, on hill" was mentioned also in *The Complaynt of Scotlande*,<sup>3</sup> and we shall find it mentioned again in the list of Captain Cox's ballads.<sup>4</sup> But there is very little probability that any of the pieces known by Moros were ballads of the Child type. Professor Child himself has denied any connection for the Tom a lin,<sup>5</sup> and he has practically done that for the "Brome. Brome, on hill."<sup>6</sup> For the latter it is to be noted that

1—That is in the 19th century. Compare also the following:

Byran O'Lin, and his wife, and wife's mother,

All went over a bridge together.

The bridge was loose, and they all tumbled in,

"What a precious concern!" cried Byran O'Lin.

—Halliwell Nursery Rhymes, Percy Society.

I found the next in a Mother Goose book published in Boston, 1876.

The two gray Kits, / And the gray Kit's mother, / All  
went over / The bridge together. / The bridge broke down, / They  
all fell in, / May the rats go with you, / Says Tom Bolin.

—Mother Goose's Pocket of Pleasure.

2—Skelton, With hey, troy lo, whip here Jak / Alumbek sodyl-  
dum, syllorym ben,

Curiously he can both counter and knak, / Of Morton  
Swart and all his merry men.

Quoted by Dr. Furnivall in a note, Captain Cox, Introduction,  
p. CXXVII f.

3—Cf. chapter 5, p. 160, note 2.

4—Cf. chapt. 5, p. 180.

5—"There is no connection between the song and the ballad beyond the name: the song is no parody, no burlesque, of the ballad as it has been called." Child, 1, 340.

6—In Scott's version there is a reading in one place of Hive hill (A8). "A more sanguine antiquary than the editor," says Scott, "might perhaps endeavor to identify this poem, which is of undoubted antiquity, with the 'Broom, broom on hill' mentioned

none of the six versions of the "Broomfield Hill" (No. 43), with which it has been identified, have preserved any refrain, though the ballad was still afloat through the first half of the 19th century. Of course it would only be a refrain that Moros' fragment could represent.

We have not space for more than a reference to Scotch balladry of the time. There seems to have been considerable interchange of material between England and her northern sister, as is shown by many a ballad and song collections and lists.<sup>1</sup> But, unless it should be the early copy of the "Gest of Robin Hood,"<sup>2</sup> there is no specimen of a Child ballad that has come to us from a Scotch source, either up to this time or until much later. In 1567 was published the first surviving edition of the "Gude and Godlie Ballatis."<sup>3</sup> It is made up in part of religious songs made over from worldly popular songs, but there is nothing in it to show any influence of the Child type of ballad. In 1568 George Bannatyne got together his famous manuscript collection of Scotch

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. . . as forming part of Captain Cox's collection." Scott, *Minstrelsy*, v. 330-33. Prof. Child comments: "Assuredly 'Broom, broom on hill,' if that were all, would justify no such identification, but the occurrence of Hive hill both in the burden which Moros sings and in the 8th stanza of Scott's ballad (A), is a circumstance that would embolden a very cautious antiquary, if he had received Hive hill from tradition and was therefore unaffected by a suspicion that this locality had been introduced by an editor from the old song." 1, p. 390.

1—For instance, the *Complaynt of Scotland* has at least seven songs that are either English, or common to England and Scotland; cf. Leyden, *Complaynt*, p. 277. Two are "Pastance with gude companie," and "Hunt is-up." "The Captain Car," that we shall come to in the next chapter, is an English ballad on a Scotch subject. In the Ifuth collection there are two Scotch broadsides by Sempill. Other examples might be noted.

2—A is bound up with ten other pieces in a volume in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh. The best qualified judges are not agreed as to the typographical origin.

3—The best edition is that of A. F. Mitchell for the Scottish Text Society, Edinburgh, 1897.

poetry.<sup>1</sup> It is an invaluable storehouse and he called it a "Ballet-buik," but it is learned and literary and there is nothing of the purely traditional style in it. In August, 1579,<sup>2</sup> two poets of Edinburgh, (William Turnbull, Schoolmaster, and William Scott, notar,) were hanged for satirical ballads,<sup>3</sup> and in October of the same year the Estates passed an Act to suppress bards, minstrels, and singers, or "sangsters."<sup>4</sup> This act seems not to have been repealed, and it must have been fairly successful in putting an end to stall-balladry in Scotland. Very few specimens in broadsheet form have come down to us.

In England down to 1580 there is but one other im-

1—Edited by Daniel Laing, Edinburgh, 1824. It is being re-edited by the Hunterian Club.

2—In 1574 there had been an edict for licensing ballads: "The press was not likely to be a friend to the Regent, and the Regent, therefore, was not a friend to the press. At this date he induced the Privy Council to issue an edict that none tak upon hand to emprint or sell whatsoever book, ballet, or other work without ys being examined and licensed under pain of death and confiscation of Goods." Chambers' Domestic Annals of Scotland, 1, 94.

3—Chambers' Domestic Annals, 1, 126: "'Twa poets of Edinburgh, remarking some of his [Morton's] sinistrous dealing, did publish the same to the people by a famous libel written against him; and Morton hearing of this, causit the men to be brought to Stirling, where they were convicted of slandering one of the King's councillors, and were there baith hangit. The names . . . They were baith well beloved of the common people for their common offices.' H. K. J.—'Which was thought a precedent, never one being hanged for the like before; and in the meantime, at the scattering of the people, there were ten or twelve despiteful letters and infamous libels in prose, found, as if they had been lost among the people, tending to the reproach of the Earl of Morton and his predecessors.' Mag. R.—At the fall of Morton less than two years after, when he was taken prisoner and conducted to Edinburgh Castle—as he past the Butter Frou, a woman who had her husband put to death at Stirling for a ballad entitled *Doff and dow nothing* (as much as to say: "Sport and be at your ease"), sitting down on her bare knees, poured out many imprecations upon him.' "

4—Chappell, Roxburghe Ballads, 1. His authority is Chambers' Domestic Annals.



portant contribution to the subject of balladry, and that is the list of ballads and books of Captain Cox,<sup>1</sup> the picturesque and ardent lover of old story and song. The list is found in an extremely interesting letter by one Robert Laneham, a London mercer, to a certain Master Humfrey Martin. Laneham describes the visit of Queen Elizabeth to her favorite, and Laneham's patron, the Earl of Leicester, at Kenilworth Castle in 1575: "The castle itself, its grounds and appointments, the pageants presented before the Queen, as well as an ancient minstrel with a solemn song,<sup>2</sup> prepared for her but not shown to her, are all described in this letter with great gusto." It is in this same sprightly narrative that we have the list of Captain Cox's books and ballads.<sup>3</sup>

"But beware, keep bak," says Laneham, "make room noow, heer they cum! And fyrst, Captain Cox, an od man I promiz yoo: by profession a Mason, and that right skilfull, very cunning in fens, and hardy az Gawin; for his tonsword hangs at his tablz eend: great ouersight hath he in matters of storie: For, az for King Arthurz book, Hunn of Burdeaus, the foor suns of Aymon, Bevys of Hampton, the squyre of lo degree, the knight of courtesy and the Lady Faguell, Frederik of Gene, Syr Eglamour, Syr Tryamour, Syr Lamwell, Syr Isenbras, Syr Gawyn, Olyver of the Castl, Lucre and Eurialus, Virgils life, the castle of Ladiez, the wid-

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1—Laneham's letter has been reprinted and fully edited by Dr. Furnivall for the Ballad Society, 1871.

2—It is "K. Ryence's Challenge" found approximately in Percy's Reliques, Wheatley's ed., London, 1891, III, p. 25.

3—Quoted by Furnivall at pp. XII f. of his edition, and in his text at pp. 28 f. Captain Cox and Laneham's letter were remembered locally long after the time of Queen Elizabeth. "The Masque of Owls," of B. Jonson, was presented at Kenilworth by the Ghost of Captain Cox mounted on his hobby-horse, 1626. Laneham's letter is echoed in the piece many times.

ow Edyth, the King and the Tanner, Frier Rous, Howleglas, Gartantua, Robinhood, Adambel Clim, etc., The Churl and the Burd, The Seaven wise Masters, The wife lapt in Morels skin, The sak full of nuez, The seargeaunt that became a Fryar, Skogan, Collyn cloout, The Fryer and the boy, Elynor Rumming, The Nutbrooun maid, with many moe then I rehearz heere: I beleeve hee have them all at hiz fingers endz.

“Then in philosophy both morall and naturall, I think he be az naturally overseen: beside poetrie and Astronomy, and oother hid sciencez, as I may gesse by the omberty of hiz books: whear-of part az I remember, The Sheperdz kalender, The Ship of Foolz, Danielz dreamz, The booke of Fortune, Stanz puer ad mensam, The hy way to the Spittl-house, Julian of Brainfords testament, The castle of Love, The booget of Demaunds, The hundred Mery talez, The book of Riddels, The Seauen sororz of wemen, The proud wives Pater noster, The Chapman of a peniworth of Wit. Beside hiz auncient playz (four mentioned), And heerwith Doctor Boords breviary of health. What should I rehearz heer, what a bunch of ballets & songs, all auncient: az Broom broom on hill, So wo iz me begon, trolly lo, Over a whinny Meg, Hey ding a ding, Bony lass upon a green, My bony on gave me a bek, By a bank az I lay, and a hundred more, he hath, fair wrapt up in Parchment. and bound with a whipcord. And az for Almanaks of antiquitec. . . . To stay ye no longer heerin, I dare say hee hath az fair a library for theez sciencez, & as many goodly monuments both in proze & poetry. & at afternoonz can talk az much without book, az ony Inholder betwixt Brainford and Bagshot, what degree soeuer he be. . . .

“Captain Cox can march on valiantly before.” . . .

He was leading the procession for the Coventry play, an old historical Hock-Tuesday affair commemorating an ancient massacre of the Danes, a play that of course had a sham battle in it.

I have been fuller in this quotation than in that of the Complaynt of Scotland, because it seems a more genuine list. Dr. Furnivall has divided the contents into sixty-two items, and he and his friends and predecessors have succeeded in identifying a very large proportion, especially among the titles of the first set. There we find two undoubted Child ballads, "Robin Hood" and "Adam Bell," and perhaps another, "The King and the Tanner." There is also the "Nutmown Maid," no ballad but often accounted one, and the "merry jest," "The wife lapt in a Morels skin," which seems to have been the progenitor of a Child ballad (No. 277) of a somewhat similar name.<sup>1</sup> Of course none of these were mentioned by Laneham as ballads. Of those that he does specifically call "ballets and songs," there is not one that seems at all likely to be of the Child type. And as for the "hundred more, he hath"—"all auncient" and "fair wrapt up in Parchment, and bound with a whipcord,"—like the Suffolk collection regained in modern times,—there is room, of course, for difference of opinion, but I should be very much surprised if there were more than two or three other Child ballads, and if they were different from those we already know of from other sources. The ancientness means nothing as to type. The reign of Henry VIII would be quite early enough, and the vast bulk of the songs and ballads of that age were far different from the Child ballads.

Other material of the first half of the reign of Eliza-

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1—"The Wife wrapt in Wether's skin."

beth, we may dismiss briefly. There are other lists that might be cited, but they would add nothing to our stock of information. The most important is by a Puritan signing himself E. D., who wrote, in 1572, a book with a title beginning: "A brief and necessary instruction."<sup>1</sup> From these words it may be guessed that his list is hostile and includes "Robin Hood" and "Adam Bell" among a number of idle, vain, childish, and wanton works.

There is also some descriptive material to show us the status and condition of pipers and minstrels of the time, but there is nothing that would connect them with Child balladry. There is a lengthy description of a minstrel in Laneham's letter.<sup>2</sup> It pictures him vividly, his dress, which seems to have been better than the usual, his thirsting after applause, which he did not get, his getting tripped up in his facts by a mem-

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1—The list has been quoted in part several times. H. R. D. Anders, *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, XL, pp. 228-9, has published the fullest account.

2—Mary, syr, I must tell yoo: Az all endeuoour waz too mooue mirth & pastime (az I tolld ye): éeuen so a ridiculous deuise of an auncient minstrell & hiz song waz prepared to haue been proffered, if méet time & place had béen founnd for it. Ons in a woorshipfull company, whear, full appointed, he recoounted his matter in sort az it shoould haue been vtred, I chaunsed too be: what I noted, heer thus I tel yoo: A parson very méet séemed he for the purpose, of a xlv. yéers olld, apparelled partly as he woold himself. His cap of : his hed séemly rounded tonster wyze: fayr kemb, that with a sponge deintly dipt in a littl capons greaz was finely smoothed too make it shine like a Mallard's wing. Hiz heard smugly shauen: and yet hiz shyrt after the nu trink, with ruffs fayr starched, sleeeked, and glistening like a payr of nu shoos: marshalld in good order: wyth a stetting stick, and stout, that euery ruff stood vp like a wafer: a side gooun of kendall green, after the freshnes of the yéer noow, gathered at the neck with a narro gorget, fastened afore with a white clasp and a keepar close vp to the chin: but easily for heat too vndoo when he list: Séemly begyrt in a red caddiz gyrdl: from that a payr of capped Sheffield kniuez hanging a to side: Out of hiz bozome drawne foorth a lappet of his napkin, edged with a blu lace, & marked with a trulooue, a hart, and A. D. for Damian: for he was but a bachelor yet.



ber of the audience, and the song he partly sang. All this is interesting reading, but his song is the "King Ryence's Challenge" found in Percy's Reliques.<sup>1</sup> To Laneham's account we might add Bulleyn's<sup>2</sup> and Gosson's,<sup>3</sup> if we were particularly interested in minstrelsy for itself. But as it is, we had best pass them by, and confine ourselves to the oft quoted but still readable tribute of the noble Sidney<sup>4</sup> to the powers of one old ballad,—most likely, the "Hunting of the Cheviot."

Sir Philip has been asking what type of verse displeases the objector to poetry. Is it the Pastoral, or

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Hiz gooun had syde sleeuez dooun to midlegge, slit from the shooulder too the hand, & lined with white cotton. Hiz doobled sleeuez of blak worsted, vpon them a payr of poynets of towney Chamblet laced a long the wreast wyth blu threedden points, a wealt toward the hand of fustian anapes: a payr of red neatherstocks: a pair of pumps on hiz féet, with a cross cut at the toze for cornz: not nu indéede, yet cleanly blakt with soot, & shining az a shoing horn.

About hiz nek a red rebond sutable too his girdl: hiz harp in good grace dependaunt before him: hiz wreast tyed to a gréen lace, and hanging by: vnder the gorget of hiz gooun a fair flagon cheyn, (pewter, for) siluer, as a squier minstrel of Middelsex, that trauaild the cuntrée this soommer seazon vnto fairz & worshipfull mens hoousez: from hiz chein hoong a Schoochion, with mettall & cooler resplendant vpon hiz breast, of the auncient armez of Islington.

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1—Wheatley Ed., London, 1891, III, p. 25. The text is not exactly the same.

2—William Bulleyn in a Morality called: "A Dialogue both pleasant and pietyfull, wherein is a goodly regimen against the fever pestilence," etc., 1564. Quoted by Chappell, *Popular Music*, 82. "There is one lately come into the hall, in a green Kendal coat, with a yellow hose, a beard of the same colour, only upon the upper lip, a russet hat with a great plume of strange feathers; and a brave scarf about his neck; in cut buskins. He is playing at the *trea trippe* with our host's son, therefore he playeth trick upon the gittern, daunces *Trenchmore*, and *Heie de Gie*, and telleth news from Terra Florida."

3—Stephen Gosson, "The School of Abuse," 1579, pp. 26-7. Arber Reprint. Also, "An Apologie of the Schoole of Abuse against Poets, Pipers, Players, and excusers," 1579. Arber Reprint.

4—Sir Philip Sidney, *An Apologie for Poetrie*, (written 1580?) London, 1595. Arber Reprint.

the Elegiack, or the Comic, or the Tragic? "Is it the Liricke that most displeaseth, who with his tuned Lyre, and well accorded voyce, giveth praise, the reward of vertue, the vertuous acts who gives morall precepts. . . . Certainly I must confess my own barbarousnes, I never heard the olde song of *Percy* and *Duglas*, that I found not my heart mooved more then with a Trumpet: and yet is it sung but by some blinde Crouder, with no rougher voyce, then rude stile: which being so evill apparrelled in the dust and cobwebbes of that uncivill age, what would it worke trymmed in the gorgeous eloquence of *Pindar*?"

We may pass his comparison of the ballad and *Pindar*. Later ballad enthusiasts seem to have taken from it a hint to try to prove that ballads and works of antiquity are not unlike in methods of treatment.<sup>1</sup> But there will be enough of that later on.<sup>2</sup>

Professor Child thought that "Sidney's commendation was fully justified by the quality of 'The Battle of Otterburn,' but was merited in even higher degree by 'The Hunting of the Cheviot,' and for that reason alone he thought the latter might be the ballad Sidney had in mind."<sup>3</sup> He thought Sidney must have heard it in a form much older than the one that has come to us. He even doubted that to Sidney the version we have would have seemed a song of an uncivil age, two hundred years anterior. "It would give no such impression even now, if chanted to an audience three hundred years later than Sidney." It is hard to differ with Professor

1—Sidney may not have been the first to suggest such a comparison, but no doubt his words on the subject had the widest currency. Cf. Gasson, *Schoole of Abuse*, Arber reprint, pp. 26, 27.

2—See especially *The Spectator*, Nos. 70, 74, etc., and other early 18th century discussions.

3—Child, *Ballads*, III, 305.

Child safely, but I feel compelled to do so on this point.<sup>1</sup> Whether it sounds old or modern depends largely on the way in which it was chanted. The old grammatical forms,<sup>2</sup> the crude syntax,<sup>3</sup> the occasional lines in the Judas meter,<sup>4</sup> the rude rhythm, all seem to me to be traits that might appeal to one fastidious, now or in Sidney's time, as "cobwebbes of an ancient and uncivil age." It seems to me most probable that Sheale's copy represents fairly, though no doubt with many individual alterations, the current minstrel version of this grand old traditional ballad.<sup>5</sup> But of course this is merely opinion, and in it I may be entirely wrong.

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1—It may be remarked in passing that of course I am not the first to hold a different view. Sheale's copy seemed quite crude enough to Percy to equate outright. The 18th century of course was ultra fastidious, but in its way was it more so than the courtly writers of the reign of Elizabeth?

2—Of which Professor Child gives an extended list.

3—Cf. the first stanza, for instance: "The Perse owt off North-  
ombarloude, and avowe to God mayd he," etc.

4—St. I, 3, 5, 2, etc.

5—The later stall version was certainly based upon a copy essentially like that of Sheale's.

## CHAPTER VI

### *Elizabeth's Reign (Continued).*

WITH the second half of Elizabeth's reign, the dawn and morning are past, and the glorious noonday sun shines full upon us. There is no need of emphasizing the literary majesty of the period. Everyone knows, by reputation at least, what an age of divine accomplishment it was—an age most extraordinary not alone for a few supreme productions, but quite as much for the almost infinite variety of the literary output. In so richly versatile an age we should expect to find some contributions to traditional balladry. Nor are we disappointed.

Of course the gleanings are practically negligible if we compare them with what has been left in some other fields of work. Ballads of no sort were in very high repute. Dozens of references from men of all stations could be cited against them. Stall-balladry, in so far as authorship was concerned, had become a trade carried on by men none too respectable in the community. Even a man like Deloney—and he was as good as any—was thought little of by men of station.<sup>1</sup> The stall-ballads often pandered to the lowest instincts. They fed an ignorant, news-loving public with crude wonders, with sensational accounts of base

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1—R. Sievers, in his life of Deloney (*Palaestra*, XXXVI, Berlin, 1904,) uses as his basis for such a statement the letter of Stephen Slony, mayor of London, to Lord Burghley, 1598. This mentions his work for the silk weavers (Jack of Newbury) and states that he has been writing a ballad containing "vain and presumptuous matter, bringing in her highness to speak with her people in dialogue in very fond and undecent sort and prescribeth orders for the remedying of the dearth of corn," likely to arouse discontent in the minds of the poor.



wantonness and adultery, with horrible murders, gallows-confessions, and executions. It is not strange that serious men stormed against them, and that others treated them with ridicule or absolute contempt. To be sure, there were many virtuous ballads of pure and faithful love, of heroic endeavor,—ballads, too, of history that were to many the only text-books that they knew. But the reputation of the good was called in question by their association with those of baser sort. Then, too, even the best could lay small claim to literary excellence. Their crudeness in style, plot and character, their hobbling meter, their forced rimes, and the *a* “to make a jerk in the end,”—all these things must have disgusted the literary contemporaries of Spenser and Shakespeare. No more do they please most of us except as curiosities showing what the under classes then were fed on.

If we would fully appreciate the reasons for the general contempt for ballads, we must not forget, even in this brief account, the men who retailed the songs to the public—the ballad-singers of the time. From all accounts they were a scurvy lot, thick everywhere in town, city and country. Stubbs is not much more severe than others when he puts into the mouth of Philoponus:

“I thinke that all good minstrelles, sober and chast musicians (speaking of suche drunken sockets and bawdye parasits as range the Countreyes, ryming and singing of vncleane, corrupt, and filthie songs in Tauernes, Alehouses, Innes, and other publike assemblies,) may daunce the wild Moris thorow a needles eye. For how should thei bere chaste minds, seeing that their exercyse is the pathway to all vncleanes. There is no ship so balanced with massie matter, as their heads are fraught with all kind of bawdie songs,

filthie ballads and scuruie rymes, seruing for euery purpose, and for euery Cumpanie."<sup>1</sup>

Henry Chettle is more specific and concrete. Lewd songs have, contrary to order, been printed and abusively chanted in every street in London, and from there have been carried out into the country. He tells how the sons of one Bārnes have spread the evil in Essex and the shires adjoining. Their songs are such as Watkins Ale, the Carmans Whistle, Choping knives, and Frier Foxtaile; and "if there be any one line in those lewd songs than other more abbominable, that with a double repetition is lowdly bellowed."<sup>2</sup> Chettle, farther on in the same passage, reports the gossip of a London printer who took apprentices and "after a little bringing them uppe to sing brokerie, takes into his shop some fresh men, and trusts his old servants of a two months standing with a dossen groates worth of ballads. In which, if they proove thrifty hee makes them prety chapmen, able to spred more pamphlets

1—*Anatomy of Abuses in England*, A. D. 1583. Ed. by Furnivall for the New Shakespeare Society, 1879, p. 171. He adds more of much the same import. "And yet, notwithstanding," he says, "it weare better (in respect of acceptation) to be a Pyper, or bawdye minstrell, than a deuyne, for the one is loued for his ribauldrie, the other hated for his grautie, wisdome and sobrietie." "Every towne, Citie, and Countrey, is full of these minstrelles to pype vp a dance to the Deuill; but of dyuines, so few be as they may hardly be seene."

Stubbs began his literary career by writing stall-ballads himself. The first was issued as a broadside in 1581. Its title reads: "A fearfull and terrible Example of Gods iuste iudgement executed upon a lewde Fellow, who vsually accustomed to sweare by Gods Blood." It is reprinted in part by Furnivall in his edition of the *Anatomy* "to show the doggrel it is written in." He takes it from Collier's reprint of *Broadside B. L. Ballads*.

2—*Kind Harts Dreame*. The friendly admonition of Anthonie Now now to Mopo and Pickering. Edited by E. F. Rimbault for the Percy Society, pp. 13 ff. Chettle's account is interesting reading and has been several times quoted in part. Cf. Chappell, *Popular Music*, p. 106; Gummere, *Popular Ballad*, p. 5 f.

by the state forbidden then all the booksellers in London." To all this he adds the charge that ballad-singers are either pickpockets or their confederates. "And, alas," he comments, "who woulde suspecte my innocent youthes, that all the while were pleasinge rude people's eyes and eares with no less delectable noise then their ditties were delightsome: the one being too odious to bee read, the other too infectious to be heard."

Further, Robert Green, in one of his *Conny-Catching* pamphlets, tells us precisely how the thieving was done—how two ballad-singers worked in conjunction with some cutpurses.<sup>1</sup> And lastly, let us not forget that our friend Autolocus was "a snatcher-up of unconsidered trifles." There is no doubt at all that ballad-

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1—*Third Part of Conny-Catching*, Huth Library X, p. 161 f. Another tale of a new coosening companion, who would needs trie his cunning in his new invented art, etc. He explains that this trade of Ballet singing is carried on at the doors of the play houses as also in open markets, and other places of the City where there is most resort. A subtile fellow and some companions "were there got vpō a stal singing of balets, which belike was som prety toy, for very many gathered about to heare it, and diuers buying, as their affections served, drew to their purses, and paid the singers for them. The slye mate and his fellowes who were dispersed among them that stode to heare the songes; well noted where euerie man that bought, put up his purse againe, and to such as would not buy, counterfait warning was sundrie times given by the rogue and his associate, to beware of the cut-purse, and looke to their purses, which made them often feel where their purses were, either in sleeves, hose or at girdle, to know whether they were safe or no. Thus the craftie copesmates were acquainted with what they most desired, and as they were scattered, by shouldering, thrusting, feigning to let fall something, and other wilie tricks fit for their purpose: heere one lost his purse, there another had his pocket pickt, and to say all in brief, at one instant, upon the complaint of one or two that sawe their purses were gone, eight more in the same companie, found themselves in like predicament." People did not know whom to suspect, because the villains themselves made pretense of a like loss. However, the ballad-singers are finally suspected and are attacked. And when they are taken before the justices it is found they are in league with the cutpurses.

singers were as a rule a bad lot, and their wares no better than themselves. Even Cornewaleys, who seems to have had an open mind, who could talk with a rude husbandman and gain knowledge, and who in maturity could renew his nurse's stories and still find them nourishing,—even he damns ballads and ballad-singers with his praise. He is interested in "Pamphlets, and Lying Stories and News, and two-penny Poets." "I see in them," he says, "the difference of wits, and dispositions. the alterations of Arguments pleasing the world, and the change of stiles. . . . I have not been ashamed to adventure mine eares with a ballad-singer. and they haue come home loaden to my liking. doubly satisfied, with profit, & with recreation: the profit, to see earthlings satisfied with such course stufte. to hear vice rebuked, and to see the power of Vertue that pierceth the head of such a base Historian, and vile Auditory.

"The recreation to see how thoroughly the standers by are affected. what strange gestures come from them, what strained stufte from their Poet, what shift they make to stand to heare, what extremeties he is driuen to for Rime, how they adventure their purses. he his wits. how well both their paines are recompenced. they with a filthy noise. hee with a base reward."<sup>1</sup>

But, after all, these many condemnations of ballads and ballad-singers have little to do, very likely, with that branch of the subject with which we are most

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1—Sir William Cornewaleys, the younger. Knight, *Essayes*, Printed for Edmund Wattes 1600. My attention was called to these essays through the kindness of Mr. Harold V. Routh, the able writer of several chapters on English social history in volumes of the Cambridge History of English Literature. All the remarks here presented are from the fifteenth essay: "Of the observation and use of things."



interested. We should grant freely that the Elizabethans had good cause for their hostility to current balladry. Enough specimens have survived, and among them the lately mentioned Watkins Ale, to show that their censure was not much too strong. We would not allow many of the pieces to be sung on our streets today. But none of these surviving specimens belong to the type which we know as the Child ballad; nor, and this is important, are any of the Child ballads, excepting those of Robin Hood and Clim of the Clough, ever mentioned by writers in their lists of disreputable songs.<sup>1</sup> This is not said as an intentional panegyric of traditional balladry.

The latter is certainly not free from taint, though in this respect it is no worse than the stall product. The point to emphasize is that the Child ballad receives almost no specific reference, either good or bad. No specimen of the type has survived in any early broadside, though at least a few were reprinted.<sup>2</sup> There is, however, nothing to indicate that many could have been afloat in that form. Nor is there anything to show that the type was very current in any other

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1—As close a reference as any is that in Webbe's *Discourse of English Poetrie*, the Arber Reprint, p. 36: "If I let passe the uncountable rabble of ryming Ballet makers and compylers of sencelesse sonets, who be most busy, to stuffe eury stall full of gross deuises and unlearned Pamphlets, I trust I shall with the best sort be held excused. Nor though many such Can frame an Ale-house song of five or sixe score verses, hobbling upon some tune of a Northern lygge, or Robyn hoode, or La lubber, etc. And perhappes observe iust number of sillables eyght in one line, sixe in an other, and there withall an A to make a iereke in the ende: yet if these might be accounted Poets (as it is sayde some of them make means to be promoted to ye Lawrell) surely we shall shortly have whole swarms of Poets: and every one that can frame a Booke in Ryme, though for want of matter, it be but in commendation of Copper vases or Bottle Ale, wyll catch at the Garlande due to Poets."

2—As we know from the Stationers' Register.

form in the accessible up-to-date parts of southern England. In all these respects the stall-ballad offers striking contrasts. Early specimens of the latter type have survived in considerable numbers in the actual printed copies. It is furthermore often specifically mentioned as current both in London and elsewhere. If the Child type was at all common, the almost universal silence about it is as strange as it was undeserved. It hardly does to say that the Child ballad was looked upon with absolute contempt. How often the stall-ballad was mentioned for that very reason! My own conclusion—oft arrived at—is, therefore, that the Child ballad was not much current in southern England. Of course there must have been numerous specimens known to various individuals in London. The metropolis was made up of an extraordinarily mixed population continuously recruited from all parts of the British isles. Many of these people must have brought with them in memory excellent traditional ballads. But such songs were not of the current type; and their naïveté and somewhat primitive art, and the clinging cobwebs of antiquity, would suggest too strongly bad grammar and the country for their friends, themselves uplandish newcomers, to desire very much to give them currency. I doubt, therefore, very much if, with the exception of Sidney's praise,<sup>1</sup> any of the Elizabethan accounts of ballads and ballad-singers were written with Child ballads in mind.

But yet we have said there are gleanings of actual

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1--Sidney's praise shows that at least one of these ballads—by no means a superexcellent specimen—could receive unprejudiced treatment. There is no reason why many other traditional ballads, if they had been equally well known, might not have received equal recognition. The Child ballad neither lacks art nor is its art of a kind that is hard to appreciate.

Child ballads from this period. Let us consider them and the sources from whence they came.

The first that should receive attention is an excellent version of "Captain Car" (No. 178), found near the end of the Cotton MS. Vespasian, A. XXV, a manuscript that seems to be all of it from the last quarter of the 16th century. All the lyrics and songs have been printed, though not always carefully, by Dr. Böddeker in the *Jahrbuch für romanische und englische Litteratur* (N. F. II, 81 ff.). In his introduction he states that the date of the make-up of the manuscript is perhaps 1578, but inasmuch as the manuscript is a commonplace-book of miscellaneous content, written in more than one ink and perhaps in more than one hand, it is not at all probable that it was all written in the same year, and since the ballad in question is the second piece from the end, it may have been inserted a considerable time later. Captain Car is the only piece that shows any of the characteristics of the Child type. A medley, "Newes, newes," has a not very important line about Robin Hood, that we have already referred to,<sup>1</sup> and there is in the manuscript also "A mery Ballet of the Hathorne tree"<sup>2</sup> that is quaint and somewhat folk-like, but it would never be mistaken for a genuine Child ballad. Yet this manuscript is a large one of over two hundred folios and comprising

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1—Cf. chapter 3, p. 91.

2—Dyce seems to be authority for the statement that this poem has the signature G. Peele written after it in the manuscript. (His edition of Peele.) Bullen in his edition of Peele's works follows Dyce's statement, II, 370. Neither thinks it very probable that Peele wrote the poem. To me it is not only improbable, but I was not aware there was any such signature. I came across the attribution too late to consult the MS., but my notes have as the signature "G. Poete."

sixty-nine pieces. The range of the material is wide, and stall and minstrel songs and ballads there are in plenty.

The collection seems to have been made for the scribe's own pleasure. Captain Car is signed, "Finis per me, William Asheton clericum," and the latter may have been the transcriber of most of the contents. The writing is for the most part careless, varying in size and closeness. Captain Car is itself very carelessly written in a cramped hand, two columns to a quarto page. The first line of the refrain is quoted after each stanza. The first two pages of the ballad have been corrected by probably the same hand, but with a slightly different ink. Some words have been crossed out and others written above the line. The whole is so carelessly done that the transcriber must have intended it merely for his own perusal.

As for the ballad itself, there are two or three points that especially need noting. First of all, "Captain Car" is an historical ballad, and the occurrence that gave rise to it happened in November, 1571.<sup>1</sup> It is a minor incident in the rivalry between the Gordons and Forbeses, two Scotch clans, an incident, however, that has been reported by several chroniclers. Not only, then, was this ballad composed in fairly modern times, but it is found in an English manuscript and in an English version, but a very few years after the actual occurrence. Furthermore the next earliest version, that in the Percy MS., is also English and for some distance presents practically the same text. The Scotch versions, of which there are several, are all considerably later. The early English versions show no incremental repetition, though they are in other re-

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1—Cf. Child, No. 178, III, 424.



spects very ballad-like. Some of the Scotch versions, especially H (taken directly out of tradition), on the other hand show good cases of incremental repetition. In none of the versions is the name of the heroine of the ballad correctly given. In A, the version we are particularly considering, it is the wife of Lord Hamilton that is besieged by Captain Car. This, says Professor Child,<sup>1</sup> is a heedless perversion of history such as is to be found only in historical ballads. Hamilton was on the same side as Gordon. To be sure his castle, and therewith the town and palace, had been burned somewhat over a year before our incident happened; but it was done by Lennox and his English allies. It is a strange thing how this Scotch ballad got afloat in an English version so early. I have not yet been able to work out the clue, but I should not be surprised if it had something to do with the burning of Lord Hamilton's castle.

There is yet one other Child ballad that first comes to us in a manuscript source from the second half of Elizabeth's reign. It is a fairly good copy of "Sir Andrew Barton" (No. 167), now found in York Cathedral Library. Its first publisher<sup>2</sup> states that "The MS. of this well-known and most popular North-country ballad recently came into the possession of the Dean and Chapter of York with a number of papers which belonged in the seventeenth century to the episcopal families of Lamplugh and Davenant. It is written in a sixteenth-century hand, and is the best known version of the famous old ballad. . . . It has at one time formed part of a ballad book in small

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1—III, 428.

2—[James Raine.] A volume of English Miscellanies, illustrating the history and language of the northern counties of England. Surtees Society, 1890.

4to, this song being numbered 25. At the end of it is part of No. 26, beginning 'As I forth walkeeth aireley among the groves and pleasant springes in the merie moneth of May.'"

Professor Child comments:<sup>1</sup> "If, as is altogether probable, there were copies of other ballads in the same book in quality as good as this, and if, as is equally probable, no more of the book can be recovered, our only comfort is the cold one of having had losses. In several details this copy differs from that of the Percy MS., but no more than would be expected. . . . Several passages are corrupted. A (the Percy MS. copy) throws light upon some of these places, but others remain to me unamendable."

What led Professor Child to make the statement that it is altogether probable that the manuscript originally contained other ballads as good as this one, is not clear to me. At least this is to be said, that there is but one manuscript<sup>2</sup> that has survived from a time earlier than the Percy Folio, which has more than one Child ballad in it, and that contains but two.

"Sir Andrew Barton" is another historical ballad, but the fight here recorded happened long before, in 1511. However, this ballad has, so to speak, been brought up to date historically. It was Sir Thomas and Sir Edward Howard that really fought against Andrew Barton. But it is Sir Charles Howard, the commander of the fleet against the Armada, who is made the hero of the ballad. There is no doubt but that the ballad was in existence long before 1588, but it must have been changed over after that date, and since in both York and the Percy copy reference is

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1—JII, 502.

2—Sloane MS. 2593, Ballads No. 22 and No. 115.

made to the contemporary Howard being made an earl, the date must have been after 1596, when Sir Charles was created Earl of Nottingham. This necessarily puts the date of the York MS. almost if not quite out of the 16th century.

As to the make-up of the ballad, there is not much else that needs comment. It may be said that the meter, though not very steady, seems to differ in theory from that of ordinary ballads. The stanzas are quatrains, but every line has four beats; the feet often being very heavy. The rime is irregular; in some stanzas it is apparently lacking, but in others there is not only alternant rime but an internal rime as well.

There are two other Child ballads that have survived from Elizabeth's reign, both unmistakable in type. They are "Flodden Field" (No. 168) and "The Fair Flower of Northumberland" (No. 9). We have to thank Thomas Deloney for both—the man whom Nash termed "the ballading silk-weaver of Norwich." As the epithet implies, Deloney was himself a great writer of ballads. Dr. R. Sievers has made up a list of forty-seven pieces that he attributes to him, largely on the evidence of their being found in Deloney's two garlands,<sup>1</sup> "Strange Histories" and the "Garland of good Will." The pieces comprise both narratives and lyrics, though Professor Lange<sup>2</sup> is right in saying that not one is intimately personal. History, drawn from popular chronicles, romantic stories from various sources, and current events, not always treated to the liking of those in authority, furnish most of the themes. A number of his ballads owe their substance

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1—Reprinted for the Percy Society.

2—In the description of Deloney's work I almost retain Professor Lange's actual words as he has expressed them in his introduction to his edition of *The Gentle Craft*, Palaestra XVIII, 1903.

wholly or in part to local oral tradition or wandering legend. Himself a self-taught man of the people, his outward life bound up with that of the many, Deloney shared in their lore, knew their stories and songs, and in turn appropriated for their enjoyment whatever might be profitably recast, or varied, or woven in with threads supplied by his fancy or reading. Deloney's tastes were distinctly bourgeois; and his experience and observation appear to have been confined to the humbler phases of English life. Viewed in the large, his works disclose the native note everywhere. This is as true of his prose as of his poetry. In his prose narrative he leaned heavily on the current books of chivalry, on which the lower classes fed their hunger for romance. They stored his memory with incidents, devices, *motifs*; they impressed themselves upon his style, and served as first models for his narrative technique. It is in one of these prose stories, "The Pleasant History of John Winchecomb," that we find inserted our two Child ballads.

His account of John Winchecomb,—“known in his younger days as Jack of Newbery,”—is an interesting enough tale framed after Fancy's own liking. It is thoroughly bourgeois. The poor apprentice and maid make great progress in worldly affairs. After riches come honors. Jack raises a troop and is brought before the Queen, who allows him to kiss her lily-white hand. The account of Jack's military experience leads to the statement about Flodden Field and the introduction of one of the ballads. But the honors grow with the story, and before the end both the King and Queen deign to visit Jack. It is on the latter occasion that the second of the ballads is sung. Let us see how Deloney introduces them.



In telling of Flodden Field, he says: "Many Noble men of Scotland were taken prisoners at this battell, and many more slaine: so that there never came a greater foile to Scotland than this: for you shall understand, that the Scottish King made full account to be Lord of this Land, watching opportunity to bring to passe his faithlesse and trayterous practice: which was when our King was in France, at Turney, and Turwin: In regard of which wars, the Scots vaunted there was none left in England, but shepherds and ploughmen who were not able to lead an Army, having no skill in martiall affaires. In consideration of which advantage, hee invaded the Countrey, boasting of victory before he had wonne: which was no small grieffe to Queene Margaret, his wife, who was eldest sister to our noble King. Wherefore in disgrace of the Scots, and in remembrance of the famous atchieved victory, the Commons of England made this song: which to this day is not forgotten of many." Then follows the ballad.

Sievers, while admitting the probable source to be tradition, gives the credit for the present wording of the ballad to Thomas Deloney. He thinks the statement about the song being made by the Commons of England may have been a blind to raise the love of the public. It may very well be that Deloney has "improved" the ballad, and some whole stanzas may be due to him. The piece is not very well balanced.<sup>1</sup> Over a half is devoted to the introduction, and the scale for this part is very much greater than for that which follows. It, too, strikes me as the most ballad-

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1—If Deloney had himself written it he would certainly have bettered this defect. Deloney's introduction is along quite another line from the material in the ballad.

like in method. The latter part, also, has a varying stanza structure. But comparing this piece with other ballads known to be by Deloney, I think one need not hesitate in taking the ballading silk-weaver at his own word. This is a genuine traditional ballad, not only in basis, but also, for the most part at least, in actual form. A comparison with the minstrel ballad on the subject, one copy of which is found nearly a half-century earlier,<sup>1</sup> is also helpful in strengthening that conclusion. The type is different. This battle<sup>2</sup> brought forth considerable poetry. It may be recalled that Skelton's ballad—the earliest stall print—was on this victory. Strange to say, none of these treatments give much attention to the actual battle. In the minstrel piece the scene is all laid in France, and what happened is but vaguely reported.

But now let us turn to the other ballad that Deloney has preserved for us. As has been stated, that was sung before the King and Queen. They were visiting Jack's factory, if I may so call it by a slight anachronism, and saw the men and maids at their work of weaving and spinning. Here is Deloney's account:

“By this time Jacke of Newbery had caused all his folkes to goe to their worke, that his Grace and all the Nobility might see it: so indeed the Queen had requested. Then came his Highnesse where he saw an hundred Loomes, standing in one roome, and two men working in every one, who pleasantly sung on this

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1—Harleian MS. 367. Though I do not feel sure of the date.

2—An item which serves to link the material with that of another historical ballad is that “In the letter sent to Henry VIII in France, James included the slaughter of Andrew Barton among the unredressed grievances of which he had to complain.” Cf. Child III, 351.

sort." Then follows a Weaver's song,—not the traditional ballad. The first stanza reads:

## THE WEAVER'S SONG.

When Hercules did use to spin,  
and Pallas wrought upon the Loom,  
Our trade to flourish did begin:  
while Conscience went not selling Broomes.  
Then love and friendship did agree,  
To keep the band of unity.

“ ‘Well sung, good fellowes,’ said our King; ‘light hearts and merry mindes live long without gray haire . . .’ His Majesty came next among the spinsters and carders, who were merrily a working: . . . The King and Queene and all the nobility heedfully beheld these women, who for the most part were very faire and comely creatures, and were all attired alike from top to toe. Then (after due reverence) the maidens in dulced manner chanted out this Song, two of them singing the Ditty, and all the rest bearing the burden.” Then follows “The Fair Flower of Northumberland” with the title “The Maidens Song.” Deloney, after quoting the ballad, continues: “After the Kings Majesty and the Queene had heard this song sweetely sung by them, he cast them a great reward, and so departing thence, went to the Fulling-mils and Dye-house.”

Unlike Flodden Field, this ballad has survived to us in numerous versions, seven in all; but that in Jack of Newbery is the only one that is early. It is to be said, also, that it is by far the best version. The Knight, though false and cruel, is not churlish in speech, as he is in some of the Scotch renderings; and the maiden herself is as modest and sweet as her lot is pathetic. In some of the versions all the delicacy of the story is well-nigh spoiled. Our present version has a grace and

modesty that is really feminine, and suggests that Deloney may have got his ballad from just such a source as he describes. He does for this piece say that it is from tradition, but the traditional origin is evident enough to be perceived without saying. Even Dr. R. Sievers grants as unquestionable all of the piece to the folk except the last stanza. That warns maidens to beware of Scots, who are never true,—an opinion oft expressed by Deloney.<sup>1</sup>

We have now reached the end of actual Child ballads from the second half of Elizabeth's reign,—four specimens; it is as large a number as any equal period has left us up to that date, and both for quality and variety we may pronounce them a good lot. Each one, too, has something distinctive about it. Captain Car is remarkable for its early appearance in a manuscript remote from the scene of action. Sir Andrew Barton is the first surviving naval ballad of the Child type. Flodden Field is the first Child ballad quoted at length in a printed book. And the Fair Flower of Northumberland is the first of the sweet tragic love-ballads that are later to be found in such numbers.

Besides these four specimens there is bequeathed to us by the period very little Child material of any importance. There are a few scattered ballad references, such as to Robin Hood and Clim of the Clough and a few other bold worthies. The most important we have already at some place specifically noted. The most astounding is Nash's apostrophe to Clim of the Clough: "thou that useth to drinke nothing but scalding lead and sulphur in hell, thou art not so greedie of thy night geare. O, but thou hast a foule swallow if it

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1—However, this opinion is not at all peculiar to Deloney. Cf. Minot's song of the battle of Bannochburn, a poem of the 14th century.



come once to the carousing of humane bloud; but thats but seldome, once in seaven yeare, when theres a great execution, otherwise thou art tyde at rack and manger, and drinkst nothing but *Aqua vitae* of vengeance all thy life time. The Proverbe gives it foorth thou art a knave, and therefore I have more hope thou art some manner of a good fellowe: let mee intreate thee (since thou haste other iniquities inough to circumvent us withall) to wype this sinne out of the catalogue of thy subtilities: helpe to blast the vynes, that they maye beare no more grapes, and sowre the wines in the cellars and Merchants storehouses." All of it an astonishing address, and to me, at least, incomprehensible.

Nash has many other scattered remarks of interest to the student of Elizabethan balladry, but there is only one that pertains to actual Child material. That is in the "Epistle Dedicatorie" to *Have with you to Saffron-Walden*, where he addresses the "Acute and amiable Dick, not *Dic mihi musa virum*, music Dick . . . nor old Dick of the castle . . . nor Dick Swash . . . nor Dick of the Cow, that mad demilance northern borderer who plaid his prizes with the lord *Jockey* so bravely." "Dick of the Cow" is a Child ballad (No. 185) that has come down to us from late in the 18th century in several copies of a single version. It is an amusing piece telling how Dick, a fool, avenged himself on Johnnie Armstrong, who had stolen his three kyne and his wife's coverlets. The Laird's Jock is an important figure in the ballad, though not the central one. The remarks by Nash, however, are sufficiently close to prove clearly that he had in mind the Child ballad, though he may have known it in a different version.

But Nash not only wrote of famous ballad characters

in passages such as those we have quoted; he did not escape the sad luck of being made a ballad-hero himself. This was no uncommon experience for men of the time,—indeed scurrilous and libelous personal songs have been rather frequent in most centuries,—and that in this period they were especially dreaded is shown by Mr. Chappell by a great number of citations.<sup>1</sup> Gabriel Harvey, in his pamphlet “The Trimming of Thomas Nashe,”<sup>2</sup> twice predicted that his sharp-tongued assailant would get balladed, and perhaps the learned Doctor is not entirely innocent of the suggestion of the surviving specimen. At least the piece has the same title as his pamphlet. “The Trimming of Tom Nashe” is a long, humorous, though not always decorous ballad, telling of the hero’s travels as a youth. The account does not flatter him. It is the first piece in a not very well known Sloane MS. from the beginning of the 17th century (MS. 1489). The ballad is worth reading, and has been published in full by Mr. Grosart, but in the almost inaccessible Huth edition of the works of Gabriel Harvey. If the lampoon were a mere stall piece, it could not for a moment demand our attention; but it happens that this ballad has more nearly the traditional tone than most productions of the sort, as if the writer had as his model not only popular romances such as those he cites, but very likely some more or less traditional ballads as well. The ordinary ballad stanza is used, perhaps, too, a refrain, and there are a few suggestive phrases and tricks of style. On this account it may not be amiss to quote enough from it to show its general character. It was evidently made for a minstrel. It begins:

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1—Popular Music, I, 253. Many of the citations are very pronounced, though most of them date from the time of James I.

2—Reprinted in the Huth Library. Vol. III, p. 61, p. 70.

*Harke, harke my Masters, and give eare, give eare, etc.*  
 Harke, harke my maysters and be still, be still and give  
     good eare  
 And I will singe as merrye a jeast as you have hearde  
     this yeare;  
 For mirth methinkes this merrye ryme shold not come  
     out of season,  
 If any then fynds any faulte, he lackes both wit [and]  
     reason.  
 Yet sing I not of lo[rd] nor kn[ight] nor Sq[ui]re of low  
     degree,  
 But of a merrye Greeke who dwelt far hence 'ith North  
     countrie:  
 Far hence 'ith North Countrye he dwelt: his name I  
     have forgot;  
 But since he was foole neere a kin to Monsier Don  
     Quixot,  
 And he as many authors read as ere Don Quixot had;  
 And some of them colde say by harte, to make the hearers  
     glad.  
 The valyand deeds o' th' kn[ight] of th' Sun and Rosi-  
     cleer soe tall,  
 And Palmarinde of Engl[and] too, and Amadis of Gaul;  
 Bevis of Hampton he had read, and Guy of Warwick  
     stoute,  
 Huon of Burdeux, though so long, yet he had read him  
     out;  
 The hundred tales, and scroggings jeasts, and Arthur of  
     th' round Table,  
 The twelve wyse men of Gotam too, and Ballats in-  
     numerable:  
 But to proceed, and not to make the matter long or  
     garrishe,  
 He was the onelye onelye youth that was in al our  
     parishe;  
 This gallant livde foole 20 yeares under his Mother's  
     wing,  
 And for to see some countryes strange, he thought to  
     have a flinge.  
 He saddled then his good gray mare, his mare as gray  
     as glasse,

The w<sup>ch</sup> cold carrye sakes to th' mil, far better then an  
     Asse;  
 He tooke his leave of all his friends but chieflie of his  
     mother,  
 Who swore of all the Barnes she had, she had not sike  
     an other.  
 He mounted then upon his mare, and short tale for to  
     telle,  
 His father's Bootes, and one old spur, did serve him  
     passing well;  
 His mother's Girdle for a scarfe, did make him fine and  
     gay;  
 W<sup>th</sup> rustye morglay by his syde foole brave he went  
     away.  
 He had not ridden halfe a myle, good lucke may him  
     betyde,  
 But he askte the way to Lond[on] towne, for thether  
     wold he ryde;  
 Yet was it never his good luck, his good luck to come  
     there;  
 Disastrous fortune kept him backe, as you shall after  
     heare.  
 But when he had ridden twenty myles, twenty at the  
     most;  
 He at an old house did dismount, and then began to  
     boast;  
 If England bee as big each way as I have come, he  
     sayde,  
 Then of the Spanyard, Turke, nor Pope, we need not be  
     afrayde;  
 But then to his Ostis spake he, let me have for my  
     Money  
 A daintye dish, w<sup>ch</sup> likes me well, men call Codlinge  
     and honey.  
 In truth <sup>Sr.</sup> (q<sup>th</sup> she) I have neither Cake, pye, nor  
     Custarde.  
 But I have a dishe, a dainty dish, men call stewd  
     pr[unes] and musterd.

The piece then tells how the youth went on to York  
 and was there frightened out of his wits by a barber



who tried to shave him. The satire becomes broad, even vulgar. Nash's name is not mentioned except in the title, and the material does not seem very well adjusted to him. Perhaps the ballad was made over from an earlier work, the suggestion coming from Harvey's pamphlet of the same name. Anyway, the result is abusive ballad satire.<sup>1</sup>

Probably there were numerous other pamphleteers in the reign of Elizabeth that contributed directly or indirectly to balladry, but at present I am not aware of any that we need to consider. Among writers of more dignity, Carew certainly deserves mention for his reference to the ballad of John Dory (No. 284). In his *Survey of Cornwall* he states that "Moreover, the prowess of one Nicholas, son to a widow near Foy, is descanted upon in an old three-man's song, namely, how he fought bravely at sea with John Dory (a Genowey, as I conjecture), set forth by John, the French king, and after much bloodshed on both sides, took, and slew him, in revenge of the great ravine and cruelty which he had fore committed upon the Englishmen's goods and bodies." This statement was made in the 1602 edition of the *Survey*,<sup>2</sup> and it was only seven years later that the single version which we have got into a song collection.<sup>3</sup> In the printed copy of the ballad Nicholl is said to be from near Bohide,<sup>4</sup> but he is described as a Cornish man and the difference in place name may be due to a local variant.

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1—The end seems to show it was written for a minstrel to sing:  
 Thus have I done the best to please, the best that I was  
 able,  
 Weh if it please, then bid me Drinke, and so be at your  
 Table.

2—P. 135. The quotation, however, is from the edition of 1813, p. 316. See Child, V, 132.

3—Ravenscroft's *Deuterometia*, 1609.

4—Wherever that may be, I do not know.

In Elizabeth's reign, literary song material, published in collections, was, as is well known, exceedingly abundant. Miscellany followed miscellany in edition after edition,<sup>1</sup> many of them richly laden with precious ore. But the poetical miscellanies have nothing to offer us in the way of ballad material.<sup>2</sup> They were evidently intended for the higher circles and contain nothing of a popular or traditional nature. There also came out no doubt other collections of a more plebeian tone, such as the "garlands" of Deloney,<sup>3</sup> but these likewise contained nothing traditional. The same statement holds good for the various song-books, perhaps even more numerous than the miscellanies. Between 1587 and 1600 there were published, accord-

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1—Cf. introduction to the Arber reprint of *Tottle's Miscellany*, p. V, where the various editions of the various collections are specified for Elizabeth's reign. Two or three miscellanies had as many as eight or more editions.

2—Perhaps the nearest approach, and that offers nothing traditional, is Clement Robinson's "A Handful of pleasant Delites," 1566, 1584. Printed by Richard Jones, Arber reprint. The introduction to the reprint explains that this is a song-book rather than a Book of Poetry. Richard Jones, one of the minor publishers of this day, specially addicted himself to the production of ballads. This little book was originally made up of some of the more favorite songs that he had published. The principle of selection seems to have consisted in the exclusion of all poems on religious subjects, political affairs or distinguished persons; and also of all those on monsters and wonderments. Much of the verse is indeed of the stall-ballad kind.

3—I am not aware that any of these garlands have actually survived in editions from Elizabeth's reign. But that there were garlands published then is certain. Deloney himself died early in the year 1600, according to R. Sievers, *Palaestra* XXXVI. Lehen and he made two such collections. Chappell's statement that garlands were first collected in the time of James (*Popular Music*, 252) is a lapse, for he mentions Deloney in the very statement. Also, even if we do not count Skelton's *Goodly Garland of Laurel* of the first quarter of the 16th century, some of the Elizabethan collections are not unlike garlands, especially such a one as *The Handful of pleasant Delites*.

ing to Dr. Bolle,<sup>1</sup> at least twenty-eight song collections of varying types. In many the music was of more importance than the words. Of the latter we have an easy means of judging from the numerous reprints in Arber's *English Garner*.<sup>2</sup> There is absolutely nothing there that even approaches the traditional manner.

There is only one other class of material<sup>3</sup> that we need to consider in this chapter, and that is the Elizabethan drama. But even here, though in many plays there are references to current songs and sometimes actual quotations from them, the contributions to Child balladry are indeed very slight. There are, in fact, no more than three or four plays that require attention.<sup>4</sup>

Of these, Peele's *Edward I.* is not only earliest<sup>5</sup> in point of composition, but it is also, to the ballad student, by far the most interesting. To be sure the play, judged as dramatic literature, is crude stuff. It not merely lacks in unity and coherence: it seems to exhibit three

1—William Bolle, *Die gedruckten englischen Liederbücher bis 1600. Palæstra*, XXIX, Berlin, 1903. He gives a list.

2—The reissue of Professor Arber's *An English Garner*, Shorter Elizabethan Poems. The new editor, A. H. Bullen, has a short introduction on song-books and miscellanies.

3—The Stationers' Register has not been mentioned, but the contribution from that source is not rich: the pseudo-ballad of Andrew Brown (cf. Child, 180), May 30, 1581, Arber II, 393: A merry jest of John Tomson and Jackaman his wife, August 1, 1586; Arber II, 450; (Not the traditional ballad of John Thomson and the Turk, Child No. 266); "A merie songe of the Kinge and the Tanner," August 1, 1586, Arber II, 451; Pastoral comedy of Robin Hood and Little John, May 14, 1594, Arber, II, 649; Two plays, being the first and second parts of Edward IV. and the Tanner of Tamworth, Arber, III, 147. August 28, 1599; A merye, pleasant and delectable history between Kinge Edward IV. and a Tanner of Tamworth, and the ballad of the same matter. Arber, III, 173. Child No. 273.

4—We shall postpone treatment of Shakespeare and Beaumont and Fletcher until the next chapter.

5—Printed in 1593. F. E. Schelling (*Elizabethan Drama*, 1,262) thinks the play was composed not long after the defeat of the Armada.

or four kinds of literary workmanship. It contains two grades of blank verse<sup>1</sup> so distinct that they could hardly be contemporary work of the same man. And besides, there is a lot of rimed verse, mostly tetrameter, that is so crude that it must surely have been taken from a more primitive type of drama. It would seem evident that just as Peele's *Old Wives Tale* contains quantities of folk-lore in solution, so this play presents us with considerable folk-drama, and perhaps folk-ballad, in a state not far removed from its original. Take the speech of the Friar at his entry in the second scene:

Guenthian, as I am true man,  
 So will I do the best I can;  
 Guenthian, as I am true priest.  
 So will I be at thy behest;  
 Guenthian, as I am true friar,  
 So will I be at thy desire.<sup>2</sup>

Here we find incremental repetition. The style and tone are precisely that of folk-poetry: it cannot be far removed. Likewise, the material that follows in the next two or three pages of text reads precisely as if it came straight from the folk-drama. It is a tale of a friar's wooing that is hardly more literary than the Robin Hood plays that have come to us from a somewhat earlier period. It does not seem out of place for the friar to suggest the singing of a merry country song.<sup>3</sup> It is just such a piece as might well have been played on a May-day. So, too, the rival wooing of the Friar and Mortimer<sup>4</sup> (disguised as a potter) is suggestive of folk-drama not only in the names of the con-

1—Cf. the beginning of the play with the end.

2—Bullen's edition. Sc. II, p. 99.

3—Bullen, p. 101, (Sc. II) l. 93.

4—Ibid. Sc. VIII, pp. 144 ff.



testants, but equally so in the language used and in the horse-play. The verse at times approaches the Skeltonic.<sup>1</sup>

But the parts we have mentioned thus far are presumably borrowings from folk-drama and may have nothing to do with balladry. But ballads, too, are drawn upon for material. Lluellen and his associates, as outlaws, take unto themselves the names and functions of various Robin Hood heroes of later tradition.<sup>2</sup> The author's ideas about these characters may also have come from the May-day games, but there is at least one passage which shows that Peele had heard Robin Hood ballads from a traditional source. At the beginning of the eighth scene Lluellen says:

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1—There are numerous strings of short-line rimes, generally in passages in which the Friar appears. The material on pp. 148-9 of Bullen illustrates as well as any. Thus:

“Friar, a ditty  
Come late from the city,  
To ask some pity  
Of this lass so pretty.”

And,

“Let us deem of the matter,  
Friar and potter  
Without more clatter  
I have cast your water.”

2—Lluellen says to his followers: “. . . naked came we into the world, naked are we turned out of the good towns into the wilderness. Let me see; mass, methinks we are a handsome commonwealth, a handful of good fellows. What say you sir[s]? We are enough to keep a passage: will you be ruled by me? We'll get the next day from Brecknock the Book of Robin Hood; the friar he shall instruct us in this cause, and we'll even here fare and well. . . I'll be Master of Misrule, I'll be Robin Hood, that's once: cousin Rice, thou shalt be Little John: and here's Friar David as fit as a die for Friar Tuck. Now, my sweet Nell, if you will make up the mess with a good heart for Maid Marian, and dwell with Lluellen under the greenwood trees, with as good a will as in the good towns, why, *plena est curia*.”—Bullen, Sc. VII, pp. 139-40. The passage shows that Peele must have known a “book of Robin Hood.” It seems to indicate, also, that the book did not represent very good tradition.

Why, so, I see, my mates, of old  
 All were not lies that beldames told  
 Of Robin Hood and Little John,  
 Friar Tuck and Maid Marian.<sup>1</sup>

The play uses, however, much more plainly other ballad material. In fact, a large part of the plot is based on a stall production entitled "A Warning-Piece to England against Pride and Wickedness."<sup>2</sup> This stall-ballad has come down to us from the same date as the play. It is the stall piece that is responsible for much of the historical inaccuracy. To it is due the shameful slanders cast against the name of Eleanor of Castile, the model wife of Edward Longshanks. And it is also a line found toward the end of the piece that suggested to the dramatist the use of another ballad—this time one really found in the Child collection—for suitable material to end his play. For Peele has transferred the story of "Queen Eleanor's Confession" (Child, No. 156) from Eleanor of Equitaine and Henry II to the Eleanor of his play. It furnishes good dramatic material.

In *The Pleasant Conceyted Comedie of George a Greene, the Pinner of Wakefield*,—generally ascribed now to the authorship of Robert Green,<sup>3</sup> we have a play written perhaps not much later than *Edward I*, but immeasurably superior in dramatic construction. Professor Schelling has described it as "unquestionably the freshest and brightest of the several comedies

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1—Bullen, p. 144.

2—Quoted in Bullen's edition of Peele, pp. 77 ff. It is to be found in the Collection of Old Ballads, 1723, vol. 1, p. 97 f.

3—Cf. Green's editor, Professor J. C. Collins, *R. Green, Plays and Poems*, Oxford, 1905, vol. II, p. 161. Also Schelling, *Elizabethan Drama*, Boston, 1908, I, 259. Schelling puts the date of composition as between 1588 and 1592. Our earliest printed edition is 1599.

in which Robin Hood appears as a character."<sup>1</sup> But for all this praise the play is hardly of as much importance to the student of ballad history as the *Edward I*, which we have just considered. There are to be sure plenty of ballad characters in the drama. There is Robin Hood, Much, Scarlet, Maid Marian, and most prominent of all, George a' Green, but the source of the play is for the most part not directly the ballads but a prose history, a copy of which we have in manuscript form in a handwriting of the late 16th or early 17th century.<sup>2</sup> According to the editor of the play, Professor J. C. Collins, "the dramatist has followed his original very closely, his only important deviations from it being these: he has substituted King Edward for King Richard, and King James of Scotland for the Earl of Leicester: he has introduced a war between England and Scotland and the episode of Jane a' Barley: he has not identified Grime with the Justice before whom Bonfield and Kendall are taken: and he has not represented Robin Hood as being rewarded by the King."<sup>3</sup> These deviations make strange history. To represent King Edward, King James, and Robin Hood as contemporaries is certainly worthy of the ballad muse. But as a matter of fact, there is really very little in the play that reminds one of actual traditional balladry. However, there is one speech by Bettris, that suggests by its form that it was taken directly from some lost ballad of George a' Green:

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1—*Elizabethan Drama*, I, 283.

2—Cf. Collins, II, 164. He quotes important passages. He also mentions another prose history, printed in 1632, that is not the source of the play. The prose romance on which the play is founded was printed in modern orthography, by Thomas in his *Early English Romances*. Cf. the new enlarged reprint by Routledge, n.d. 557 ff.

3—R. Green, *Plays and Poems*, II, 167.

I care not for Earle, nor yet for Knight,  
 Nor Baron that is so bold;  
 For George a' Green, the merrie pinner,  
 He hath my heart in hold.<sup>1</sup>

If this is not from a ballad, I am much deceived; and there may be other lines or passages in the play from a like source, that have escaped me.

There are still two other plays about Robin Hood that must be treated.<sup>2</sup> They belong, however, strictly together. In fact, there are several indications that point to their being but an expansion of a single earlier production. The versatile Anthony Munday is credited with having written the *Downfall of Robert Earl of Huntington*, though Chettle "mended" it; and Munday and Henry Chettle together are supposed to have written the second part of the play, *The Death of Robert Earl of Huntington*. It seems to me probable that most of the material in the first part and much of that of the second as far as the death of the Earl, originally belonged to a single play by Munday and Chettle.<sup>3</sup> This was later expanded by Chettle or by Munday and Chettle. There is a decided break in the continuity in the second part. Up to just after the death of Robert, which is not far into the second play, the material links closely in

1—Collins' edition, Sc. IV, ll. 234-237, p. 189.

2—Robin Hood is said to act a minor rôle in the anonymous play, "*Look About You*, a sprightly comedy of disguises dealing on its historical side with dissensions between Henry I and his three sons." Cf. Schelling, *Elizabethan Drama*, I, 283. I have not seen the piece. Several plays are based more or less on stall-ballads. Cf. Chettle and Day's *Blind Beggar of Bednal Green*, *The Famous History of Captain Stukely*, etc. It will be recognized that none of this dramatic material throws much light on the history of balladry.

3—Both parts are published in vol. VIII, of W. C. Hazlitt's issue of *Dodsley's Old English Plays*, 4th edition, London, 1874, pp. 93 ff. and pp. 209 ff. There is a slight introduction to each part.



every respect with that of the first. Then comes a change. There is not only a shift in time, in characters, in method of treatment, there is not only a new dumb show exhibited, but the Friar tells the audience that the play is over with.<sup>1</sup> He is interrupted by Chester:

Nay, Friar, at the request of thy kind friend  
 Let not thy play too soon be at an end.  
 Though Robin Hood be dead, his yeomen gone, . . .  
 Yet know full well, to please this company,  
 We mean to end Matilda's tragedy.<sup>2</sup>

In so far as we are concerned, it would have been as well if Chester had not spoken. The story of the lawless pursuit of the chaste Matilda by King John is very far removed from traditional balladry. We may limit ourselves, therefore, to the preceding material. This is difficult to handle. Just as in the case of *Edward I*, the play seems to be a work of shreds and patches. It is supposed to be a rehearsal of an entertainment to be given before Henry VIII, by Master Skelton, Sir John Eltham, and others. Sir Thomas Mantle plays the leading rôle of Robert Earl of Huntington, Eltham and Skelton take the parts of Little John and Friar Tuck, and "little Tracy" that of Matilda, daughter of the good Fitzwater. These very names may show that the Robin Hood material is very freely treated. The hero is the Earl of Huntington, who is banished by the machinations of his enemies, particularly an uncle, Gilbert Hood, the relentless prior of St. Mary's of York. The time of the action is in the reign of Richard I, just

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1—Also at the end of Act IV of the *Downfall*, Skelton outlines the rest of the play for the audience. It is to be the death of Robin Hood, which till they see they are to sit patiently. (Dodsley, p. 185.) It is possible that the original play had two short parts acted together.

2—Dodsley, p. 249.

as the king is returning from his captivity in Austria. Robert, being banished, escapes with Matilda. He is joined by friends, and the party rescue Scarlet and Scathlock, who are about to be executed. These young fellows, they learn, have been successful outlaws at Barnsdale for seven years.<sup>1</sup> This suggests a plan to the Earl. In Sherwood Forest he and his followers will also live as outlaws until the return of Richard. During that time they are to be like simple yeomen: he to be plain Robin Hood, and his betrothed lady, Maid Marian. Little John draws up a list of articles for their government, to which all agree. Such, according to the play, is the origin of the outlaw band.<sup>2</sup> The plot is complicated by the Queen mother loving sinfully the Earl Robert, as Prince John does Matilda; but that is quite apart from ballad influence.

Thus far all questions appear simple enough, and it might seem easy to evaluate the balladry in the play. But we have not yet touched upon the most difficult and most interesting feature. That is concerned with the relation of Skelton to the sources of the material. It is to be remembered that he takes the part of the Friar, and a large part of his speeches is made up of the short "ribble-rabble rhymes Skeltonical," as Eltham calls them. These rimes, if by Munday, are surprisingly good imitations and show a close study of the original. In one speech, also, it is suggested plainly that the poet laureate was a good authority on Robin Hood matters. Skelton himself tells the audience in a parody of a well-

1—Dodsley, p. 141. The rescue is somewhat like that told in the ballad of "Robin Hood Rescuing three Squires." Child, No. 140. There is a somewhat extended reference to various ballad heroes and their helpers in Act III, Sc. II, Dodsley, pp. 151-2. The account is confused. It surely does not represent good tradition.

2—Cf. especially Act III, Sc. 2.

known proverb: “. . . Many talk of Robin Hood, that never shot in his bow. But Skelton writes of Robin Hood what he doth truly know.”<sup>1</sup> It is to be added that some short passages in *Edward I* are almost Skeltonical.<sup>2</sup> These various bits of evidence suggest that Skelton may have written a lost interlude about Robin Hood, or that at least his work has some close connection with the ballad outlaw that it is impossible now to determine.

Toward the end of the first part Eltham and Skelton talk over the chances of their play for success.

### *Eltham.*

Methinks, I see no jests of Robin Hood,  
 No merry morrices of Friar Tuck,  
 No pleasant skippings up and down the wood,  
 No hunting songs, no coursing of the buck.  
 Pray God this play of ours may have good luck,  
 And the king's majesty mislike it not.

### *Friar.*

And if he do, what can we do to that?  
 I promis'd him a play of Robin Hood,  
 His honorable life in merry Sherwood.  
 His majesty himself survey'd the plot,  
 And bad me boldly write it: it was good.  
 For merry jests they have been shown before,  
 As how the friar fell into the well  
 For love of Jenny, that fair bonny belle;  
 How Greenleaf robb'd the Shrieve of Nottingham,  
 And other mirthful matter full of game.<sup>3</sup>

It is to be noted that in the *bona fide* works of Skelton there is a reference to “The Friar in the Well.”<sup>4</sup> It

1—Act I, Sc. 1, Dodsley, p. 109. The proverb's second line reads, “And many talk of Little John that never did him know.” Cf. the note.

2—See chapt. 6, p. 211.

3—Act IV, Sc. 2, pp. 184-5. Dodsley.

4—*Colyn Cloute*, v. 879 ff. Cf. Child, No. 276.

is to be added that in our play the Friar acts rather free with a certain Jenny, the sweetheart of Much. The well episode would not have been out of harmony with other things in the play's text. The quoted passage not only serves to show how much semi-popular dramatic material we have lost,—for Eltham tells what might be expected in Robin Hood plays, and Skelton mentions specific pieces that had been “shown” or dramatized,—but the passage also makes clear how all-absorptive the cycle was in drawing to itself alien material. Through Friar Tuck, even the “Friar in the Well” is joined to the cycle.

In the play there is not much actual quotation from the ballads. There is a Robin Hood song at the Earl's death entirely unpopular in manner,<sup>1</sup> and aside from this there are but two perhaps loose quotations from “The Jolly Pinder of Wakefield.” They do not exactly agree with the preserved versions, but it is possible they represent as good tradition. One is,

O there dwelleth a jolly pinder,  
At Wakefield, all on a green.<sup>2</sup>

The other is

At Michaelmas cometh my covenant out,  
My master gives me my fee:  
Then, Robin, I'll wear thy Kendal green  
And wend to the greenwood with thee.<sup>3</sup>

And with these quotations we may close the chapter.

1—Dodsley, p. 249.

2—Spoken by Much, Dodsley, p. 232.

3—Spoken by Prince John, Dodsley, p. 195.



## II

# Lessing's Laocoon



## PREFACE

Many of the objections that this monograph urges against the theories of the *Laocoon* first occurred to me in the spring of 1901 while I was a graduate student at the University of Michigan. It was not until the next year, however, while a fellow in English at Yale, that the ideas were put into written form. They were at that time embodied in a paper read before the Yale English Club. Since then I have given considerable attention to the subject, have enlarged the scope of the inquiry, and have collected much new material.

In spite of my apparently hostile attitude to the *Laocoon* in the beginning of the paper, the ultimate purpose of my work has been much the same as Lessing's. It is an attempt to get past the mere externals of criticism to the fundamental principle, and by means of this principle to discover the æsthetic and linguistic limitations of descriptive literature. In carrying out this programme I hope that everywhere I have used scientific caution. Though some of the theories advanced are new, I have tried to base them on adequate psychological foundations. If I have made mistakes I shall be glad to rectify them.

I take pleasure in thanking all who have assisted me in preparing this monograph. My greatest obligation is to Professor Scott, who not only first interested me in the study of rhetorical problems, but who has ever since kept alive this interest with frequent encouragement, and who now, in editing this work, has done me the great service of pruning it of much extraneous

material. I also wish to thank Professors Pillsbury, Rebec, and Hempl of the University of Michigan, Professor Cook of Yale, and the members of the English department in the University of Kansas.

F. E. B.

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.



## I

### *Lessing's Laocoon*

**B**OSANQUET, in his *History of Æsthetic*, has pointed out a very curious and surprising fact with reference to the occasion that brought forth Lessing's *Laocoon*. He says:

“The *occasion* of the *Laocoon* was such as to show with a force amounting to irony, the superior importance of ideas as compared with particular facts. Winckelmann had said, in his treatise *On the Imitation of Greek Works of Painting and Sculpture*, that the expression in Greek statues always revealed a great and composed soul, and that this was illustrated by the famous *Laocoon* group, in which *Laocoon's* features expressed no such extremity of suffering as would be realistically in accordance with the situation, and more particularly, did not indicate him to be crying out, as *Virgil* describes him. *Lessing*, aroused, as he admits, by the implied censure on *Virgil*, maintains that the absence of agonized expression in *Laocoon's* features, and of all sign of outcry—which he completely accepts as a fact—is to be accounted for not by the demands of Greek character, but by the laws of Greek sculpture; in other words, that portrayal of extreme suffering and its expression, legitimate in poetry, was prohibited by the law and aim of beauty, which he alleged to be supreme in formative art.

“Now the tendency of skilled criticism ever since *Lessing's* day has been to deny the alleged fact that *Laocoon* is represented in the marble group as silent or nearly so, and with an expression far removed from that of extreme bodily suffering. The truth appears to be that the group is a work of the *Rhodian* school, which retained little of the great Greek style and was chiefly distinguished by technical skill and forcible presentation of ideas. The expression of pain is violent, and

the abstinence from crying out is exceedingly doubtful. It is remarkable that the observation with reference to which such influential theories were propounded, should be of questionable accuracy.'"<sup>1</sup>

This is indeed remarkable, but these later opinions concerning the Laocoon group do not at all affect the validity of Lessing's theory as a theory of perfect art. For, according to Bosanquet, not only is it held that the priest, Laocoon, utters cries, but it is also held that this group belongs to an inferior period of sculpture; the one conclusion, therefore, neutralizes the other, and perhaps the only effect of the investigations is to throw the Laocoon group out of the discussion. Lessing's theory may still be correct, though this group can no longer be used as an illustration of it.

But the point just made by Bosanquet is not the only surprising thing that has been noticed about the *Laocoon*. The book has two titles: *Laocoon; oder, Ueber die Grenzen der Malerei und Poesie*.<sup>2</sup> The first of these titles would lead us to expect a work on sculpture, while the second one tells us that it is to deal with painting and poetry. That is, these titles betray an inconsistency,—and one that is also to be found within the pages of the book. It is due to the fact that Lessing has not distinguished between the different formative arts. To him, apparently, the same laws apply to painting that apply to sculpture. He has thus made the same mistake in his treatment of the formative arts that he criticises other persons for making in their treatment of the limits of painting and poetry. This being true, the very argument that he develops regarding this latter subject may be turned back against him-

1—B. Bosanquet, *A History of Aesthetic*, pp. 221-2.

2—*Laocoon; or, Concerning the Limits of Painting and Poetry*.

self to discredit what he says concerning the formative arts. But this second discrepancy is again one upon which it is unnecessary to dwell. It is admitted that some of the things that Lessing said about formative art are not true. His defenders tell us that "art" after all was not his forte. It is to the science of literary criticism that the *Laocoon* makes its most brilliant contribution.

We may therefore narrow our inquiry to the single question: What is the value of Lessing's contribution to the theory of literary art? or more specifically, How far was he right in his delimitation of descriptive literature? Let us first take a rapid survey of his argument.

We have already learned, in the passage from Bosanquet, what occasioned the *Laocoon*. It was the fact that Winckelmann had tried to prescribe the same laws for the poet that he had given to the sculptor. Lessing saw very clearly that this would not do. The priest made no outcry, not because of the demands of Greek character, but because of the laws of Greek sculpture. Lessing pointed out more than one example in which Greek poets had made their heroes cry out and show other evidences of violent pain or grief. He showed that "art" has certain limitations; for instance, since in any one representation it can present its object from but one point of view, the object can be shown in but a single stage of development, and this stage remains before us as long as we view the representation. It was such limitations as these that probably influenced the artist in his treatment of the Laocoon group. Scarcely any of these limitations, however, could influence the work of the poet. Poetry does not appeal to the eye alone. Furthermore, nothing obliges the poet to concentrate

his picture into a single moment. He can take up every action, if he will, from its origin, and carry it through all possible changes to its issue. This suggested that the difference in the treatment of the Laocoon story by the poet and by the sculptor should be explained as arising out of a difference in the media through which the representation is effected. But it will not be necessary for us to follow Lessing's argument throughout all the turns of its sinuous course. Suffice it to say that after much apparent wandering he is finally able to gather up all the threads of his exposition into the famous group of arguments on the limits of painting and poetry. The important part that they play in this study, as well as their own interest, justifies me in quoting them almost in full.

Lessing says:<sup>1</sup>

"I will try to prove my conclusions by starting from first principles.

"I argue thus. If it be true that painting employs wholly different signs or means of imitation from poetry,—the one using forms and colors in space, the other articulate sounds in time,—and if signs must unquestionably stand in convenient relation with the thing signified, then signs arranged side by side can represent only objects existing side by side, or whose parts so exist, while consecutive signs can express only objects which succeed each other, or whose parts succeed each other, in time.

"Objects which exist side by side, or whose parts so exist, are called bodies. Consequently bodies with their visible properties are the peculiar subjects of painting.

"Objects which succeed each other, or whose parts succeed each other in time, are actions. Consequently actions are the peculiar subjects of poetry.

"All bodies, however, exist not only in space, but also

1—*Laocoon*, XVI; Translation by Ellen Frothingham, Boston: 1887.



in time. They continue, and, at any moment of their continuance, may assume a different appearance and stand in different relations. Every one of these momentary appearances and groupings was the result of a preceding, may become the cause of a following, and is therefore the centre of a present, action. Consequently painting can imitate actions also, but only as they are suggested through forms.

“Actions, on the other hand, cannot exist independently, but must always be joined to certain agents. In so far as those agents are bodies or are regarded as such, poetry describes also bodies, but only indirectly through actions.

“Painting, in its coexistent compositions, can use but a single moment of an action, and must therefore choose the most pregnant one, the one most suggestive of what has gone before and what is to follow.

“Poetry, in its progressive imitations, can use but a single attribute of bodies, and must choose that one which gives the most vivid picture of the body as exercised in this particular action.

“Hence the rule for the employment of a single descriptive epithet, and the cause of the rare occurrence of descriptions of physical objects.

“I should place less confidence in this dry chain of conclusions, did I not find them fully confirmed by Homer, or, rather, had they not been first suggested to me by Homer's method. These principles alone furnish a key to the noble style of the Greek, and enable us to pass just judgment on the opposite method of many modern poets who insist upon emulating the artist in a point where they must of necessity remain inferior to him.

“I find that Homer paints nothing but progressive actions. All bodies, all separate objects, are painted only as they take part in such actions, and generally with a single touch. . . . If Homer, for instance, wants us to see the chariot of Juno, Hebe must put it together piece by piece before our eyes. . . . When Homer wishes to tell us how Agamemnon was dressed, he makes the king put on every article of raiment in our presence: the soft tunic, the great mantle, the beautiful

sandals, and the sword. When he is thus fully equipped he grasps his sceptre. We see the clothes while the poet is describing the act of dressing. An inferior writer would have described the clothes down to the minutest fringe, and of the action we should have seen nothing."

When Homer describes the sceptre, instead of presenting us with a copy of it, he gives a history. "And so at last," says Lessing, "I know this sceptre better than if a painter should put it before my eyes, or a second Vulcan give it into my hands." If it is Homer's sole object to give us a picture, he will yet break this up into a sort of history in order that the coexistent parts may follow each other in the time order.

"But,"<sup>1</sup> continues Lessing, "it may be urged, the signs employed in poetry not only follow each other, but are also arbitrary; and, as arbitrary signs, they are certainly capable of expressing things as they exist in space,"—witness Homer's description of the shield of Achilles. Lessing says that he will proceed to answer this double objection—double, because a just conclusion must hold, though unsupported by examples, and on the other hand the example of Homer has great weight with him, even when he is unable to justify it by rules. At this point we might expect him to meet the first of the objections by denying that the signs of language are arbitrary. This plain and simple solution of the difficulty does not, however, occur to him. Accepting as a fact the alleged arbitrariness of language, he tries to escape the dilemma by affirming that while it is true that this property of language does help the prose-writer to make objects plain and intelligible, it does not enable the poet to paint, a thing that the poet must always aim to do. Then he asks the question, "How do we obtain a clear idea of a thing in space?"

He answers: "First we observe its separate parts, then the union of these parts, and finally the whole. Our senses perform these various operations with such amazing rapidity as to make them seem but one. This rapidity is absolutely essential to our obtaining an idea of the whole, which is nothing more than the result of the conception of the parts and of their connection with each other. Suppose now that the poet should lead us in proper order from one part of the object to the other; suppose he should succeed in making the connection of these parts perfectly clear to us: how much time will he have consumed?"

"The details, which the eye takes in at a glance, he enumerates slowly one by one, and it often happens that, by the time he has brought us to the last, we have forgotten the first. Yet from these details we are to form a picture. When we look at an object the various parts are always present to the eye. It can run over them again and again. The ear, however, loses the details it has heard, unless memory retain them. And if they be so retained, what pains and effort it costs to recall their impressions in the proper order and with even the moderate degree of rapidity necessary to the obtaining of a tolerable idea of the whole." Lessing then quotes two stanzas from Von Haller's *Alps* to illustrate the point that he has just been making.

We may neglect for our purpose that which follows in the next few pages of his book, but in his statements with reference to the shield of Achilles we take up again the main thread of the argument. He begins thus:<sup>1</sup>

"But I am lingering over trifles and seem to have forgotten the shield of Achilles, that famous picture, which more than all else caused Homer to be regarded among

the ancients as a master of painting. But surely a shield, it may be said, is a single corporeal object, the description of which according to its coexistent parts cannot come within the province of poetry. Yet this shield, its material, its form, and all the figures which occupied its enormous surface, Homer has described, in more than a hundred magnificent lines, so circumstantially and precisely that modern artists have found no difficulty in making a drawing of it exact in every detail."

Lessing's answer to this objection is that "Homer does not paint the shield finished, but in the process of creation. Here again he has made use of the happy device of substituting progression for coexistence, and thus converted the tiresome description of an object into a graphic picture of an action. We see not the shield, but the divine master-workman employed upon it. . . . Not till the whole is finished do we lose sight of him. At last it is done; and we wonder at the work, but with the believing wonder of an eye-witness who has seen it a-making. The same cannot be said of the shield of Æneas in Virgil."

After reading Lessing's glowing account of Homer's description we ought certainly to have no doubt about the effect that the work should have upon us. It seems clear that this description of the shield must perform the miracle denied to the enumerative description. But a few pages farther on Lessing discloses the fact that, after all, Homer's description is not so clear to everybody as we might suppose. Since we shall have occasion in a later part of this study to mention objections that he admits have been urged against it, it will not be necessary for us to quote them here. Nor will it be necessary at present to quote other passages from the *Laocoon*. We have now before us enough material to begin the discussion. Let us take up the parts we have just presented and subject them to a careful criticism.



## II

### *Homer's Descriptions*

IN the extracts just quoted, it will be recalled that Lessing has admitted that the example of Homer has great weight with him even when not justified by argument. He has told us that he would place less confidence in his dry chain of conclusions, did he not find them fully confirmed by Homer, or, rather, had they not been first suggested to him by Homer's method. These principles alone, he says, furnish a key to the noble style of the Greek. Homer paints nothing but progressive actions. All bodies, all separate objects, are painted only as they take part in such actions, and generally with a single touch. It will be remembered also that Lessing draws practically all his examples of good descriptions from Homer. Consequently before we shall be in a position to discuss Lessing's theory critically, we must go to his great source, and learn, at first hand, the facts concerning Homer's descriptions.

I think that Lessing was very fortunate in choosing Homer as model and guide. The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were wrought into their present form under peculiar conditions. They were recited, and those who did the reciting made this work their profession. The bards spoke the poems time and time again with an audience before them. They could therefore tell from daily experience what was interesting and what was not. If they found any weak or ineffective parts, it is only natural to suppose that they would either drop them or (if they could) improve upon them. So I think we may safely conclude that from Homer's poems the ineffective descriptions

have been eliminated, and those that we find there have been proved thoroughly effective. But in saying this I do not mean to imply that any type of description not found in Homer is probably ineffective. These poems were recited, and recited from memory, hence they had to be of a form easy for the listener to understand and easy for the bard to remember. From this we might expect more simplicity and directness, a more frequent use of repetition and of fixed epithets, than in works written to meet certain other conditions. Nevertheless, Homer does not appear to us very restricted, and when Lessing makes the unqualified assertion that all of Homer's descriptions are progressive, that none of them are presented as static pictures, we must confess the German critic appears rather sweeping. Can his statement be justified?

Perhaps the first possible exception is the detailed description of Thersites in Book II of the *Iliad*. I shall quote it in part, calling attention to the fact that it is a description by enumeration. Homer says: "And he was ill-favoured beyond all men that came to Ilios. Bandy-legged was he, and lame of one foot, and his two shoulders rounded, arched down upon his chest; and over them his head was warped, and a scanty stubble sprouted on it."<sup>1</sup> Lessing himself mentions this example in his treatment of the ugly in art. The point he there makes is that the impression of ugliness produced by the description is softened by the details being given one after the other. That is a point we need not discuss for the present. But there is one question about the description that we must not fail to ask. It is a question that Lessing did not answer

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1—*Iliad*; Book II. Lang, Leaf, and Myers' translation, p. 28.

nor even try to, although it was essential to his argument, and that is, Does this description of Thersites give us a unified picture? For myself, I will say that this description as given in the *Iliad* makes one unified impression on me, though the details are given one after the other. Several others with whom I have spoken, acknowledge that my experience is also theirs. Here then, in a passage from Homer, we have some reason to suppose, is an exception to Lessing's theory. Here we have a description, told by enumeration, which nevertheless produces a unified impression. Is this the only exception in Homer?

Lessing has had much to say about the shield of Achilles in the *Iliad*, Book XVIII. In fact, he lays more stress upon this particular description than on any other. So let us give it a due amount of attention. It is curious to note that in spite of one statement to the contrary, Lessing admits that there is no unanimity of opinion as to what this shield must have looked like as a whole. It will be remembered that Homer's method was to tell us how this shield was constructed and adorned. We see the whole process, step by step. Lessing thinks this an admirable illustration of his theory. When Homer finishes he thinks we know all about the shield,—and yet, alas, there have been people, he admits, who have questioned the very possibility of such a shield. The stoutest defenders of Homer's literary art do not seem at all agreed as to its appearance. Putting aside the problem, How is it possible to bring all this wealth of ornament into one picture in the mind's eye? the question has even been asked, How is it conceivable that all of these details should be presented on a single shield? There have been several hypotheses. Lessing very ingeniously says that he

thinks the pictures were divided between the front and the back of the shield. This divergence of opinion suggests the point that I now wish to present. Homer has told us all about the shield, except how it looks as a whole; that, he has not tried to do. Apparently Lessing has not thought of this, though it is essential if the example of the shield is to illustrate his argument. He has told us that we cannot describe successfully by the method of enumeration—the method Homer used in the description of Thersites—but that we can describe progressively. But now, the progressive description of the shield of Achilles does not give me, at least, as unified a picture as the enumerative description of Thersites—in fact, it does not give me any unified picture at all, and Lessing admits that I am not the only one affected in that way. It would seem, then, as far as examples are concerned, that Lessing has failed in both instances. With reference to the shield of Achilles he has confused *knowing* with *seeing*. This same confusion is further illustrated by his statements about the sceptre of Agamemnon. In the description of the latter there is to be found hardly a word to suggest the actual appearance of the object. Homer merely tell us the various gods and men who have owned it. He says: “Then stood up lord Agamemnon bearing his sceptre, that Hephaistos had wrought curiously. Hephaistos gave it to king Zeus, son of Kronos, and then Zeus gave it to the messenger-god the slayer of Argus, and king Hermes gave it to Pelops the charioteer. and Pelops again gave it to Atreus shepherd of the host. And Atreus dying left it to Thyestes rich in flocks. and Thyestes in his turn left it to Agamemnon to bear. that over many islands and all Argos he should



be lord." Yet Lessing says with reference to it: "At last I know this sceptre better than if a painter should put it before my eyes, or a second Vulcan give it into my hands." But such a statement is not to the point. There is no question that Homer's account does add dignity and interest to the sceptre. We obtain much information about it just as we did about the shield; but not for that reason have we the right to say that we know it visually. Nothing has been said about how the sceptre looks.

But now let us continue our study of the shield of Achilles. The shield is adorned by numerous pictures, the descriptions of which Homer has given us in some detail. How are these scenes presented to us? Is the emphasis thrown upon the process of the making? Are we more conscious of Vulcan in his workshop than we are of the scenes themselves? Do we find any enumeration of details, and if so do we obtain therefrom completed pictures? Before trying to answer such questions, let us read one or two of the descriptions. We may begin with the account of the ploughers in the field. Homer says:

"Furthermore he set in the shield a soft fresh-ploughed field, rich tilth and wide, the third time ploughed; and many ploughers therein drave their yokes to and fro as they wheeled about. Whensoever they came to the boundary of the field and turned, then would a man come to each and give into his hands a goblet of sweet wine, while others would be turning back along the furrows, fain to reach the boundary of the deep tilth. And the field grew black behind and seemed as it were a ploughing, albeit of gold, for this was the great marvel of the work.

"Furthermore he set therein the demesne land of a

king, where hinds were reaping with sharp sickles in their hands. Some armfuls along the swathe were falling in rows to the earth, whilst others the sheaf-binders were binding in twisted bands of straw. Three sheaf-binders stood over them, while behind boys gathering corn and bearing it in their arms gave it constantly to the binders; and among them the king in silence was standing at the swathe with his staff, rejoicing in his heart. And henchmen apart beneath an oak were making ready a feast, and preparing a great ox they had sacrificed; while the women were strewing much white barley to be supper for the hinds.'"<sup>1</sup>

These two descriptions have a very different effect upon me from the account of Agamemnon's sceptre, a very different effect also from that of the whole description of the shield. I can see the ploughed field and the men and oxen at work in it—all in one picture. I can see the demesne land in one picture, too, the several parts coexisting side by side. The fact that the details are given one after the other does not interfere with my conception of their co-existence, and in these descriptions I am not helped by the knowledge that Hephaistos is constructing the pictures on a shield. For me the scenes simply grow by the accumulation of facts. And there are others who admit that my experience is theirs. For us these scenes are practically enumerations,—they are almost exactly what Lessing has said cannot be done successfully; and yet here we have this method used, in Homer, and in the very example that Lessing has cited to illustrate its contrary.

But the *Iliad* is not the Homeric poem that one would

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<sup>1</sup>--*Iliad*, Book XVIII. Lang, Leaf, and Myers' translation, p. 383.

naturally refer to in illustrating the possibilities of description. For such work the *Odyssey*, the traveler's book, is far superior, and I am more than surprised that Lessing does not mention the *Odyssey* in support of his contention. It would seem that he had not thought of it in this connection. Lessing says: "I find that Homer paints nothing but progressive actions. All bodies, all separate objects, are painted only as they take part in such actions, and generally with a single touch." Will the *Odyssey* bear him out in this statement? Let us answer by quoting a few descriptions from the *Odyssey*.

Here is a description of an axe: "She gave him a great axe, which fitted well his hands; it was an axe of bronze, sharp on both sides, and had a beautiful olive handle, strongly fastened; . . . ."

Here is a description of a chair: "She led me in and placed me on a silver-studded chair, beautiful, richly wrought,—upon its lower part there was a rest for feet. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

Here is a description of a harbor: "Now in the land of Ithaca there is a certain harbor sacred to Phorcys, the old man of the sea. Here two projecting jagged cliffs slope inward toward the harbor and break the heavy waves raised by wild winds without. Inside, without a cable, ride the well-benched ships when once they reach the roadstead. Just at the harbor's head a leafy olive stands, and near it a pleasant darksome cave sacred to nymphs, called Naiads. Within the cave are bowls and jars of stone, and here bees hive their honey. Long looms of stone are here, where nymphs weave purple robes, a marvel to behold. Here are ever-flowing springs.

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1—*Odyssey*, Book V. Palmer's translation, p. 79. *Ibid.*, Book X, p. 156.

The cave has double doors: one to the north, accessible to men; one to the south, for gods. By this, men do not pass; it is the immortals' entrance."<sup>1</sup>

Here is a description of Athene: "Near him Athene drew, in form of a young shepherd, yet delicate as are the sons of kings. Doubled about her shoulders she wore a fine-wrought mantle; under her shining feet her sandals, and in her hand a spear." Also: "As he thus spoke, the goddess, clear-eyed Athene, smiled and patted him with her hands; her form grew like a woman's,—one fair and tall and skilled in dainty work. . . ."<sup>2</sup>

Here is a description of Calypso's grotto: "He [Hermes] found she was within. Upon the hearth a great fire blazed, and far along the island the fragrance of cleft cedar and of sandal-wood sent perfume as they burned. Indoors, and singing with a sweet voice, she tended her loom and wove with golden shuttle. Around the grotto, trees grew luxuriantly, alder and poplar and sweet-scented cyprus, where long-winged birds have nests,—owls, hawks, and sea-crows ready-tongued, that ply their business in the waters. Here too was trained over the hollow grotto a thrifty vine, luxuriant with clusters; and four springs in a row were running with clear water, making their way from one another here and there. On every side soft meadows of violet and parsley bloomed. Here, therefore, even an immortal who should come might gaze at what he saw, and in his heart be glad. Here stood and gazed the guide, the Speedy-comer."<sup>3</sup>

Next I will quote a part of the description of the palace of Alcinous:

1—*Odyssey*, Book XIII. Palmer's translation, p. 202.

2—*Ibid.*, p. 205.

3—*Ibid.*, Book V, p. 74.



“Meanwhile Odysseus neared the lordly palace of Alcinous, and his heart was deeply stirred so that he paused before he crossed the brazen threshold; for a sheen as of the sun or moon played through the high-roofed house of generous Alcinous. On either hand ran walls of bronze from threshold to recess, and round about the ceiling was a cornice of dark metal. Doors made of gold closed in the solid building. The doorposts were of silver and stood on a bronze threshold, silver the lintel overhead, and gold the handle. On the two sides were gold and silver dogs; these had Hephaistos wrought with subtle craft to guard the house of generous Alcinous, creatures immortal, young forever. Within were seats planted against the wall on this side and on that, from threshold to recess, in long array; and over these were strewn light fine-spun robes, the work of women. Here the Phæacian leaders used to sit, drinking and eating, holding constant cheer. And golden youths on massive pedestals stood and held flaming torches in their hands to light by night the palace for the feasters. . . .

“Without the court and close beside its gate is a large garden, covering four acres; around it runs a hedge on either side. Here grow tall trees—pears, pomegranates, apples with shining fruit, sweet figs, and thrifty olives. On them fruit never fails; it is not gone in winter or in summer, but lasts throughout the year; for constantly the wind’s breath brings some to bud and mellows others. Pear ripens upon pear, apple on apple, cluster on cluster, fig on fig. Here too the teeming vineyard has been planted, one part of which, the drying-place, lying on level ground, is heating in the sun; elsewhere men gather grapes; and elsewhere still they tread them. In front the grapes are green and shed their flower, but a second row are now just turning dark. And here trim garden beds, along the outer line, spring up in every kind and all the year are gay. Near by, two fountains rise, one scattering its streams throughout the garden, one bounding by another course beneath the court-yard gate toward the high house; from this the townsfolk draw their water.

Such at the palace of Alcinous were the gods' splendid gifts. Here long-tried royal Odysseus stood and gazed. Then after he had gazed to his heart's fill on all, he quickly crossed the threshold and came within the house."<sup>1</sup>

Now, surely, I have quoted enough. Each of these examples refutes Lessing's statement about Homer, each stands as an argument against his theory. After reading such descriptions I cannot resist quoting against Lessing a statement he himself made in an early part of the *Laocoon*: "Much would in theory appear unanswerable if the achievements of genius had not proved the contrary."

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1—*Ibid.*, Book VII.

### III

#### *Lessing's Psychology of Vision*

**B**UT now, is it necessary to go to the achievements of genius in order to disprove the arguments for Lessing's theory? May there not be some flaw in his reasoning? I think we have a right to suppose that there is. It would be passing strange if sound argument could contradict the facts proved by example. And yet Lessing has presented a strong case. His arguments seem logical, consistent, and fairly conclusive. Let us, however, investigate his premises. Almost everything he says is based, directly or indirectly, on his theory of vision. He asks the question: "How do we obtain a clear idea of a thing in space?" and he answers: "First we observe its separate parts, then the union of these parts, and finally the whole. Our senses perform these various operations with such amazing rapidity as to make them seem but one. This rapidity is absolutely essential to our obtaining an idea of the whole, which is nothing more than the result of the conception of the parts and of their connection with each other."

Lessing's idea, then, is that in vision we see the separate particulars before we see the whole object, and that the mind does its work of synthesis almost instantaneously. But can this be accepted as a true theory of vision? No, I think we may answer with confidence, modern psychology will not accept any such theory as that. As all experiments tend to show, in seeing we go from the vague to the definite, and the process is often very far from being instantaneous.

For the purpose of illustration let us suppose that you and I go to the top of a hill and there suddenly catch sight of an unfamiliar landscape on beyond. How will it appear to us at the first glance? Will it flash itself upon us as a wealth of details? Shall we see the woodlands and meadows, the river, the farm-houses, the barns and the sheds, all distinctly in this first glance? No, if you have ever introspected under such conditions you will say at once, Not at all. Your experience will be something like mine. First of all, I am conscious of nothing more than that I see a landscape, with the addition, perhaps, of one or two vague details that my attention has been focused upon. Gradually these become clearer and other details begin to come into view as my attention shifts from place to place. At first I can distinguish nothing but crude lines and blotches. These resolve themselves presently into the woods and meadows, or into the row of trees that follow the river, or into roads and fences. I notice, next, a number of farm buildings, though I am not conscious at first which is the house and which is the barn, these later details coming to me after I focus my attention upon them. Thus, by a comparatively slow process of analysis, in the same way that Odysseus observed the palace of Alcinous, the scene before me grows, bit by bit, all the time becoming more and more distinct.

But, you may say, this is an unfair example. When I meet my friend, Mr. Smith, on the street, I do not have to go through all this long process to recognize him. I can tell him at the first glance. Certainly, but that is because most of our seeing is not perception but apperception. We always see by the help of former experience. The ease with which you recognize Mr. Smith depends very largely on the degree of your acquaintance



with him. Strange as it may seem to one who is not familiar with the results of modern psychological inquiry, your visual image of Mr. Smith, that you recognize so readily, is not a picture of the moment that the outer world, so to speak, thrusts upon you, but rather it is the resultant of all your previous views and analyses of the man—it is a complex mental process. Suppose that the man does not look like anyone with whom you are at present familiar, but that he does somewhat resemble a person you knew ten years ago. The details now—and with them the recognition—will not come so quickly as in the other case. Now you will have to analyze out the details slowly, one by one, until the picture is complete. Our visual conceptions, then, are matters of growth, often of slow growth.

Let us take another example. Go, if you please, to the art gallery and choose there some great painting that you have never looked at before. Now certainly neither you nor anyone else would care to assert that you can see all there is in the picture at the first glance. Your view of it will become clearer and more definite the longer you look. Study will always bring out new details and new meaning. Or suppose that you see a beautiful man or woman. Are you conscious at once of what it is that makes the person beautiful? Perhaps it is some particular part that most impresses you,—let us say it is the eyes. Are you then conscious of what it is about the eyes that makes them so beautiful? If you are like most persons you have not even noticed the color. You simply know vaguely that they are very beautiful. Barrie's Little Minister was not at all exceptional in failing to notice the color of his sweetheart's eyes.

The truth is that most of the things we see in this

world are necessarily no more than abstractions. True, we rarely think of them in that way: to us they appear very real, and we treat them with familiarity and ease, just as a mathematician treats his abstract quantities. When we look at an object we think we see all that lies exposed to us, and yet, while we are looking, someone else may be able to point out details that we have not seen. We may live in a house several months and feel perfectly at home there, and yet perhaps not be able to answer such simple questions as whether it has blinds or not, or whether it has four windows or five in front. We meet men day after day and do not know whether they have blue eyes or black. For ordinary purposes we do not need to know such things. I have classes in composition. Recently I asked them to describe some of the buildings that they go to every day. If Lessing's theory of vision were true, the task of finding things to say ought to be easy. Though perhaps the students might not be able to write effective descriptions, they ought themselves to see a great wealth of details. But instead of that they had great trouble in finding anything to say. It was difficult for them to analyze out the details. Though they had gone to the places every day, the buildings had remained abstractions for them. They had never before had occasion to note the characteristic features. And they simply knew those things about the buildings which the necessities or accidents of experience had taught them.

In this ignorance of details the students were perfectly normal. When we consider the matter, it becomes clear at once that every object, if it be analyzed deeply enough, is exceedingly complex. In fact, there seems to be no limit to the minuteness of analysis. But suppose there were, then if all these details should

crowd themselves into the mental image at the first glance, the mind would necessarily be overwhelmed by its very wealth. When we looked for one thing we should see a hundred or a thousand, equally distinct. What a great waste of effort that would involve! Clearly, on the ground of mental economy alone we should be safe in judging that the eye does not see in that way.

But if one will study the structure of the eye, one may find much stronger reasons for rejecting Lessing's theory of vision. All parts of the retina do not receive impressions with equal distinctness. There is in each eye a certain place, called the blind spot, which receives no impressions at all from the field of vision. And there is another place, called the yellow spot, on which the impressions are received most strongly and vividly. The eye, therefore, cannot by its very structure see all parts of the field of vision with the same definiteness. When we look at an object, there is always one part, called the focus of attention, which stands out more clearly than all the rest. The rays of light from this part are received by the eye on its yellow spot. The rest of the field is not so plain in vision, and it forms, as it were, a more or less vague background or fringe for the central part. If we wish to see the background more distinctly we are obliged to shift our attention. Though we may see the whole of a large field at once, there is only a small portion of it that is perceived with any degree of vividness, and even that part is dependent on past experience for its interpretation. The less we know the less we see. The first glance, then, that we give to an object does not afford us a wealth of details. Analysis is necessary to bring out the details, and this analysis requires time.

To re-enforce the preceding statements I will give the results of an experiment that I have tried on perhaps a score of people. Wherever possible I tried to select as my subjects persons who are good visualizers, that is, persons who remember things in terms of visual images. I asked these persons to study a picture of some complexity. In almost all cases it was a little woodcut of Landseer's "The Challenge."<sup>1</sup> My instructions were generally that the person should look at the picture until he could see the whole of it in his mind's eye. A good visualizer after looking at the woodcut from a half-minute to two minutes would assure me that his mental image contained everything that was in the picture. To him the mental image was just as rich in detail as the picture itself. Then I took the picture myself and began asking questions to discover what was really in the subject's mental image. The result was exactly what I expected it to be. Among all my subjects not one could answer two-thirds of my questions. Of course the best visualizers made the fewest mistakes, but even they did sometimes answer incorrectly, and were frequently obliged to confess that they did not know whether certain parts were arranged in one way or in another. For instance, when I would ask,

Do you see the deer, plainly?

Yes, would be the answer.

But when I went farther and asked such questions as

Is the deer's mouth open or shut?

Can you see the deer's tail?

Does the deer make a shadow? etc.,

the subject often found it impossible to answer. I

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1—Perry Pictures, No. 914.



asked how many tree-trunks there are in the picture. The answer was generally two, but occasionally it was one, and sometimes three. A few of my subjects thought they saw the trunks plainly, but to my next question,

How many prongs are there on the trunk at the left of the picture? I have never yet received a correct answer. Generally the subject would say immediately, I did not notice that, or I did not count the prongs, or make some similar answer. That is, the mental images, though they seemed complete, were after all not susceptible of minute analysis. They were conceptual rather than perceptual: they contained the general notion of the object without going much into detail.

The answers regarding the tree-trunk and the deer are fair representatives of the results as a whole. And not only were the things themselves unanalyzed, but the relations of part to part were also unanalyzed. Thus not very many could tell me whether the left tree-trunk is under the deer, or before it, or behind it, and the three or four who could tell me how many deer-tracks there are in the picture were unable to give the relative position of the tracks. So it was with the relationship of other objects. This phase of the experiment suggests that relationships, too, require analysis, if they are to be correctly reproduced in the mental image.

If this experiment shows that the ordinary observer has but vague impressions in his percepts, it shows also that he seldom realizes the fact. Had I asked the subject to memorize all the details in the picture, he would probably have said at once that he could not do it, for his past experience would have guided him in the answer. But by giving my directions in the way I did,—

that is, by asking him simply to intensify his mental image until it looked to him exactly like the picture, I drew the attention away from the memorization of facts and made the task seem a comparatively simple one. Though the process of intensification involved analysis and memorization of separate facts, he did not think of it in that way. He did not realize that what he saw in the picture was not all that was there. In many cases, therefore, the surprise grew with the questions, and when, after I had finished, the subject was permitted to look at the picture again, not infrequently he assured me that the picture he now saw was very different from the one he thought he saw before.

So much, then, for Lessing's theory of vision. It is unquestionably wrong. Nevertheless, in order to show conclusively that his theory of vision invalidates his theory of description, it will be well for us to examine further the question of the time involved in seeing. If the time required to analyze out the details—to resolve them from the vague into the definite—is instantaneous or nearly so, then of course it would make but little difference for description what might be the process of the operation. The question to be answered, then, is whether language is rapid enough to keep up with visual analysis. Let us consider this phase of the subject more in detail.

In the examples hitherto presented—though the fact was not emphasized—the operation of seeing was by no means instantaneous. The traveler looking over the valley might gaze for half an hour without seeing all that was pleasing. The friend who recognized Mr. Smith so readily, did so because he had learned to know his features through previous meetings, but an artist in order to paint the same face would require many

sittings. The task of the composition student was a slow one. Even the subjects on whom I experimented with Landseer's picture, after looking at it from one half-minute to two minutes, did not then see nearly all that was in it. So in all these examples—and it would seem that the ones chosen are fairly representative—a very appreciable time is spent in the act of perceiving. Now how fast can we present ideas by means of language? I should like to answer this question by giving the results obtained from one of the subjects of the Landseer experiment.

The subject was one of my students—a young woman who is an excellent visualizer. After looking at the picture two-thirds of a minute she said that she “saw as much of the picture as she would ever see.”

This is what she saw :

A winter scene with snow and ice.

The deer; with a general impression of its pose but nothing very definite. She did not see the mouth, nor the tail, nor the shadow, nor the ribs.

The mountains; with one or two parts very distinct.

The dark sky with stars.

A smooth body of water; but she could not tell whether or not the banks approach each other at the sides of the picture.

Two tree-trunks with an uncertain number of prongs, and the roots of the tree-trunk at the right.

She may have seen other things indistinctly, but if so I could not find them out. I am sure she did not see the stones near the bank, nor the shadows in the picture, nor the footprints, nor the other deer. She was also uncertain about the mist. She did not know much about the relative positions of objects: for

instance, she could not tell me where the left tree-trunk is with reference to the deer and to the water's edge.

Now, although this young woman is an excellent observer and a good visualizer, yet it took her two-thirds of a minute to see the few general details that I have listed. What can descriptive language do in the same interval? The question is easily answered. In less than one-half of that time I can read aloud a description which contains all the details that she saw, stated at least as definitely as she saw them. Let the following description serve as the example:

It is a moonlight winter scene. In the foreground on the snow-covered shore of a quiet lake, stands a deer with head thrown back as if in the act of challenging to combat another deer. Across the lake to the right rise snow-covered mountains, very distinct against the dark though starlit sky. On this side of the water near the deer, lie two prongy tree-trunks, the one at the right having gnarled roots.

Now, as I said above, I can read through this description out loud in less than one-half the time it took the subject to perceive the details, and the subject was a better visualizer and a better observer than the average person on whom I experimented. No one saw more details than she did in the same length of time. As a matter of fact, I can read off more details in two-thirds of a minute than any of my subjects were able to see in two minutes of observation. And though I have not tried the experiment on enough people to make a sweeping generalization, I can at least say this, that I have yet to find a person who can take up the picture for the first time and see details as rapidly as they can be expressed in language. If, then, enumerative descriptions are generally unsuccessful, it surely can-



not be due to the slowness of language. Language seems to be ever so much more rapid than is the work of analysis for the average person. Lessing's argument, therefore, falls to the ground: language is more than rapid enough for enumerative description.

#### IV

### *Lessing's "Chain of Conclusions" and the Missing Principle*

WHILE, then, I do not wish for a moment to deny that there is truth in Lessing's contention that literature and formative art have different possibilities and different methods, I am compelled to deny emphatically that Lessing has found the true basis for this differentiation. The principle upon which he bases all of his famous "chain of conclusions"<sup>1</sup> is wrong, and must invalidate all that rests upon it. The contrast between poetry and painting is not that one is perceived temporally and the other spatially, for both are perceived temporally and both may be perceived spatially; nor is it that one uses articulate sounds and the other uses forms and colors. Some other principle must be found. But before we seek it let us examine carefully some of the individual arguments in Lessing's "chain of conclusions." I will begin with his fourth argument, the one that deals with the description of bodies through actions. It is complementary to the argument regarding the presentation of actions through bodies.

"Actions," says Lessing, "cannot exist independently, but must always be joined to certain agents. In so far as those agents are bodies or are regarded as such, poetry describes also bodies, but only indirectly through actions."

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1—*Laocoon*, XVI.

This statement is perhaps true on its face, and no doubt Lessing meant to be entirely fair and honest when he made it. Nevertheless, it is more subtly fallacious than almost any other paragraph of Lessing's that I know of. It is so subtle, in fact, that even so accomplished a logician as Bosanquet, translating it for his *History of Æsthetic*, p. 224, makes of it a complete fallacy. This is his translation:

“On the other hand actions cannot exist apart, but must be attached to beings. In as far as these beings are bodies, or are regarded as bodies, poetry *can* depict bodies too, *but only* by suggestion conveyed through action.” (The italics are mine.)

Now all that Lessing can truthfully mean is:

“Actions cannot exist apart from agents. Therefore, in so far as agents are bodies, poetry *must* depict bodies,—*at least in so far* as it suggests them in connection with actions.”

But if the least that can be said with reference to this paragraph from the famous “chain of conclusions” is that it is very misleading, what should be said about the second paragraph following it? As already stated, Lessing pairs off the characteristics for painting and poetry in contrasting sets. In the paragraph following the one we have just been discussing, Lessing makes this statement:

“Painting, in its coexistent compositions, can use but a single moment of an action, and must therefore choose the most pregnant one, the one most suggestive of what has gone before and what is to follow.”

We shall not dispute his conclusion. He has argued this matter out at some length in previous chapters. But now notice what he has to say about poetry in the contrasting statement:

“Poetry, in its progressive imitations, can use but a single attribute of bodies, and must choose that one which gives the most vivid picture of the body as exercised in this particular action.”

This statement does seem to balance with the other rather prettily, but where are its antecedents to be found? Certainly not in any of the earlier parts of the book, and certainly not in any other “links” in his chain of conclusions. Nowhere has he had anything to say about the number of attributes that can be used in description. The preceding statement on poetry—the one that we have just been criticising—should tell us that we can describe without using any attributes whatever. Since the agent is a body with certain characteristics, when we mention the mere name we suggest these characteristics, and hence present potentially a certain amount of description. Now if the cause for the failure of so many descriptions is that which Lessing would have us believe, that is, that language is so slow it cannot keep up with the rapidity of perception, why not reduce our description to its lowest terms? Why employ even a single epithet? Clearly, it would seem that if he were entirely consistent, Lessing should have given us for his contrasting statement one something like this: Just as painting in its unprogressiveness uses but a single moment of time, poetry in its progressive development should use but a single symbol—that is, the name of the object itself. Here indeed we have a consistent argument, though it is not one we should wish to follow. Art is too complex to be encompassed by such simple rules.

But how did Lessing arrive at this idea? The explanation, as I see it, is an interesting one. He had been giving his conclusions in contrasting pairs. He



had shown at some length in previous chapters that painting can use but a single moment of time, but he had nowhere developed any idea about poetry that could serve as a balancing statement. Nevertheless he knew that Homer used single epithets, and since he wished his argument to be in accordance with the example of Homer, he worked back from the method followed in the epics to a generalization that would be in accordance with it. This he boldly assumed as the true principle, just as if he had proved it, and introduced it as the statement correlative to the one about painting. Then having assumed it, he deduced from it the rule that had at first suggested it—"Hence the rule," he says, "for the employment of a single descriptive epithet." Then last of all he confirms all this by referring to Homer: "I should place less confidence in this dry chain of conclusions, did I not find them fully confirmed by Homer, or, rather, *had they not been first suggested to me by Homer's method.*" An interesting example of reasoning in a circle.

We have found, then, that there is more than one flaw in Lessing's argument, and we are not through with it yet. But before we try to destroy anything further in the *Laocoon*, let us seek that missing principle, lately referred to, that can serve as the basis in the differentiation of literature and formative art. At the beginning of his "chain of conclusions," Lessing speaks of the different signs (*Zeichen*) or means of imitation used by painting and poetry. Until a short time ago I was for some reason under the impression that Lessing meant by *sign* what is ordinarily meant by *symbol*, and that, therefore, it was his idea that painting has a symbolism of forms and colors which exactly corresponds to the sounds used by poetry. In this I misunderstood Less-

ing. I now believe that he meant by the word *sign* nothing more than the material out of which, or by means of which, the respective arts represent their ideas.

But if he had really intended to say what I thought he said, he would again have made a mistake, for it is precisely in connection with the use of symbolism that we find the true basis for the differentiation of the sister arts. Poetry—or, more broadly speaking, literature—has to use in the presentation of most of its ideas an elaborate, artificial symbolism. There is nothing in the form or the sound of the word *knife*, for instance, which makes that symbol particularly fit to suggest to us a thing to eat with. A person unacquainted with our language could no more tell the meaning of the word from its form and sound than we could guess the meaning of *Messer* or *couteau* if we did not know German or French. *Knife* means to us what it does, simply through previous associations of the word with the object. The word by its own nature does not show us the thing, it simply stands for it arbitrarily. That is, literature is obliged to present its visual ideas indirectly through a word symbolism. Such is not the case with painting or with the formative arts in general. They can present their objects directly in terms of the very sensations. A knife in painting has, as far as possible, the same visual characteristics as the real knife one uses at the table. To be sure, formative art may and often does use symbolism with complete success, but this symbolism which formative art employs is generally natural as opposed to artificial. There is at any rate a very close relation between the sign and the thing signified. Formative art, then, may be almost universal in its immediate appeal, whereas no one can

appreciate literary art until he understands the language in which it is written. A painted landscape means a landscape to everybody; not so the description of a landscape. This difference of directness and indirectness in presentation is the boundary between the two fields of art, the principle determining for each its separate aims and methods. The full importance of this difference will become clearer as we proceed.

Lessing has admitted more than once that language is arbitrary, and we have agreed with him so far as to say that most words have no special fitness to stand as the symbols for the particular ideas which they represent. But clearly this cannot be the meaning that Lessing had in mind for the word *arbitrary*, because surely the fact that words are not fitted to stand for their ideas cannot help them in the work of description, and Lessing admits distinctly that language can describe to some extent just because it is arbitrary. What Lessing must mean by the term, then, is that the same word can suggest the same idea to each of us. Passing over the question for the moment whether this is true or not, we can reply to Lessing that if language is arbitrary in this sense, then it must be an ideal medium for enumerative description. All that is necessary for adequate description is to give first the general impression and then to follow this by details in the order in which they naturally suggest themselves. But there is another characteristic about language that Lessing apparently has not thought of, and that is, that language is not made up of isolated fragments—each word does not give us a distinct impression—but we think in word-groups, and it is possible to read a periodic sentence almost to its close before the con-

tained idea flashes upon the mind. This of course is a great help to description.

If language were arbitrary I see no reason why it could not compete with a photograph. But here again the facts are against Lessing: language is not arbitrary. Mental imagery is a very personal affair; it must necessarily rest upon individual experience. The life history of no two persons is the same; not only do men differ in their temperaments and inclinations, but no two are able to go through exactly the same experiences. Therefore the concepts and notions of things, which are built up out of experience, must also differ, and since words but represent these concepts and notions, they too must have for different persons different associations. Herein, I believe, lies the hardest problem of description: How is it possible to suggest the same picture to all when the words used may mean different things for each? The difficulty, I fear, is at least in part insurmountable, for not only do concepts differ in themselves but they may also call up different backgrounds. It will be best to leave this subject, however, for a later and fuller discussion.

I have had much fault to find with Lessing on my way so far. Indeed, the discussion may have suggested that with regard to everything he said he was somewhat in the wrong. It has been shown that he was wrong in his assertions about Homer's methods, and wrong in his opinion that the method of enumerative description runs counter to the process of acquiring visual ideas. The argument has again thrown open to discussion the whole theory of the limits of description—boundaries which Lessing thought he had fixed for all time. Not to do this eminent thinker injustice, let us now say a few words in his favor.



One of the chief ideas presented in the *Laocoon*—perhaps the most important of them all—is that literature and formative art, by the very nature of things, have different possibilities and methods. This is a familiar thought now, but it was Lessing who first impressed the idea upon the world. If he had done nothing more he would deserve respect for having accomplished that. But Lessing not only showed that the two fields are different—he also gave us proper methods to use in making this differentiation.

Furthermore, Lessing's very errors served in their time a useful purpose. His rule that description ought always to be progressive, though it does not state the whole truth and though he did not establish it legitimately, is not far in the wrong. It goes much beyond the older idea, which he attacked, that the poet should imitate the painter in portraying scenes and faces. Though I attempt to show that description is broader in method than Lessing supposed, far be it from my purpose to encourage the frequent use of static and enumerative description. I am with Lessing in standing for life and movement, but my reasons are different from his, and different largely because men have been making discoveries in psychology in the hundred and fifty years since Lessing's time. So then, though we have disputed Lessing's views at almost every step, all honor to the man for having broken the way.

*Boundaries of Description as a Type of Discourse*

HEREAFTER we shall not have much to say about Lessing and his theory. The latter has done us good service as an introduction to our work, and while we have not yet determined as definitely as possible the boundaries and methods of description, we have learned from the preceding chapters that Lessing's ideas on the subject, though stimulating, are not very trustworthy. We need then feel no uneasiness if the ideas that we shall presently work out are not in accordance with those expressed in the *Laocoon*. Modern scholarship, especially in the field of psychology, has made advances since the time of Lessing, and it is with these advances that we shall be chiefly concerned in our further study.

As preliminary to determining the boundaries of descriptive writing, it seems desirable to state with exactness what is meant by description. This is not so easy as might be supposed. Even a brief study of literary types will afford ample illustration of the statement made by Gardiner in his *Forms of Prose Literature* that the present "divisions of rhetoric are artificial and largely arbitrary."<sup>1</sup> As a result, writers are not entirely agreed in the matter of definition. To add to the confusion, the types overlap, so that it is sometimes difficult to tell whether a selection is descriptive, or expository, or narrative. And some specimens of discourse, of considerable interest and importance, it is

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1—J. H. Gardiner, *The Forms of Prose Literature*, N. Y., 1900, p. 1.

impossible to classify under any of the recognized types. These are some of the difficulties that stand in the way of scientific definition.

The disturbing element in any discussion of classification is the type exposition. It is this type which overlaps the rest. Being especially designed to convey instruction, it has brought together from the fields of description, narration, and argument whatever may be of service in didactic composition. Rhetoricians have been slow to recognize this fact, and have persisted in trying to mark out for it a field coördinate with the other types.

The current rhetorical division of literature into description, narration, exposition, and argument (or persuasion), has now become so well-nigh universal in text-books that many students assume it to be founded in the nature of things and to have existed from the beginning of rhetorical speculation. This idea is so far from the truth that it will be worth our while to consider briefly the genesis of our modern classification, if for no other reason than to show how entirely dependent on practical considerations has been the evolution of the various types.

According to Jebb,<sup>1</sup> the founder of rhetoric as an art was Corax of Syracuse (c. 466 B. C.). In 466 Thrasybulus the despot of Syracuse was overthrown, and a democracy was established. One of the immediate consequences was a mass of litigation on claims to property. Such claims, often dating back many years, would frequently require that a complicated series of details should be stated and arranged. They would also, in many instances, lack documentary proof,

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1—*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Vol. XX, p. 508 f., Article, Rhetoric. Also Jebb's *Attic Orators*.

and rely chiefly on inferential reasoning. The facts known as to the "art" of Corax perfectly agree with these conditions. It sought to help the plain citizen who had to speak before a court of law. Thus rhetoric originated in a practical way. At first the only recognized rhetorical type was that of argument or persuasion. But the law court was not the only place where men were required to address public assemblies. Civic duties and various other functions called for the oration, nearly akin to the forensic speech. So in the course of time, and at first as subordinate branches, two other kinds of rhetoric were added to the forensic,—first, the deliberative, and later the epideictic branch. Aristotle, while he recognized the three types as coördinate, defined rhetoric as the "faculty of discerning in every case the available means of persuasion;" though clearly in his own treatment the subject-matter had outgrown this definition, for, as he pointed out, the epideictic branch is not chiefly concerned with persuasion: it is the rhetoric of display.

Later, when the study of rhetoric was transferred to Rome, the point of view was again considerably shifted. This, I believe, was due in large part to fundamental differences in racial characteristics and in the taste of the age. Since the Romans were not so analytical as the earlier Greeks, they cared less for logical persuasion. The attainment of eloquence now became the ideal of instruction in rhetoric. But eloquence is a broader and looser term than persuasion, and it has for its object to please quite as much as to convince. Here, then, was a chance for an enlargement of the field, and that is precisely what came about.

While these changes were taking place, however, there had grown up another body of theory, which



dealt with the aims and methods of the literature of pleasure. This theory had at first nothing to do with rhetoric. It was known as poetics, and later as a part of grammar. But after rhetoric broadened its horizon, parts of this theory began to find their way into rhetorical teaching. The Romans and the later Greeks gave the youth instruction in descriptive and narrative writing (fables) as a preliminary to the more advanced and more important study of eloquence. The reading and memorizing of poetry was also made a part of this elementary instruction. These subordinate branches assuming a more and more important place, the study of rhetoric, by the beginning of the modern epoch, had come to embrace two distinct kinds of discourse: the literature of eloquence or persuasion, and the literature of pleasure. It is in the latter field that description and narration have achieved their development. Many books in rhetoric have treated them solely in connection with poetry, and even at the present day they are still almost entirely limited, though perhaps unintentionally, to the literature of pleasure. They are still chiefly concerned with an appeal to the imagination.

In modern times the scope of rhetoric has been extended still farther. The name eloquence was applied to writing as well as to speaking, and rhetoric thus became the art of writing well. It also added to itself the study of *Belles Lettres*. Any branch of literature about which it was thought a student should know, whether for purposes of composition or appreciation, was felt to be a fit subject for rhetorical instruction. Besides orations, rhetoric already included poetry, and now it began to add such other types of literature as sermons, essays, dissertations, histories, and even let-

ters. Reaching out into this new territory, rhetoric laid claim to another field of literature,—a field that may be called the literature of instruction. With the dissertation it approached the most modern of all our present types of discourse, that which we know as exposition. As nearly as I can discover, exposition was first recognized in the rhetorics about the middle of the nineteenth century, being forced upon the attention of students of rhetoric by the growing interest in scientific instruction.

In late years rhetoric has continued to change. It has now limited its work almost entirely to instruction in prose composition. And in this field it has shifted the emphasis. Eloquence no longer holds the most important place. Indeed this shift has been felt to be so great that writers on the subject have often hesitated to call their text-books "rhetorics," preferring the name English Composition. I have suggested in the last few pages that there are three purposes for which composition may be used: that is, æsthetic pleasure, instruction, and conviction. Though these three purposes have not as yet been consciously recognized in the matter of classification, all three receive treatment in the present-day rhetoric, and no one is given a preponderance of attention. Instruction in description and narration deals mainly with the literature of pleasure, instruction in exposition with the literature of instruction, and instruction in argument with the literature of conviction.

This brief and fragmentary account of the development of rhetorical types will show why it is difficult to frame a satisfactory definition of description. We can easily see, after such a review, that the theory and aims of rhetoric have not remained stationary for the

past two thousand years. Contrary to the opinions of certain learned men,<sup>1</sup> Aristotle has not had the last word to say upon this subject. It has been revolutionized several times since his death. The numerous types that since then have been adopted, have been added for practical reasons. Their subject-matter has first grown up outside the rhetorics. Such conditions are not ideal for obtaining a logical classification.

In the greater number of modern text-books the classification of types of discourse is based on two conflicting principles: first, the nature of the idea, that is, whether it is specific<sup>2</sup> or general; and secondly, the purpose of the discourse, that is, whether it is to instruct, to convince, or to arouse æsthetic pleasure. Though the second of these principles is, as I have said, the less consciously employed, I think it is nevertheless the more serviceable of the two. It is possible to show this in discussing the relations of exposition to the other types.

Exposition is pre-eminently the type employed in scientific and other similarly instructive discourse. In this field it presents material, it explains and interprets it, and it argues about it if necessary. The last of these uses may be considered first. It is usual to differentiate scientific argument from exposition by limiting the former to questions in dispute and the latter to material that is accepted by all. But as applied to writers that are genuinely scientific this distinction has little value. So slight is the difference in method between the two, that what is argument for one person

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1—Cf., for example, the Preface to Weldon's translation of Aristotle's *Rhetoric*.

2—With the specific is ranked the concrete, with the general the abstract.

may be exposition for another. Mr. Gardiner<sup>1</sup> makes this point clear by citing the case of Darwin's *Origin of Species*. Darwin spoke of his book as an extended and difficult argument; we think of it nowadays as an exposition. That is, scientific argument,<sup>2</sup> as soon as it is generally accepted, becomes sound exposition.

As regards the presentation of ideas, exposition is engaged in the same kind of work as description and narration. It is customary to separate exposition from the other two kinds of writing on the ground that it deals with abstract and general ideas, while description and narration present ideas that are concrete and specific. It is possible to show, however, that this distinction is accidental rather than essential, and that the principle of division will not hold absolutely for either of the members. Exposition sometimes deals with the specific and concrete.<sup>3</sup> For instance, it may present and discuss the traits of one bird as well as those of a whole species, and a description of the former may be virtually identical with a description of the latter. Not only in method but even in the actual words employed, there may be no appreciable difference between the accounts of how a stamping machine makes a particular coin, and how it makes any coin. If, then, the purpose, the methods, and even the very words used may be the same for the general as for the specific, what is the logical value of the principle of division?

Furthermore, not every presentation of general or abstract ideas is expository. Consider, for instance, the following from Robert Greene's *Content*:

1—*The Forms of Prose Literature*, p. 16.

2—This is less true for artistic argument, or persuasion, than for scientific argument, because in the former the emotional element betrays the purpose.

3—Cf. A. S. Hill *The Principles of Rhetoric*, 1895, p. 307, f.



Sweet are the thoughts that savour of content,  
The quiet mind is richer than a crown ;  
Sweet are the nights in careless slumber spent,  
The poor estate scorns fortune's angry frown :  
Such sweet content, such minds, such sleep, such bliss,  
Beggars enjoy, when princes oft do miss.

What have we here except a presentation of general or abstract ideas? Yet few persons would venture to call it exposition. In both spirit and purpose it differs much from writings of the expository type. Its aim is not so much instruction as self-expression.

I think I have shown that to posit the qualities of abstractness and generality as necessary attributes of exposition, does violence to the type as regards both method and subject-matter. But if this principle of division is unfair to exposition, it also works no less injustice to description and narration. If, for instance, we lay down the rule that description must not deal with generalizations, we deny to it the right to present that which is typical. This means that character descriptions and even personal descriptions such as are found in biographies, must in theory be excluded from this category. Theoretically to limit descriptions, as we now generally do, to specific objects or scenes, and then to allow to them in practice all sorts of generalizations in the presentation of this limited subject-matter, is the height of illogicality. The fact is that in dealing with the essential characteristics of single objects or scenes we require exactly as much generalization as in expounding the essential characteristics of a genus of plants or animals.

How shall we escape from this dilemma? I have already suggested my answer. Let us cease to regard exposition as coördinate with the other types. Let us include under it all literature whose specific aim is

instruction. We may then frankly concede that a part of its work lies in the field of description. Coördinate with exposition is the literature of pleasure, which also makes large use of description. These two main divisions represent the respective aims of science and art, and though science and art sometimes mingle, the two are generally quite sharply differentiated both in ideals and methods.

Further, in each of these main divisions there seem to be three possible stages in conveying ideas. First of all, there is simple presentation. That is, some facts serve their intended purpose when they are merely stated, their values and their relationships becoming at once apparent. A large part of all artistic discourse belongs in this class. But oftentimes simple presentation does not go as far as is necessary. Either the ideas are not in that way made sufficiently clear, or the writer wishes to draw inferences from them. This requires a second stage in presentation: the facts must be explained and interpreted. But sometimes even this second stage is not sufficient. The interpretation may be in dispute. In this case the third and last stage becomes necessary: the writer must now resort to argument and persuasion.

The direct work of description is largely in the first of these three divisions. According to this view, description and narration together cover all the work done in simple presentation. Since their methods and purposes are much the same, they frequently mingle one with the other. It is only with the handling of action that the two fall apart, and even here the difference is not so great as is often supposed. Description may present action, if the action is duly subordinated and does not bring about a significant change

in the object. In narration, on the other hand, action is essential. It is the organizing force in this kind of composition and brings about significant changes in the object treated. But the two types are so nearly allied that it is not always wise to attempt to differentiate them.

Hereafter, then, I shall consider description as being chiefly a kind of presentation, though it is sometimes interpretative as well. The type's limits will accordingly be somewhat broader than those usually assigned to it. It will be held to include much that is at present thought of as exposition. It is to contain unpicturesque as well as picturesque material; and it may be used to convey matter-of-fact information as well as to cause objects, states, and conditions to be vividly realized. Perhaps it may be thought that this is extending the limits too far, but if so, it is not because of the admission of expository material but rather because some presentative material, artistic as well as scientific, is so intangible and incorporeal that the presentation of it lacks the sensuousness which we generally associate with the term description.

## VI

### *The Nature of Mental Imagery*

**T**HUS far I have treated description as if it could make but one kind of sensuous appeal, namely, to the organ of vision. I have been justified in so doing, because that is the only type of description that Lessing treated. But if the discussion had been entirely independent, I should still have been justified in beginning with visual description. The reason is that the eye is by far the most skillful of the sense organs. Impressions received in other ways are comparatively crude. It is the eye that gives us the most clearly defined and the most easily presented impressions. It goes so much farther than any other sense that in general what is true of the others is also true of it. It is, in a word, the most representative of all the sense organs.

But we do not get all our sense impressions through the eye alone. The normal man also hears, smells, feels, tastes, and moves. Each sense gives him a share of his experience. Impressions obtained in any of these ways are fit material for description, and description, if it is to do all of which it is capable, must hold itself in readiness to make appeal to any of the senses. For instance, how ineffective would be a description of roast beef that left out of account the savor! Why are we so much pleased with the description of Calypso's grotto<sup>1</sup> if it is not that it seems to make all the senses tingle? Language can appeal to every sense, and the writer fails to have a mastery of his instrument if he

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<sup>1</sup>—*Odyssey*, Book V.



cannot suggest for his reader the same wealth and variety of impressions that he finds in life. Description, then, embraces all kinds of sensuous appeal.

But just in the number and extent of these possibilities are to be found important limitations of which, I fear, many descriptive writers are totally unaware. It is still not generally known, at least in a practical way, that people differ very greatly in the sensuous nature of their mental imagery. A person who is a good visualizer,—that is, one who sees the appropriate picture arise in the mind's eye whenever he hears the name of an object,—is naturally of the opinion that other people must be similarly constituted. The good visualizer finds it hard to understand how those who are without the faculty can think at all. Nevertheless there are many persons who have no visual images worthy of the name. They perform all their mental processes—remembering, thinking, imagining—in other ways. The differences in this respect are so marked that men may be classified under various types according to the nature of their mental imagery. Some persons imagine chiefly in terms of sight, others in terms of sound, others in terms of muscle sensations, etc. These differences are so important for the understanding of descriptive effects, that a somewhat extended treatment of them will be necessary at this point.

According to James, Galton was the first to develop this subject. His method was to submit printed questions to a large number of persons.<sup>1</sup>

“The first group . . . related to the illumination, definition, and coloring of the mental image, and were framed thus:

“ ‘Before addressing yourself to any of the Questions

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1—The closely printed matter that follows is taken mainly from James's *Principles of Psychology*.

on the opposite page, think of some definite object—suppose it is your breakfast-table as you sat down to it this morning—and consider carefully the picture that rises before your mind's eye.

“1. Illumination.—Is the image dim or fairly clear? Is its brightness comparable to that of the actual scene?

“2. Definition.—Are all the objects pretty well defined at the same time, or is the place of sharpest definition at any one moment more contracted than it is in a real scene?

“3. Coloring.—Are the colors of the china, of the toast, bread-crust, mustard, meat, parsley, or whatever may have been on the table, quite distinct and natural?”

“The earliest results of my inquiry amazed me. I had begun by questioning friends in the scientific world, as they were the most likely class of men to give accurate answers concerning this faculty of visualizing, to which novelists and poets continually allude. . . . To my astonishment, I found that a great majority of the men of science to whom I first applied protested that mental imagery was unknown to them, and they looked on me as fanciful and fantastic in supposing that the words ‘mental imagery’ really expressed what I believed everybody supposed them to mean. They had no more notion of its true nature than a color-blind man, who has not discerned his defect, has of the nature of color. . . .

“On the other hand, when I spoke to persons whom I met in general society, I found an entirely different disposition to prevail. Many men and a yet larger number of women, and many boys and girls, declared that they habitually saw mental imagery, and that it was perfectly distinct to them and full of color. . . .”

Galton found that scientific men as a class have feeble powers of visual representation. “My own conclusion is,” he says, “that an over-ready perception of sharp mental pictures is antagonistic to the requirement of habits of highly generalized and abstract thought, especially when the steps of reasoning are carried on by words as symbols, and that if the faculty of seeing pictures

was ever possessed by men who think hard, it is very apt to be lost by disuse. . . . I am, however, bound to say that the missing faculty seems to be replaced so serviceably by other modes of conception, chiefly, I believe, connected with the incipient motor sense, not of the eyeballs only but of the muscles generally, that men who declare themselves entirely deficient in the power of seeing mental pictures can nevertheless give lifelike descriptions of what they have seen, and can otherwise express themselves as if they were gifted with a vivid visual imagination.<sup>1</sup> They can also become painters of the rank of Royal Academicians. . . .

“It is a mistake to suppose that sharp sight is accompanied by clear visual memory. I have not a few instances in which the independence of the two faculties is emphatically commented on. . . . The visualizing and identifying powers are by no means necessarily combined. A distinguished writer on metaphysical topics assures me that he is exceptionally quick at recognizing a face that he has seen before, but that he cannot call up a mental image of any face with clearness.

“Some persons have the power of combining in a single perception more than can be seen at any one moment by the two eyes. . . . I find that a few persons

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1—Cf. the following description by Mr. Robert Holliday. This writer, as I know from personal acquaintance, is not of the visual type,—he is largely motor,—yet not only can he write descriptions like the following but he also has skill as an artist:

“The penmanship completely surpassed my highest expectation. It was a revelation. . . . That a human creature could create such illuminations with simple pen and ink was marvelous. It was the gentleman of the old-school style of penmanship carried to excess. The up-strokes were amazingly fine, and the down-strokes as amazingly heavy; the capitals were dreams of flourishes, flourishes that went round and round, like pin-wheels, and intertwined and encircled each other; in some places they were as thin as a hair, and in some places as broad as the eighth of an inch. They mixed up with small letters and lost themselves among them, and reappeared further on down the line. ‘It was made with the whole-arm movement,’ explained Murphy, and I believe him. In a mental picture now I can see that talented and accomplished man push back his cuff and sway his whole arm from the shoulder, around and around, preparing to begin.’—R. C. Holliday, *A Conspiracy*.

can, by what they often describe as a kind of touch-sight, visualize at the same moment all round the image of a solid body. . . . Some persons have the habit of viewing objects as though they were partly transparent. . . . They can also perceive all the rooms of an imaginary house by a single mental glance, the walls and floors being as if made of glass. A fourth class of persons have the habit of recalling scenes, not from the point of view whence they were observed, but from a distance, and they visualize their own selves as actors on the mental stage. By one or other of these ways, the power of seeing the whole of an object, and not merely one aspect of it, is possessed by many persons.

“Images usually do not become stronger by dwelling on them;<sup>1</sup> the first idea is commonly the most vigorous, but this is not always the case. Sometimes the mental view of the locality is inseparably connected with the sense of its position as regards the points of the compass, real or imaginary. . . .”

We see, then, that people differ much in the nature of their mental imagery. Even those of the visual type imagine in several different ways. But all are not visualists. Those who are not, that is, those who do not think and remember in terms of images of sight, use other mental material. They belong to other types, of which the two most important are the auditory and the motor or motile.

“The auditory type,” says M. A. Binet, “appears to be rarer than the visual. Persons of this type imagine what they think of in the language of sound. In order to remember a lesson they impress upon their mind, not the look of the page, but the sound of the words. They reason, as well as remember, by ear. . . . Imagination also takes the auditory form. ‘When I write a scene,’ said Legouvé to Scribe, ‘I hear; but you see. In each phrase which I write, the voice of the person-

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1—For a more detailed treatment of this question, cf. *A Preliminary Study of the Behavior of Mental Images*, J. W. Slaughter, *Am. Journal of Psychology*, vol. XIII, p. 526 f.



age who speaks strikes my ear. *Vous, qui êtes le théâtre même*, your actors walk, gesticulate before your eyes; I am a listener, you a spectator.' 'Nothing more true,' says Scribe. . . .

"The motor type," continues Binet, "remains perhaps the most interesting of all, and certainly the one of which least is known. Persons who belong to this type make use, in memory, reasoning, and all their intellectual operations, of images derived from movement. In order to understand this important point, it is enough to remember that 'all our perceptions, and in particular the important ones, those of sight and touch, contain as integral elements the movements of our eyes and limbs; and that, if movement is ever an essential factor in our really seeing an object, it must be an equally essential factor when we see the same object in imagination' (Ribot). For example, the complex impressions of a ball, which is there, in our hand, is the result of optical impressions of touch, of muscular adjustments of the eye, of the movements of our fingers, and of the muscular sensations which these yield. When we imagine the ball, its idea must include the images of these muscular sensations, just as it includes those of the retinal and epidermal sensations. They form so many motor images."

To quote from James:

"Professor Stricker of Vienna, who seems to have the motile form of imagination developed in unusual strength, has given a very careful analysis of his own case in a couple of monographs. . . . His recollections both of his own movements and of those of other things are accompanied invariably by distinct muscular feelings in those parts of his body which would naturally be used in effecting or in following the movement. In thinking of a soldier marching, for example, it is as if he were helping the image to march by marching himself in his rear. And if he suppresses this sympathetic feeling in his own legs, and concentrates all his attention on the imagined soldier, the latter becomes, as it were, paralyzed. In general his imagined movements,

of whatsoever objects, seem paralyzed the moment no feelings of movement either in his own eyes or in his own limbs accompany them."

One branch of this general motor form of imagination is of sufficient importance to be thought of as a separate type. It is known as the verbal type. Without visual, auditory, or tactile imagery, the subject simply *knows*. He goes no farther in his efforts to imagine than the mere statement of the words that act as symbols for his thought. When he thinks of "red," for instance, he does not see the color, but his speech organs feel the impulse to say the word "red." If by any means they are entirely prevented from going through this impulse, then the mind—like Professor Stricker's soldier—seems paralyzed; it cannot think or imagine the idea at all.

Probably the verbal type of imagery is used by almost everyone for certain kinds of mental work, particularly for abstract thinking. For this reason, if for no other, it must be reckoned with; but from what has been said it is evident that the verbal type stands somewhat apart from the others. The visual, auditory, olfactory, tactile, and the part of the motor type not verbal,—each of these presents its imagery in the very form in which the object is perceived by the senses. The verbal type, on the other hand, corresponds to no special sense. Being entirely symbolic, it does no more than to present information. Although it is effective for all of the senses in turn, it is not the immediate representation of any one.

We see from the foregoing that the audience which the descriptive writer addresses is very heterogeneous in respect to its instruments of appreciation. Some readers do a large part of their imagining in visual

concepts, others in auditory, others in motor, and so on. This does not mean that each person is restricted to just one type of mental imagery, but that most are to a greater or less extent limited in the number of types of imagination at their service. This limitation is important for our theory. It makes clear to us that no sensuous description will be realized in the same form by all, and that while one class of details will arouse direct sense impressions for one class of readers, for another class they will do no more than to present information.

Let us illustrate. Suppose a writer has described for us a fire-engine rushing down the street. The description tells us first of the appearance of the scene, of the outward aspect of the firemen and the horses. Into this picture there are then interwoven the various noises, that we know are characteristic, such as the clatter, the shouts, the clanging of the gong, etc. Finally the writer tries to show us the strain and movement that pervade the scene. Thus various senses are appealed to. What will be the effect upon the reader? If his imagination is of the purely visual type, all that appeals to the eye will be reproduced in his mind as visual imagery; all else—that is the sounds, movements, etc.—will be merely information to him. It will not be realized as sensuous imagery. For the auditory reader, on the other hand, it will be the various sounds which will be imagined in their direct form, and all else will be information. Thus for each class of readers using but one type of mental imagery, there will be a certain part of the description which will be imagined sensuously and another part which can hardly be thought of as imagined at all—it will be merely acquired as information; and what will belong

to one part and what to the other will depend largely upon the type of imagination the reader uses. If he can use several types, he will find less in the description which must be considered as mere information; but, to take an extreme case, if a person were so restricted that he had to use the verbal type in all his mental processes, then for him the most sensuous of descriptions, as well as the most abstract, could do no more than to present information.

Perhaps there is no way of overcoming entirely the difficulties we have just brought to notice; they must be considered as natural limitations of the type. Nevertheless the descriptive writer may to an extent obviate the inconvenience by making his work appeal to as many senses as possible. This method has the advantage of giving at least a few sensuous impressions to each class of readers. It has also another advantage. Psychologists know that the senses mutually strengthen each other when used simultaneously. James remarks<sup>1</sup> that patches of color held so far off as not to be recognizable are immediately and correctly perceived when a tuning-fork is sounded close to the ear, and that sounds which are on the limits of audibility become audible when lights of various colors are exhibited to the eye. I do not know of any experiments that have been tried with the special purpose of determining the effect of one kind of mental image upon another, but it would seem that the same principle ought to hold here as in direct sensation. That is, if various senses are appealed to in the reader, then those kinds of impressions which are most easily realized will bring out other kinds naturally associated with them in experience.

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1—*Principles of Psychology*, Vol. II, p. 29 f.



Thus it is said<sup>1</sup> that the mentioning of odors and perfumes oftentimes seems to have special power in calling out associated visual impressions.

In this connection it is interesting to note that the type of imagery which is most often effective in bringing out these related sense impressions is the motor type. Lessing, as we have seen, advocated the progressive kind of description, which uses at least one kind of motor presentation, and almost all theorists since his time have likewise advocated the use of motion, in some form, in description. The reason generally assigned<sup>2</sup> has been that language is better fitted to express action than to express rest. But this reason, as I shall attempt to show later, is wrong, though the idea which it is supposed to support is without question right. In my opinion the real cause why motion is so effective in description is two-fold. First, motion enters not only largely but almost inseparably into many forms of experience; and secondly, though this needs confirmation, most persons seem to be somewhat motor in imagination, and therefore ideas expressing motion are almost universally realized in their own sensuous forms, and in this realization bring up, at least faintly, other sensuous impressions with which they are very closely connected.

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1--Cf. C. S. Baldwin, *Specimens of Prose Description*, p. xii f.

2—Cf. Royce, *Some Recent Studies on Ideas of Motion, Science*, Nov. 30, 1883.

## VII

### *Limitations and Possibilities of Description Due to its Instrument of Expression*

**I**N Part IV we discussed the limitations imposed upon description by its medium of expression. We learned that this medium differs essentially from that employed by the formative arts in that it is symbolic while their medium is directly presentative. Thus a painting gives us so nearly the same sensations as the reality that under certain conditions the one may be easily mistaken for the other. So too in music, we like the sequences and combinations of sound, not because they stand for something apart from what they are, but for their own inherent beauty. But poetry and prose, although they may have a music inherent in their spoken words, are chiefly concerned with the expressing and transmitting of ideas by means of a written and spoken symbolism. Their chief peculiarity, as contrasted with the formative arts, is that the words they use as a medium of expression are interesting not for what they are but for what they represent. This characteristic gives to literature certain advantages and also certain disadvantages.

We may say for each of the formative arts, such as painting or music, that it has a special field imposed upon it by the sensuous medium it employs. Painting, for instance, should not aim to represent sounds, nor music visual pictures, if each is to do the work for which it is best suited. But if we seek the particular field in which literature can do its best, we soon discover that literature has no special sensuous field in

which it can appeal to us directly. Everywhere it is symbolic,—doubly symbolic, we may say, for it can use either a spoken or a written symbolism to express exactly the same ideas.

As a result of the peculiar nature of its medium of expression, literature has at least one great advantage over any of the formative arts. Its range is as broad as experience itself. It can express any kind of ideas, true or imagined. It can set at naught time, space, and the recognized facts of experience. It can present the sensuous and the non-sensuous with like ease. It can analyze, synthesize, and generalize to any degree of which the mind is capable. It can express equally well, movement or rest. It can work rapidly or slowly. In its marvelous range and flexibility, language affords to literature the most perfect instrument of expression imaginable.

But symbolism is not without some disadvantages. At best it is an indirect means of portrayal, and the signs it uses—at least in the case of language—are made to stand very arbitrarily for the things they signify. The direct sensations conveyed through words have to be translated into thought-units of a quite different kind. This process cannot but bring about a loss in the intensity of the impression. Suppose, for example, that such a word as “knife” does call up in the mind of the reader a correct visual picture,—and very often this does not happen,—even then there will be a loss in effectiveness, because, as is well known, the remembered image is never so vivid as the direct sensation. Thus we see that language cannot compete with reality in intensity, and since the formative arts present their impressions directly, using the same sensations as the reality, they have literature at a great

disadvantage in this respect. Literature cannot hope to be as sensuously intense as the formative arts in their natural fields.<sup>1</sup>

But lack of sensuous vividness is not the only disadvantage at which literature is placed because of its instrument of expression. We have noted in a preceding part of this essay that words do not mean the same for all hearers or readers, and that mental imagery is a very personal affair, resting on a basis of individual aptitude and experience. Not only do persons differ in the types of imagination they can use, but even for those of the same type the imagery suggested by a given word is hardly ever identical for all. That brings us again to the very hard problem: How is it possible to suggest the same picture to all readers when the words used may mean different things for each? We have confessed that the difficulty seems at least in part insurmountable, but let us discuss this subject now more in detail.

First of all, there are cases in which the writer has some chance for success. For instance, if it is his task simply to call to mind an object already sensuously known to the reader, he ought not to have much difficulty in achieving his purpose, for in this case writer and reader have a common basis in experience. Thus in describing a portrait of Washington a writer should be able to suggest, at least to every American, an almost identical conception, because we have all seen portraits of Washington. In this case the writer is not called upon to build up an entirely new image, he has

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1—I say, “sensuously intense,” because when it comes to conveying thoughts and feelings, the case is different. Thoughts and feelings may go beyond what sensuous imagery directly expresses. Thus for certain purposes literature may possess a more effective instrument for intense expression than any of the formative arts.



merely to recall to the reader material that is already stored in his mind.

A more difficult case is that in which a writer attempts to describe to an unknown reader an object which the latter has not seen. But here again there is not always the same degree of difficulty. If the object described is a very simple one, with the parts few and clearly related, there will be more chance for success than if the object is complicated. Thus it is easier to describe a door than a house. Suppose, for instance, I wish to convey to a reader the exact appearance of the house that Mr. M. lives in. What will be my difficulties? In the first place, everything I say will be interpreted in the light of the reader's experience, not in that of my own. He has seen innumerable varieties of houses, but perhaps the type most readily suggested to him is very unlike the one of which I am thinking. Now I can control his notions to some extent by saying that the house is large, of red brick, etc. These added details help immensely by limiting the range of selection, but they hardly make it possible for me to achieve complete success, for there are so many kinds of large red-brick houses that even the limited concepts may be almost as divergent as they were before. Also when I begin to mention different parts of the house, I meet new difficulties, because the reader will probably have his individual concept for each new detail I add. For instance, I tell him the house has a porch. Not only will he be likely to imagine the wrong kind of porch, but he will also be likely to join it to the house at the wrong place. Thus the trouble grows, until at last, if my description is very long, I may suggest to my reader nothing but hopeless confusion.

Another source of difficulty in description is that the

concepts suggested are not only different in themselves from the ideas the writer intended, but they are also likely to bring along with them into the mental picture irrelevant details that confuse the reader. Thus to say that a building is of red brick may suggest many things that have nothing to do with the materials, such as the shape, size, etc. In actual seeing, the field of vision, as was explained in Part III, has of necessity a center or focus of attention, and around this there is a fringe or background that is less distinct. Now since our mental imagery is made up of reproductions of things we have actually seen, these reproductions, though they may come back to us in modified forms, bring with them the accompaniments which they had in actual seeing. Each detail, therefore, as it is mentioned, may bring up with it a background that is entirely irrelevant.

These difficulties of description may be illustrated by a simple experiment. Suppose that wishing to describe a friend I begin by stating that he has an aquiline nose. What will be the effect of this statement on my description? In the first place, since aquiline noses differ somewhat in their shapes, I may not suggest exactly the same picture to all. But that will not be my main difficulty. This will arise from the fact that we are accustomed to seeing noses in connection with faces, and so when I mention a particular kind of nose, if I call up any image at all, I am more than likely to suggest a face along with it, and this face may have no resemblance whatever to the one I have in mind.

To discover how different the results might be for different readers, I tried the following experiment on my students. I asked them whether the sentence, "This person has an aquiline nose," suggested the particular

kind of nose by itself, or a nose as part of a face, and if the latter, what kind of face was suggested. In answer to the question some stated that they saw no visual image at all; but all who did see a nose saw also a background of some familiar face. Here are some of their statements:

“He had an extremely masculine face—very long and thin, with a very prominent long chin—light complexion—blue eyes.”

“In my mind I see the face of a four-year-old girl friend—light curly hair—ruddy complexion—prominent forehead.”

“The face of a man whose forehead is half circled with a mass of black hair—small, sharp, piercing eyes—firm, medium-sized mouth.”

“When aquiline nose is mentioned I think of a broad forehead, deep-set eyes, and broad face with high cheek bones.”

“The face I see is a broad, good-natured face with twinkling eyes—the face of a man about forty years old.”

“Sharp nose—long slim face—face not very full.”

Now if these are fair samples of the results that may be obtained by using such a simple descriptive phrase as “aquiline nose,” we can readily see that photographic description is an impossibility. If every other detail mentioned should in like manner bring up its own irrelevant background, by the time one had presented a half-dozen ideas about the face, what a confusion of backgrounds the reader would have! “Aquiline nose” might suggest an old man; “blue eyes,” a young girl; “blonde mustache,” a face still different; and so on. How could one fuse all this together into one picture? To be sure, the case is not generally so bad as here presented. It is not necessary that each word should bring up a separate image. As I have said before, we

read in word-groups,—a number may go together to produce a single image. Nevertheless each group, be it large or small, is very likely to call up with it irrelevant details, and if we permit too many of these groups to cover the same image-territory, the result may well be that the irrelevant details will interfere with each other and obscure or confuse the whole picture.

For me such is the effect of the following description by a distinguished man of letters :

“He came into the room a quaint, stump figure of a man, whose effect of long trunk and short limbs was heightened by his fashionless trousers being let down too low. He had a noble face, with tossed hair, a distraught eye, and a fine aquilinity of profile, which made me think at once of Don Quixote and of Cervantes; but his nose failed to add that foot to his stature which Lamb says a nose of that shape will always give a man.”

This description confuses me not so much by the number of details as by the incongruity of the things listed. I have material enough here for three or four pictures, and since my visual images are rather weak and also under poor control, I am not able to fuse these various pictures together. The separate details will not harmonize.

In actual observation no such difficulty exists. When I look at a picture, the background that I see is always relevant, that is, it is made up of details of the one picture, and every part of it that I notice serves only to strengthen the total impression and to bind closer together the various details. So here again, because of its use of symbolism, literature—and therefore, description—is put at a great disadvantage in comparison with the formative arts,—so great, in fact, that it cannot hope to compete with the latter in the production of exact or



universal images. I have frequently read short descriptions to people for them to sketch or outline on paper. For the same words I have never had two drawings that looked in any way alike.

But in this competition with reality, description is no worse off than any other branch of literature. Lessing was of the opinion that language, by its very nature, was better fitted to express action<sup>1</sup> than rest, but I cannot agree with him. If descriptions of objects are not equal to paintings in intensity and universality of impression, neither are narratives in the same respects equal to the drama when presented on the stage, nor are descriptions of music equal to the actual performances. In each case the reason for the weakness lies deeper than the fact that words follow each other in time order. It is found in the element of symbolism in the instrument of expression.<sup>2</sup>

1—In a limited sense Lessing may be right. Since language does arouse incongruous backgrounds, and since the latter have more chance to get in each other's way in static than in progressive description, we may indeed argue that language is better fitted to express progressive action than rest. This, however, is not Lessing's argument. (See p. 225.)

2—However, literature has its compensations. Just because it uses symbols, it has not only greater range but also greater quickness and ease, and just as algebra can do higher work than arithmetic, so literature can go beyond formative art in delicacy, suggestiveness, and interpretation. A picture or a photograph, as a mere object of perception, is a remarkably abstract and unsuggestive thing. We have to regard it long and closely in order to analyze it completely. This is not true of objects presented through description. The impressions of the latter may not have unity or coherence, but they are certainly analyzed. A brief description may assemble more details than an actual observer could discover in hours of study. I may assert even more: a master of description may point out things that the ordinary man would never see with his own unaided eye.

This suggests that the view afforded by description is personal. If the author is a man of weak insight this is a disadvantage; but a description written by a great thinker may, through its suggestive and interpretative power, be of as much value as the sight

Description, because it uses symbolism, generally does no more than to convey the essential truth of the object portrayed. It arouses in the mind of the reader not the sensuous image that the writer saw, but another image like the former only in that it has the same essential characteristics.<sup>1</sup>

I think we have now determined the principal differences between description and painting. The advantage of the latter is found in its power of denotation. A few lines will give more exact sensuous information than a page of description. But just because formative art uses direct sensations it cannot rely on imagination to so great a degree to supply deficiencies and omissions. A few bold strokes will give to all observers the same outline, but they are not likely to suggest for anyone a finished picture or much more of picturesque detail than they really present. The reverse is true of description. The power of the latter lies in connotation. Since every word calls up associations, a few well-chosen descriptive epithets and phrases may suggest a picture that seems as complete and lifelike as reality.

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of the object itself. Having the object before us or having known it in the past directly does not make the description useless,—nay, that may be the very reason why it is interesting. We seldom care for long descriptions of pictures, for instance, unless we can see the originals or copies of them.

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1—This, however, is not as great a disadvantage for description as one might suppose. In works of the imagination it makes very little difference whether non-essentials are perceived alike or not, and even in books dealing with real places and real men, it is generally easy to supplement descriptions with appropriate drawings or photographs.

## VIII

### *Varieties of Description*

THE importance of description as a type of discourse is underestimated, I believe, by many rhetorics. No doubt this is partly the result of using too narrow a definition. We ought to include under the term, I think, more than the formal or set description. The latter covers but a part of the whole field. For instance, much description is of the nature of a running commentary, loose and informal in structure. This ought not to be neglected. The purpose in view for description ought also to be broader than merely that of arousing picturesque images. The latter work is important, but not all that the type has to do. For instance, as an example of what it seems necessary to call unpicturesque description, take the following account of Milton :

“The English poet, who by common consent holds a rank second only to that of Shakespere, was born in a house on Bread Street, London, Dec. 9, 1608. Milton’s grandfather was a Catholic. His father, also John Milton, was a Protestant, and had been disinherited for his faith. By profession the poet’s father was a scrivener; that is, he was an attorney and also a stationer. He was a man of property and planned with great care and liberality for his son’s education,” etc.

Such material as this can hardly be called exposition according to any definition at present found in rhetorics. It is not explanatory but presentative, and may therefore rightly be designated as description. Nevertheless, it has nothing about it that is picturesque. If then we take into account the various generally neglected por-

tions, we must consider that we have in description a large subject. Nor is it such a dependent subject as some people think. To be sure, it is frequently mixed with other types, and often it has subordinate work to do, but these are not entirely characteristic conditions. In poetry, in science, in books of travel, and even in fiction, description is very often employed independently and for its own sake.

It is indeed a widely used, important form of discourse, having many methods, and aims, and, consequently, appearing in numerous types. In this chapter we propose to take up and discuss some of these principal varieties. Classification is not very important in itself, but oftentimes it can suggest things to look for in the analytical study of a subject, and in advanced work every means that can enable us to get clearer ideas about the nature and the relations of the various parts of our subject ought to be welcome. We shall have this end in view in the following treatment.

However, to give to the numerous classes of description an orderly presentation is a task which is extremely difficult. The problem seems to lie in the fact that though there are many methods of division, there is no proper subordination among them, and the more important ones seem lacking in clearly defined principles of classification. The members of a group often fail to be mutually exclusive. They do not bear toward each other the relation of opposites, but of parallels. Frequently they claim the right to exist simply because they especially emphasize certain much-used groups of material and ideals. The difficulty is illustrated in the first classification we shall mention.

Probably the most important and comprehensive division that can be made for our subject is that which



groups it into two chief types around the centers of art and science. This method divides description according to its purpose, the artistic branch having as its main object to arouse esthetic pleasure, while the scientific aims to convey accurate, systematic information. This is a fundamental distinction, and a very useful one, too, but nevertheless it does not always meet the requirements of classification. The reason lies in the fact that though art and science have different ideals, these are after all merely different, and they are not necessarily opposed to each other. Their relationship is indeed much like that existing between two political parties, one of which, we will say, stands for a protective tariff, while the other labors for prohibition. Now there is nothing that is necessarily antagonistic in two such platforms; indeed, they may have much in common, and it may be that the chief difference lies in the emphasis that is given to this or that principle. So, too, the difference between art and science is largely one of emphasis. The artist is willing to sacrifice matter-of-fact truth for effectiveness, the scientist is willing to sacrifice effectiveness for truth, but this merely shows that each regards the ideals of the other as of less importance than his own. The two may use in part the same methods and they may borrow methods from each other. This parallelism produces some confusion in working out classification.

We can probably best illustrate this by taking up and discussing some of the characteristics that are thought to differentiate the two types. We may mention first of all, two sets which we have already treated. Artistic description is said to be usually specific and concrete, while scientific description is general and abstract. We have here in this statement the same contrasting dis-

tinctions that we discussed in Chapter V. in relation to exposition and description, and we showed there that these qualities are not sufficient to enable us to differentiate those two types. In the present case, as in the former one, we have the same problems involved and we arrive at the same results, and it will not be necessary for us to go over the ground again. Sufficient it is to state that we have in these two sets of qualities usual but not necessary differentia between art and science.

Again, artistic description is said to be pre-eminently imaginative and suggestive, while scientific description is informational and literal. This statement expresses, without doubt, an essential truth, nevertheless it can not be used as a safe criterion for differentiation. Modern realism has frequently all the earmarks of science. No work could be more truthful, more matter-of-fact, and more exact, than some art. Even such a story as *Robinson Crusoe* seems more informational than imaginative. The author apparently does not wish to suggest more than the plain facts he states. Yet it is precisely these characteristics in the story that afford to the reader one of the chief sources of pleasure. On the other hand, scientific writings are often very far from being unimaginative, a fact which one must acknowledge as soon as he thinks of the great scientific theories. How, for instance, can one entirely comprehend the nebular hypothesis or the theory of natural selection if he does not possess a vivid imagination? But even for less important scientific conceptions, for scientific descriptions and the like, imagination is often necessary, and though in all these cases science uses it in the interest of truth, the effect may not seem any more real than the fiction of the story-book.

There are still other ways of differentiating art and

science, but in each case we have no surer results. Thus, feeling and thought are supposed to characterize the two respective subjects, but they, like the two classes they represent, are by nature parallel rather than opposed to each other, and they are generally, perhaps necessarily, found together in good literature. Again, the ascribing of the qualities of sensuousness and picturesqueness to all art, and the lack of these qualities to science, is an assertion much too sweeping to be true,—as can be seen from numerous examples that show the contrary. But in this last characterization we do have real opposition between the members of the group, and though picturesque and unpicturesque material is very often found mixed together in description, it is important to note, as we have already done, that while some descriptive material is by nature thoroughly picturesque, other material, equally specific and definite, seems to be almost entirely lacking in this sensuous quality. As an example of the unpicturesque type, we have quoted a few lines from the life of Milton. We might also have referred to the description of the scepter of Agamemnon as another example.

It ought to be clear now from what we have said that the classification of description into the types scientific and artistic is not entirely satisfactory as a method of division. The members of the group are not mutually exclusive. Nevertheless this method is convenient and generally practicable, and its use in classifying all kinds of description will throw much light upon several interesting phases of the subject.

But now we may profitably pass on to other methods of classifying description. The next that we shall mention divides descriptive material according to the work it accomplishes. We have already shown that this

work is largely presentative; that is, it gives us information of one kind or another and for one purpose or another, and this information corresponds to what is actually stated. But we know description sometimes does more than to present; it often suggests. With a few details it makes us imagine a whole scene. This second kind of work is limited almost entirely to the artistic field, though here it has a very wide use indeed. But description is not even confined to presentation and suggestion. It is sometimes interpretative. The very fact that the subject-matter of description is based so largely on personal analysis makes it necessary that much of the work will be interpretative. Furthermore, since perception is largely a matter of apperception, it is clear that it is often necessary to understand what a thing means in order to see what it is. It is frequently helpful to define description in terms of these three divisions, but unfortunately again for purposes of classification the three are often not separated distinctly from each other.

Another method of classifying description—one that we have already sufficiently discussed in our treatment of the *Laocoon*—has as its basis of differentiation the presence or lack of narrative movement in specimens of the type. Those that present their object in terms of the coexistent parts are called enumerative descriptions, while those that have a narrative movement to them—that represent the object as changing from stage to stage—are named progressive descriptions. The meaning of these terms ought to be clear to everyone.

There is another classification somewhat similar to this, that divides description into the types static and dynamic. Because this classification and the one preceding have much in common they are liable to be con-



fused with each other, and it would appear that Lessing fell into this error in his treatment. The two should be kept apart. The word "static" includes all that part of the descriptive field that does not make use of action in any way. The word "dynamic" includes the part that does use action. Enumerative descriptions are frequently though not necessarily static, but dynamic descriptions are very often not progressive. There are many kinds of action that are not essentially narrative. The dynamic description is the kind that makes use of all those appeals to the motor type of imagination which we discussed in a preceding chapter. An excellent example of dynamic description, as well as of suggestive description, is Wordsworth's *Green Linnet*, of which the following lines seem especially good as an illustration of action that is not narrative:

“Amid yon tuft of hazel trees  
That twinkle to the gusty breeze,  
Behold him perch'd in ecstacies,  
Yet seeming still to hover;  
There where the flutter of his wings  
Upon his back and body flings  
Shadows and sunny glimmerings,  
That cover him all over.”

There are many other ways of classifying description, some based on the nature of the material presented, others on the method used, the purpose in view, the effects produced, etc. Some of these we can pass without comment. Thus description at times deals with single objects—either persons or things—and at other times with whole scenes. This may give the basis for a classification. Then, too, descriptions differ in length and style. Sometimes they are limited to a word—an epithet, sometimes they take the form of a catalogue, but most often they are richer in expression

and make use of a full sentence structure. Here again we have distinctions that have been used for purposes of classification.

Sometimes also a description may be organic, standing out from the rest of the discourse as a unit complete in itself. It deals systematically with a particular object or scene and it presents this from a designated point of view and according to a definite plan. This type is variously known as the systematic, or formal, or set description. It needs no illustration. It is the kind first thought of when we hear the word description used, because it is the kind generally emphasized by text-books on the subject. However, there is a great deal of descriptive material that can not be placed in this class. Sometimes this is because it is interwoven with other forms of discourse, or it may be because the description lacks system and point of view. Neither of these characteristics is absolutely essential to good description.

Another common method of classifying description is to divide it into two classes, the objective and the subjective, according to the amount of the author's personality that enters into his work. This is a classification in which the members differ in degree rather than in kind, for all literature is shaped and colored to some extent by the author's personality. The first member, the objective description, theoretically owes nothing to the individuality of its writer. It assumes that there is no personal equation, that the facts it states appear the same to everyone. The contrasted division, the subjective description, owes a great deal to its writer. It is completely permeated by its author's temperament and mood. It takes many forms. Often it is impressionistic, but in all cases it has a strong personal col-

oring. The difference between the two members of this division is sufficiently marked to make this generally a useful method of classification.

There are still other classes of description. In fact, we might continue this process of division indefinitely and then add numerous subdivisions, but such a course is unnecessary. As we stated earlier in the chapter, classification is not very important in itself. We do not wish then to lay too much stress upon it. It should be used as a tool and not as an end. As a tool it may be helpful in suggesting possibilities and limitations for the subject, also methods of work. But, as an end, its influence is pernicious, setting up false ideals to work for. We have mentioned enough classifications to show at least the general outline of the field.

## IX

### *Ideals and Methods of Description*

IN this, our last chapter, we intend to discuss some of the practical considerations that arise in the treatment of description. As usual, we shall endeavor to view the subject from a somewhat philosophic standpoint. We shall not be so much interested in the general expediency of a particular method of work as in the reasons that cause the method to be expedient. In this way we hope to unite the practical with the ideal.

Now to be ideal, a literary product must be effective, and effective according to the requirements of its purpose. This is a principle which holds as well for description as for other forms of discourse; but when stated in this vague and general way, the formula cannot give us much guidance either in the work of criticism or of production. It is necessary to evaluate the terms very carefully with reference to the specific branch in which we wish to apply it, if we are to succeed in making it useful. But if properly evaluated this generalization ought to give us knowledge of what really constitutes the ideal for any of the various forms of literature. Let us apply it to description.

It is always to be remembered that our general statement carried with it one important qualification. It said that the literary product should be effective according to its purpose. Hence all literature is not required to be effective in the same manner. It is not even necessary that there shall be but one ideal of effectiveness for all kinds of description. Every work, whatever its



nature, shall be judged with reference to what it seeks to do. Consequently if description has many separate aims and purposes, we are to expect that it will have just that many kinds of ideals.

In our classification of description we showed that the type is used for at least two very important purposes,—the conveying of information and the affording of pleasure,—and we found that these purposes are important enough to stand as distinguishing traits for two great classes of description,—the scientific and the artistic. What are the proper ideals for each of these classes?

For scientific description, which seeks to convey information, the most important requisite is clearness or intelligibility. Until the material presented is clearly understood by the reader it is not information for him. To accomplish this end it is not necessary that the scientific writer shall suggest a picture. What is necessary is that the material shall be put in such a way that the reader can grasp most easily and clearly not only the details themselves but also the relations existing between details. Generally the scientific writer finds it necessary to present more material than the artistic writer, and he is therefore generally obliged to be more systematic in his treatment. It will seldom do for him to arrange his ideas strictly in the order in which they naturally come to him, because this order is usually a haphazard one, suggested by the chance interests of the moment. He should group his details according to some definite plan. If the special branch in which he is working has some accepted order of statement, that is probably the best order for him to follow, because it will be most familiar to the reader. In other cases it is usually best to proceed from general

to particular—that being the natural order of perception—beginning with an outline of the whole object or scene and then filling this in, later, part by part.

But it is hardly necessary to say, of course, that all scientific descriptions are not to be constructed after the same model. The type may have many subordinate purposes to influence its form of presentation, with the result that the latter is subject to nearly as great extremes as it is in the case of the artistic description. What the form shall be in any particular description depends upon the subject-matter treated and the audience addressed. Sometimes it is well to let the scientific description approach the artistic type in literary finish, but not unfrequently this would not do at all. For some purposes the scientific description reaches its most ideal form in the catalogue. In this we can get knowledge presented within smallest compass, and such may be exactly what the reader most desires.

For artistic description, which seeks to afford pleasure, there is a greater range of possibilities than there is for specimens of the scientific type. But for all these various methods and forms, which may be employed, it is required that the resulting product shall be interesting. If this effect is secured, it matters little to the artist directly, whether his production does or does not convey information, or whether what he says is true or false. These latter considerations may be important in determining whether his work shows good or bad art, but they are of little use in deciding whether or not it is artistic. As long as the writer succeeds by his manner of presentation in holding fast the attention of his readers, so long may he be said to use artistic methods; and when he fails to do this, his work—no matter how noble or true it may be—ceases to be artistic.

The writer who wishes to make his work interesting must be very careful not to tire out his reader. Interest and tedium are incompatible. Hence any type of description that is likely to be exhausting must be used with caution. Such a type is found in the long enumerative description, which is not in accordance with the usual methods of observation. Ordinarily the attention is not concentrated on one object for any extended length of time. We interpiece our looking with bits of conversation and reflection, or we let the attention shift frequently from one object to another. We seldom try to see all that the view might afford. The mind, consciously or unconsciously, selects those things that appeal to its interests, neglecting all the rest. This helps to relieve the mind of any tedium.

It is a fact well known to psychologists that when the mind does try to attend continuously to one object for a considerable length of time, it is subjected to a great strain, and undergoes periodic fluctuations of attention. That is, the field of vision seems to fade away at intervals, leaving the mind a blank. Now I believe it is possible that we may have in a long description the same conditions for fluctuations of attention that we have in direct observation. That may explain why it is that we cannot remember all the details in a long description. It is because some of the details are read while the mind is passing through its lapse and hence they slip the attention completely. Whether this is the true explanation or not, at least it is a thesis that deserves careful investigation.

The long enumerative description is also likely to prove fatiguing because after a certain limit the reader experiences increased difficulty in harmonizing each new detail with those already in the mind. We learned in

Chapter VII that when mental images are aroused they are likely to bring up with themselves associated backgrounds more or less incongruous. If but few details are mentioned, these backgrounds do no harm, aside from their inaccuracy. On the contrary, they may serve a very useful purpose in giving fullness and completeness to the mental picture. But it ought to be clear that the more details are mentioned the less need there is of making use of these associated backgrounds and the more likelihood there is of these backgrounds becoming sources of confusion. After a certain limit has been passed the new details find their places already taken by an incongruous imagery, previously and gratuitously suggested, and the reader is compelled either to neglect the new details or else to change more or less his whole conception in order to insert them. The latter causes strain with often unsatisfactory results.

Thus we see that the long enumerative description is a dangerous type for the artist to employ. In gaining perceptive knowledge we usually obtain our ideas, a few at a time. Just a few ideas, if these are suggestive, may arouse for the reader a clear and complete picture, which may be quite accurate enough for the purpose intended. More details might unnecessarily waste the reader's energy, thereby weakening the total effect instead of strengthening it. The long description may easily defeat its very object by presenting too much material. The general principle of economy is especially applicable to description,—that one should use the fewest means for producing the desired result.

Lessing was right then in preferring the progressive description to the enumerative, though he did not use the right line of argument to justify his opinion. The progressive type is the better one because it is usually



the more interesting. It affords an easy, natural synthesis. Generally it has more variety. We like to see things that are changing—progressing from one state to another. How frequently we notice boys standing a long while watching a carpenter construct a building. They would not pause a moment to look at the work after it is done. A description that tells how an object is constructed is much more likely, then, to hold the attention than one which presents the object already completed.

Psychologists have long known that things in motion attract the attention most readily, and also that they produce the most vivid effects upon us. We may hear a bird in a tree, but if it makes no movement it is often extremely difficult to locate it; but let it move, and we shall probably see it at once. The same tendency is present in description. The suggestion of objects in motion seems to make the imaginative powers more fluid; it helps the objects to slide into focus, as it were. Then, too, if the object described is in motion, irrelevant details do not bother us as much as otherwise. If we see things in the wrong way, the next shift of the picture can set our images right. The object moves on without our noticing the incongruities. So for all these reasons the progressive description is a good type to use.

But it is not by any means the only good type to use. Even the static enumerative description may be very interesting if it have sufficient variety. To obtain this it is well to appeal to various senses. Let the description have the same wealth of sensuousness that the real object possesses. Put into it the variety of life. This diversity will not confuse, because the details will be parallel instead of overlapping. True, it is easily pos-

sible to go too far. We may over-emphasize the sensuousness of life. As we have stated once before, most of the things in this world are to some degree abstractions to us. We go through life only partly realizing the world which we are in. This is true for all, but the artist, because of his very nature, is more sensitive than the average person and has a richer experience. This is as it should be unless his sensitiveness goes so far as to be unhealthy; then of course his art must suffer, but it is not necessarily a fault in descriptions to have a richer sensuousness than real life can afford to most people. It is to be remembered that art has need of intensifying impressions in order to be successful. Not a little of the powerfulness of the effect is lost in the transmission. Hence in literary art the reader is not likely to sense all that is presented to him, but that does not necessarily interfere with his pleasure in reading a description. A person likes art oftentimes because it presents more than he otherwise could perceive,—that is one way it enriches his experience.

However, it should be repeated, it is easily possible to go too far. Many descriptions are both too long and too definite. We have learned in a preceding chapter that one of the most valuable powers of literary art is to be found in its suggestiveness. In that it is greatly superior to formative art. This superior capability should be made use of wherever possible. Many things may be suggested much more artistically than they may be told. This is especially true if we wish to make the reader feel that the object described is particularly ideal or beautiful. In this connection Lessing offers us some good advice. He says the poet should desist entirely from the description of physical beauty as such. "Here again Homer is the model of all

models. He says, Nireus was fair; Achilles was fairer; Helen was of a godlike beauty. But he is nowhere betrayed into a more detailed description of these beauties. Yet the whole poem is based upon the loveliness of Helen. How a modern poet would have revelled in descriptions of it!" Nevertheless, Lessing tells us, we can suggest physical beauty.

"What Homer could not describe in its details, he shows us by its effect. Paint us, ye poets, the delight, the attraction, the love, the enchantment of beauty, and you have painted Beauty herself. . . . Yet another way in which poetry surpasses art in the description of physical beauty, is by turning beauty into charm. Charm is beauty in motion, and therefore less adapted to the painter than the poet."<sup>1</sup> It is a transitory beauty which we would fain see repeated.

I think Lessing's advice excellent, though again I think he bases it on erroneous arguments. Homer certainly does not make use of long descriptions of physical beauty. The longest that I have been able to find are such as the following:

". . . and when she marked the fair neck and lovely breast and sparkling eyes of the goddess, she marvelled straightway. . . ."<sup>2</sup>

"Near him Athene drew, in form of a young shepherd, yet delicate as are the sons of kings. Doubled about her shoulders she wore a fine-wrought mantle; under her shining feet her sandals, and in her hand a spear."<sup>3</sup>

In these descriptions it will be noticed that the details mentioned are not very definitive or individualizing. Homer tells us the goddess has sparkling eyes,

1—Laocoön, XX, XXI.

2—*Iliad*, III, p. 61. Lang, Leaf, and Myers' translation.

3—*Odyssey*, XIII, p. 205. Palmer's translation.

but he does not define their color. He says that Athene has a fine-wrought mantle, but he is silent as to its material, make, etc. That is, what Homer says is suggestive but it does not define the image. He gives us the opportunity to fill in details as we wish. In doing this I think he observes important psychological principles. There is no universal standard of beauty. People differ from each other in their preference for particular types. Then too their conceptions of the beautiful are very closely associated with personal interest. People are likely to think of the beautiful in terms of living examples. Not infrequently the heroes and heroines we have known in life go a long way in helping to embody the heroes and heroines of literature. If then we wish to be successful in making the reader feel that the person described is particularly beautiful, it may be well to confine our efforts to setting the imagination at work, letting the reader choose the details to suit himself. For me the pleasure of reading a novel is sometimes lessened if not spoiled by the introduction of pictures that do not at all set forth the characters and scenes in a way I should like to imagine them.

There is another reason for not describing beauty at great length. The beautiful is always harmonious. Now the details in a description tend to bring up with themselves irrelevant backgrounds. These backgrounds accordingly cannot fit in well together, and hence there is a conflict of images. Thus the harmony is destroyed and an impression of beauty rendered impossible. For either of these reasons long descriptions of the beautiful are inadvisable.

But we have not yet treated sufficiently the various means by which the enumerative description can secure



for itself variety and effectiveness. To make an appeal to all the senses affected, we have found to be a useful expedient, but this is not the only resource that the enumerative description has at its disposal in maintaining interest. It too can make use of motion. The progressive type does not by any means utilize all the kinds of motion that may be used to advantage in description. Its use of motion is limited to one sort, but motion of any kind is likely to add vividness to a portrayal, and largely for the reasons we have already advanced in treating the progressive type. Motion affords variety. It adds life and spirit. It tends to make the imagination more fluid. Indeed it may be used to advantage even when no motion actually takes place in the object or scene described. Thus to say that "the sunlight falls," "the mountains rise," "the streets run east and west," or to use any other expressions of a like nature, helps us to shift our images into place. We are therefore by this means enabled to see the object in the imagination much more easily and vividly.<sup>1</sup>

Not only the enumerative, but all kinds of artistic description are sometimes the better for not being too formal. Formality tends to put a chill upon the imaginative and emotional powers. The traveler who writes of the scenes he has visited may do well to be systematic in his descriptions. He is supposed to see and remember all that comes before him. In a way he is a scientist, and his descriptions have the scientific trait of being informational. The objects and scenes he describes are so new to the reader's experience as to be interesting in themselves. But the traveler does not look at things

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1—Cf. Josiah Royce: *Some recent Studies in Ideals of Motion*. Science, 1883, part quoted in A. S. Hill's *Principles of Rhetoric*, 1895, pp. 273-4.

from the standpoint of ordinary experience. In everyday life people are not usually scientific in the way they absorb information. They see the things that interest them and in an order largely controlled by their chance interests. They are unconscious that they have any point of view. They do not even realize that they are acquiring information. They follow natural instincts and see and learn what they cannot help but see and learn.

Now these are characteristics that are found in numerous modern artistic descriptions. The reader is entirely unconscious of formality. The details read appear to stand in such a haphazard order and they are combined with other forms of discourse so artlessly that they do not seem to form part of the description at all. They are merely easy, delightful reading. Everything said is entirely natural and necessary to the purpose. This artlessness, if skillfully managed, is often a good trait in description.

It is not even necessary that the reader shall be made conscious of a point of view. In fact, we may go a step farther and say that it is not always necessary for a description to have a real point of view. This is a phase of the subject that needs further investigation, but a few things are clear. In Chapter VI we had something to say about the nature of mental imagery, and we found there that the imaginative mind has strange, fairy-like powers of seeing through and around things, and we may add, of being anywhere—even the most inaccessible places. To be personal, when I myself imagine things, I seem to be present, but to form an immaterial and invisible part. I am sometimes not conscious of having any bodily location. I am as if in midair. If I have a point of view, I take it uncon-

sciously, and if I reason out where it must be, I sometimes find it in very odd places, such as up near the ceiling or right in the wall of the room. This strange point of view, if indeed such it may be called, I change instantly and unconsciously whenever the occasion demands. However unnatural this may sound, these are not powers peculiar to myself. I have found other people having similar imaginative processes. But this subject of the point of view is one that needs further study. At present not much can be stated about it definitely. Nevertheless it will be found upon investigation that the peculiarities just mentioned have already been made use of in works of literature, though of course in an entirely unconscious manner.<sup>1</sup>

Another very important factor in artistic description is the personal element. This is especially effective in arousing and maintaining the reader's interest. Every one of us is a human being, and that may be sufficient reason to explain the depth of our interest in all that concerns other human beings. But more than this, when we are in the artistic mood we are especially sympathetic and hence especially susceptible to the influence of this human element or quality. This personal or subjective element enters description in many different forms, and in many of these it plays an important part. There are few long descriptions that do not make at least some use of it, and almost always to their advantage. Sometimes it is no more than to introduce men and women as a part of the subject-matter; but more often the author introduces his own personal experiences and impressions, or those of some imaginary character, and makes a more or less direct appeal to the reader's sym-

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1—Cf., for instance, the type of novel in which the author is omnipresent.

pathy. Whatever the form this personal element may take, it can be used very effectively in arousing and maintaining interest.

We have stated earlier in the chapter that it is not a necessary part of the work of the scientific description to suggest pictures. Indeed, sometimes picturesqueness may be detrimental to science, inasmuch as the imagery suggested is not likely to represent the exact truth. In this respect science and art are very different. Though the latter does not have to be picturesque, it generally finds it most to its advantage to be so. The question whether a description suggests the exact truth is one that seldom troubles the artistic writer. What he desires most of all is that his writing be effective, and when his style is vividly picturesque, with the imagination working freely, then it is that he is most likely to succeed in his purpose.

In securing vividness two or three expedients or means have long been known to be valuable. The first to be mentioned is of course the use of the apt word or phrase. The importance of aptness can hardly be overestimated, but it does not require further exposition. Next to be considered is the use of specific, concrete words. These are able to present their ideas much more vividly and intensely than general or abstract words, for very simple reasons. Of course one must not forget that specific, concrete words are good only to express ideas that are equally specific and concrete. Abstract material cannot be presented concretely without making it change its nature. The same is true for generalized material and specific words. Applying this caution to the work of the artistic writer, who wishes his style to be vivid, we may say that it is necessary for him to keep his ideas out of the realm of the general and ab-



stract. Thus in place of a general statement he should give a specific instance, and he should fill out his abstractions with enough material to make them seem concrete.

The reason why these methods produce greater vividness is not difficult to find. The specific word is much more limited than the general extent of meaning. It stands for but one particular thing, and as a result it is likely to be very closely associated with its idea and consequently it requires little effort for the one to call up the other. The general word, on the other hand, stands for a number of things, and these, though usually similar, are by no means identical. Therefore the energy used to connect the word with its idea has to be made to cover a larger territory of meaning than in the case of the specific word, and naturally this gain in breadth is obtained only by a corresponding loss in intensity. The result of the imaginative process is that though the general word has the more sensuous material to choose from in embodying its idea, it has after all less power to bring up any idea whatever, and consequently it is greatly inferior to the specific word in vividness of effect. Similar forces operate to make the concrete word more vivid than the abstract. The latter does not offer the imagination much definite material out of which to build conceptions. That which it does present is more or less intangible. The concrete, on the other hand, generally presents material that is easily imagined. It is tangible and therefore more likely to make a vivid impression on the imagination.

Another help to vividness, one that is closely allied to specificalness and concreteness, is the giving to description the qualities of freshness and originality. We all know the effect of the trite and the commonplace. They are inefficient not only because they are

apt to lack interest in themselves, but also because the mind in dealing with things very familiar is not likely to be on the alert. It accepts the material without trying to realize it, and consequently the description has no chance of being vivid at all. It treats it just as it does the performance of habitual actions, such as walking and breathing. The control is given over to the lower centers. The mind reads the various details without once bringing them to full consciousness. To obtain the greatest vividness, then, the mind ought to be put on the alert by being compelled to master something new.

Another help to vividness in description is the use of apt comparisons. Not only are these likely to make strong impressions on the mind of the reader, but they are also likely to convey correct impressions as well. Suppose, for example, that I write that Mr. So-and-so looks like Napoleon. Almost everyone has seen a picture of the latter, and his appearance, therefore, has become practically universal knowledge. By comparing Mr. So-and-so with Napoleon, I am thus likely to enable my reader to use a common basis of experience with myself. The same would be true if I should state that a certain building had the shape of a letter E, or if in my description I should make any other comparison with a well-known object. Hence apt comparisons are an especially valuable means of giving what is called the fundamental image,—of mapping out for the reader the plan or outline of a building or in representing the general appearance of an object or scene.

Figures of speech play a part somewhat like that of comparison. They are of course not so exact as the latter in what they suggest, but, nevertheless, the help

they afford to description is quite as valuable as that obtained through any other means. Like comparisons, they are of great aid in synthesizing ideas, or in giving frameworks, or in pointing out the direction for the thought to go. Then, too, they are very stimulating, enabling the mind to do more work with less conscious effort.<sup>1</sup> If a writer in describing a man says that he looks like a bulldog, or if he calls him a bulldog, he may at once suggest by that simile or metaphor a picture of the man and an idea of his personality that is nearer the truth than could be obtained by a weighty list of details, for in the latter case the reader would have difficulty in joining the different parts together. Of course, a man is not a bulldog, and hence there must be elements in the latter image that are entirely wrong for the representation of the man, but the mind is accustomed to deal with such inconsistencies. We have already learned that such a matter-of-fact detail as an aquiline nose is likely to bring up not only an image of a nose, but also an associated background which is generally irrelevant. Everything we say, then, is likely to have connected with it irrelevant details, consequently in this regard figures may be as well off as plain facts. The important consideration for description in the use of either comparisons or figures is that there be an essential likeness involved. Then the comparison or figure leads in the right direction, and that which is wrong and unessential may be modified by supplementary details or it may be entirely disregarded.

If true figures can do much to lead us in the right direction, false figures are just as potent to lead us in

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1—This point is made for the Metaphor in Dr. Buck's "The Metaphor. A Study in the Psychology of Rhetoric." Inland Press, Ann Arbor. An excellent treatment of the figure.

the wrong direction. We should therefore be as careful about the accuracy of our figures as of our facts. Beware of suggesting likenesses that do not exist. To be sure, we are not always consistent in these matters. There are certain moods in which likenesses appeal to us that in other moods would seem quite unreal. Sometimes, for instance, the poet out in the midst of trees and flowers feels toward nature a personal relation. He would like to personify it. Very well; let him do so. If he can put us in the same mood that he feels, then nature will probably appeal to us in the same way, and what he says will have nothing incongruous about it. But let the poet beware! Let him make sure that we are likely to fall into his mood, and let him see to it that all he says is natural to such a state of feeling. Otherwise his words may affect us in an entirely wrong way. They may appear as a confusing body of labored conceits and overdrawn fancies. Such I believe is the feeling of the average man of the present generation towards Von Haller's *Alps*,<sup>1</sup> mentioned in the *Laocoön*. That this was not the effect upon Lessing is due to the fact that his age had become accustomed to looking at things in the poet's way. If

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1—Lessing says with reference to this description: "The learned poet is here painting plants and flowers with great art and in strict accordance with nature, but there is no illusion in his picture." *Laocoön* XVII. The translation here used is found in Miss Frothingham's *Laocoön*:

The lofty gentian's head in stately grandeur towers  
 Far o'er the common herd of vulgar weeds and low;  
 Beneath his banners serve communities of flowers;  
 His azure brethren, too, in reverence to him bow.  
 The blossom's purest gold in curving radiations  
 Erect upon the stalk, above its gray robe gleams;  
 The leaflets' pearly white with deep green variegations  
 With flashes many-hued of the moist diamond beams.  
 O Law beneficent! which strength to beauty plighteth,  
 And to a shape so fair a fairer soul uniteth.



I choose, I too can look at that description from a similar point of view, but for me the view is badly forced, and I cannot help but feel conscious that the whole thing is unreal and inartistic. For me the description is greatly lacking in vividness.

No description can be vivid that is not interesting. The material must be of such a nature and it must be put in such a form that it compels our attention, enlisting all our powers for its realization. But we know that different literary epochs are interested in different phases of life and experience. It is not to be expected, then, that all literary periods will agree in their admiration for the same kinds of description. We should expect to find, what indeed is the truth, that each particular age develops for itself certain peculiarities of descriptive method. This introduces into criticism a complicating factor, because what one age may enjoy most of all, may seem to the next age entirely lacking in artistic qualities. This may help to explain why there should be such a difference between Lessing's feeling for Von Haller's Alps and our own.

It also serves to bring into prominence still another important factor in description, which, as yet, we have not sufficiently emphasized. Artistic description to be successful must be interesting, but one of the most essential requisites for this interest is that there shall be a bond of sympathy joining writer and reader. The true artist never neglects his audience. It may be large or small, learned or popular. He may misconceive the nature of it. He may greatly blunder in making his appeal, but he always keeps it in mind. It is this feeling for his audience that, more than anything else, controls his choice of method and material. Rhetorical theory may help to develop him by showing

how he can get control of his instrument, but when he has reached his mastery, it will merely suggest,—it will never dictate. If it expresses his own artistic convictions, he will of course apply it; if not, he will undoubtedly leave it alone.

## APPENDIX A—I

### I

#### BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

The best edition of the *Laocoön* is probably

*Lessings Laokoön*. Herausgegeben und erläutert von Hugo Blümner. Zweite verbesserte und vermehrte Auflage. Mit drei Tafeln. Berlin, Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1880. S. xxv—756.

For my own work, however, I have used the edition by Hugo Göring in the Cotta'sche Bibliothek, Stuttgart, and the translation by Ellen Frothingham, now published by Little, Brown and Company.

For previous criticisms of Lessing's theories see the following:

Herder. *Kritische Walder*. Erstes Waldchen.

Bollman. *Ueber das Kunstprincip in Lessing's Laokoön und dessen Begründung*. (Progr. d. Gym. z. grauen Kloster in Berlin, 1852.)

Buck and Woodbridge. *A Course in Expository Writing*. Henry Holt and Company, 1901. The second chapter touches upon Lessing's psychology of vision.

Edward L. Walter. *On some points in Lessing's Laocoön*. Ann Arbor, 1888. An admirable monograph on the boundaries of poetry and painting, apropos of the *Laocoön*.

C. Rethwisch. *Der bleibende Wert des Laokoön*. Berlin, 1899. A brief running commentary on the *Laocoön*.

Ph. Wegener. *Grundfragen des Sprachlebens*. Halle, 1885. See especially chapter xxii.

The foregoing references relate to the parts of the *Laocoön* discussed in this essay. For other *Laocoön* material the reader should consult Blümner, and

Gayley and Scott. *An Introduction to the Methods and Materials of Literary Criticism*. Ginn and Company, 1899.

## II

In his Commentar XVI, s. 612f., Blümner discusses Herder's and Bollman's objections to Lessing's treatment of Homer. Bollman has pointed out that the Palace and Garden of Alcinous, *Odyssey*, VII, are descriptions that traverse Lessing's theory of Homer's method. Blümner says:

“Lessing hat diese Stellen keineswegs übersehen. Er sagt in dem Entwurf zum 2. Theil des Laokoon, Frgt. A. 5, No. XLI: ‘Neue Bestärkung, dass sich Homer nur auf successive Gemälde eingelassen, durch die Widerlegung einiger Einwürfe, als von der Beschreibung des Palastes in der Iliade (soll wohl heissen “Odyssee”). Er wollte bloss den Begriff der Grösse dadurch erwecken. Beschreibung der Gärten des Alcinous; auch diese beschreibt er nicht als schöne Gegenstände, die auf einmal in die Augen fallen, welches sie in der Natur selbst nicht sind.’ Es ist zu bedauern, dass Lessing diese Andeutung nicht weiter ausgeführt hat, vielleicht würde seine Ansicht darüber noch deutlicher geworden sein. In der That scheint es nämlich nicht, als ob die Schilderung jenes Palastes den Begriff der Grösse erwecken solle; sondern Homer beabsichtigt bei dieser Schilderung sowohl wie bei der Gärten, die beide ja ganz dicht beisammen stehn und daher eigentlich nur als ein Beispiel angeführt werden müssten, den Begriff des Wunderbaren, Uebernatürlichen zu erwecken, wozu nicht nur die reichliche Verwendung kostbarer Metalle beitragen soll, sondern namentlich die künstlichen Bildwerke von der hand des Hephaestos, und die ewig blühenden, immer Obst tragenden Gärten.”

Blümner says that Homer “schildert Coexistentes, aber nicht um es dem Hörer als Solches zum Bewusstsein



zu bringen, sondern weil er eine bestimmte Vorstellung—der Grösse oder des Wunderbaren—durch dieselbe erwecken will.”

Apparently Lessing did not give the description of the palace and gardens of Alcinous very careful consideration. If he had he would hardly have called it a *Neue Bestärkung*. Blümner does not seem to appreciate fully the point at issue. Homer may have tried to produce the effect of wonderfulness or of greatness or of both. The description certainly does impress upon us the wonderfulness of the building, but that does not prevent it from giving us also an idea of what the building looks like. The enumeration of the coexistent parts gives us a picture of coexistent parts. Some of the details may be forgotten before the end is reached, but the total effect is a unified impression of the whole building. I have lately read the description of the palace to my mother, who is a good visualizer. She is very positive that she could see the whole palace as one picture. In fact, she was very much surprised to learn that some persons are unable to visualize the description at all. She did not see how such persons could understand it or remember it; her thinking and her visual images generally went together, and one seemed as essential as the other. If at any point the pictures came to her later than the ideas, the one seemed necessary to complete the other. For instance, when I read the word “bronze,” she could not at once see the exact shade of color. The nearest she could come to it was a kind of brown, and her idea was no more exact than the color-image. As she expressed it, she could not for a moment think exactly what bronze was like. Her imagery was made up from things she had seen, either in books or in actual experience. Before reading

Homer's account of the palace, I explained briefly the nature of the description and its setting. As I began, she saw first the outside of an old castle and an old man, Odysseus, approaching it. Then the scene shifted to the inside of the same building. As new details were mentioned, she added them to her picture, changing the original conception as far as necessary. She did this naturally and easily, and only when she did not understand what a word meant did she feel any confusion, and then the image was very faint. She said that if at any time when she read a description, she found she had an entirely wrong conception of the object described, she at once transferred her ideas to a new conception that seemed more nearly right. A description made up of coexistent details gave her no trouble whatever. For myself, I will say that I am not so strongly visual. My imagery is usually located geographically, so to speak. Though I seldom see it distinctly as a picture, I can map it out pretty accurately and tell the size and position of the details.

Blümner continues:

“Nun bringt Bollman noch eine ganze Zahl anderer Homerstellen bei, die gegen Lessing sprechen sollen. . . . Sollten diese zahlreichen Beispiele, ‘deren Anzahl sich leicht vermehren liesse,’ alle Lessing entgangen sein?—Unmöglich! Lessing muss sie gekannt, aber nicht als Einwürfe betrachtet haben. Und das sind sie denn näher betrachtet auch nicht. Nirgends ist todte auf zählung der Theile, überall ist Leben und Bewegung: so bei der Grotto der Kalypso, Od. V, 59-73, wo diese selbst geschildert ist, wie sie darin sitzt, singt und webt, wo Vögel hausen, die an der Küste des Meeres auf Raub spähen, etc.; . . . Vielfach beschränkt sich die Schilderung auf zwei bis drei Thatsachen: solche kurze Beschreibungen zu zerbieuten, ist Lessing natürlich nicht eingefallen. . . . Ich kann keine einzige der von

Bollman angeführten elf Stellen als Widerlegung von Lessing's Darlegung der Homerischen Methode anerkennen."

I have not quoted all that Blümner has to say, but here, as in the previous extract, Blümner does not see clearly just how much Lessing proves by his chain of conclusions. The latter argues that consecutive signs can express only objects which succeed each other in time. This is very different from saying that consecutive signs can or should express only objects that have life or movement. In the description of the grotto, in the description of the ploughers and reapers on the shield, etc., Homer introduces much life and movement. But that fact is not sufficient to make these descriptions supports for Lessing's chain of conclusions. In order to accomplish this it is necessary to show that there is progress, that the consecutive signs represent things that stand in a like consecutive relation. Therefore such a description as that of the grotto of Calypso is decidedly opposed to Lessing's theory. All the things mentioned—the fire, its fragrance, the singing and weaving of Calypso—though they may have action, are contemporaneous. The various kinds of action are going on at the same time. They belong to one picture. An enumerative description does not have to be made up of dry, dead facts, as Blümner would suggest.

In Commentar XVIII, s. 627, in reply to Herder's objection that the description of the shield of Achilles does not give us a unified picture of the completed shield, Blümner says:

“Lessing will durchaus nicht sagen, Homer erreiche bei seiner Beschreibung vom Werden des Achillesschildes, dass wir den werdenden Schild am Schluss der Be-

schreibung als gewordenen vor uns sehen; er betont nur, dass Homer die vielen Bilder nicht nacheinander ermüdend beschreibt, sondern sie vor unsern Augen entstehen lässt."

If Blümner is correct in his interpretation, it would appear that Lessing meant to say that literature finds it impossible to portray artistically, by any means, coexisting objects as coexistent. I think we have already shown the absurdity of such a view. Not only is it possible to receive unified pictures from descriptions, it is even possible to receive them from progressive descriptions, though neither the example of the shield nor any other example that Lessing mentions is very satisfactory. Perhaps the best illustrations are to be found in mixed narrative and description.

### III

Rethwisch, discussing section XVI, makes an interesting distinction. He says:

"Das Körperliche ist der eigentliche Gegenstand der Malerei.

"Das Geistige ist der eigentliche Gegenstand der Poesie. . . .

"Von den Organen ausgehend mit denen wir Kunst- und Dichtwerke aufnehmen, kann man sagen: Die bildende Kunst führt ihre Darstellungen dem äusseren, die Dichtung die ihrigen dem inneren Auge vor, jenes vermag nur Körperliches, dieses nur Geistiges aufzunehmen. So ist das Körperliche das Bereich der Kunst, das Geistige das der Dichtung. Da das äussere Auge aber seine Eindrücke als Vorstellungen, also als etwas Geistiges, an das innere Auge abgiebt, so kann die Kunst auch Geistiges darstellen, wenn auch nur mittelbar durch Körperliches. Und da das innere Auge Vorstellungen durch das äussere Auge erhält, so kann die Dichtung auch Körperliches darstellen, wenn auch nur mittelbar durch Vorstellungen, also durch etwas Geistiges."



## IV

Buck and Woolbridge mildly criticise Lessing's psychology of vision. But though their account is interesting and helpful as an account of mental processes, I do not think the method is one that will disprove Lessing's theory.

“To a certain extent Lessing's view was right, inasmuch as words are slow things compared with the senses, and language is slow in reproducing what the senses have been quick in perceiving. But though there is this disparity in speed, it ought to be recognized for what it is—a difference in degree, not in kind. For our sense perceptions only appear instantaneous, they are not really so, but as we shall see, follow a discoverable order and sequence; and it is this order and sequence which we must observe, that we may reproduce it in the mind of our listener.”

By reference to the effect of successive instantaneous exposures of a bunch of leaves by means of a stereopticon or similar device, the authors show that our ordinary perceptions, which we think of as instantaneous, really have stages. All our perceptions pass from the vague to the definite, from the general to the detailed. In successive glimpses of the bunch of leaves, first we see that the object is green, then that it is green leaves, then that there are different kinds of leaves, etc. In a note we are told that the mechanical difficulties in these experiments are greater than might be supposed. The exposures, to be of any value, must be managed with the greatest care; they must be exceedingly short, but complete, etc.

Now it seems clear that a method of this sort will not disprove Lessing's theory. If the process of perception is really so rapid that we have to go to all this

trouble to find out what it is,—that is, if the visual details follow each other so rapidly as to appear instantaneous, language is certainly not rapid enough to compete with the senses. Lessing in that case would be correct in saying that language is not fitted to produce pictorial illusion by the method of enumerated details. Unless we can show that language unaided is commensurate in speed with unobstructed perception, we have lost our case. But the authors have tried to prove something that it is not necessary to prove so far as Lessing is concerned. Our concepts are often complex ideas. The words *green leaves* suggest not a simple idea but a complex idea of size, color, shape, etc. All these different notions follow just as quickly upon the concept as upon the perception of the real object. So the words may suggest just as complex a picture as we should obtain from a glance at the green leaves. The process of description is the presentation of a further analysis, and, as we have already seen, this perceptual analysis, obtained by looking at the real object, requires time that is commensurate with the rapidity of language.

## V

Wegener in his *Grundfragen des Sprachlebens* devotes Chapter XXII to an attack upon Lessing's chain of conclusions (*Laocoön*, XVI). His main points are the following:

Lessing said concerning the means (Mittel) of poetry: 1. (rightly) that it uses articulated tones in a time order; 2. that these means are imitative; 3. that these means must unquestionably stand in a suitable relation to the thing designated; and that, therefore, 4.

the thing designated, like the means of imitation, must possess a chronological order.

With reference to 2. he asks: Is poetry really imitative of the things it describes? He concludes it is not, for if it were, then the whole business of poetry would be the imitating of articulated tones. He then asks: Is poetry even an exact description of its materials? He says to describe anything such as an action means to analyze it into its separate parts and then to enumerate these parts one after the other. He concludes that poetry is not even a description, in a strict sense. "Also ist nicht blos der von Lessing angegebene Grund falsch, warum die Poesie nur Handlungen darstellen könne, sondern auch die Thatsache falsch, dass Poesie Handlungen anschaulich zu beschreiben vermöchte."

## VI

With reference to Lessing's theory of vision, compare the following from James's *Principles of Psychology*, II, p. 45 f.:

"Hume was the hero of the atomistic theory. Not only were ideas copies of original impressions made on the sense-organs, but they were, according to him, completely adequate copies, and were all so separate from each other as to possess no manner of connection. Hume proves ideas in the imagination to be completely adequate copies, not by appeal to observation, but by *a priori* reasoning. . . . The slightest introspective glance will show to anyone the falsity of this opinion. Hume surely had images of his own works without seeing distinctly every word and letter upon the pages which floated before his mind's eye. His dictum is therefore an exquisite example of the way in which a man will be blinded by *a priori* theories to the most flagrant facts."

Hume lived from 1711 to 1776; Lessing from 1729 to 1781.

## VII

The objection has recently been urged before me that I have left out of account the man of genius in my discussion of the rate and manner in which people take in new scenes. It was admitted that I had stated the facts with reference to the great majority of men and women, who indeed perceive things slowly and by separate stages. But the point was made that the genius has wonderful powers of taking in a whole scene at a glance, and that therefore Lessing's theory would hold for the genius if not for the ordinary man. I admit that I have not had the opportunity to verify my theory in this particular. I have read of the wonderful visualizing powers of Macaulay, and of painters who could reproduce scenes exactly after they had been away from them for a number of years, but it has never yet been my good fortune to experiment on a person with such extraordinary powers. However, I do not believe that this fact vitiates the argument.

That there is a great difference in people in their powers of perception is true, but from the few experiments I have tried I believe it is a difference of degree and not of kind. But suppose the difference is one of kind. Geniuses are few in number. Though they are the producers of great literary works, they make up a very small percentage of the audience by whom the works are read. Now Lessing argued—and rightly, too—from the standpoint of the audience. It was because he believed that the reader does not see things in the time order that he warned the writer not to use enumerative description. But since most readers do see things in the time order, we can say at least that Lessing failed to make good his position in the way he intended.



Again, supposing still that the genius sees things by a process essentially different from that of the ordinary mind, why is he so well qualified to act as the mouth-piece of the ordinary man? How can he make his audience understand him? Such questions as these lead one, I believe, to the view that the mental operations of the genius differ from those of other men in degree rather than in kind.

Let us suppose that this is the difference. Let us say that the genius simply can do things more easily and quickly than the ordinary man. He can see at a glance what it will take some little time for anyone else to see equally well. Does then Lessing's theory hold good for the man of genius? Is the latter so handicapped by his unusual powers that he is less fitted than other men to appreciate the enumerative description? It would hardly seem possible. It must not be forgotten that one word alone may be sufficient to call up a complete picture, and the stronger a person's visualizing powers the more will he be able to call up with a single word. A man with genius of this kind differs from the ordinary man in that he has imagery much richer and more concrete. Because of these powers it ought to be easier for him than for other men to deal with enumerative description. He ought to be able to harmonize details and fuse them together with a success which is beyond the reach of the ordinary man.

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After I had finished this section of the appendix, my attention was called to a note by W. C. Lawton and Russell Sturgis in the June number of Scribner's Magazine (1904, p. 765), entitled "Poet and Artist." I quote a few lines from the first part:

“In general, are not the best dramas, epics, romances, those which leave impressed upon our souls one or two glorious pictures—a single group at most, usually dominated by one heroic figure? . . . . And the dominant central figure or group outlives in our memory all the incidents of the most cleverly woven plot. . . . And conversely, a great picture is by no means enjoyed at a single glance. . . . Such loving study still concentrates, not distracts, our gaze: heightens, not lessens, the unity and pathetic meaning of the picture. . . . The essential identity underlying all creative art, literary and plastic, is infinitely more important than any diversity in material and method.”

## APPENDIX A—II

### *Psychological Basis*

It would be very difficult for me to present a comprehensive bibliography for this part of the subject, and I shall not try to do so. I can hardly consider myself a specialist in psychology, though I have long been interested in the study. Almost every standard text-book contains at least some material that should be useful to the student who would do special research work in rhetorical problems. Also the psychological and other journals<sup>1</sup> occasionally furnish valuable material for work of this sort. The research student ought to know something about the whole field of psychology before beginning his investigation. It is also well for him to have had experience in a laboratory. If thus equipped, he can easily work out his own bibliography. Nevertheless it is best even in this case to consult a specialist in psychology.

The preceding remarks are of course intended only for the very advanced special research worker. They do not apply to the student who desires to gain merely a fair idea of the fundamental problems of description and of other forms of art. I think everything presented in this book should be clear to advanced students without any previous training in psychology. My work is suggestive rather than exhaustive. It does not call for special preparation.

The books that I have found most suggestive for my

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1—Cf. the following: Royce *Some Recent Studies on Ideas of Motion*, Science, 1883; *Mental Imagery*, monograph to Psychological Review, Vol. II, No. 3, 1898; Bentley, *The Memory, Image and its Qualitative Fidelity*, Am. Jour. of Psych., Vol. XI, p. 1; Slaughter, *A Preliminary Study of Behavior of Mental Images*, Am. Jour. of Psychol., Vol. XIII, p. 526.

own work are: James's Psychology (2-vol. ed.), and the Psychologies of Titchener, and Stout; the article Psychology, in the Britannica, by Ward; and A. Binet's Psychology of Reasoning.<sup>1</sup>

I have sought accuracy in all my work, and I hope I have not made many mistakes. Much that I have said needs testing, especially with reference to the subjective part, but introspective results of course always need to be substantiated by numerous observers. I do not think I have offered much that is surprisingly new to a psychologist. Though as a matter of fact there is a great deal of psychological material yet needed for the study of perception, and for the study of the nature and forms of mental imagery.

The objection has been offered to my method of testing what is in a person's mental image (Ch. III), that I confused memory with perception, and that a person sees much more than he can remember. The objection is perhaps partly valid, but it is not sufficient to give any ground for still supporting Lessing's theory of vision. The latter I show to be in error by still other methods of argument. It is difficult to determine just how important a part memory plays in the perceptive process I describe. However, I cannot believe, judging from my own experiments, that we really see much more than we can recall, when the questioning is done immediately after seeing. At least the part we forget (?) could not have been seen very plainly, and probably never reached consciousness at all. But this is a point that I am willing to leave open for others to decide.

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1—The last work is published in translation by the Open Court Publishing Co., Chicago.



## APPENDIX A—III

### *Rhetoric*

**S**TRANGE as it may seem, there is no book that deals adequately with the complete history of rhetoric. There are several that pretend to do so, and they may succeed in so far as they go, but all, if I mistake not, regard the work of Aristotle as the culminating point in the whole history. This is an erroneous belief very prevalent but very misleading. With this conception in mind, no one can correctly appreciate the growth of mediæval and modern rhetoric. Aristotle, though he has exerted considerable influence, is after all somewhat out of the direct line of development. Even in his own time rhetoric was becoming something more than the art of persuasion, and he himself unconsciously recognized the fact by introducing into his work the epideictic division of the subject.

An adequate history of rhetoric ought to treat the subject genetically. It ought to trace for us the part that rhetoric has played in the educational system of each age—and the consequent actions and reactions. It ought to show us the causes that have produced each change in this gradual evolution. Modern rhetoric will not then be treated as a deteriorated form, which it is not, but as the current stage of an evolution which has continually tried to meet the practical needs of the educational environment. Such a history ought to present much of interest, and it ought to place the subject on a much more scientific basis.

In the few suggestions which I now wish to offer, it is not at all my purpose to give the materials for such a history. I merely wish to suggest a possible course of reading for the use of the student who desires to gain a fair idea of the general nature of this evolution.

A good introduction to the subject is the article "Rhetoric" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol. XX. This is of value chiefly for its treatment of the ancient rhetorics. It was written by Jebb. A much longer work is the same author's *The Attic Orators, from Antiphon to Isæos*, Macmillan, 1876.

Another work which not only deals with ancient rhetorics but with later ones as well, is Saintsbury's *A History of Criticism*, in 3 vols., Wm. Blackwood & Sons, Edinburgh and London. This treatment is sometimes exasperating, but it presents much very useful information. It offers quite a little about Byzantine rhetoric.

Müller and Donaldson's *A History of the Literature of Ancient Greece*, in 3 vols., Longmans, Green & Co., has sections that deal with the history of Greek rhetoric.

Mullinger's *Schools of Charles the Great*, London, 1877, and Rashdall's *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, in 3 vols. (2nd vol. has two parts), Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1895, are the best books I know of for a treatment of mediæval rhetoric.

Carpenter's edition of *The Arte or Crafte of Rhetoryke*, by Cox, has some very valuable material for the study of Renaissance rhetoric.

These are the best general works in English that I know of. But a student should read besides as many of the older rhetorics themselves as possible. Many of these are to be found in translation.

The student should at least read Plato's *Phædrus* and *Gorgias* (translated by Jowett), Aristotle's *Rhetoric* and *Poetics*, and Longinus *On the Sublime*, for an idea of Greek Rhetorical theory.

For the Latin, the Bohn Library contains a translation of the rhetorical works of Cicero and also a translation of Quintilian's *Institutes of Oratory*. Both are very important, and it should be remembered with reference to Cicero as well as in the study of other rhetorical works that it is not always the best contributions that have had the most influence. This is especially true for rhetoric in the Middle Ages.

I do not know of any early mediæval rhetoric in translation.

Cox's *The Arte or Crafte of Rhethoryke* is a good example of Renaissance rhetoric, and has been made easily accessible through a reprint by Frederic I. Carpenter, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1899. Besides presenting much bibliographical material for the period, the reprint contains an analysis and outline of the rhetoric of Melanchthon, also a reprint of a portion of Melanchthon's *Institutiones Rhetoricæ*.

There are several "arts of poetry" belonging to this period that may be studied with profit. Several of these are to be found among the Arber Reprints. A. S. Cook has edited one or two that are published by Ginn & Company.

Of the early modern works, Henry Home's (Lord Kames) *Elements of Criticism*, Hugh Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles-Lettres*, and George Campbell's *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, are the most important. All are easily accessible.

I do not wish to mention works for the Nineteenth century. The student should consult all that he can find, also the school readers.

I believe it is best to make this study comparative. How is each work different from its neighbors and why is it different? Is the educational environment different? etc. The answering of such questions as these will give to the study a profitableness and interest that it could not otherwise have.

The following text-books are the ones which I have used most of all in my work in description. They have been made use of both for ideas and for illustrative materials:

Baldwin, *Specimens of Prose Description*, H. Holt & Co., 1895.

A. S. Hill, *Principles of Rhetoric*, American Book Co., 1895.

Genung, *Working Principles of Rhetoric*, Ginn & Co., 1901.

Gardiner, *Forms of Prose Description*, Scribner's, 1900.

Scott and Denney, *Composition-Literature*, Allyn & Bacon, 1902.

Gardiner, Kittredge and Arnold, *Mother Tongue*, bk. III, Ginn & Co., 1902.







## APPENDIX B

### *Experimental Material*

#### I

**L**OOK at the Japanese picture for not more than two or three seconds. Close the eyes and try to recall what was the impression it made upon you. Then look at it again very briefly. Close the eyes and note any new details that come from this second view. This procedure may be repeated several times. Lastly, study the picture thoroughly. What is your final impression? How is it different from the first? Did you see any details wrongly? Did your first conception lack in accuracy as well as in definiteness?

This experiment may be tried on any unfamiliar object or scene. Also, it may be used with another person as subject.

#### II

Take a picture, such as the "Challenge,"<sup>1</sup> and try the experiment suggested in chapter III. Care must be taken in choosing a picture. It ought to be complex enough to tax the observer's powers without going so far as to confuse them. The Japanese drawing opposite page 335 should only be used with extremely good visualizers, or at least not until simpler material has been tried. Let the subject look at the picture until he thinks he can carry it all in his mind's eye. Note the time spent. Then find out in so far as possible

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1—The Challenge is No. 914 of the Perry Pictures.

what is really in the person's mental image by discreet questions. Some shrewdness must here be used. Usually the questions ought not to be misleading, and at the same time they should go beyond the self-evident. The experimenter himself must have studied the picture until he knows it thoroughly, though he may have it before him as he asks the questions. Next, put the material obtained from the answers in a condensed description and compare the time it takes to read it with the time it required to see the details. The subject should be tested both with reference to the details seen and with reference to the relations of part to part. If the subject is a good draughtsman, it is interesting to have him block out on paper the relative positions of the different parts.

### III

Get as subjects good draughtsmen. Read the following description to them several times, if necessary, and then ask them to block out rapidly on paper the picture that is suggested. Compare results:

“Almost everybody knows, in our part of the world at least, how pleasant and soft the fall of the land is round about Plover's Barrows farm. All above it is strong dark mountain, spread with heath, and desolate, but near our house the valleys cove, and open warmth and shelter. Here are trees, and bright green grass, and orchards full of contentment, and a man may scarce espy the brook, although he hears it everywhere. And, indeed, a stout good piece of it comes through our farm-yard, and swells sometimes to a rush of waves, when the clouds are on the hill-tops. But all below, where the valley bends, and the Lynn stream goes along with it, pretty meadows slope their breast, and the sun spreads on the water. And nearly all of this is ours, till you come to Nicholas Snowe's land.”—



Blackmore: *Lorna Doone*. Quoted in Baldwin's *Specimens of Prose Description*.

This experiment may be varied by trying to determine what is in the subject's mental image at the end of each reading. He may be asked himself to describe the picture he sees. When he hears the description read again, does the same picture come up in his mind? It is interesting to find out the effect of the description of the brook. Also, it is interesting to study how the pictures crystallize from the description. What words or word combinations call up the most vivid conceptions?

#### IV

Try an experiment similar to that mentioned in Chapter VII with reference to incongruous backgrounds. Take the phrase "brown eyes," for example, and note if it is imagined alone or in connection with faces. If the latter, what kind of faces?

#### V

Test the relative value of different classes of words for purposes of description. For this study use the various descriptions found in the next general section of the appendix. Are verbs more powerful than other words? Are participial adjectives better than other adjectives? Are the qualifiers as helpful as the words qualified? What are the most suggestive words in the following sentence?

"Two-horse batteries trot briskly into view from the leafy shelter in which they had been lurking."

#### VI

Von Haller's *Alps*. Lessing says with reference to this description: "The learned poet is here painting

plants and flowers with great art and in strict accordance with nature, but there is no illusion in his picture." Discuss Lessing's criticism. Is this description natural? Are the words used likely to call up the correct picturesque impressions? Can this type of description be justified? Compare it with Thompson's "*Spring*," Lowell's "*Vision of Sir Launfal*." The rendering here used is that found in Miss Frothingham's translation of the *Laocoön*. It is very fair to the original, I think.

"The lofty gentian's head in stately grandeur towers  
Far o'er the common herd of vulgar weeds and low;  
Beneath his banners serve communities of flowers;  
His azure brethren, too, in rev'ence to him bow.  
The blossom's purest gold in curving radiations  
Erect upon the stalk, above its gray robe gleams;  
The leaflets' pearly white with deep green variegations  
With flashes many hued of the moist diamond beams.  
O Law beneficent! which strength to beauty plighteth,  
And to a shape so fair a fairer soul uniteth.

## VII

Negative statements. What visual images, if any, do the following statements arouse?

There wasn't a stick of wood in the woodbox.

He could not see a man anywhere.

The moon no longer shone through the window panes.

The stove was not in the center of the room.

Not a leaf to be seen.

The view extended with every step; scarce a tree, scarce a house, appeared upon the fields of wild hill that ran north, east, and west, all blue and gold in the haze and sunlight of the morning.

## VIII

In what ways is contrast valuable to description? Repetition?

Is climax of any value?

Why are Synecdoche and Metonymy effective in description?

Why is it that the trite is so likely to be ineffective?

Discuss the use of such epithets as the following: The parched desert, green meadows, the wet waves, the briny deep, high Olympus, broad expanse.

## IX

Make a study of the beautiful in description. Lessing like to have Thersites described as ugly? What is the element of pleasure in caricature?

## X

Make a study of the beautiful in description. Lessing says that we can describe beauty by its effect. However, does the mentioning of an effect necessarily suggest the cause,—that is, in this case, the beautiful itself? Do we imagine Helen's beauty the more vividly because we are told of its effect upon the old men of Troy? (The Iliad, bk. III). Cf., also, the following: "Walpole thus gives an impression of the Gunning sisters: 'They can't walk in the park, or go to Vauxhall, but such mobs follow them that they are generally driven away.' When one of them was presented, 'even the noble mob in the drawing-room clambered upon chairs and tables to look at her. There are mobs at their doors to see them get into their chairs; and people go early to get places at the theatres when it is known they will be there.'"<sup>1</sup>

Are these descriptions informational or picturesque? If the latter, what is it that occupies the center of vision in the imagination—the beautiful sisters, or the crowd

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1—Quoted by A. S. Hill, *Principles of Rhetoric*, 1895, p. 270.

looking at them? Compare with the description of Helen:

“O'er her fair face a snowy veil she threw,  
And, softly singing, from the loom withdrew:  
Her handmaids Clymene and Æthra wait  
Her silent footsteps to the Sæean gate.

“There sat the silent seniors of the Trojan race,  
(Old Priam's chiefs, and most in Priam's grace,)  
The king the first; Thymœtes at his side;  
Lampus and Clytius, long in council try'd;  
Panthus, and Hicetæon once the strong;  
And next, the wisest of the reverend throng,  
Antenor grave, and sage Ucalegon,  
Lean'd on the walls, and bask'd before the sun.  
Chiefs who no more in bloody fights engage,  
But wise through time, and narrative with age,  
In summer days like grasshoppers rejoice,  
A bloodless race, that send a feeble voice.  
These, when the Spartan Queen approach'd the tower,  
In secret own'd resistless beauty's power;  
They cried, No wonder, such celestial charms  
For nine long years have set the world in arms;  
What winning graces! what majestic mien!  
She moves a Goddess, and she looks a Queen!  
Yet hence, O Heaven! convoy that fatal face,  
And from destruction save the Trojan race.”

—Pope's translation.

Is this purely a description by effect?

## XI

Choose a suitable description, and with it study the problem of “fluctuation of attention.” See chapter IX, page 171 ff.

## XII

Make a study of the point of view in artistic description. See chapter IX, page 183 ff. To what extent and in what way does the personality of the reader



enter into the scenes he imagines? Where with reference to himself do the scenes appear to take place?

### XIII

Study the use of "mood" in description. How are moods produced, and what, if any, is the effect on the mental imagery?

### XIV

Which senses arouse the most vivid impressions? It is said that appeals to the sense of smell are particularly suggestive. Is this true for everyone? Is there any difference in the character of the emotional effect that the various senses are able to produce?

### XV

Make a study of the boundaries of the types of discourse, especially with reference to the different kinds of "presentative" material.

### XVI

Read through a number of fairly long descriptions, noting what are the various means used to arouse and maintain interest.

### XVII

The methods and types of description may be considered historically. That is, all literary epochs have not looked with equal favor on the same types and methods of description. It is not without interest to compare the different literary periods with the object of determining what were the types especially favored in each age. Compare, with reference to the use of epithets, the enumerative description, the progressive, the long and short description, etc. Individual writers have also had their particular favorites. In any or all

of these cases, do the favored descriptions stand in a harmonious relation to the other literary characteristics of the period or writer?

## APPENDIX C

### *Illustrative Material*

**T**HE Bay of Monterey has been compared by no less a person than General Sherman to a bent fishing-hook; and the comparison, if less important than the march through Georgia, still shows the eye of a soldier for topography. \*Santa Cruz sits exposed at the shank; the mouth of the Salinas river is at the middle of the bend; and Monterey itself is cozily ensconced beside the barb. Thus the ancient capital of California faces across the bay, while the Pacific Ocean, though hidden by low hills and forest, bombards her left flank and rear with never-dying surf. In front of the town, the long line of sea-beach trends north and north-west, and then westward to enclose the bay.—Stevenson, *Across the Plains*.

This description is often quoted as an example of skillful outlining. However, if a person unfamiliar with the place tries to draw a map of it by means of the description, he meets with some difficulty. Is the bay a narrow strip of water curving inland like a fishing-hook, or is it a broad chunky piece with a shore line that suggests to the observer the fishing-hook's shape? Does the description say?

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The room in which the House meets is the south wing of the Capitol, the Senate and the Supreme Court being lodged in the north wing. It is more than twice as large as the English House of Commons, with a floor about equal in area to that of Westminster Hall, 139 feet long by 93 feet wide and 36 feet high. Light is admitted through the ceiling. There are on all sides

deep galleries running backward over the lobbies, and capable of holding two thousand five hundred people. The proportions are so good that it is not until you observe how small a man looks at the farther end, and how faint ordinary voices sound, that you realize its vast size. The seats are arranged in curved concentric rows looking toward the Speaker, whose handsome marble chair is placed on a raised marble platform projecting slightly forward into the room, the clerks and the mace below in front of him, in front of the clerks the official stenographer, to the right the seat of the sergeant-at-arms. Each member has a revolving arm-chair, with a roomy desk in front of it, where he writes and keeps his papers. Behind these chairs runs a railing, and behind the railing is an open space into which some classes of strangers may be brought, where sofas stand against the wall, and where smoking is practised, even by strangers, though the rules forbid it.

When you enter, your first impression is of noise and tumult, a noise like that of short, sharp waves in a Highland loch, fretting under a squall against a rocky shore. The raising and dropping of desk-lids, the scratching of pens, the clapping of hands to call the pages, keen little boys who race along the gangways, the pattering of many feet, the hum of talking on the floor and in the galleries, make up a din over which the Speaker, with the sharp taps of his hammer, or the orators, straining shrill throats, find it hard to make themselves audible. Nor is it only the noise that gives the impression of disorder. Often three or four members are on their feet at once, each shouting to catch the Speaker's attention. Others, tired of sitting still, rise to stretch themselves, while the Western visitor, long, lank, and imperturbable, leans his arms on the



railing, chews his cigar, and surveys the scene with little reverence.—Bryce, *American Commonwealth*. Quoted in Scott and Denney's *Composition-Literature*.

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In Wolmer Forest I see but one sort of stone, called by the workmen sand, or forest-stone. This is generally of the color of rusty iron, and might probably be worked as iron ore, is very hard and heavy, and of a firm, compact texture, and composed of a small, roundish, crystalline grit, cemented together by a brown, terrene, ferruginous matter; will not cut without difficulty, nor easily strike fire with steel. Being often found in broad flat pieces, it makes good pavement for paths about houses, never becoming slippery in frost or rain, is excellent for dry walls, and is sometimes used in buildings. In many parts of that waste it lies scattered on the surface of the ground, but is dug on Weaver's Down, a vast hill on the eastern verge of that forest, where the pits are shallow and the stratum thin. This stone is imperishable.—White, *Natural History of Selborne*, vol. 1.

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[Dante.] The head of Dante corresponds in every sense to the well-known mask which has hitherto served as a model to artists of every age. The high and fair forehead, the regular curve of the brow, and somewhat deep sunken eye, the hooked nose, classic mouth and slightly pointed chin, are all equally characteristic. But this, which was true when the head was first rescued from whitewash, is much less so now. The profile has been taken up and revived, but the outline much enfeebled in the operation. A portion of the eye which was gone, including the greater part of the iris to the upper lid, has been, with a part of

the cheek, supplied anew by the restorer. No care or trouble can, indeed, ever secure an exact similarity of tone between old and new color, the latter tending to continual change, whilst the former remains comparatively fixed; but here it would seem not only that the vacant space has been filled up, but that an attempt has been made to harmonize the new with the old by glazing and touching up the latter. The result is a general feeble tone of yellow without light or transparency—which after all are the best qualities of fresco. The bonnet has not only been restored, but altered in color as well as in form.—Crowe and Cavalcaselle, *A New History of Painting in Italy*.

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The Leeds and Skipton railway runs along a deep valley of the Aire; a slow and sluggish stream, compared to the neighboring river of Wharfe. Keighley station is on this line of railway, about a quarter of a mile from the town of the same name. The number of inhabitants and the importance of Keighley have been greatly increased during the last twenty years, owing to the rapidly extended market for worsted manufactures, a branch of industry that mainly employs the factory population of this part of Yorkshire, which has Bradford for its centre and metropolis.

Keighley is in process of transformation from a populous, old-fashioned village, into a still more populous and flourishing town. It is evident to the stranger, that as the gable-ended houses, which obtrude themselves corner-wise on the widening street, fall vacant, they are pulled down to allow of greater space for traffic, and a more modern style of architecture. The quaint and narrow shop-windows of fifty years ago are giving way to large panes and plate-glass. Nearly every dwell-

ing seems devoted to some branch of commerce. In passing hastily through the town, one hardly perceives where the necessary lawyer and doctor can live, so little appearance is there of any dwellings of the professional middle-class, such as abound in our old cathedral towns. In fact, nothing can be more opposed than the state of society, the modes of thinking, the standards of reference on all points of morality, manners, and even politics and religion, in such a new manufacturing place as Keighley in the north, and any stately, sleepy, picturesque cathedral town of the south. Yet the aspect of Keighley promises well for future stateliness, if not picturesqueness. Grey stone abounds; and the rows of houses built of it have a kind of solid grandeur connected with their uniform and enduring lines. The frame-work of the doors, and the lintels of the windows, even in the smallest dwellings are made of blocks of stone. There is no painted wood to require continual beautifying, or else present a shabby aspect; and the stone is kept scrupulously clean by the notable Yorkshire wives. Such glimpses into the interior as a passer-by obtains, reveals a rough abundance of the means of living, and diligent and active habits in the women. But the voices of the people are hard, and their tones discordant, promising little of the musical taste that distinguishes the district, and which has already furnished a Carrodus to the musical world. The names over the shops (of which the one just given is a sample) seem strange even to an inhabitant of the neighboring county, and have a peculiar smack and flavour of the place.

The town of Keighley never quite melts into country on the road to Haworth, although the houses become more sparse as the traveller journeys upwards to the grey round hills that seem to bound his journey in a

westerly direction. First come some villas; just sufficiently retired from the road to show that they can scarcely belong to any one liable to be summoned in a hurry, at a call of suffering or danger, from his comfortable fire-side; the lawyer, the doctor, and the clergyman, live at hand, and hardly in the suburbs, with a screen of shrubs for concealment.

In a town one does not look for vivid colouring; what there may be of this is furnished by the wares in the shops, not by foliage or atmospheric effects; but in the country some brilliancy and vividness seems to be instinctively expected, and there is consequently a slight feeling of disappointment at the grey neutral tint of every object, near or far off, on the way from Keighley to Haworth. The distance is about four miles; and, as I have said, what with villas, great worsted factories, rows of workmen's houses, with here and there an old-fashioned farm-house and outbuildings, it can hardly be called "country" any part of the way. For two miles the road passes over tolerably level ground, distant hills on the left, a "beck" flowing through meadows on the right, and furnishing water power, at certain points, to the factories built on its banks. The air is dim and lightless, with the smoke from all these habitations and places of business. The soil in the valley (or "bottoms," to use the local term) is rich; but, as the road begins to ascend, the vegetation becomes poorer; it does not flourish, it merely exists; and, instead of trees, there are only bushes and shrubs about the dwellings. Stone dykes are everywhere used in place of hedges; and what crops there are, on the patches of arable land, consist of pale, hungry-looking, grey-green oats. Right before the traveller on his road rises Haworth village; he can see it for



two miles before he arrives, for it is situated on the side of a pretty steep hill, with a back-ground of dun and purple moors, rising and sweeping away yet higher than the church, which is built at the very summit of the long narrow street. All around the horizon there is this same line of sinuous, wave-like hills; the scoops into which they fall only revealing other hills beyond, of similar colour and shape, crowned with wild, bleak moors—grand, from the ideas of solitude and loneliness which they suggest, or oppressive from the feeling which they give of being pent-up by some monotonous and illimitable barrier, according to the mood of mind in which the spectator may be.

For a short distance the road appears to turn away from Haworth, as it winds round the base of the shoulder of a hill; but then it crosses a bridge over the "beck," and the ascent through the village begins. The flagstones with which it is paved are placed end-ways, in order to give a better hold to the horses' feet; and, even with this help, they seem to be in constant danger of slipping backwards. The old stone houses are high compared to the width of the street, which makes an abrupt turn before reaching the level ground at the head of the village, so that the steep aspect of the place, in one part, is almost like that of a wall. But this surmounted, the church lies a little off the main road on the left; a hundred yards, or so, and the driver relaxes his care, and the horse breathes more easily, as they pass into the quiet little by-street that leads to Haworth Parsonage. The churchyard is on one side of this lane, the school-house and the sexton's dwelling (where the curates formerly lodged) on the other.

The parsonage stands at right angles to the road, facing down upon the church; so that, in fact, parsonage,

church, and belfried school-house, form three sides of an irregular oblong, of which the fourth is open to the fields and moors that lie beyond. The area of this oblong is filled up by a crowded churchyard, and a small garden or court in front of the clergyman's house. As the entrance to this from the road is at the side, the path goes round the corner into the little plot of ground. Underneath the windows is a narrow flower-border, carefully tended in days of yore, although only the most hardy plants could be made to grow there. Within the stone wall, which keeps out the surrounding churchyard, are bushes of elder and lilac; the rest of the ground is occupied by a square grass-plot and a gravel walk. The house is of grey stone, two stories high, heavily roofed with flags, in order to resist the winds that might strip off a lighter covering. It appears to have been built about a hundred years ago, and to consist of four rooms on each story; the two windows on the right (as the visitor stands with his back to the church, ready to enter in at the front door) belonging to Mr. Brontë's study, the two on the left to the family sitting room. Everything about the place tells of the most dainty order, the most exquisite cleanliness. The door-steps are spotless, the small old-fashioned window-panes glitter like looking-glass. Inside and outside of that house cleanliness goes up into its essence, purity.—Mrs. Gaskell, *Life of Charlotte Brontë*, chap. 1.

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Between the fair boundaries of the counties of Hereford and Worcester rise in a long undulation the sloping pastures of the Malvern Hills. Consulting a big red book on the castles and manors of England, we found Lockley Park to be seated near the base of this grassy range,—though in which county I forget. In

the pages of this genial volume, Lockley Park and its appurtenances made a very handsome figure. We took up our abode at a certain little wayside inn, at which in the days of leisure the coach must have stopped for lunch, and burnished pewters of rustic ale been tenderly exalted to "outsides" athirst with breezy progression. Here we stopped, for sheer admiration of its steep thatched roof, its latticed windows, and its homely porch. We allowed a couple of days to elapse in vague, undirected strolls and sweet sentimental observance of the land, before we prepared to execute the especial purpose of our journey. This admirable region is a compendium of the general physiognomy of England. The noble friendliness of the scenery, its subtle old-friendliness, the magical familiarity of multitudinous details, appealed to us at every step and at every glance. Deep in our souls a natural affection answered. The whole land, in the full, warm rains of the last of April, had burst into sudden perfect spring. The dark walls of the hedgerows had turned into blooming screens; the sodden verdure of lawn and meadow was streaked with a ranker freshness. We went forth without loss of time for a long walk on the hills. Reaching their summits, you find half England at your feet. A dozen broad counties, within the vast range of your vision, commingle their green exhalations. Closely beneath us lay the dark, rich flats of hedgy Worcestershire and the copse-checked slopes of rolling Hereford, white with the blossom of apples. At widely opposite points of the large expanse two great cathedral towers rise sharply, taking the light, from the settled shadow of their circling towns,—the light, the ineffable English light! "Out of England," cried Searle, "it's but a garish world!"

The whole vast sweep of our surrounding prospect lay answering in a myriad fleeting shades the cloudy process of the tremendous sky. The English heaven is a fit antithesis to the complex English earth. We possess in America the infinite beauty of the blue; England possesses the splendor of combined and animated clouds. Over against us, from our station on the hills, we saw them piled and dissolved, compacted and shifted, blotting the azure with sudden rain spots, stretching, breeze-fretted, into dappled fields of gray, bursting into a storm of light or melting into a drizzle of silver. We made our way along the rounded summits of these well-grazed heights,—mild, breezy inland downs,—and descended through long-drawn slopes of fields, green to cottage doors, to where a rural village beckoned us from its seat among the meadows. Close beside it, I admit, the railway shoots fiercely from its tunnel in the hills; and yet there broods upon this charming hamlet an old-time quietude and privacy, which seems to make it a violation of confidence to tell its name so far away. We struck through a narrow lane, a green lane, dim with its height of hedges; it led us to a superb old farmhouse, now jostled by the multiplied lanes and roads which have curtailed its ancient appanage. It stands in stubborn picturesqueness, at the receipt of sad-eyed contemplation and the suffrance of “sketches.” I doubt whether out of Nuremburg—or Pompeii!—you may find so forcible an image of the domiciliary genius of the past. It is cruelly complete; its bended beams and joists, beneath the burden of its gables, seem to ache and groan with memories and regrets. The short, low windows, where lead and glass combine in equal proportions to hint to the wondering stranger of the mediæval gloom within, still prefer their darksome



office to the grace of modern day. Such an old house fills an American with an indefinable feeling of respect. So propped and patched and tinkered with clumsy tenderness, clustered so richly about its central English sturdiness, its oaken vertebrations, so humanized with ages of use and touches of beneficent affection, it seemed to offer to our grateful eyes a small, rude synthesis of the great English social order. Passing out upon the highroad we came to the common browsing-patch, the "village green" of the tales of our youth. Nothing was wanting; the shaggy, mouse-colored donkey, nosing the turf with his mild and huge proboscis, the geese, the old woman,—the old woman, in person, with her red cloak and her black bonnet, frilled about the face and double-frilled beside her decent, placid cheeks,—the towering ploughman with his white smock-frock, puckered on chest and back, his short corduroys, his mighty calves, his big, red, rural face. We greeted these things as children greet the loved pictures in a story-book, lost and mourned and found again. It was marvellous how well we knew them. Beside the road we saw a ploughboy straddle, whistling, on a stile. Gainsborough might have painted him. Beyond the stile, across the level velvet of a meadow, a footpath lay, like a thread of darker woof. We followed it from field to field and from stile to stile. It was the way to church. At the church we finally arrived, lost in its rock-haunted churchyard, hidden from the work-day world by the broad stillness of pastures,—a gray, gray tower, a huge black yew, a cluster of village graves, with crooked headstones, in grassy, low relief. The whole scene was deeply ecclesiastical. My companion was overcome.

“You must bury me here,” he cried. “It’s the first church I have seen in my life. How it makes a Sunday where it stands!”

The next day we saw a church of statelier proportions. We walked over to Worcester, through such a mist of local color that I felt like one of Smollet’s pedestrian heroes, faring tavernward for a night of adventures. As we neared the provincial city we saw the steepled mass of the cathedral, long and high, rise far into the cloud-freckled blue. And as we came nearer still, we stopped on the bridge and viewed the solid minster reflected in the yellow Severn. And going farther yet we entered the town,—where surely Miss Austin’s heroines, in chariots and curricles, must often have come shopping for swan’s-down boas and high lace mittens;—we lounged about the gentle close and gazed insatiably at that most soul-soothing sight, the waning, wasting afternoon light, the visible ether which feels the voices of the chimes, far aloft on the perpendicular field of the cathedral tower; saw it linger and nestle and abide, as it loves to do on all bold architectural spaces, converting them graciously into registers and witnesses of nature; tasted, too, as deeply of the peculiar stillness of this clerical precinct; saw a rosy English lad come forth and lock the door of the old foundation school, which marries its hoary basement to the soaring Gothic of the church, and carry his big responsible key into one of the quiet canonical houses; and then stood musing together on the effect on one’s mind of having in one’s boyhood haunted such cathedral shades as a King’s scholar, and yet kept ruddy with much cricket in misty meadows by the Severn. On the third morning we betook ourselves to Lockley Park, having learned that the greater

part of it was open to visitors, and that, indeed, on application; the house was occasionally shown.

Within the broad enclosure many a declining spur of the great hills melted into parklike slopes and dells. A long avenue wound and circled from the outermost gate through an untrimmed woodland, whence you glanced at further slopes and glades and copses and bosky recesses,—at everything except the limits of the place. It was as free and wild and untended as the villa of an Italian prince; and I have never seen the stern English fact of property put on such an air of innocence. The weather had just become perfect; it was one of the dozen exquisite days of the English year,—days stamped with a refinement of purity unknown in more liberal climes. It was as if the mellow brightness, as tender as that of the primroses which starred the dark waysides like petals wind-scattered over beds of moss, had been meted out to us by the cubic foot,—tempered, refined, recorded! From this external region we passed into the heart of the park, through a second lodge-gate, with weather-worn gilding on its twisted bars, to the smooth slopes where the great trees stood singly and the tame deer browsed along the bed of a woodland stream. Hence, before us, we perceived the dark Elizabethan manor among its blooming parterres and terraces.

“Here you can wander all day,” I said to Searle, “like a proscribed and exiled prince, hovering about the dominion of the usurper.” (This Mr. Searle has a slight hereditary claim to this English estate.)

“To think,” he answered, “of people having enjoyed this all these years! I know what I am,—what might I have been? What does all this make of you?”

“That it makes you happy,” I said, “I should hesi-

tate to believe. But it's hard to suppose that such a place has not some beneficent action of its own."

"What a perfect scene and background it forms!" Searle went on. "What legends, what histories it knows! My heart is breaking with unutterable visions. There's Tennyson's Talking Oak. What summer days one could spend here! How I could lounge my bit of life away on this shady stretch of turf! Haven't I some maiden-cousin in yon moated grange who would give me kind leave?" And then turning almost fiercely upon me: "Why did you bring me here? Why did you drag me into this torment of vain regrets?"—Henry James, *A Passionate Pilgrim*.

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Mr. Henry laid down his cards. He rose to his feet very softly, and seemed all the while like a person in deep thought. "You coward!" he said gently, as if to himself. And then, with neither hurry nor any particular violence, he struck the master in the mouth.

The master sprung to his feet like one transfigured. I had never seen the man so beautiful. "A blow!" he cried. "I would not take a blow from God Almighty."

"Lower your voice," said Mr. Henry. "Do you wish my father to interfere for you again?"

"Gentlemen, gentlemen," I cried, and sought to come between them.

The master caught me by the shoulder, held me at arm's length, and still addressing his brother: "Do you know what this means?" said he.

"It was the most deliberate act of my life," says Mr. Henry.

"I must have blood, I must have blood for this," says the master.



"Please God it shall be yours," said Mr. Henry; and he went to the wall and took down a pair of swords that hung there with others, naked. These he presented to the master by the points. "Mackellar shall see us play fair," said Mr. Henry. "I think it very needful."

"You need insult me no more," said the master, taking one of the swords at random. "I have hated you all my life."

"My father has but newly gone to bed," said Mr. Henry. "We must go somewhere forth of the house."

"There is an excellent place in the long shrubbery," said the master.

"Gentlemen," said I, "shame upon you both! Sons of the same mother, would you turn against the life she gave you?"

"Even so, Mackellar," said Mr. Henry with the same perfect quietude of manner he had shown throughout.

"It is what I will prevent," said I.

And now here is a blot upon my life. At these words of mine the master turned his blade against my bosom; I saw the light run along the steel; and I threw up my arms and fell to my knees before him on the floor. "No, no," I cried, like a baby.

"We shall have no more trouble with him," said the master. "It is a good thing to have a coward in the house."

"We must have light," said Mr. Henry, as though there had been no interruption. "This trembler can bring a pair of candles," said the master.

To my shame be it said, I was so blinded with the flashing of that bare sword that I volunteered to bring a lantern.

"We do not need a lantern," said the master, mocking me. "There is no breath of air. Come, get

to your feet, take a pair of lights, and go before. I am close behind with this—" making the blade glitter as he spoke.

I took up the candlesticks and went before them, steps that I would give my hand to recall; but a coward is a slave at the best; and even as I went, my teeth smote each other in my mouth. It was as he had said, there was no breath stirring; a windless stricture of frost had bound the air; and as we went forth in the shine of the candles the blackness was like a roof over our heads. Never a word was said, there was never a sound but the creaking of our steps along the frozen path. The cold of the night fell about me like a bucket of water; I shook as I went with more than terror; but my companions, bareheaded like myself, and fresh from the warm hall, appeared not even conscious of the change.

"Here is the place," said the master. "Set down the candles."

I did as he bade me, and presently the flames went up as steady as in a chamber in the midst of the frosted trees, and I beheld these two brothers take their places.

"The light is something in my eyes," said the master.

"I will give you every advantage," replied Mr. Henry, shifting his ground, "for I think you are about to die." He spoke rather sadly than otherwise, yet there was a ring in his voice.

"Henry Durie," said the master, "two words before I begin. You are a fencer, you can hold a foil; you little know what a change it makes to hold a sword! And by that I know you are to fall. But see how strong is my situation! If you fall, I shift out of this

country to where my money is before me. If I fall, where are you? My father, your wife who is in love with me—as you very well know—your child even who prefers me to yourself: how will these avenge me! Had you thought of that, dear Henry?" He looked at his brother with a smile; then made a fencing-room salute.

Never a word said Mr. Henry, but saluted too, and the swords rang together.

I am no judge of the play, but my head besides was gone with cold and fear and horror; but it seems that Mr. Henry took and kept the upper hand from the engagement, crowding in upon his foe with a contained and glowing fury. Nearer and nearer he crept upon the man till, of a sudden, the master leaped back with a little sobbing oath; and I believe the movement brought the light once more against his eyes. To it they went again, on the fresh ground; but now methought closer, Mr. Henry pressing more outrageously, the master beyond doubt with shaken confidence. For it is beyond doubt he now recognized himself for lost, and had some taste of the cold agony of fear; or he had never attempted the foul stroke. I cannot say I followed it, my untrained eye was never quick enough to seize details, but it appears he caught his brother's blade with his left hand, a practice not permitted. Certainly Mr. Henry only saved himself by leaping on one side; as certainly the master, lunging in the air, stumbled on his knee, and before he could move the sword was through his body.

I cried out with a stifled scream, and ran in; but the body was already fallen to the ground, where it writhed a moment like a trodden worm, and then lay motionless.—Stevenson, *The Master of Ballantrae*.

[Thackeray.] I believe you have never seen Thackeray. He has the appearance of a colossal infant, smooth, white shiny, ringlet hair, flaxen, alas with advancing years, a roundish face with a little dab of a nose upon which it is a perfect wonder how he keeps his spectacles, a sweet but rather piping voice with something of a childish treble about it, and a very tall, slightly stooping figure—such are the characteristics of the “great snob” of England.—Motley, *Letters*, Vol. 1.

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[De Quincey.] I had formed to myself the idea of a tall, thin, pale, gentlemanly-looking, courtier-like man; but I met a short, sallow-looking person, of a peculiar cast of countenance, and apparently much an invalid. His demeanor was very gentle, modest, and unassuming; and his conversation fully came up to the ideal I had formed of what would be that of the writer of those articles. He seemed well acquainted with many of the literary men of the present day.—Hogg, *De Quincey and His Friends*.

His appearance has often been described, but generally, I think, with a touch of caricature. He was a very little man (about 5 feet, 3 or 4 inches); his countenance the most remarkable for its intellectual attractiveness that I have ever seen. His features, though not regular, were aristocratically fine, and an air of delicate breeding pervaded the face. His forehead was unusually high, square and compact. At first sight his face appeared boyishly fresh and smooth, with a sort of hectic glow upon it that contrasted remarkably with the evident appearances of age in the grizzled hair and dim-looking eyes. The flush or bloom on the cheeks was, I have no doubt, an effect



of his constant use of opium; and the apparent smoothness of the face disappeared upon examination. Mr. De Quincey's eyes were dark in colour, the iris large, but with a strange flatness and dimness of aspect, which, however, did not indicate any deficiency of sight: it was often difficult to catch his eyes from the hazy expression diffused over them. They had the dreamy look often observable in students or in short-sighted people.—Hogg, *De Quincey and His Friends*.

No one who ever met De Quincey could fail to be struck, after even the briefest intercourse, with the extreme sweetness and courtesy of his manners. He had the air of old-fashioned good manners of the highest kind; natural and studied politeness, free from the slightest ostentation or parade; a delicacy, gentleness, and elegance of demeanor that at once conciliated and charmed. . . . In any attempt to transcribe or rather describe his conversation, the chief difficulty would be to fix—perhaps to account for—a certain evanescent charm which every one felt, but which can only be remembered, not transmitted. It was in fact an exquisite and transient emanation from the intellectual and moral nature of the man, enhanced in its effect by the rare beauty of his language, and the perfectly elegant construction of every phrase and sentence he uttered.—Hogg, ditto.

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[Coleridge.] The good man, he was now getting old, towards sixty, perhaps; and gave you the idea of a life that had been full of sufferings; a life heavy-laden, half-vanquished, still swimming painfully in seas of manifold physical and other bewilderment. Brow and head were round, and of massive weight, but the face

was flabby and irresolute. The deep eyes, of a light hazel, were as full of sorrow as of inspiration; confused pain looked mildly from them, as in a kind of mild astonishment. The whole figure and air, good and amiable otherwise, might be called flabby and irresolute; expressive of weakness under possibility of strength. He hung loosely on his limbs, with knees bent, and stooping attitude; in walking, he rather shuffled than decisively stepped; and a lady once remarked, he never could fix which side of the garden walk would suit him best, but continually shifted, in cork-screw fashion, and kept trying both. A heavy-laden, high-aspiring and surely much-suffering man. His voice, naturally soft and good, had contracted itself into a plaintive snuffle and singsong; he spoke as if preaching,—you would have said, preaching earnestly and also hopelessly the weightiest things. I still recollect his “object” and “subject,” terms of continual recurrence in the Kantean province; and how he sung and snuffled them into “om-m-m-jeet” and “sum-m-m-ject,” with a kind of solemn shake or quaver, as he rolled along. No talk, in this century or in any other, could be more surprising. . . .

Nothing could be more copious than his talk; and furthermore it was always, virtually or literally, of the nature of a monologue; suffering no interruption, however reverent; hastily putting aside all foreign additions, annotations, or most ingenuous desires for elucidation, as well-meant superfluities which would never do. Besides, it was talk not flowing anywhither like a river, but spreading everywhither in inextricable currents and regurgitations like a lake or sea; terribly deficient in definite goal or aim, nay, often in logical intelligibility; *what* you were to believe or do, on any

earthly or heavenly thing, obstinately refusing to appear from it. So that, most times, you felt logically lost; swamped near to drowning in this tide of ingenious vocables, spreading out boundless as if to submerge the world.

To sit as a passive bucket and be pumped into, whether you consent or not, can in the long-run be exhilarating to no creature; how eloquent soever the flood of utterance that is descending. But if it be withal a confused, unintelligible flood of utterance, threatening to submerge all known landmarks of thought, and drown the world and you! I have heard Coleridge talk, with eager musical energy, two stricken hours, his face radiant and moist, and communicate no meaning whatsoever to any individual of his hearers,—certain of whom, I for one, still kept eagerly listening in hope; the most had long before given up, and formed (if the room were large enough) secondary humming groups of their own. He began anywhere: you put some question to him, made some suggestive observation: instead of answering this, or decidedly setting out toward answer of it, he would accumulate formidable apparatus, logical swim-bladders, transcendental life-preservers and other precautionary and vehicular gear, for setting out; perhaps did at last get under way,—but was swiftly solicited, turned aside by a glance of some radiant new game on this hand or that, into new courses; and ever into new; and before long into all the Universe, where it was uncertain what game you would catch, or whether any.

His talk, also, was distinguished, like himself, by irresolution: it disliked to be troubled with conditions, abstinences, definite fulfilments;—loved to wander at its own sweet will, and make its auditor and his claims

and humble wishes a mere passive bucket for itself! He had knowledge about many things and topics, much curious reading; but generally all topics led him, after a pass or two, into the high seas of theosophic philosophy, the hazy infinitude of Kantian transcendentalism, with its "sum-m-m-m-jects" and "om-m-m-jects." Sad enough; for with such indolent impatience of the claims and ignorance of others, he had not the least talent for explaining this or anything unknown to them; and you swam and fluttered in the mistiest wide unintelligible deluge of things, for most part in a rather profitless, uncomfortable manner.

Glorious islets, too, I have seen rise out of the haze; but they were few, and soon swallowed in the general element again. Balmy sunny islets, islets of the blest and the intelligible:—on which occasions those secondary humming groups would all cease humming, and hang breathless upon the eloquent words; till once your islet got wrapt in the mist again, and they would recommence humming. Eloquent artistically expressive words you always had; piercing radiances of a most subtle insight came at intervals; tones of noble pious sympathy, recognizable as pious though strangely coloured, were never wanting long; but in general you could not call this aimless, cloudcapped, cloudbased, lawlessly meandering human discourse of reason by the name of "excellent talk," but only of "surprising;" and were reminded bitterly of Hazlitt's account of it: "Excellent talker, very,—if you let him start from no premises and come to no conclusion." Coleridge was not without what talkers call wit, and there were touches of prickly sarcasm in him, contemptuous enough of the world and its idols and popular dignitaries; he had traits even of poetic humour: but in



general he seemed deficient in laughter; or indeed, in sympathy for concrete human things either on the sunny or on the stormy side. One right peal of concrete laughter at some convicted flesh-and-blood absurdity, one burst of noble indignation at some injustice or depravity, rubbing elbows with us on this solid Earth, how strange would it have been in that Kantian haze-world, and how infinitely cheering amid its vacant air-castles and dim-melting ghosts of defunct bodies and of unborn ones. The moaning singsong of that theosophico-metaphysical monotony left on you, at last, a very dreary feeling.—Carlyle, *Life of John Sterling*, Ch. VIII.

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Along the road walked an old man. He was white-headed as a mountain, bowed in his shoulders, and faded in general aspect. He wore a glazed hat, an ancient boat-cloak, and shoes; his brass buttons bearing an anchor upon their face. In his hand was a silver-headed walking-stick, which he used as a veritable third leg, perseveringly dotting the ground with its point at every few inches interval. One would have said that he had been, in his day, a naval officer of some sort or other.

Before him stretched the long, laborious road, dry, empty, and white. It was quite open to the heath on each side, and bisected that vast dark surface like the parting-line on a head of black hair, diminishing and bending away on the furthest horizon.—Hardy, *Return of the Native*.

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Mrs. Emerson, (whose quaint, sweet face, and simple, old-fashioned attire suggested to one lady that "she might have just stepped off the Mayflower,")

bustled around, shaking hands and arranging chairs for the guests.—R. W. Emerson, *Ireland*.

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[Emerson.] To sum up briefly what would, as it seems to me, be the text to be unfolded in his biography, he was a man of excellent common sense, with a genius so uncommon that he seemed like an exotic transplanted from some angelic nursery. His character was so blameless, so beautiful, that it was rather a standard to judge others by than to find a place for on the scale of comparison. Looking at life with the profoundest sense of its infinite significance, he was yet a cheerful optimist, almost too hopeful, peeping into every cradle to see if it did not hold a babe with the halo of a new Messiah about it.—Holmes, quoted by Alex. Ireland in his sketch of Emerson.

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[Dickens.] Let me speak today of the younger Dickens. How well I recall the bleak winter evening in 1842 when I first saw the handsome, glowing face of the young man who was even then famous over half the globe! He came bounding into the Tremont House, fresh from the steamer that had brought him to our shores, and his cheery voice rang through the hall, as he gave a quick glance at the new scenes opening upon him in a strange land on first arriving at a Transatlantic hotel. "Here we are!" he shouted, as the lights burst upon the merry party just entering the house, and several gentlemen came forward to greet him. Oh, how happy and buoyant he was then! Young, handsome, almost worshipped for his genius, belted round by such troops of friends as rarely ever man had, coming to a new country to make new conquests of fame and honor,—surely it was a sight long to be remembered and never entirely to be forgotten. . . . You ask me what was

his appearance as he ran, or rather flew, up the steps of the hotel, and sprang into the hall. He seemed all on fire with curiosity, and alive as I never saw mortal before. From top to toe every fibre of his body was unrestrained and alert. What vigor, what keenness, what freshness of spirit, possessed him! He laughed all over and did not care who heard him! He seemed like the Emperor of Cheerfulness on a cruise of pleasure, determined to conquer a realm or two of fun every hour of his overflowing existence.—J. T. Fields, *Yesterdays with Authors*.

[Dickens.] Very different was his face in those days from that which photography has made familiar to the present generation. A look of youthfulness first attracted you, and then a candor and openness of expression which made you sure of the qualities within. The features were very good. He had a capital forehead, a firm nose with full wide nostril, eyes wonderfully beaming with intellect and running over with humor and cheerfulness, and a rather prominent mouth strongly marked with sensibility. The head was altogether well formed and symmetrical, and the air and carriage of it were extremely spirited. The hair so scant and grizzled in later days was then of a rich brown and most luxuriant abundance, and the bearded face of his last two decades had hardly a vestige of hair or whisker; but there was that in the face as I first recollect it which no time could change, and which remained implanted on it unalterably to the last. This was the quickness, keenness, and practical power, the eager, restless, energetic outlook on each several feature, that seemed to tell so little of a student or writer of books, and so much of a man of action and business in the world.

Light and motion flashed from every part of it. *It was as if made of steel*, was said of it.—Forster, *Life of Dickens*, vol. 1.

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[Sterling.] It was on this his February expedition to London that I first saw Sterling. . . . A loose, careless-looking, thin figure, in careless dim costume, sat in a lounging posture, carelessly and copiously talking. I was struck with the kindly but restless swift-glancing eyes, which looked as if the spirits were all out coursing like a pack of merry eager beagles, beating every bush. The brow, rather sloping in form, was not of imposing character, though again the head was longish, which is always the best sign of intellect; the physiognomy in general indicated animation rather than strength.—Carlyle, *Life of Sterling*.

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Dr. Johnson was announced. He is, indeed, very ill-favored; is tall and stout; but stoops terribly; he is almost bent double. His mouth is almost [constantly opening and shutting], as if he were chewing. He has a strange method of frequently twirling his fingers, and twisting his hands. His body is in continual agitation, *see-sawing* up and down; his feet are never a moment quiet; and, in short, his whole person is in *perpetual motion*. His dress, too, considering the times, and that he had meant to put on his *best-becomes*, being engaged to dine in a large company, was as much out of the common road as his figure; he had a large wig, snuff-coloured coat, and gold buttons, but no ruffles to his shirt, [doughty fists, and black worsted stockings]. He is shockingly near-sighted, and did not, till she held out her hand to him, even know Mrs. Thrale. He *poked his nose* over the keys of the harpsichord, till the duet



was finished, and then my father introduced Hetty to him. . . . His attention, however, was not to be diverted five minutes from the books, as we were in the library; he pored over them, [shelf by shelf], almost touching the backs of them with his eye-lashes, as he read their titles. At last, having fixed upon one, he began, without further ceremony, to read [to himself], all the time standing at a distance from the company. We were [all] very much provoked, as we perfectly languished to hear him talk; but it seems he is the most silent creature, when not particularly drawn out, in the world.—*Early Diary of Frances Burney*, vol. II.

Johnson grown old, Johnson in the fulness of his fame and in the enjoyment of a competent fortune, is better known to us than any other man in history. Everything about him, his coat, his wig, his figure, his face, his serofula, his St. Vitus's dance, his rolling walk, his blinking eye, the outward signs which too clearly marked his approbation of his dinner, his insatiable appetite for fish-sauce and veal-pie with plums, his inextinguishable thirst for tea, his trick of touching the posts as he walked, his mysterious practice of treasuring up scraps of orange-peel; his morning slumbers, his midnight disputations, his contortions, his mutterings, his gruntings, his puffings, his vigorous, acute, and ready eloquence, his sarcastic wit, his vehemence, his insolence, his fits of tempestuous rage, his queer intimates, old Mr. Levett and blind Mrs. Williams, the cat Hodge and the negro Frank, are all as familiar to us as the objects by which we have been surrounded from childhood. But we have no minute information respecting those years of Johnson's life during which his character and his manners became immutably fixed. We know him not as he was

known to the men of his own generation, but as he was known to men whose father he might have been. That celebrated club of which he was the most distinguished member contained few persons who could remember a time when his fame was not fully established and his habits completely formed. He had made himself a name in literature while Reynolds and the Wartons were still boys. He was about twenty years older than Burke, Goldsmith, and Gerard Hamilton, about thirty years older than Gibbon, Beauclerk, and Langton, about forty years older than Lord Stowell, Sir William Jones, and Windham. Boswell and Mrs. Thrale, the two writers from whom we derive most of our knowledge respecting him, never saw him till long after he was fifty years old, till most of his great works had become classical, and till the pension bestowed on him by the Crown had placed him above poverty. Of those eminent men who were his most intimate associates towards the close of his life, the only one, as far as we remember, who knew him during the first ten or twelve years of his residence at the capital, was David Garrick; and it does not appear that during those years, David Garrick saw much of his fellow-townsmen.—Macaulay, *Samuel Johnson*.

[There is other interesting descriptive material in this essay.]

Boswell, we are told, had a strong Scotch accent, though by no means strong enough to make him unintelligible to an English ear. He had an odd mock solemnity of tone and manner that he had acquired unconsciously from constantly talking of, and imitating Johnson. There was also something slouching in the gait and dress of Mr. Boswell that ridiculously caricatured the same model. His clothes were always too large for him; his hair, or wig, was constantly in a

state of negligence; and he never for a moment sat still or upright in his chair. Every look and movement betrayed either intentional or involuntary imitation.—Seeley, *Fanny Burney and her Friends*.

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[Irving.] A crayon drawing of Irving by the hand of Vanderlyn, made in 1805, enables us to learn what manner of man he was at this time. The portrait represents him with a long and somewhat angular chin, a finely cut mouth, a long aquiline nose, a bright full eye, delicately pencilled eyebrows, a high, full forehead, somewhat concealed by the falling hair, which was short and slightly curling, and light side-whiskers. His passports show that his height was five feet seven inches, his hair chestnut, and his eyes blue. Altogether he was an attractive, if not a handsome young man; and his travels had imparted an ease and grace to his manners that gave an impression of courtly breeding.—D. J. Hill, *Life of Washington Irving*.

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The penmanship completely surpassed my highest expectations. It was a revelation. . . . That a human creature could create such illuminations with simple pen and ink was marvelous. It was the gentleman of the old-school style of penmanship carried to excess. The upstrokes were amazingly fine, and the down strokes as amazingly heavy; the capitals were dreams of flourishes, flourishes that went round and round, like pinwheels, and intertwined and encircled each other: in some places they were as thin as a hair, and in some places as broad as the eighth of an inch. They mixed up with small letters and lost themselves among them, and reappeared further on down the line. "It was made with the whole-arm movement," explained

Murphy, and I believe him. In a mental picture now I can see that talented and accomplished man push back his cuff, and sway his whole arm from the shoulder, around and around, preparing to begin.—Robert C. Holliday, *A Conspiracy*.

[The description above was written by a man who is not of the visual type of imagination, so he himself has told me. He does not see things in imagination as pictures, and yet he knows how they look. He is largely of the motor type. The description should be studied with these facts in mind.]

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The whole scene impressed itself sharply upon Page's mind—the fine sunlit room, with its gay open spaces and the glimpse of green leaves from the conservatory, the view of the smooth, trim lawn through the many windows, where an early robin, strayed from the park, was chirruping and feeding; her beautiful sister Laura, with her splendid overshadowing coiffure, her pale, clear skin, her slender figure; Jadwin, the large solid man of affairs, with his fine cigar, his gardenia, his well-groomed air. And then the little accessories that meant so much—the smell of violets, of good tobacco, of fragrant coffee; the gleaming damasks, china and silver of the breakfast table; the trim, fresh-looking maid, with her white cap, apron, and cuffs, who came and went; the thoroughbred setter dozing in the sun, and the parrot dozing and chuckling to himself on his perch upon the terrace outside the window.—Norris, *The Pit*, Chapter VI.

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Nine years old, on 3rd January, 1858, thus now rising towards ten; neither tall nor short for her age; a little stiff in her way of standing. Her eyes rather



deep blue at that time, and fuller and softer afterwards. Lips perfectly lovely in profile;—a little too wide and hard in the edge, seen in front; the rest of the features what a fair, well-bred Irish girl's usually are; the hair, perhaps, more graceful in short curl round the forehead, and softer than one sees often, in the close-bound tresses above the neck.—Ruskin, *Præterita*, III. Quoted in Baldwin's *Specimens of Prose Description*, p. xvii.

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“A slight figure,” said Mr. Peggotty, looking at the fire, “kiender worn; soft, sorrowful, blue eyes; a delicate face, a pritty head, leaning a little down; a quiet voice and way—timid a'most. That's Em'ly. . . . Cheerful along with me; retired when others is by; fond of going any distance fur to teach a child, or fur to tend a sick person, or fur to do some kindness tow'rds a young girl's wedding (and she's done a many, but has never seen one); fondly loving of her uncle; patient; liked by young and old; sowt out by all that has any trouble. That's Em'ly!”—Dickens, *David Copperfield*, Ch. LXIII. Quoted in A. S. Hill's *Principles of Rhetoric*, p. 263.

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[Egdon Heath.] A Saturday afternoon in November was approaching the time of twilight, and the vast tract of unenclosed wild known as Egdon Heath embrowned itself moment by moment. Overhead the hollow stretch of whitest cloud shutting out the sky was a tent which had the whole heath as its floor.

The heaven being spread with this pallid screen and the earth with the darkest vegetation, their meeting-line at the horizon was clearly marked. In such contrast the heath wore the appearance of an installment

of night which had taken up its place before its astronomical hour was come: darkness had to a great extent arrived hereon, while day stood distant in the sky. Looking upwards a furze-cutter would have been inclined to continue work; looking down, he would have decided to finish his faggot and go home. The distant rims of the world and of the firmament seemed to be a division in time no less than a division in matter. The face of the heath by its mere complexion added half an hour to evening; it could in like manner retard the dawn, sadden noon, anticipate the frowning of storms scarcely generated, and intensify the opacity of a moonless night to a cause of shaking and dread.—Hardy, *Return of the Native*.

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The pageant on the day of the burial was indescribable. The cessation of business, the dense blackness of the festoons of drapery, the stillness and awe of the spectators, the multitudes so immense that they became impersonal and conveyed only the idea of numbers, mass, and volume, like the leaves of a forest or the sands of the sea; the lofty hearse with its twelve led horses completely caparisoned in black, with silver fringes sweeping the ground; the dirges of bands and bells, all contributed to a spectacle that can neither be described nor forgotten.—J. J. Ingalls, *Garfield*.

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Deep in the shady sadness of a vale  
 Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn,  
 Far from the fiery noon, and eve's one star,  
 Sat gray-haired Saturn, quiet as a stone,  
 Still as the silence round about his lair;  
 Forest on forest hung about his head  
 Like cloud on cloud. No stir of air was there,  
 Not so much life as on a summer's day

Robs not one light seed from the feather'd grass,  
 But where the dead leaf fell, there did it rest.  
 A stream went voiceless by, still deadened more  
 By reason of its fallen divinity  
 Spreading a shade: the Naiad 'mid her reeds  
 Press'd her cold finger closer to her lips.  
 Along the margin-sand large foot-marks went,  
 No further than to where his feet had stray'd,  
 And slept there since. Upon the sodden ground  
 His old right hand lay nerveless, listless, dead,  
 Unsceptred; and his realmless eyes were closed;  
 While his bow'd head seem'd list'ning to the Earth,  
 His ancient mother, for some comfort yet.

—Keats, *Hyperion*.

[Study the above description intensively with the object of determining the effect produced and the means used. What suggests remoteness? lifelessness? intense quiet? What makes the description sound dreamy? Any motion in it? Any contrast? Any comparisons? Cf. *Faerie Quene*, Bk. 1, Can. 1: 39-43, House of Morpheus. Also see Thompson's *Castle of Indolence*, Bk. 1.]

St. Agnes Eve—Ah, bitter cold it was!  
 The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;  
 The hare limp'd trembling through the frozen grass,  
 And silent was the flock in woolly fold:  
 Numb were the beadsman's fingers, while he told  
 His rosary, and while his frosted breath,  
 Like pious incense from a censor old,  
 Seem'd taking flight for heaven, without a death,  
 Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his prayer he  
 saith.

His prayer he saith. this patient, holy man;  
 Then takes his lamp, and riseth from his knees,  
 And back returneth, meagre, barefoot, wan,  
 Along the chapel isle by slow degrees:  
 The sculptur'd dead, on each side, seem to freeze,

Emprison'd in black, purgatorial rails:  
 Knights, ladies, praying in dumb orat'ries,  
 He passeth by; and his weak spirit fails  
 To think how they may ache in icy hoods and mails.

Northward he turneth through a little door,  
 And scarce three steps, ere Music's golden tongue  
 Flatter'd to tears this agèd man and poor;  
 But no—already had his deathbell rung;  
 The joys of all his life were said and sung:  
 His was harsh penance on St. Agnes' Eve:  
 Another way he went, and soon among  
 Rough ashes sat he for his soul's reprieve,  
 And all night kept awake, for sinners' sake to grieve.

That ancient Beadsman heard the prelude soft;  
 And so it chanc'd, for many a door was wide,  
 From hurry to and fro. Soon, up aloft,  
 The silver snarling trumpets 'gan to chide:  
 The level chambers, ready with their pride,  
 Were glowing to receive a thousand guests:  
 The carved angels, ever eager-ey'd,  
 Star'd, where upon their heads the cornice rests,  
 With hair blown back, and wings put cross-wise on  
 their breasts.

At length burst in the argent revelry,  
 With plume, tiara, and all rich array.  
 Numerous as shadows haunting faerily  
 The brain, new stuff'd, in youth, with triumphs gay  
 Of old romance. . . . .

—Keats, *Eve of St. Agnes*.

And see where surly winter passes off,  
 Far to the north, and calls his ruffian blasts:  
 His blasts obey, and quit the howling hill,  
 The shatter'd forest, and the ravaged vale;  
 While softer gales succeed, at whose kind touch,  
 Dissolving snows in living torrents lost,  
 The mountains lift their green heads to the sky.  
 As yet the trembling year is unconfirm'd,



And Winter oft at eve resumes the breeze,  
 Chills the pale morn, and bids his driving sleets  
 Deform the day delightless; so that scarce  
 The bittern knows his time, with bill engulf'd  
 To shake the sounding marsh; or from the shore  
 The plovers when to scatter o'er the heath,  
 And sing their wild notes to the listening waste.  
 At last from Aries rolls the bounteous Sun,  
 And the bright Bull receives him. Then no more  
 Th' expansive atmosphere is cramp'd with cold;  
 But, full of life and vivifying soul,  
 Lifts the light clouds sublime, and spreads them thin,  
 Fleecy and white, o'er all-surrounding heaven.  
 Forth fly the tepid airs; and unconfin'd,  
 Unbinding earth, the moving softness strays.  
 Joyous, the impatient husbandman perceives  
 Relenting Nature, and his lusty steers  
 Drives from their stalls, to where the well-used plough  
 Lies in the furrow, loosen'd from the frost.  
 There, unrefusing, to the harness'd yoke  
 They lend their shoulder, and begin their toil,  
 Cheer'd by the simple song and soaring lark.  
 Meanwhile incumbent o'er the shining share  
 The master leans, removes th' obstructing clay,  
 Winds the whole work, and sidelong lays the glebe.  
 While thro' the neighb'ring fields the sower stalks,  
 With measured step; and liberal throws the grain  
 Into the faithful bosom of the ground:  
 The harrow follows harsh, and shuts the scene.

—Thompson, *The Seasons*, *Spring*.

[In the above description particularly notice the use of adjectives. Does Thompson seem to have any mannerisms in their use? Their number? Do they fall into types according to ending or part of speech? Their appropriateness? Their effect upon the reader? The imagery, is it harmonious? What are the chief beauties of the description?]

And now arriving at the isle, he springs  
 Oblique, and landing with subsided wings,  
 Walks to the cavern 'mid the tall green rocks,  
 Where dwelt the goddess with the lovely locks.  
 He paused: and there came on him as he stood,  
 A smell of cedar and of citron wood,  
 That threw a perfume all about the isle;  
 And she within sat spinning all the while,  
 And sang a low sweet song that made him hark and  
 smile.

A sylvan nook it was, grown round with trees,  
 Poplars, and elms, and odorous cypresses,  
 In which all birds of ample wing, the owl  
 And hawk, had nests, and broad-tongued waterfowl.  
 The cave in front was spread with a green vine,  
 Whose dark round bunches almost burst with wine;  
 And from four springs, running a sprightly race,  
 Four fountains clear and crisp refreshed the place;  
 While all about a meadowy ground was seen,  
 Of violets mingling with the parsley green.

—Leigh Hunt's translation.

[Compare this description, with the one following, and also with the prose translation on page 238. These are three different versions of Homer's description of Calypso's grotto. *Odyssey*, Book V. Note differences of effect due to differences of method and form.]

Then, swift ascending from the azure wave,  
 He took the path that winded to the cave.  
 Large was the grot, in which the nymph he found  
 (The fair-hair'd nymph with every beauty crown'd).  
 She sate and sung; the rocks resound her lays,  
 The cave was brighten'd with a rising blaze;  
 Cedar and frankincense, an odorous pile,  
 Flamed on the hearth, and wide perfumed the isle;  
 While she with work and song the time divides,  
 And through the loom the golden shuttle guides.  
 Without the grot a various sylvan scene  
 Appear'd around, and groves of living green;  
 Poplars and alders ever quivering play'd,

And nodding cypress form'd a fragrant shade;  
On whose high branches, waving with the storm,  
The birds of broadest wing their mansions form,—  
The chough, the sea-mew, the loquacious crow,—  
And scream aloft, and skim the deeps below.  
Depending vines the shelving cavern screen,  
With purple clusters blushing through the green.  
Four limpid fountains from the clefts distil;  
And every fountain pours a several rill,  
In mazy windings wandering down the hill;  
Where bloomy meads with vivid greens were crown'd,  
And glowing violets threw odours round.  
A scene, where, if a god should cast his sight,  
A god might gaze, and wander with delight!  
Joy touch'd the messenger of heaven: he stay'd  
Entranced, and all the blissful haunts survey'd.

—Pope's translation.

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[Countess Guiccioli.] The countess is twenty-three years of age, though she appears no more than seventeer or eighteen. Unlike most of the Italian women, her complexion is delicately fair. Her eyes, large, dark, and languishing, are shaded by the longest eye-lashes in the world; and her hair, which is ungathered on her head, plays over her shoulders falling in a profusion of natural ringlets of the darkest auburn. Her figure, is, perhaps, too much embonpoint for her height; but her bust is perfect. Her features want little of possessing a Grecian regularity of outline; and she has the most beautiful mouth and teeth imaginable. It is impossible to see without admiring—to hear the Guiccioli speak without being fascinated. Her amiability and gentleness show themselves in every intonation of her voice, which, and the music of her perfect Italian, give a peculiar charm to everything she utters. Grace and elegance seem component parts of her nature. Notwithstanding that she adores Lord Byron, it is evident that the exile and pov-

erty of her aged father sometimes affect her spirits, and throw a shade of melancholy on her countenance, which adds to the deep interest this lovely woman creates. Her conversation is lively, without being learned; she has read all the best authors of her own and the French language. She often conceals what she knows, from the fear of being thought to know too much.—Sir Hen. Bulwer, *Life of George Gordon, Lord Byron*. (Illustrated Byron.)

Out went the taper as she hurried in;  
 Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine, died:  
 She clos'd the door, she panted, all akin  
 To spirits of the air, and visions wide:  
 No uttered syllable, or, woe betide!  
 But to her heart, her heart was voluble,  
 Paining with eloquence her balmy side;  
 As though a tongueless nightingale should swell  
 Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled, in her dell.

A casement high and triple-arch'd there was,  
 All garlanded with carven imag'ries  
 Of fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,  
 And diamonded with panes of quaint device,  
 Innumerable of stains and splendid dyes,  
 As are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings;  
 And in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,  
 And twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,  
 A shielded scutcheon blush'd with the blood of queens  
 and kings.

Full on this casement shone the wintry moon,  
 And threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,  
 As down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon;  
 Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest,  
 And on her silver cross soft amethyst,  
 And on her hair a glory like a saint:  
 She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,  
 Save wings, for heaven:—Porphyro grew faint:  
 She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint.  
 —Keats, *Eve of St. Agnes*.



See what a lovely shell,  
Small and pure as a pearl,  
Lying close to my foot,  
Frail, but a work divine,  
Made so fairly well,  
With delicate spire and whorl,  
How exquisitely minute,  
A miracle of design!

—Tennyson, *Maud*.

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She [Clemency] was about thirty years old; and had a sufficiently plump and cheerful face, though it was twisted up into an odd expression of tightness that made it comical. But the extraordinary homeliness of her gait and manner would have superseded any face in the world. To say that she had two left legs, and somebody else's arms; and that all four limbs seemed out of joint, and to start from perfectly wrong places when they were set in motion, is to offer the mildest outline of the reality. To say that she was perfectly content and satisfied with these arrangements, and regarded them as being no business of hers and took her legs and arms just as they came, and allowed them to dispose of themselves just as it happened, is to render faint justice to her equanimity. Her dress was a prodigious pair of self-willed shoes, that never wanted to go where her feet went; blue stockings; a printed gown of many colors, and the most hideous pattern procurable for money; and a white apron. She always wore short sleeves, and always had, by some accident, grazed elbows, in which she took so lively an interest that she was continually trying to turn them round and get impossible views of them. In general, a little cap perched somewhere on her head; though it was rarely to be met with in the place usually occupied in other subjects, by that article of dress, but

from head to foot she was scrupulously clean, and maintained a kind of dislocated tidiness.—Dickens, *Battle of Life*.

She [Clemency] raised her head as with a sudden attention to the circumstances under which she was recalling these events, and looked quickly at the stranger, [Michael Warden.] Seeing that his face was turned toward the window, and that he seemed intent upon the prospect, she made eager signs to her husband, and pointed to the bill [poster], and moved her mouth as if she were repeating with great energy, one word or phrase to him over and over again. As she uttered no sound, and as her dumb motions like most of her gestures were of a very extraordinary kind, this unintelligible conduct reduced Mr. Britain [her husband] to the confines of despair. He stared at the table, at the stranger, at the spoons, at his wife—followed her pantomime with looks of amazement and perplexity—asked in the same language, was it property in danger, was it he in danger, was it she—answered her signals with other signals expressive of the deepest distress and confusion—followed the motion of her lips—guessed half aloud “milk and water,” “monthly warning,” “mice and walnuts—” and couldn’t approach her meaning.—Dickens, *Battle of Life*.

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I cannot tell you what a horrid state of mind I was in for a long time. I seemed to care for nothing; the world was a blank to me. I abandoned all thoughts of the law. I went into the country, but could not bear solitude, yet could not endure society. There was a dismal horror continually in my mind, that made me fear to be alone. I had often to get up in the night and

seek the bedroom of my brother, as if the having a human being by me would relieve me from the frightful gloom of my own thoughts.—Warner, *Washington Irving*.

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Sometimes a great ship, an East Indiaman, with rusty, seamed, blistered sides and dingy sails, came slowly moving up the harbor, with an air of indolent self-importance and consciousness of superiority, which inspired me with profound respect.—Cary, *Life of G. W. Curtis*.

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When the major had concluded the perusal of this letter, his countenance assumed an expression of such rage and horror that Glowry, the surgeon, felt in his pocket for his lancet, which he always carried in his card-case, and thought his respected friend was going to have a fit. The intelligence was indeed sufficient to agitate Pendennis. The head of the Pendennises going to marry an actress ten years his senior,—the headstrong boy about to plunge into matrimony.—Thackeray, *Pendennis*.

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How they did dance! Not like opera dancers. Not at all. And not like Madame Anybody's finished pupils. Not the least. It was not quadrille dancing, nor minuet dancing, nor even country dancing. It was neither in the old style, nor the new style, nor the French style, nor the English style; though it may have been, by accident, a trifle in the Spanish style, which is a free and joyous one, I am told, deriving a delightful air of off-hand inspiration, from the chirping little castanets. As they danced among the orchard trees, and down the groves of stems and back again, and twirled each other lightly round, the influence of their airy motion seemed

to spread and spread, in the sun-lighted scene, like an expanding circle.—Dickens, *Battle of Life*.

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[Sounds.] When other birds are still and screech-owls take up the strain, like mourning women their ancient a-lu-lu, their dismal scream is truly Ben Jonsonian. Wise midnight hags! It is no honest and blunt tu-whit tu-who of the poets, but, without jesting, a most solemn graveyard ditty, the mutual consolations of suicide lovers remembering the pangs and the delights of supernal love in the infernal groves. Yet I love to hear their wailing, their doleful responses, trilled along the woodside; reminding me sometimes of music and singing birds; as if it were the dark and tearful side of music, the regrets and sighs that would fain be sung. They are the spirits, the low spirits and melancholy forebodings, of fallen souls that once in human shape night-walked the earth and did the deeds of darkness, now expiating their sins with their wailing hymns or threnodies in the scenery of their transgressions. They give me a new sense of the variety and capacity of that nature which is our common dwelling. *Oh-o-o-o that I had never been bor-r-r-r-n!* sighs one on this side of the pond, and circles with the restlessness of despair on some new perch on the gray oaks. The—*that I had never been bor-r-r-r-n!* echoes another on the farther side with tremulous sincerity, and *bor-r-r-r-n!* comes faintly from far in the Lincoln woods.

I was also serenaded by a hooting-owl. Near at hand you could fancy it the most melancholy sound in Nature, as if she meant by this to stereotype and make permanent in her choir the dying moans of a human being,—some poor weak relic of mortality who has left hope behind, and howls like an animal, yet with human sobs, on enter-



ing the dark valley, made more awful by a certain gurgling melodiousness,—I find myself beginning with the letters *gl* when I try to imitate it,—expressive of a mind which has reached the gelatinous mildewy stage in the mortification of all healthy and courageous thought. It reminded me of ghouls and idiots and insane howlings. But now one answers from far woods in a strain made really melodious by distance,—*Hoo hoo, hoo, hoerer hoo*; and indeed for the most part it suggested only pleasing associations, whether heard by day or night, summer or winter.

I rejoice that there are owls. Let them do the idiotic and maniacal hooting for men. It is a sound admirably suited to swamps and twilight woods which no day illustrates, suggesting a vast and undeveloped nature which men have not recognized. They represent the stark twilight and unsatisfied thoughts which we have. All day the sun has shone on the surface of some savage swamp, where the single spruce stands hung with usnea lichens, and small hawks circulate above, and the chickadee lisps amid the evergreens, and the partridge and the rabbit skulk beneath; but now a more dismal and fitting day dawns, and a different race of creatures awakes to express the meaning of Nature there.—Thoreau, *Walden*, (*Sounds*).



III  
Other Essays





## THE RELATION OF THE STANDARD LANGUAGE TO THE POPULATION OF LONDON<sup>1</sup>

**L**AST year in the preparation of my paper for the Modern Language Association<sup>2</sup> I felt the real thrill of discovery when I chanced to look up the vital statistics for London in the 17th century. Such material is not usually thrilling, and those otherwise dull, oppressive figures had power over me only as I thought of them in connection with the part played by London in crystallizing our standard language. I should have had my interest aroused if I had made for myself no other discovery than the astonishing discrepancy between birth-rate and death-rate. It is important enough to challenge attention that in several different years the metropolis lost eight or nine times as many inhabitants as there were children born. Truly the ravages of the plague were more terrible than many people realize. But when I learned that, in spite of this tremendous death-rate, the city instead of falling back in population, or of having trouble in holding its own, actually increased during the century about three fold, I was given, as I have said, a real thrill,—for these statistics seemed to throw a flood of light on some hitherto dark places and to show up most clearly some of the most important influences that went to shape the language of the metropolis.

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1—Read by title at the meeting of The Modern Language Association, Dec. 1907, summarized in *Proceedings*, p. xx.

2—On the Conservation of Language in a New Country. *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, June, 1907.

London in the 17th century must have contained a heterogeneous population. Inasmuch as the death-rate throughout the century was higher than the birth-rate, the whole increase in population was due to immigration, and for much of the time, perhaps all of it, a large majority of the inhabitants must have been of foreign birth. That means that numerous dialects were brought to the city and used there side by side,—for no matter how anxious the newcomers may have been to make their speech conform to the traditions of the capital, the process could not be an instantaneous one nor the result in many cases anywhere nearly perfect. In the seventeenth century, then, we have conditions very favorable to speech mixture. My curiosity naturally prompted me to ask the question, What was the state of affairs in other centuries? This paper is in large part my attempt at an answer.

The first fact that I have need to chronicle is the almost complete silence of the English historians with reference to all matters relating to the subject. Many tolerably thorough histories say nothing of any of the pestilences aside of that of the Black Death of 1349 and perhaps the plague of 1665, and yet in the long stretch of over three centuries in between there were not so very many decades unvisited by pestilence. Again, there are several lives of Shakespeare and several lengthy accounts of London in the time of Elizabeth that make no mention of any plague in the city, and yet during this period the theatres had to be closed a number of times because of it. This silence is to me a strange matter, for the plague was no mere trifle like a cold in the head, but on the contrary a very mortal disease that killed people by the thousand, and must therefore have more or less profoundly influenced industrial and social life.

Of course we all know of the Black Death of 1349 and of the immense number that died of it in both city and country. London itself lost a half of its population, and according to the chroniclers of the time whole districts elsewhere were almost entirely depopulated. The Black Death of 1349 has been given adequate treatment, but how many historians know that in the half-century following there were no less than five other plagues, most of them probably of the same nature? Thus the second great epidemic, which fell mostly on the upper classes and the rising generation, was in 1361, the third in 1368-9, the fourth in 1375, the fifth in 1382, the sixth in 1390-91.<sup>1</sup> And there were other outbreaks of sickness besides these. When we consider such a list of epidemics we find no reason for looking upon the 17th century as representing conditions in any way peculiar.

The 15th century also, though it is a silent age, which chronicled little, and about which it is difficult to find out very much, seems to tell us the same story of the ravages of plague, famine, and pestilence. "A century in which more than twenty outbreaks of plague occurred, and have been recorded by the chroniclers, can hardly be regarded by us except as one long unbroken period of pestilence," so Denton is quoted as saying in his book, *England in the Fifteenth Century*.<sup>2</sup> One attack fell sometime between 1405-07, and is said by the St. Albans annalist to have left desolate many humble homes which had been gladdened by a numerous progeny; another attended and followed the great famine of 1438 and was most felt in 1439, being called "the pestilence."<sup>3</sup> After

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1—Traill, *Social England*, II, pp. 138, 241.

2—Cunningham, *Growth of English Industries and Commerce*, I, p. 388.

3—Creighton, *Traill's Social England*, II, p. 414.

six fierce attacks<sup>1</sup> within 28 years, four months of plague in 1477 swept off three times the number of people that had perished in the civil wars during the previous fifteen years. But from this time on it was to the towns and to the poorer classes in these that the plague was almost entirely restricted. Of the cities London always took the lead—even from the scanty records of the 15th century the existence of plague in the capital to a more or less dangerous extent can be traced in most years.<sup>2</sup>

The 16th century tells us the same story. In 1499-1500, says Creighton,<sup>3</sup> our best authority on the subject of English epidemics, "the plague in London is vaguely estimated to have destroyed 20,000 of its citizens; but if it had destroyed only half of that number it would have taken the usual toll of a London plague of the first degree—namely, one-fifth or one-sixth of the inhabitants." "In the time of Henry VIII., plague was a very serious disturber of the public health; from the first to the last year of his reign there were probably not half a dozen summers or autumns for which we lack evidence of plague in London. Some of the years, such as 1513, 1521, 1535, 1543, 1547, witnessed epidemics of the greater degree in the capital. . . . The mortalities of these greater epidemics are not known with numerical exactness until 1563; but from the experience of that and many subsequent epidemics, in which figures were kept, it may be safely asserted that, on an average, once in a generation, and during a period of three centuries—from the Black Death to the extinction of plague in 1666—the capital lost from a fourth to a sixth of its population at one stroke in a single sea-

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1—Fletcher, Traill's Social England, II, p. 412.

2—Creighton, Traill's Social England, II, p. 415.

3—Traill's Social England, II, p. 564.



son, suffering also a drain of its poorer classes from the same cause more or less steadily from year to year.'<sup>1</sup> "The reign of Edward VI. was not without the long-standing plague, but its chief interest for us is that it witnessed the fifth and last epidemic of the 'sweating sickness'—a very fatal malady that had been carrying off a great many portly Falstaffs in the preceding seventy years."<sup>2</sup> In the succeeding reigns, however, other similar diseases took its place. Meanwhile the plague continued, in 1563 the number of deaths from the dread disease reaching more than 20,000.<sup>3</sup> The other great plague in Elizabeth's reign was in 1593, when the total number of deaths from plague and other causes was more than 25,000.<sup>4</sup>

About the seventeenth century we have already had enough to say. In 1666 the plague in England came to an end, but even after that time we do not find that the birth-rate exceeded the death-rate. Except for short isolated periods that did not happen before the 19th century.<sup>5</sup>

As a result of this rapid survey it ought to be clear to us that the death-rate of London in all the many centuries in which the standard language was taking shape was something enormous,—very far, indeed, beyond anything that modern conditions would be likely to suggest to us. Supposing the mortality to have remained the same, London would have become depopulated in any of these centuries if it had not been

1—Creighton, Traill's Social England, III, p. 145.

2—Creighton, Traill's Social England, III, p. 256.

3—Creighton, Traill's Social England, III, pp. 558-9. In 1563 the total number of deaths from all causes was 23,660.

4—It is well to note that Creighton often puts the mortality higher than the figures I presented in my paper last year.

5—Creighton, Traill's Social England, IV, p. 470; and *Britannica*, article "London."

supplied with people from without. There is no evidence that there was any danger of any such fate happening to it. Instead, the city has grown so many fold since Chaucer's time that it is difficult to realize what the figures mean. It will not be necessary for me to present any array of statistics to justify the statement. All know that London has grown enormously, and that it is composed in part of a foreign-born population. It is the extent of this extraneous population that I have been trying to emphasize.

We think of our own nation and of other new countries as peculiarly the product of race mixture. That is largely because it is so hard for foreigners to get to our shores that we can easily number and classify them as they come. Now as a matter of fact statistics would seem to show that the ratio of foreign-born to native-born is ever so much higher for London than for America. It is such an easy matter for Englishmen to slip into London that it is hard for anyone to realize how many do it. The number is surprisingly large. The result is, and that is one of my main points, most people do not realize how heterogeneous London has been in the past. And furthermore, no matter how much all the residents may have desired the contrary, there can have been no time when there was a uniform spoken tongue common to all the people in the city. To be sure, there has been in all periods an attempted approximation to such a norm, but the norm itself has been theoretical rather than actual. Now I am led to this conclusion not only by the statistics hitherto presented, but also by a monograph that was indeed intended to lead its readers in just the opposite direction. I refer to Dr. Morsbach's very able treatment of the origin of the standard

language.<sup>1</sup> This book seeks to prove that it has not been any one author or group of authors, such as Chaucer, or Wyclif, that has created for us our literary language, but rather the latter owes its origin and the whole course of its development to the work of the London dialect. An analysis of documents written in London by Londoners from 1380 on for fifty years proves this conclusion, so Prof. Morsbach thinks, beyond question. As I have said, this is a very able monograph, and one could hardly wish to find fault with its methods. They are rigidly scientific and they are carried out with admirable thoroughness and consistency. The conclusions, too, are very sane, and one can accept all or most of them precisely as stated. And yet I cannot feel that the work entirely explains the origin and evolution of our standard language. Like the explanation of the origin as due to a single author, Morsbach's solution is too easy.

The treatment, I think, underestimated the influence of literary models. Not a single document of any literary value is mentioned as representative of the speech of London. Literature shows too much dialect mixture. But I think it is a false uniformity that Morsbach has attempted to make for his London dialect. By the strict application of a number of rigid tests, only those documents that were composed by Londoners and written by London scribes are allowed to stand as representative, but this very process of exclusion throws out one of the most essential factors of London speech, a factor without which it is very difficult to explain how it is that London has been continually shifting from the southern toward the

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1—Morsbach: Ueber den ursprung der neuenglischen schriftsprache. Heilbroun, 1888.

northern dialect. There were many times in the history of the city when the foreign-born citizens greatly outnumbered the native-born, and so, surely, it was not the latter class that had any monopoly of the writing and talking. To leave out either part of the inhabitants gives us an unfair picture of the actual conditions. As a matter of fact, even after all this process of exclusion, there is no absolute uniformity in the survivals. Not only do his three classes of writings, townsmen's, the state, and the parliamentary documents, fail to agree with each other, but each class within itself shows considerable variations, and even single documents are often very far from being consistent. And lastly, this *Staats* and *Parlaments-Urkunden* are better representatives of the trend of the standard language than are the works of the chosen townsmen themselves.

Furthermore, I am still somewhat uncertain, though I have gone through the monograph carefully, as to just what was the part played by London in spreading and making uniform our literary language. I am inclined myself to give more weight to literary models than does Prof. Morsbach. I think it is clear that no one but the parties immediately concerned would ever read the documents utilized by the Professor unless he had to, while on the other hand the ideas in literary masterpieces have influenced generation after generation, and why should not the language also have had some of this same influencing power?

With this idea in mind it occurred to me to make a test as to the birthplace and early home of the chief writers of our standard literature. For this purpose I took the names given in Chambers's *Encyclopedia of English Literature* from the time of Chaucer to 1650. The results are not entirely trustworthy, because our informa-



tion concerning many of the writers is untrustworthy. Of the 144 names about which I could find any definite biographical information, only about one-fourth were of men born in London. Of these same writers only about one-fifth were not educated in Oxford or Cambridge. Many never made London their home. Surely the metropolis did not have any great direct influence on these men. But when we think of the influence of their literature and then add to it the influence exerted by the clergymen and tutors and schoolmasters sent out from the universities, may we not well ask the question, Have not the universities also had a very large share in the work of normalizing and standardizing of our speech? If we agree that they have, that need not compel us to think they have counteracted the influence of London. Oxford and Cambridge were like the metropolis in being composed of a very heterogeneous population, and conditions in all three places were probably enough alike to give similar results. All three may have worked together.

There are many other cognate problems that are naturally suggested by our general subject, but time limits forbid us to enter on the discussion of any of them. It must suffice us to say that the standardizing of our speech has been a very complex process, into which many separate factors have entered. It is necessary in a complete treatment to consider both the written and the spoken language and the influence of each upon the other. Also, the problems of dissemination might well occupy our attention. Work in standardizing the speech must have gone on in many parts of England at the same time, and I am inclined to think that London was only one of the chief centers of crystallization. But however that may be, I think it safe to affirm that Lon-

don has not changed its language in order that it might thereby the more easily impose it upon the rest of England, but rather that the continual shift only mirrors the state of affairs at the capital, where in many periods the majority of the speakers were of alien birth.

## THE THRYMSKWITHA

DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF THE LATE PROFESSOR G. A.  
HENCH, OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN.

[The Thrymskwitha is one of the best of the Eddic poems. It is the dramatic story of how Thor, aided by Loki, got back his famous hammer. Thrym had stolen it, and he would not give it up until they would bring him Freyja to wife; but she very indignantly refused to get married under any such terms. It is finally arranged, though much against his will, that Thor himself must dress up to impersonate Freyja, and go up to get married to the giant Thrym. The latter half of the poem contains the carrying out of this plan. But Thor is the great thunder-god. He is the largest and strongest of them all, and a ravenous eater and drinker. The story is elsewhere told of him that once, in a drinking contest, he lowered the sea several inches. It is he alone that was not allowed to walk over the bridge of the rainbow for fear he might break it down. What could be more incongruous and ludicrous, then, than to have this great clumsy god dress up as Freyja, the fairest of the goddesses, and to go off in her name to marry the ice-giant Thrym! The Norse poet has made good use of his opportunities, and we have in this poem a masterpiece of its kind.

There have been several translations of the Thrymskwitha, but none of them are very accessible; and, of those that the writer has seen, none have tried to preserve the alliterative form. In this translation the

attempt has been made to reproduce, as far as is possible, the ideas, the form, and the spirit of the original poem; and, having attempted so much, the writer would like to beg indulgence if he sometimes falls short of his ideal. He has been unable to preserve the exact quantitative character of the original verse. Its short, choppy form is not at all adapted to modern English. The brevity and simplicity are most difficult to imitate. All the original crudities stand out more plainly in the English, and the pervasive humor has a tendency to disappear in translation.

With regard to the metre it may be said briefly that there are five different kinds of lines possible, and these may follow each other in any order. They are: /u/u; u/u/; u\ u; /\ u/; // \ u, —in which / means a heavy stress: \, a medium stress, and u, one or more unstressed syllables together. A heavy stress may fall on either one long syllable or two short ones taken together. Two lines make up a complete verse, and one of the two stressed elements in the first line must alliterate with the first stressed element of the second. The text used in the translation is the one worked out by Finnur Jonsen, one of the foremost Norse scholars of the present day. The brackets indicate parts that he thinks are not original; the dashes, parts that he thinks are lacking. The other translations that the writer has been able to consult are those by Cottle, Thorpe, Vigfusson, and Powell, and a translation by an unknown writer in the *Dublin University Magazine*, 41:578. These are all in English. He has also consulted the German translation by Hugo Gering, and it is to this last work alone that the writer feels any real indebtedness.]



## THE THRYMSKWITHA.

1. Wroth then was Wingthor,<sup>1</sup>  
     awakening,  
 To find missing  
     Miolnir,<sup>2</sup> his hammer.  
 He shook his beard  
     and shaggy head:  
 The son of Earth  
     sought how to find it.
  
2. First of all said he  
     the following word:  
 "Hear now, Loki,<sup>3</sup>  
     what I tell you;  
 No one knows it,  
     nowhere on earth  
 Nor up in heaven;  
     This Ase's hammer is stolen!"
  
3. Went they to Freyja's<sup>4</sup>  
     fair abode then;  
 First of all said he  
     the following word:  
 "Wilt to me, Freyja,  
     thy feathercoat lend,  
 If my hammer  
     may be recovered?"
  
4. Freyja says:  
     "I should give it thee,  
     gold though it were;

1—Thor, the thunder-god, son of Odin and the Earth.

2—Miolnir, Thor's famous hammer, is one of the chief protections of the gods. It never misses its aim, and it always returns to the hand of the thrower.

3—The most cunning and deceitful of all the gods, or Ases.

4—The goddess of the summer rains. Her feathercoat is the clouds.

You might have it  
even though of silver.'<sup>1</sup>

5. Flew then Loki,  
feathercoat rustling,  
Until he was out  
of the Ases' court  
[And was far within  
the Iotons' home.<sup>2</sup>]

On a mound sat Thrym,  
Thurses' ruler,  
For his greyhounds  
gold bands plaiting,  
[And smooth the manes  
of his mares he combed.]

6. Thrym says:  
"What ails the gods?  
What ails the elves?  
To the home of the giants  
why journey alone?"  
"Much ails the gods!  
Much ails the elves!  
Have you Hloritha's<sup>3</sup>  
hammer hidden?"

7. "I have Hloritha's  
Hammer hidden:  
Under eight miles<sup>4</sup>  
of earth it lies,  
And such no one  
shall see again

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1—This anti-climax is in the original.

2—The Iotons are the giants, sometimes called the Thurses. Thrym, their ruler, is a winter giant. Some critics think that this myth is an attempted explanation of the fact that there is no thunder in the winter time, because Thrym has stolen Thor's hammer.

3—Another name for Thor.

4—According to some critics, these correspond to the eight months of the northern winter.

- Save he first bring me  
Freyja to wife!"
8. Flew then Loki,  
feathercoat rustling,  
Until he was out  
of Iotonheim  
[And was far within  
the Ases' court.]  
Thor he met there  
in the midst of it.  
First of all said he  
the following word:
9. "Hast thou reward  
worth thy labor?  
Tell me up in air  
all your tidings.  
Oft the sitter  
strays from his subject,  
And one lying  
lies most easily."<sup>1</sup>
10. "I have reward  
worth my labor.  
Thrym has thy hammer,  
Thurses' ruler;  
And such no one  
shall see again,  
Save he first bring him  
Freyja to wife."
11. They go the fair  
Freyja to seek;  
First of all said he  
the following word:  
"Bind thyself, Freyja,  
in bridal linen—

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1—Thor is here the speaker. Loki is still up in the air in the feathercoat. If the last lines contain a pun, it is also to be found in the original. Thor is probably quoting here some old Norse saw.

We two must journey  
to the giant's home."

12. Wroth then was Freyja,  
fairly snorting,<sup>1</sup>  
The Ases' hall  
all a-shaking;  
[Broke then the famous  
Brisinga necklace.<sup>2</sup>]  
"Me wouldst thou think  
man-crazy quite,  
Should I journey with thee  
to the giant's home."

13. Soon the Ases  
were all at the Thing,<sup>3</sup>  
And the Asyniur,<sup>4</sup>  
all to hold conference.  
On this pondered  
the powerful gods:  
How to recover  
Hloritha's hammer.

14. Then said Heimdall,<sup>5</sup>  
whitest of Ases,  
Of the future aware  
as were the Vanir:  
"Let us bind then Thor  
in bridal linen.  
Let him bear the famed  
Brisinga necklace.

- 15 "And let clinking  
keys hang from him,

---

1—This is a trifle strong, but I do not think it an unfair translation.

2—The Brisinga necklace was made by a dwarf. The story of the way in which Freyja earned it is not very edifying.

3—The Assembly.

4—Goddesses.

5—Probably Heimdall was the god of the early dawn, and therefore a "light" god, who foretold the coming day.



And female dress  
 fall round his knees,  
 And let bright<sup>1</sup> stones  
 his breast adorn,  
 And with much skill  
 make him a head-dress.”

16. Then Thor replied,  
 that powerful god:

“Me wouldst all Ases  
 unmanly call  
 If I let you bind me  
 in bridal linen.”

17. Said then Loki,  
 son of Lanfey:  
 “Be silent, Thor,  
 From such-like words.  
 Soon will the Iotons  
 In Asgard dwell  
 Unless thy hammer  
 to thee is returned.”

18. Bound they Thor then  
 in bridal linen,  
 Had him bear the famed  
 Brisinga necklace.

\* \* \*

19. And let clinking  
 keys hang from him,  
 And female dress  
 fall round his knees,  
 And let bright stones  
 his breast adorn,  
 And with much skill  
 made him a head-dress.

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1—The original reads “broad” stones.

2—Is this an editor’s joke at the expense of Thor?

20. Said then Loki,  
 son of Lanfey:  
 . . .  
 "I'll also go  
 To act as maid;  
 We two girls journey  
 to the giant's home."
21. Directly the goats<sup>1</sup> then  
 were driven home,  
 Thrust into harness —  
 they had to run well.  
 Mountains broke open,  
 the earth was aglow.  
 Into Iotonheim  
 went Odin's son.
22. Then did Thrym say,  
 Thurses' ruler:  
 "Stand up, Iotons,  
 strew the benches.  
 Now they fetch me  
 Freyja to wife,  
 Niord's daughter  
 of Noatun.
23. "Gold-hornèd cows<sup>2</sup>  
 for the court prepare;  
 All-black oxen  
 for the Ioton's feast.  
 I own many jewels,  
 I own many gems:  
 I seemed lacking  
 alone in Freyja."
24. Early did there  
 the evening come,

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1—Thor either walked or drove in a wagon drawn by two goats.

2—The cattle of the gods and giants are in several places mentioned as gold-horned.

- And for the Iotons  
 ale was brought forward.  
 Thor ate an ox  
 and eight salmon,  
 [All the tidbits  
 intended for women.]  
 Lif's husband<sup>1</sup> drank  
 three hogsheads of mead.
25. Then did Thrym say,  
 Thurses' ruler:  
 "Didst e'er see a bride  
 That seemed so greedy?  
 I ne'er looked on one  
 with so large a mouth,  
 Nor on a maid  
 that more mead drank."
26. Sat a crafty  
 serving-maid<sup>2</sup> there,  
 That found answer  
 to the Ioton's speech:  
 "Freyja has not eaten  
 for eight long nights,  
 So much she yearned  
 for Iotonheim."
27. Thrym stooped; under her veil  
 he sought to kiss,  
 And then sprang back  
 the breadth of the hall.  
 "Why so frightful  
 are Freyja's eyes?  
 I believe they look  
 like burning coals."
28. Sat a crafty  
 serving-maid there,  
 That found answer  
 to the Ioton's speech:

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1—Thor.

2—Loki. He was always practising deceit.

“Freyja has not once slept  
for eight long nights,  
So much she yearned  
for Iotonheim.”

29. In came the giants’  
joyless sister.  
She dared to beg  
a bridal gift.  
“Grant me the ruddy  
rings on your hands.  
If you would merit  
my good wishes.  
[My good wishes,  
my whole affection.]”
30. Then did Thrym say,  
Thurses’ ruler:  
“To gain the bride,  
bear in the hammer.  
Lay now Miolnir  
in the maiden’s lap.  
Make us husband and wife  
by the hand of Var.”<sup>1</sup>
31. Laughed the heart in  
Hloritha’s breast  
As the bold-hearted one  
his hammer saw.  
Thrym he slew first,  
Thurses’ ruler,  
And the giants’ kindred,  
killed were they all.
32. Slew he the giants’  
joyless sister,  
Who had begged of him  
a bridal gift.  
She a stroke got  
instead of shillings,

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1—Goddess of marriage.



A stroke of the hammer  
instead of rings.  
[Thus again Thor got  
his hammer.]

ON THE CONSERVATISM OF LANGUAGE IN A  
NEW COUNTRY.

I CANNOT begin this discussion more appropriately than by quoting a well-known paragraph from Ellis's *Early English Pronunciation*. In Part I, page 19, he says:—

“The results of emigration and immigration are curious and important. By emigration is here specially meant the separation of a considerable body of the inhabitants of a country from the main mass, without incorporating itself with another nation. Thus the English in America have not mixed with the natives, and the Norse in Iceland had no natives to mix with. In this case there is a kind of arrest of development; the language of the emigrants remains for a long time in the stage at which it was when emigration took place, and alters more slowly than the mother tongue, and in a different direction. Practically the speech of the American English is archaic with respect to that of the British English, and while the Icelandic scarcely differs from the old Norse, the latter has, since the colonization of Iceland, split up on the mainland into two distinct literary tongues, the Danish and Swedish. Nay, even the Irish English exhibits in many points the peculiarities of the pronunciation of the xviii<sup>th</sup> century.”

This paragraph was published as long ago as 1869, and it would be hardly fair to Mr. Ellis to hold him strictly responsible now for all it contains. Nevertheless the paragraph still expresses a widely accepted theory. It is a belief among many scholars that the language of a colony is almost always more conservative than that of

its mother country, and that this conservatism is in some way connected with the fact of emigration.

A good illustration of this point of view is to be found at the end of Professor Emerson's careful study of the Ithaca Dialect.<sup>1</sup> Professor Emerson there quotes the above paragraph from Ellis, and, though he refuses to subscribe to all it contains, he says with reference to his own investigations, that: "At least, in the absence of any other assignable cause, it may be stated with assurance, that the older forms of speech in IthD. are due to conditions attending isolation from the mother country by emigration." And immediately after he states positively as two of his three conclusions, that:—

"1. The dialect of Ithaca represents, in comparison with standard English, a dialect of the eighteenth century, with certain peculiarities usually attributed to the seventeenth century.

"2. This arrested development is due to emigration and separation from the mother country."

Perhaps few have been as outspoken as Professor Emerson is here, but there have been many scholars who have given more or less willing assent to the theory. Numerous writers on Hibernianisms, Americanisms, and American dialects have made much of the essentially archaic nature of the language they treat. We have all heard about the wonderful purity of colonial languages. I know that I have been told not only that American English is purer than British English, but much more than that,—and this probably through the local patriotism of some school-teacher,—that the western Americans speak much better English than our cousins in the east-

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1—*Dialect Notes*, I, pp. 85 ff., espec. 173. For another illustration, concerning Irish English, cf. *Academy*, vol. LXI, p. 291 f. Other illustrations might be cited.

ern part of the United States. I wish it understood that I am not at present advocating this last bit of doctrine, and yet, if by "better" is only meant "more conservative," do we have here anything more than the logical conclusion for the emigration theory? True, archaisms are always startling, and when we find that many of our common American words are survivals of older English words that have died out in England, it is no wonder if we are led sometimes to the conclusion that we, who speak the emigrant language, and not the English, are the true successors of Shakespeare, Dryden, Pope, and the other great literary men of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

But now what is the truth of this matter? Is emigration in itself a conservative force? Do we in America speak a more archaic language than the people of England, and if we do, or if we have dialects that do, are there not other possible causes sufficient to account for the conservatism? It is with such questions as these that this paper is concerned. The treatment is necessarily far from exhaustive. There is not enough material yet at hand for a thorough study, and besides I do not pretend to have read everything that might be brought to bear on the subject. Nevertheless, I think I have got together enough facts to justify at least a few definite conclusions.

On general principles we should not expect to find in emigration a conservative force. We all know, when we stop to consider, that the phrases "living language" and "dead language" are merely figures of speech. In actual fact, of course, it is utterly impossible that a language should have any real life of its own and consequently any death. If we wish for convenience to attribute to it a borrowed life, that is a different matter. But it



should never be forgotten that language is no more alive than the steam-engine, or the silk-loom, or than any other artfully constructed instrument. Language is a tool. It can do nothing—not even to reproduce or maintain itself—except through the agency of man. The latter is the all-important factor, and language is always secondary to him and to his environment. If this be true, and I think all must agree with me that it is, this secondariness ought to be reflected in speech differentiation. Not only should every language be characteristic of the people who have developed it and of the land they live in, but changes in land or people should find parallel changes in the language itself. Furthermore, if a language is imported into a new country or to a new people, we should expect that it would immediately begin to adjust itself to its new surroundings—that is, to a new order of development. So I repeat that on general principles we should not expect to find in emigration a conservative force. Other things being equal, a colonial language ought to change more than the speech in the mother country.

On general principles also, we should infer that the changes in a colonial language are likely to be of a different nature from those in the mother country. For this phase of the emigration theory Ellis's statement, quoted above, seems entirely reasonable. In the new land the speech is likely to be subjected to a changed environment. Thus, there may be a different climate, a different flora and fauna, and the necessity of a different mode of life. There may be also another people to contend with, having probably a different civilization and language. It is evident that if many of these conditions of the new environment are unlike those of the parent home, the language cannot go on develop-

ing in the old way. The old needs and impulses for change will be gone and new needs will have taken their places. Unless, then, conditions happen to be very similar in the two countries and unless there is extensive intercourse maintained, the languages of mother-land and colony are likely—nay, sure—to alter in divergent directions. But now, it is only a small part of a language that changes at any one time. In so far as is consistent with developing conditions, it is the ideal of language to be conservative, for it is through conservatism that a language best fulfills its office as an instrument of communication. It is likely, therefore, that the field in which the mother-tongue does its changing may remain almost unaltered in the colony, and the colonial language in its turn may change in parts which in the mother-land remain quite conservative. The result is that each country is likely to present both innovations and survivals peculiar to itself.

Now in this matter we do not have to rest content with mere theory. These statements are amply supported by facts. Thus, it will be remembered that Mr. Ellis was careful to limit his remark about the language of Ireland. His words were that it “exhibits *in many points* the peculiarities of the pronunciation of the seventeenth century.” This is no doubt true, and it is not only in pronunciation but also in vocabulary that Irish is in many points archaic. The fact has been emphasized by many writers, but that is a very different thing, of course, from identifying modern Irish—even of a few generations ago—with pure seventeenth century English. It would be hard to find a competent scholar who would do the latter. Mr. W. H. Patterson in the introduction to his *Glossary of Words in Use in the Counties*

of *Antrim and Down*<sup>1</sup> is careful to state that: "The forms of the words may vary somewhat, because they naturally underwent changes consequent upon the lapse of time since their introduction to an alien soil. In many cases it was a difficulty how to spell the words, because I only had them as sounded, and the difficulty was increased when I frequently found the same word was pronounced in two or more ways by different persons, either natives of different districts, or persons whose mode of speaking had been influenced by different surroundings or by more or less of education." He further adds that "in some districts in the east of the two counties the people still talk a Scotch dialect, but with a modified Scotch accent."

But Ellis himself, farther on in his *Early English Pronunciation*,<sup>2</sup> gives sufficient material to show that Irish English contains both archaisms and innovations. Thus in just one paragraph of Irish speech quoted by him from Mr. Graves as a fair specimen of the Kilkenny English of the last century, we find many archaic survivals side by side with as many altered forms. Thus with the archaic *clane*,<sup>3</sup> *dacent*, *faver*, and *baaste* are found *depind*, *Riverence*, *yistherday*, *hins*, and *gintleman*. In *childhre*, which illustrates an archaic plural, we have the peculiar Irish dental-plus-*r*, found also in *dhrop* and *dhry*, and in *crathers*, *inthered*, and *wather*. *Potatoes* is pronounced *pyates*. Along with archaic meanings for *clean* and *likely* we have introduced the Irish word *colleen* for girl. Now the illustrations here given do not exhaust the material of this single para-

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1—*Eng. Dial. Soc.*, Vol. VII, p. 8.

2—Part IV, p. 1233.

3—The spelling is that found in Ellis.

graph, but if we wish to leave it and go on to the word lists that follow, we shall find that Ellis offers still more material in confirmation of our general proposition. The English language in Ireland contains both archaisms and innovations.

Dr. Sweet in his *History of Language* (p. 89) states the same conclusion for modern Icelandic. You may remember that Ellis in the paragraph first quoted made the statement that Icelandic scarcely differs from Old Norse. If this were true, it would not be such a very strange phenomenon. Iceland is so cut off from the activities of the rest of the world that we need not expect its language to change very much. But it would seem according to Sweet that Icelandic has changed more than Ellis suspected. Sweet says:—

“We have in Modern Icelandic an instructive instance of the conflict between the two factors of conservatism in life and absence of foreign influence on the one hand and complete isolation from direct contact with cognate languages on the other. The result is that the language, instead of developing in an analytical direction similar to that of its immediate cognates, Norwegian, Danish, and Swedish, has preserved its old inflectional system absolutely unimpaired on the whole, although with frequent modifications of detail. . . . But the sounds of Modern Icelandic have undergone the most fantastic changes through the want of control by cognate languages. Thus *ō* has become (au), and *au* itself has become (œi), the front-round *y* has been levelled under *i*, and so on, while in the other Scandinavian languages it has been kept distinct from *i*, and *ā* has merely been rounded into a



variety of (æ) without any further exaggeration. Icelandic, in fact, as regards its sounds, behaves like an adult whose speech by deafness has been isolated from the control of his fellow-speakers. It is curious to observe that the island-Portuguese of the Azores shows a curious change of long vowels into diphthongs equally opposed to the tendencies of the continental mother-language.'<sup>1</sup>

Other colonial languages, in so far as I have been able to learn about them, seem to illustrate our position equally well. I know almost nothing about Australian English. I presume it contains numerous archaisms, but I am not sure. I do know, however, that it has many neologisms. There is even a dictionary of over 500 pages on Austral English, and though the size of this book may be no fair index of the number of new words in the colonial language, the number is certainly not small. I am acquainted with the book only through a review in the *Nation*,<sup>2</sup> and this in its treatment lays emphasis on the new words rather than on the survivals. With reference to the English contingent of the special vocabulary the reviewer says that it "includes, naturally, some novel formations; but far more numerous are the examples of familiar words in unfamiliar senses. The old system of penal transportation, the mad days of the gold 'rushes,' the growth of sheep and cattle raising, the rowdy life of city idlers, the agrarian difficulties, the development of autonomy through political strife of peculiar and complex bitterness—all have left their impress on the language of the colonists." Surely this

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1—Cf. also Larsen, *Jour. of Eng. and Germ. Philol.* VI, pp. 99ff.

2—*Nation*, Vol. LXII, pp. 169 f., *Austral English: A Dictionary of Australasian Words, Phrases, and Useages*. By Prof. E. E. Morris. Macmillan.

does not tend to show that Australian English is archaic or conservative.<sup>1</sup>

Let us turn now to America. I think we shall find among the various colonial languages of this continent similar conditions. Let us begin with the French-Canadian language, which has received considerable attention. The published results of the investigation of such men as Professors Elliott, Sheldon, Chamberlain, and Geddes seem to give ample warrant for our general proposition. The French language in Canada has been both progressive and conservative. Professor Elliott in one of his articles<sup>2</sup> on Canadian French points out clearly that the circumstances in which the new settlers were placed were sufficient to produce important changes in their language, and to bring about the *Ausgleichung* of grammar-forms and intermixture of phonetic elements which are found today in the Canadian language, common in all essential particulars to the provinces of the Dominion, wherever French is spoken. And Professor Chamberlain has stated our position precisely in his article on *The Life and Growth of Words in the French Dialect of Canada*.<sup>3</sup> He says:—

“No portion of the study of Canadian-French life and history can be more of interest than the investigation of the changes which their speech has undergone in the course of more than three centuries of varied progress and development. . . . Nowhere, perhaps.

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1—Leutzner, in *Englische Studien*, XI, 173 f., published a note in which he quoted three passages from Froude's *Oceana* (1896) to show that English is spoken in Australia absolutely without provincialism. This does not prove conservatism, however, but rather a leveling of dialectical forms. Similar statements are quoted by Elliott for early Canadian French.

2—*Amer. Jour. of Philol.*, Vol. VII, pp. 141 ff. Cf. also Prof. Elliott's article in Vol. X (pp. 133 ff.) of the *Journal*.

3—*Mod. Lang. Notes*, Vol. IX, cols. 78 ff.

are these laws of the life and growth of verbal significations better illustrated than in French-speaking Canada; nowhere else, indeed, has the necessity for modification been greater. . . . [He then mentions some of the circumstances that necessitated change. As a result] their *sprachgefühl* was quickened and called again to life, new words arose and old ones clothed themselves in meanings they had never had before, while Old French words, preserved by the conservatism of agriculture or of religion, linger still beneath the shadow of Cape Diamond or in the valley of the Gatineau, long after the French Academy has ceased to include them in its great dictionary."

Similar conclusions, if I mistake not, can be reached for Pennsylvania German, if one studies the valuable series of articles<sup>1</sup> on that dialect published by Professor Learned. Pennsylvania German has perpetuated in their pristine vigor the characteristics of its venerable European ancestor, the Rhine Frankish. Nevertheless, this colonial language has undergone change not only in vocabulary but also in phonology and syntax.

And now last of all I think we may urge the same generalizations for American English. I have no need to inform you that a large number of Americanisms are merely survivals of older English words that have died out in the mother country—this fact has been emphasized too often—but perhaps it would not be nearly so trite if I made the same statement for Britishisms. I think we have laid too much stress on the archaisms in American English. In cultivated American speech the special archaic forms are not nearly so numerous as the neologicistic. Many of our archaisms are merely vulgarisms or limited provincial-

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1—Amer. Jour. of Philol., Vols. IX and X.

isms, and are to be found with a similar status in parts of England. In some cases the words have never been anything but vulgarisms or provincialisms in either country. I have never met with an attempt anywhere to show that cultivated British English is archaic with respect to American English, but really I think about as good a case could be made out for the one country as for the other. Consider, for example, what a large number of names for officers and parts of the government from the king to the bailiff and Parliament to Assize Court have survived in England but have been displaced in America. Such a long list, however, is too easy proof—it seems like begging the question. Let us choose a few more isolated Briticisms to illustrate the point.

The word *fruiterer* has interested me. I saw it for the first time in England. It struck me then as a monstrous malformation and I supposed it had been recently introduced by ignorant people. In my own superior ignorance I felt toward the word as many an Englishman has felt toward some of our archaisms. Great was my surprise, therefore, to discover in the *New English Dictionary* that the earliest recorded case for this word is dated 1408, and that we also find the word used by Shakespeare. But now along with *fruiterer* may be mentioned several other words, with lengthy pedigrees, expressing names of occupations. Thus *draper*, *mercier*, *costermonger*, and *poulterer* have been in the language of England for many centuries. The word *beetle* (= Amer. *bug*) goes back to Old English and was probably used in its loose English sense in very early times. It is vastly older than *bug*. *Biscuit* (= Amer. *cracker*) is cited for the year 1330. *Cracker* is very modern. *Coverlet* is given the date of 1300;



*bed-spread* is not even mentioned in the *New English Dictionary*. *Autumn* is cited from Chaucer and its pedigree is certainly longer than that of our word *fall*. The English sense for *creek* is the original sense. The same can be said for *casket* and *squash*. The English words *hustings*, *luggage*, *copse*, *cony*, *close*, *goloshes* are all more or less venerable, and there are many other Briticisms equally so. The authors of *Words and their Ways in English Speech*, after showing how in Great Britain railroading has merely taken to itself the terms for coaching—utilizing in this way such words as *coaches*, *drivers*, *guards*, and *booking-offices*,—state as a generalization: “The conservative tendency to retain familiar terms in a new application is probably stronger in England than in America.”

In the domain of pronunciation we probably find ourselves on rather uncertain ground, owing to the extreme difficulty of determining for past ages precisely what were the usual pronunciations for the various sounds. We ought not to permit ourselves to make more sweeping generalizations for past ages, about which we can know but little, than we should be willing to make for today, and yet that is ever the temptation. We somehow feel that all people in the past spoke alike. Professor Grandgent, in his article *From Franklin to Lowell*,<sup>1</sup> surely observes due caution, and he would seem to show that American English has made many changes, and that at least in some respects our language has changed wherein English speech has remained as it was. Compare the American loss of rounding for *ɔ* and *o*. We should further remember that there is no one standard for our whole country. If one section has been entirely conservative, other sections

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1—*P. M. L. A. of A.*, Vol. XIV, pp. 207 ff., 1899.

must have changed. In the West perhaps our *r* and our *æ* (in such words as *aunt*) are archaic, but surely it cannot be maintained that we in the West speak more nearly eighteenth-century English than the people in the East.

Furthermore, if we to-day have no one standard, neither had the people of England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. America has not been settled by Londoners, and to set up this city as a standard for comparison is manifestly absurd, especially when one considers the speech conditions of London for the past two or three centuries. I think few scholars realize how extraordinary these conditions have been. Since the year 1600 London has increased in population over twenty-five fold. Up to the nineteenth century all of this increase came from without. Let me present some figures. According to the *Britannica*, in 1600 the population was about 180,000; in 1650, 350,000; and in 1700, 550,000. That is, roughly, during the seventeenth century the city increased its size threefold. But all through this century—largely because of the plague—the death-rate was tremendously in excess of the birth-rate. For example, in 1603 there were 37,253 more deaths than births; in 1625 the excess was 47,482; in 1665 the number reached 87,339. In the last year quoted, for every birth there were more than nine people who died. That means that London in that year in order to hold its own had to have eight times as many immigrants as there were children born. For the other years quoted the ratio is equally startling. But we have found that instead of merely holding its own London grew immensely. With such an influx of dialect speakers, why should we expect much conservatism! In the present century the birth-rate has exceeded the death-rate, but even now almost

half of the population of London was born outside the city.

If we compare with these statistics the conditions in America we may find even more cause for surprise. According to the statistics published in the *World's Almanac* for 1906, the population of this country in 1900 was 76,303,387. Of this number only 10,460,085 were of foreign birth, and only 26,198,939 of foreign parentage. That is, less than one-seventh of our present population were born outside of this country and hardly more than a third have parents of foreign birth. With such figures I think it can be said without making a bull that London is more of an English colony than the United States. And surely we find here plenty of reason why London English should have changed.

But now returning again to the subject of speech in America, I think it has not been and cannot be proved that cultivated Americans speak a more archaic English than the people of Great Britain. Ellis is wrong on that point. I think the truth lies, rather, in the proposition suggested early in this discussion, that each country presents both archaisms and innovations. But while standing for this position, I am perfectly willing to grant that we may have dialects in this country which are more conservative and archaic than London English. Thus it seems probable that Professor Emerson has proved the fact for the Ithaca dialect, though I am of the opinion that many of the clipped forms found in that speech are not archaisms but American degenerates. But grant the language of Ithaca is more conservative than London English—what of it? Is it quite fair to compare on this score Ithaca<sup>1</sup> and the city of London? I think it would have been better to compare Ithaca with some isolated

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1—The dialect studied seems to be country as well as town.

town in Lincolnshire or East Anglia. Be that as it may, after reading Professor Emerson's account of the conditions there, I see no cause for wonder at any of the conservatism found in Ithaca. I should have been much more surprised if the speech of the town had not been conservative.

Summing up now the results of this examination, I can say: Colonial languages, like all dialects, exhibit both conservative and innovative traits. Conservatism, however, is not so pronounced a feature as many people believe. Some colonial dialects may be more conservative than their mother-tongues, but wherever this happens, in so far as I know, local conditions seem to be amply sufficient to explain the conservatism. In no case have I found the least probability that emigration in itself is a conservative force.



BEOWULF, 62

THE confused passage in *Beowulf* centering in l. 62 has given rise to two classes of emendations. The first rests on the supposition that there is a mistake in the word *elan*; the second supposes that there is an omission after *cwen*. I wish to show that it is the second class of emendation that is in the right. The lines just preceding the confused place tell us that Healfdene had four children. The names of the three sons are given as assured fact and present no difficulty, but the passage dealing with the fourth child is confused, and the composer by his method of statement gives some ground for the belief that the confusion may be partly due to his own uncertainty of information. *Hyrde ic*, is the way he begins the confused passage,—

Ð[æ] *elan cwen heaðo-scilfingas heals-gebedda*

The confusion in this clause may be partly due to uncertainty of information, but surely that is not the only cause for the trouble. The passage not only seems lacking in at least one proper name, but it also has no verb, and it contains a probable genitive ending in *as*. How are we to deal with it? Ettmüller and others believe that *Elan* is the name of the daughter of Healfdene, and they better the passage by supplying a verb and the conjectured name of the husband after *cwen*. This is the simplest solution, and I believe it is the correct one. But others, such as Grundtvig, Bugge, and Kluge, believe that *elan* is the genitive ending in the name of the husband, whose name they reconstruct, and then supply a verb and a conjectured name for the wife. The later emendators say that *elan* can

hardly be a proper name, since it does not occur elsewhere in Old English. The name, however, according to Heine, is found in Old High German, and in any case such an objection loses most of its weight when we recollect that all we know about the name of Beowulf is to be found in the manuscript under discussion.

But now there is another interesting point to consider. The word *heaðo* is written over an erasure. Zupitza, in his autotype edition, does not mention it, but there can be little doubt of the fact. What I say I base on a study of two copies of the facsimile. The raggedness of the letters in *heaðo* and, better yet, the remains of some of the letters of the earlier word, are strong enough evidence to support my assertion. The word *swen* is near the edge of the manuscript, and not much can be stated about it from a study of the facsimile, but *elan* is farther in and is perfectly distinct and shows not the slightest trace of any erasure. The bearing of this upon the work of emendation ought to be evident. It shows that, whatever may have been the remote cause for the confusion in this passage, the immediate cause centers in this erasure in the manuscript. The scribal mistake was not in the letters *elan*, but farther on in the word after *cwen*. It is impossible from the facsimile to make out with certainty any of the letters underneath *heaðo*, unless perchance it is an *s* apparently at the end of the erased word. This *s* tends to show that the word erased was a genitive, but, inasmuch as the word must have been wrong to be erased, it will not help much in the emendation to determine it more definitely. It is, then, in the place after *cwen* that all emendations must be made if they are really to better the passage. This conclusion throws out of consideration one of the two classes of emendations mentioned above.

## BEOWULF, 62, AGAIN

IT is perhaps rather late in the day to object to the conclusions of Professor Klaeber in his notes<sup>1</sup> on l. 62 of *Beowulf*, but I have only kept silent because I had other important things on hand. I think that Professor Klaeber, unintentionally, has somewhat misrepresented matters; and if I may be pardoned for adding a few more straws to the already heavy burden of this poor line, I should like to make the attempt to straighten some things out. It may be that one or two of my additions may have a more general interest than my title would seem to promise.

I hope that Professor Klaeber will not take offense if I suggest that he has been at times a trifle overconfident: perhaps in my first note<sup>2</sup> on this line I was, in the same way, a little at fault,—however, I think he has sinned more than I. The points at issue are: the facts concerning the erasure in this line, the meaning of them, and the part played by *hyrde ic* in Old English literature.

Professor Klaeber agrees with me that there is an erasure after *cwen*, but according to him we are not to draw any conclusions from it. "The scribe had made a mistake, which he corrected. [!] That is all the erasure tells us. Whether that unlucky scribal blunder which has caused so much headache to modern scholars, occurred before or after *elan cwen*, cannot be learned from it. Nor do we know whether the (first) scribe of our *Beowulf* copy actually committed or merely transmitted it. Besides, can we really be sure that what he

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1—*Modern Language Notes*, XX, p. 11; *Modern Philology*, III, p. 243.

2—*Modern Language Notes*, XIX, 121.

erased was not simply a blot of ink?" He also says that no letter underneath *heaðo* can be made out with certainty; and to my suggestion that *hyrde ic* possibly implies uncertainty of information on the composer's part, he returns a very decided and, I think, dogmatic negative answer. His only justification is the two-edged remark that "The stylistic and metrical functions of *hyrde ic* are clearly seen in line 2163," and he quotes the line. So much appears in his article in *Modern Language Notes*, XX, p. 11. In *Modern Philology*, III, pp. 243 f., he again takes up *hyrde ic* and treats it as a *gefraegn* formula. He says: "Now the phrase *hyrde ic* serves here (*Beo.* 62) practically as poetic formula of transition equal to 'further,' exactly as in line 2163, where the account of the presentation of the four gifts is connected in the same way with [its continuation, that is] the report of the donation of the horses." . . . He then quotes the line, refers the reader to his note in *Modern Language Notes*, and adds another reference, to line 2172.

This summer in the British Museum I took occasion to examine carefully this page of the *Beowulf* MS. I found there what my previous study of several copies of the facsimile had shown me, namely, that there has been an erasure, that it was the erasure of a word, and that there are the indisputable remains of an *s* just after the *o* of *heaðo*. But, I think it especially noteworthy that all copies of the facsimile are not equally efficient in what they disclose of the MS. If one takes two copies and compares them page for page he will find considerable variation in the plainness of the readings. The *s* just mentioned can be seen in the MS. itself. Both I and the attendant in the Manuscript work-room identified it. It can generally be seen in copies of the fac-



simile, and I think there are some specimens that show it even plainer than the original MS. But this variation is to me noteworthy. It seems rather remarkable that the mere difference in the strength of an impression can bring so much more out in one copy than in another. It suggests that by proper manipulation a MS. photograph may be made to give plainer readings than its original. Also, the fact that Zupitza has not mentioned this particular erasure in his edition suggests that it is a pity that he has not edited the autotype more thoroughly. It has been pointed out to me that there are several other erasures and suspicious places that he has said nothing about.

But to return now more narrowly to our subject, Professor Klaeber says that "the phrase *hyrde ic* certainly does not point to the composer's uncertainty of information." His only proof is an assertion about line 2163, which he later strengthens by adding line 2172. He also puts in a counter claim, so to speak, by bringing forward Schücking's suggestion that *hyrde ic* serves here practically as a poetic formula of transition. "The question," he says, "is not what modern logic expects, or subjective criticism declares possible or impossible, but whether such an expression accords with the practice, not to say the laws, of the old style." I agree with Professor Klaeber. This is very good doctrine, quite worthy of being followed. In point of fact, the terms poetic formula and epic formula, as I myself am prepared to prove, are used so loosely that they are practically meaningless. They class together locutions of quite different character; the locutions often mean what they literally say; and sometimes these terms are applied to expressions that are not even stereotyped. Now, what are the facts concerning *hyrde ic*? It occurs but three

times in all Old English poetry, always in *Beowulf*. Schücking has tried to obtain a fourth or at least analogous case in the *hyrde we* passage in the *Fates of the Apostles*, line 70, but I think with no success. Such, then, is the extent of the practice mentioned by Professor Klaeber. Now, what are the metrical and stylistic functions of the phrase? First, in all three cases, *hyrde ic* introduces a passage metrically independent of the rest of the poem. In at least two of these cases the material is also logically independent. Let us consider lines 2163 and 2172: they are close neighbors and should be treated together. Their sections follow immediately in succession upon a long speech by Beowulf in which that hero tells of his experiences in the land of Hroðgar, and he closes by offering to Hygelac the treasure he has received from the son of Healfdene. Several presents are mentioned specifically. "*Bruc ealles well!*" Then follows: *Hyrde ic þæt þam frætuum feower mearas . . . last weardode . . .* that is, another present is mentioned that the author or scribe has heard that Beowulf gave to his lord. "Thus should a kinsman do," is the comment. Then he adds a second *hyrde ic* clause, introducing still other presents: *Hyrde ic þæt he þone healsbeah Hygde gesealde*. Now, either or both of these passages could easily have been added by any scribe. Much the same, also, can be said for line 62. The material is independent metrically and could have been added by any copyist. Suppose that a previous scribe had accidentally left out a line or two describing the fourth child of Healfdene, then it would not be at all unlikely that our copyist, noticing the omission, would try to supply the defect on the basis of his own probably uncertain information. Nor would it be strange if he became confused in the process. I say all this is possible, and that is all that I have claimed for it at any time.

Let us now take up another line of argument. Professor Klaeber says with reference to the erasure, that it tells us that the scribe had made a mistake which he corrected. Now, surely Professor Klaeber cannot have meant this to be taken literally, for if the scribe had corrected his mistake, there would have been none of the "headache" referred to. But that is just the point: the mistake was not corrected. After the word *cwen* everything is peculiar. There is an erasure, a genitive ending in *as*, and a feminine nominative singular ending in *a*,—not to mention logical and metrical difficulties. Before *elan cwen* there is not the slightest internal or direct evidence to show that there is any error. It seems to me that the MS. testimony is thus fairly conclusive. Now, if we should accept Professor Klaeber's suggestion that what the scribe erased was a blot of ink, the MS. testimony is strong enough to be considered proof, because the scribe has shown by erasing just a mere blot that he at least thought there was no mistake before the blot.

Finally, if one does not wish to consider *elan* a woman's name, there is still another way of construing it, as Professor Schofield has suggested to me (it is also noted in Grein's *Sprachschatz*). It is entirely possible to take *elan* as the genitive of *Ela*, making this the name of the husband, and supplying after *cwen* the name of the wife and the verb *waes*. The reconstructed line would be type E. Consequently, from either point of view, it is not at all necessary to make an emendation at any other place than after the word *cwen*.

DID BOCCACCIO SUGGEST THE CHARACTER OF  
CHAUCER'S KNIGHT?

**S**TANZA 40 of Book VI of the *Teseide* reads as follows:

“In cotal guisa co'suoi rugginoso  
Dell'arme e del sudor venne in Atene:  
E benchè bel non paia, valoroso  
Chiunque il vede veramente il tene;  
E fe', del modo suo non borioso  
Ma umile, parlare a tutti bene:  
Ben s'ammiraron della condizione  
Chiunque il vide a sí fatto barone.”<sup>1</sup>

This is the last of six stanzas describing King Evander, who was one of the combatants in the tournament. The details mentioned in this stanza are so similar to the most prominent characteristics of Chaucer's knight, as he is described in the *Prologue* to the *Canterbury Tales* (ll. 43-78), as to suggest that Chaucer may have got the first conception of his knight from this source.

Boccaccio, in the previous five stanzas, has described a Greek warrior-king. He has told Evander's birthplace and parentage, how he was mounted and how he was armed. He has described his dress and that of his followers; and he has devoted especial attention to a description of Evander's shield, on which were depicted scenes illustrating former adventures and experiences.

There is nothing in these stanzas that is exactly the same as in Chaucer's *Prologue*. There are some correspondences, but these might easily be accidental,—thus:

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1—“In this way, with his followers, he came into Athens, begrimed from his arms and from sweat. Although he did not look beautiful, whoever sees him holds him truly valorous. He was not haughty in manner, but humble: he spoke well to all. Whoever saw him marveled at this in such a baron.”



(a) both are distinguished warriors. (b) Each has followers with him. (c) The previous deeds of valor are told for each, though in different ways—for Evander, it is done by a description of his shield; for the knight, the means is direct narration. But if Chaucer was influenced by this description of Evander, he could not possibly have made use of the details found in these five stanzas,—because the settings are too different. Boccaccio had described a Greek king going to a tournament, while Chaucer wished to present an ideal English knight riding in a company of pilgrims.

But the stanza first quoted seems to bear toward Chaucer a different relation from the other five. There are the following agreements:

Evander came into Athens begrimed from his arms and from sweat.

The knight joined the pilgrims with his clothes stained by his armor.

Evander, though he did not look beautiful, was held to be valorous by all.

The knight was not gay, but he was worthy and wise.

Evander was not proud in manner, but humble; he spoke well to all.

The knight was in bearing as meek as a maid; he never said anything discourteous to his inferiors.

It hardly seems to me that these agreements can be explained as due to mere chance. What all found striking in King Evander, we find striking in Chaucer's knight—that such a distinguished warrior should be so humble and courteous in bearing toward those of lesser rank. Chaucer knew the *Teseide*, having early made some sort of translation or paraphrase of it in his last work, *Palamon and Arcite*. He must, therefore, have been familiar with this description long before he con-

ceived of the *Canterbury Tales*. The *Knight's Tale* is itself the story of the *Teseide*. The character of the knight had to harmonize with the story he was to tell. There is, therefore, a close relationship between the two, and one might suggest the other. If then the *Teseide* has within itself an unneeded character suitable to act as narrator of the story to the Canterbury pilgrims, what is more natural than to suppose that Chaucer might have taken the essential traits of this personage as the nucleus around which to build up his own character of the knight?

## THE BOLD PRISONER.

(ARCHIE O CAWFIELD.)

THE following ballad, a version of *Archie o Cawfield*, Child, No. 188, forms the first column of a broadside printed by Pitts, probably in 1804-5. The date, my friend Professor Becker thinks, is fairly sure from a song printed on the same sheet as a second column. This song, *The Land we Live in*, begins:

Since our foes to invade us have long been preparing,  
'Tis clear they consider we've something worth sharing,  
And for that mean to visit our shore;  
It behoves us with spirit to meet 'em,  
And tho 'twill be nothing uncommon to beat 'em,  
We must try how they'll take it once more.

The first three lines of the second stanza read:

Here's a health to the tars on the wide ocean ging (*sic*),  
Perhaps even now some broadsides are exchanging,  
We'll on shipboard and join in the fights.

This doggerel is so limited as to occasion that it hardly seems probable that it would continue to be printed long after the specific scare was over. Each column of the broadside has its own woodcut, each much worn. That for *The Bold Prisoner* is a picture of a man carrying a basket. It is framed in a double-lined circle an inch and a half in diameter.

This broadside is at present in my possession; I obtained it last summer in London with several others. I did not suppose that any were of value, and gave the lot no particular attention. It was not much over a month ago that I first read this specimen and perceived it as traditional. I sent a copy to Professor Kittredge, who of course recognized it as a version of *Archie o Cawfield*.

My broadside is most like Professor Child's version F, III, 494. My copy is much shorter, but this may be due to the stall trick of cutting a ballad to fit the column. There are no identical stanzas, though four are very similar, and it is to be further noted that the title of F, as given by Mr. Watson, is *Bold Dickie*, Child, III, 495 E (=F). Nevertheless the treatment, it seems to me, is independent enough in F and in the following copy to permit one's considering them independent versions.

THE BOLD PRISONER.<sup>1</sup>

Pitts, Printer, Wholesale Toy and Marble warehouse, 6,  
Great St. Andrew street, 7 dials.

As I was walking for my recreation,  
Across the green meadows one morning in May  
There I heard two brothers a talking  
And I listened awhile to what they did say.

Says one to the other, 'I have got a brother,  
In prison so strong confined is he;  
But if I had forty brave fellows like myself,  
We soon would set the bold prisoner free.

'Ten of them should hold our horses head,  
Ten at the prison door should be,  
And ten should guard the prison all round,  
While the rest should set the bold prisoner free.'

Dicky broke locks, and Dicky broke bolts,  
And Dicky made all before him to flee,  
And Dicky took Arthur all up in his arms  
And carried him off most manfully.

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1—In the broadside. quotation marks are lacking and the punctuation is very faulty. Otherwise no changes have been made.



Dickey looked over his left shoulder,—

‘You little do think what I do see;  
Here comes the bold sheriff of bonny down dale  
And a hundred bold traps in company.’

‘O stop, O stop,’ the sheriff he cries,  
‘O stop, O stop, whosoever you be;  
Only give us the irons from off his legs,  
And you may have the bold prisoner free.’

‘O no, O no, you are vastly mistaken,  
O no, O no, that never can be;  
The irons will serve to shoe our horses,  
For we have a farrier in our company.’

‘O I will leave houses and I will leave lands,  
I will leave wives and children three;  
But before I’d leave my own dearest brother,  
I sooner would die under yonder green tree.’

To dancing, to dancing they went,  
To dancing they went most merrily:  
’Twas the very best dance that ever they had,  
Because they had set the bold prisoner free.

## RESEARCHES IN EXPERIMENTAL PHONETICS

(Studies from the Yale Psychological Laboratory. Edited by Edward W. Scripture, Director of the Psychological Laboratory. Vol. VII. New Haven, 1899, pp. 108. Review by Frank Egbert Bryant, Ann Arbor, Mich., 1901.)

**T**HE volume contains two articles: "Researches in Experimental Phonetics" and "Observations on Rhythmic Action," both by Dr. Scripture. This review will concern itself only with the first article.

The "Researches in Experimental Phonetics" deserves the careful consideration of phoneticians. Dr. Scripture is a laboratory man, and he uses laboratory methods in his researches. Though his regular line of work is psychology, this article is devoted exclusively to phonetics and prosody. He has devised a clever machine that greatly enlarges the records on gramophone plates, and it is these records that he uses in his experiments. The researches "were begun in order to settle the controversy in regard to the quantitative character of English verse," but, in reality, the greater part of the article is taken up with a study of the nature of some of the speech-sounds—particularly the diphthong *ai* in *I*, *eye*, *fly*, *die*, and *thy*. We are told that this is but a first report, and that there are other researches in progress that cover a much broader field.

Dr. Scripture is not the first to study gramophone and phonograph records, as he himself shows in his introduction, but his methods are so simple and he introduces them with such vigor that they are likely to be employed by others. If these methods prove to give

accurate results, Dr. Scripture's work will have been, directly or indirectly, of great service in phonetics, prosody, and kindred subjects. It is for this reason that the fundamental presupposition underlying his methods should be investigated with extreme care. It would almost appear that it has not occurred to Dr. Scripture that gramophone records may be inaccurate. For him the only difficulty seems to lie in the interpreting the record. But the question may justly be asked: Can the gramophone records be absolutely relied upon? And this needs more than a cursory answer.

I have listened to several phonographs, graphophones, and gramophones, but I have never heard one which seemed to me to give an entirely natural reproduction of the voice. There was always something lacking or out of proportion in the representation. Phonograph dealers have told me that it is a difficult task to get even the best records. It requires experience, and even then it is almost impossible to get good records for some people and for some musical instruments. When one considers the make-up of the machine it becomes clear that there are many possibilities for inaccuracy. For instance, there are the various resonance chambers, there is the vibration rate of the glass disk, and then there is the complicated process of making a plate. All these things make it possible for error to creep in. It is not the purpose of this review to condemn graphic methods, but to call the attention of experimenters to the imperfectness of the tool they are using, and to the need of thoroughly testing it. One should whisper a passage to the machine, and see how accurate the report is. A long series of tuning-forks could be tried to see if each note is returned with equal accuracy. One could take a trombone and blow glides

into it. And such questions as the following might be asked: Does it give back the exact relative pitch and the exact relative intensity? and, Does the machine give back the fundamentals and overtones in exactly the right proportions? It may be that Dr. Scripture's instruments are entirely accurate, but there are several of his results that phoneticians would hardly care to accept until this is shown to be so.

Again, in order to be sure of his results, Dr. Scripture should make his own records and not have to rely on purchased ones. In beginning the study, he should use only one subject, whose speech habits he knows perfectly. He should take note of all the conditions under which each record is made, and he should have many records. Dr. Scripture at times appears to be somewhat rash in drawing conclusions from insufficient material. As an example of this we may say that from the record of *h* in *who* he generalizes for all *h*'s.

We may now consider briefly some of Dr. Scripture's particular results. After an excellent introduction, he begins a study of the diphthong *ai* as it is found in the nursery-rime *Cock Robin* and in one or two short prose selections. He uses the National Gramophone Company's records, for which Mr. W. H. Hooley, an elocutionist, is the speaker. In his treatment of this diphthong he brings out some startling results. For instance, instead of the second part of the diphthong being the weaker, his records show in most cases that it is from  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to  $2\frac{1}{3}$  times that of the *a*! For almost all of his *a*'s there seems to be a fixed note of about 1,000. Louis Bevier, in the *Physical Review*, vol. X, p. 193, working on phonograph records, also finds a similar note, but with a vibration-rate quite a little above this. Whether this is a mouth resonance tone, as is sug-



gested, or a resonance tone due to the machine, can be determined only by careful investigation.

Dr. Scripture would appear to go too far in some of his statements. Thus, he concedes that *eye* and *I* are different fundamentally, although the ear cannot distinguish between them (p. 36). He says, in general, with reference to *ai*, that "*ai* is not the sum of the two vowels *a* and *i*, but an organic union into a new sound *ai*. Thus, there is no necessary pause or sudden change of intensity or change of pitch or even change in character," (p. 53.) This is, of course, true so far as a pause is concerned; in fact, the statement might be made much more positive. To be true of character, the statement can be made only with emphasis on the word "sudden."

In the course of his paper, Dr. Scripture treats briefly the subject of punctuation. He puts a period after the third line in the first stanza because Mr. Hooley in his one reading paused there. Later (p. 36) he gives us his philosophy of the subject. He implies that there is still an accepted theory which relates punctuation and time. He tells us that possibly "this theory may have to be modified, as later researches have shown that comma pauses may be long and semicolon and colon pauses may be very short." He seems, however, still inclined to hold the "accepted" theory.

Dr. Scripture discusses at some length the various vowel theories. He favors Willis's theory that the mouth tone is independent of the cord tone in regard to pitch. He believes that he has shown with absolute certainty that this must be so. But again the question arises: Are the gramophone results absolutely reliable? Rayleigh, in his "*Theory of Sound*," vol. II, p.

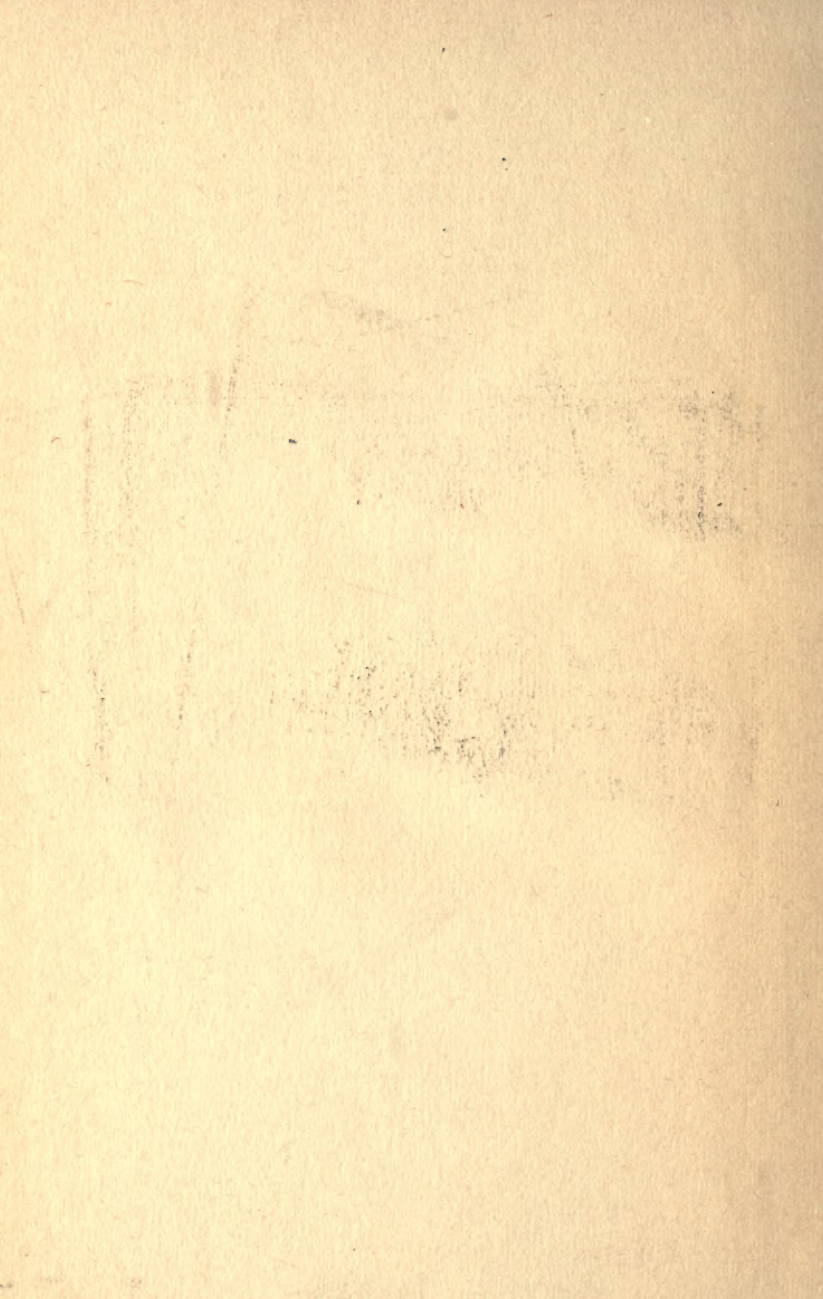
477, says that from graphic records the fundamentals are either weak or lacking, but that in experiments with resonators they are found to be most important. This is a divergence well worth noting. If it is true that phonographs and gramophones slight the lower fundamentals, we cannot feel so sure of Dr. Scripture's conclusions. So once again we see the need of a thorough investigation of the reliability of the machine.

The cut on page 59, in which is given the whole record for "Who'll be the parson?" presents much that is interesting. The machine gives here no record for *p*, *b*, *th*, and hardly any for *s*. This seems to disclose a serious weakness in the gramophone as a scientific instrument.

The last few pages of the article are devoted to the study of *Cock Robin* with a view to the settlement of the controversy in regard to the quantitative character of English verse. To Dr. Scripture the task must appear an easy one, if such a little nursery-rime can settle it. *Cock Robin* is not a fair example to stand for the whole of English verse. It belongs to folk poetry, and has certain peculiarities of its own. But the whole treatment of the subject shows an unconsciousness of the difficulty of the problems involved, and a lack of acquaintance with the present views of verse theorists.

There is another matter that the reader's attention should be called to, which surprises one in the work of a laboratory man. I refer to the errors to be found in the cuts and diagrams. Fig. 5 does not agree with fig. 7, nor with its own description. Not only in the case of fig. 6 (acknowledged by Dr. Scripture), but also in that of fig. 18, fig. 24, fig. 29, fig. 33, fig. 42, etc., the scale reads 100,200,400,300,500. . . .

Moreover, much of the actual plotting is wrong. In fig. 6 the height of *i* is drawn over 300. It should be 250. Fig. 15 has the *a* curve up to 4 and then down again. It should be constant 3. But on page 49, Dr. Scripture says that fig. 15 is carefully plotted. Further errors will be found in fig. 28 and fig. 32. Errors so serious as these throw over the work as a whole an uncomfortable element of doubt.





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