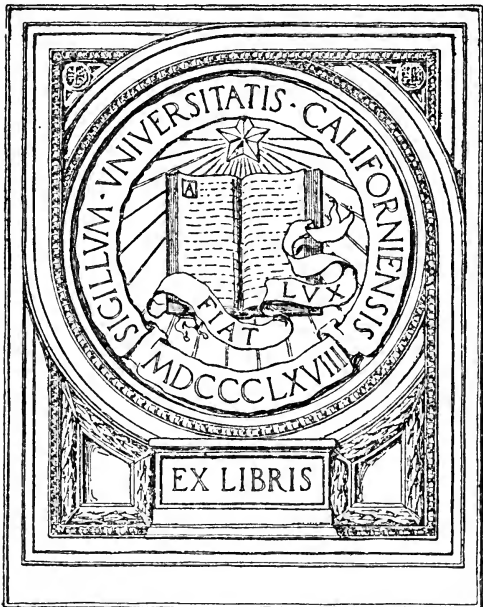


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The Nibelungenlied and Gudrun  
in  
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The  
Nibelungenlied and Gudrun  
in  
England and America

BY

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## P R E F A C E

THE main purpose of the following pages, for which a Certificate of Research has been granted by the University of Cambridge, is to make a modest contribution of material to the future historian of the literary relations between the English and German speaking peoples by placing on record exactly what attention has been paid in England and America to the two great National Epics of Germany. Incidentally it is hoped that some help and guidance may be afforded both to students and to intending workers in a field as yet more or less neglected.

With these objects in view, the material collected has been divided, in the case of each poem, into four sections, dealing respectively with Translations, Reprints of the Old German Text, Miscellaneous Accounts and Essays, and Influence on Literature Proper. In each of these sections chronological order has been followed, and careful estimates have been made of the value of all translations, essays, &c., worthy of detailed notice.

To avoid undue repetition in criticising so many publications of similar contents, introductory sections have been prefixed containing fairly detailed abstracts of the two poems, brief accounts of the most important facts and theories connected with them (including the results of recent research), and select bibliographies. In the course of each abstract a few striking passages are quoted from the original, and rendered into simple prose for comparison with the translations.

For the matter of these introductory sections I am indebted to the recognised editions and to the works mentioned in the bibliographies and text; the chief sources for the rest of the work were, of course, the catalogues of the British Museum, the Cambridge University Library, the Bodleian Library, and the Taylor Institution, Oxford. The publishers' catalogues, the Annual American Catalogue, indexes of periodicals, and the chief bibliographical works have also been searched, and some material has been found by examining large numbers of books with such promising titles as those mentioned in the Appendix. The references to the Nibelungen and Gudrun sagas in Anglo-Saxon and Middle English literature are, except where otherwise stated, mentioned, but not discussed, in G. Binz's *Zeugnisse zur germanischen Sage in England* (*P.B.B.*, xx. 190 ff.), an article concerned mainly with the occurrence in England of names taken from the old sagas.

In conclusion, I must express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Breul and Professor Fiedler for their valuable suggestions and encouraging interest. To the former I am especially indebted for suggesting the subject, and to the latter for his kindness in reading the proofs.

FRANCIS E. SANDBACH.

THE UNIVERSITY, BIRMINGHAM,  
May 16, 1903.

*P.S.*—This work would have been issued in December 1903 but for the fire at Messrs. Leighton's, in which the entire stock was destroyed.



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THE NIBELUNGENLIED





# THE NIBELUNGENLIED

## I. INTRODUCTORY

THE story of Siegfried, the bright, unconquerable hero, of his assassination from motives of jealousy, and of the subsequent massacre of the Burgundians by the Huns, was probably the most widely spread of all the old Teutonic traditions. Originating among the Rhine-Franks about the end of the fifth century, the saga was carried by wandering gleemen to all lands peopled by Germanic tribes, and penetrated by way of Denmark to the Scandinavian North. It was natural enough that in different localities and at different periods the original legend should undergo various modifications; there would be alterations, omissions, additions, dependent on such factors as the nationality of the singer, his desire to flatter his audience, or the attempt to introduce new motives or make a connection with other saga-cycles. Thus it is that none of the versions that have come down to us have preserved, pure and undefiled, the original story, and it is only after a comparison of these versions that we can reconstruct its outline and study its historical and mythological foundations. The most important for this purpose are respectively: Upper German (the *Nibelungenlied* and *Hürnen Seyfrid*), Lower German (the *Thidrekssaga*), and Norse (the two *Eddas* and the *Völsungasaga*).

The *Nibelungenlied* opens with the description of Kriemhild, the far-famed beauty of Worms, who lived in great splendour under the care of her mother Ute and her brothers Gunther, Gernot, and Giselher. One night, however, she is disturbed by a dream, in which her

future happiness and sorrow are foreshadowed (Piper,<sup>1</sup> st. 13-17):—

In disen hôhen êren troumte Kriemhilt,  
 wi si zûge einen valken starc, scœn und wilt,  
 den ir zwêne aren erkrummen, daz si daz muoste sehen.  
 ir erkunde, ir dirre werlde leider nimmer gesehen.

Den troum si dô sagete ir muoter Uoten.  
 sine kundes niht besceiden baz der guoten :  
 “ der valke, den du ziuhest, daz ist ein edel man ;  
 ine welle got behüeten, du muost in sciere vloren hân.”

“ Waz saget ir mir von manne, vil liebiu muoter mîn ?  
 âne recken minne, sô wil ich immer sîn.  
 sus scœne ich wil beliben unz an mînen tôt,  
 daz ich von mannes minne sol gewinnen nimmer nôt.”

“ Nu versprich ez niht ze sêre ” sprach aber ir muoter dô.  
 “ soltu immer herzenliche zer werlde werden vrô,  
 daz gesiht von mannes minne. du wirst ein scœne wîp,  
 ob dir noch got gefüezet eins rehte guoten ritters lîp.”

“ Die rede lât beliben ” sprach si “ frouwe mîn.  
 ez ist an manegen wîben vil dicke worden scîn,  
 wie liebe mit leide ze iungest lônên kan.  
 ich sol si mîden beide ; sone kan mir nimmer missegân.”<sup>2</sup>

Siegfried is next brought before us, the son of Siegmund and Sieglinde, King and Queen of the Netherlands. He has already gained fame as a warrior, though the *Nibel-*

<sup>1</sup> Paul Piper, *Die Nibelungen*, in *Kürschner's Deutsche National-Litteratur* (Berlin & Stuttgart, 1889).

<sup>2</sup> Amidst all this splendour Kriemhild dreamed how she trained a falcon, strong, fine, and fierce, and how two eagles tore it to pieces before her very eyes. Nothing in this world could have caused her more grief. She related the dream to her mother Ute, who could only interpret it for her good daughter thus: “The falcon thou wast training is a husband of noble birth; unless God protect him, thou wilt lose him early.” “Why do you speak to me of a husband, my dear mother? I wish for no warrior's love. Thus beautiful would I remain till death, and never be in distress through love of a husband.” “Be not too ready to renounce it,” replied her mother. “If thou art destined ever to know heartfelt joy in this world, it will be from a husband's love. Thou wilt be a lovely wife, if God send thee a right worthy knight.” “Let us speak no more of it, madam,” she answered, “it has often been shown in the life of many a woman how happiness in the end turns to grief. I shall avoid both; then no misfortune can befall me.”

*ungenlied* itself tells but little of his early life and adventures, and the strophes containing that little were considered spurious by Lachmann. Hearing of Kriemhild's beauty, Siegfried is fired with the desire to make her his wife, and sets off with a dozen followers to Worms. Hagen of Troneg, Gunther's right-hand man, recognises the young hero and relates the story of his attempt to divide between Schilbung and Nibelung the treasure they had inherited from their father. He tells how, when the two princes grew impatient at his slowness and treacherously attacked him, Siegfried seized the good sword Balmung—his promised reward—and slew them both, together with many of their men. From the dwarf Alberich, who attempted to avenge his masters, he won his *tarnkappe* (invisible-making cloak), and, after forcing him to swear fealty, appointed him keeper of the treasure.

"More still I know of him," continued Hagen, "he has slain a dragon, and made himself invulnerable by bathing in its blood. We must receive him graciously, and avoid making him our enemy." Siegfried now makes a long stay at Worms, in the hope of seeing the fair one, distinguishing himself meanwhile by his skill and valour in the lists, and rendering important aid to the Burgundians in a campaign against the Saxons and Danes. But at length, a year having dragged along without his appearing to have made any progress with his suit—though actually Kriemhild is, in secret, full of admiration for his martial skill and fine bearing—he reluctantly decides to take his leave. His hosts, however, will not hear of it, for he is a most useful ally; and, guessing perhaps the real object of his visit, they bring about a meeting between him and Kriemhild. A great festival is arranged, at which the ladies of the court appear, Kriemhild outshining them all in beauty (Piper, st. 282-287):—

Nu gie diu minneclîche alsô der morgenrôt  
tuot ûz den trûeben wolken. dâ sciet von maneger nôt,  
der sî da truog in herzen und lange hêt getân :  
er sach die minneclîchen nu vil hêrlîchen stân.

Iâ lûhte ir von ir wæte vil manec edel stein,  
 ir rôsenrôtiu varwe vil minneclîchen scëin.  
 ob iemen wünschē solde, der kunde niht geiehen,  
 daz er ze dirre werelde hête iht scēners gesehen.

Sam der liechte mâne vor den sternen stât,  
 des scëin sô lûterliche ab den wôlken gât,  
 dem stuont si nu geliche vor maneger frouwen guot.  
 des wart dâ wol gehœhet den zieren heleden dër muot.

Die rîchen kamerære sah man vor ir gân.  
 die hôhgemuoten degene dine wolden daz niht lân,  
 sine drungen, dâ si sâhen dië minneclîchen meit.  
 Sîvrîde dem hêrren wart beide lieb unde leit.

Er dâht in sînem muote "wie kunde daz ergân,  
 daz ich dich minnen solde? daz ist ein tumber wân.  
 sol aber ich dich vremeden, sô ware ich sanfter tôt."  
 er wart von den gedanken vil dicke bleich unde rôt.

Dô stuont sô minneclîche das Sigemundes kint,  
 sam er entworfen wære an ein permint  
 von guotes meisters listen, als man ime iach,  
 daz man helt deheinen nie sô scēnen gesach.<sup>1</sup>

Kriemhild receives him very sweetly and graciously, and he soon has an opportunity of proposing for her to Gunther, when the latter resolves to woo Queen Brunhild of Isenstein and cannot be dissuaded, in spite of the danger involved in the suit. For Brunhild is not to be

<sup>1</sup> Now came the lovely maiden, like the rosy dawn breaking out from gloomy clouds. Then he who bore her in his heart, and long had done, was freed from his trouble, for he saw his heart's desire there before him in her splendour. Many a jewel sparkled on her raiment; her rose-red cheeks were radiant and lovable. Whatever he might wish to say, none could truthfully declare that he had ever in this world seen anything more beautiful. Just as the bright moon excels the stars, its beams reflected brightly from the clouds, so she now stood superior to the ladies about her. At the sight of such beauty the gaily dressed knights grew eager to prove their mettle. Chamberlains in rich attire went before her, but the high-mettled heroes could not be prevented from thronging to where they could see the lovely maid. Sir Siegfried was both pleased and sad. He thought: "How could it be that I should win thee? That is a foolish hope. But if I must avoid thee—I were rather dead!" These thoughts made him by turns pale and red. There the son of Siegmund stood, as beautiful as though painted on parchment by the skill of a cunning master, and it was said of him that so handsome a warrior had never been seen.



lightly won; she is possessed of marvellous strength, and all her lovers must match themselves against her in throwing the spear, hurling a heavy stone, and jumping; if they fail in any one of these they forfeit their lives. Siegfried, who appears to have been at Isenstein before—though in what character our poem does not relate—agrees to help Gunther in this matter, provided that when they return with Brunhild he shall receive Kriemhild as his reward. After due preparation they set off, accompanied only by Hagen and his brother Dankwart. In the contests, Siegfried, invisible in his *tarnkappe*, is the actual conqueror of the Amazonian queen, while Gunther merely performs the appropriate actions; and on their return to Worms the former receives the promised reward. Both couples are married on the same day, but poor Gunther meets with very summary treatment at the hands of his bride. She is unable to understand how her sister-in-law can be given to her husband's vassal—the rôle played by Siegfried at Isenstein—and as the king can offer no satisfactory explanation, she meets his caresses by binding him with her girdle and hanging him on a nail, there to spend the night. Once more the *tarnkappe* comes into requisition, for on the next night Siegfried wrestles with and overpowers her for Gunther, but is so ill-advised as to carry off her girdle and ring, which he presents to his own loving wife. From that time on, Brunhild's strength, depending on her maidenhood, was only that of an ordinary woman.

Siegfried and Kriemhild withdraw to their capital, Santen, on the Rhine, and all goes well until Brunhild persuades Gunther to invite them to a festival at Worms, for it is strange, she thinks, that the vassal neither pays tribute nor renders homage. They come, readily enough; but before long a dispute arises between the two queens as to the merits of their respective lords, ending in a quarrel for precedence in entering the church. In front of the sacred building Kriemhild bursts out with a public accusation touching her rival's honour, and pro-

duces the fatal girdle and ring in support of her assertions. Siegfried is sent for and publicly denies the existence of any guilt; an outward reconciliation takes place, but the tragedy is near. For Hagen can never forgive the slur cast upon his queen; Siegfried must die. With Gunther he plans the murder. Bribed messengers announce that the Saxons and Danes are again marching against them, and Siegfried generously offers his assistance. Hagen visits Kriemhild, feigning solicitude for her husband, and learns that Siegfried has a vulnerable place between the shoulder-blades, where a linden leaf kept the dragon's blood from his skin; he persuades her to sew a small cross on his victim's cloak to mark the dangerous spot, that he, so he says, may ward off dangerous blows. Later messengers arrive with the news that the enemy has decided after all to leave them in peace, and a great hunt in the Odenwald is arranged in place of the campaign. Siegfried performs wonders and shows himself the best huntsman of them all. At the feast that follows the day's sport it is found that wine is wanting, but the resourceful Hagen knows a spring near by and challenges Siegfried to race him to it. Although the latter keeps on his hunting costume and carries his weapons, he easily beats Hagen, who had stripped, and the two warriors await by the spring the arrival of King Gunther, that he may drink first. But treacherously was Siegfried's politeness repaid (Piper, st. 981-989):—

Do engalt er sîner zûhte. den bogen unt daz swert  
 daz truoc allez Hagene von im danewert.  
 dô sprang er hin widere, dá er den gêr vant.  
 er sach nâch einem bilde an des küenen gewant.

Dâ der hêrre Sîfrit ob dem brunnen tranc,  
 er scôz in durch daz kriuze, daz von der wunden spranc  
 daz bluot im von dem herzen vaste an Hagenen wât.  
 sô grôze missewende ein helet nimmer mêr begât.

Den gêr im gein dem herzen stecken er dô lie.  
 alsô grimmeclichen ze flühten Hagene nie  
 gelief noch in der werlde vor deheinem man.  
 dô sich der hêrre Sîfrit der grôzen wunden versan,

Der hârre tobelichen von dem brunnen spranc.  
im ragete von den herten ein gêrstange lanc.  
der fûrste wânde vinden bogen oder swert ;  
sô müese wesen Hagene nâch sîme dienste gewert.

Dô der sêre wunde des swertes niht envant,  
done hêt êt er niht mêre wan des scildes rant.  
er zuhten von dem brunnen, dô lief er Hagenen an ;  
done kunde im niht entrinnen des künic Gunthêres man.

Swie wunt er was zem tôde, sô krefteclîch er sluoc,  
daz ûzer dem schilde dræte genuoc  
des edelen gesteines ; der schilt gar zebrast.  
sich hôte gerne errochen der hêrlîche gast.

Dô was gestrûchet Hagene vor sîner hant zetal.  
von des slages krefte der wert vil lûte erhal.  
hêt er swert enhende, sô wær ez Hagenen tôt,  
sô sêre zurnde der wunde ; des gie im wêrlîchen nôt.

Erblichen was sîn varwe, ern kunde niht gestên.  
sînes libes sterke muose gar zergên,  
wand er des tôdes zeichen in liechter varwe truoc.  
sît wart er beweinet von schœnen vrouwen genuoc.

Dô viel in die bluomen der Kriemhilde man.  
daz pluot von sîner wunden sach man vaste gân.  
dô begonde er schelden (des twanc in grôziu nôt),  
di ûf in gerâten hêten den ungetriuwen tôt.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Then he paid for his courtesy ; Hagen removed his bow and sword (*daz allez*), sprang back to his spear, and looked for the sign on the warrior's coat. As Sir Siegfried leaned over the water to drink, Hagen drove the spear through the cross, so hard that the heart-blood spurted on to his own garments. Such a foul deed would no hero now commit. There he left the spear sticking near his heart ; never in the world had Hagen yet fled so madly before any man. When Siegfried felt the sore wound he sprang up in fury from the stream, the long spear-shaft standing out from between his shoulder-blades. He thought to find near his bow or sword, and Hagen would have been paid as he deserved. But when the sore-wounded man found no sword there, he had only his shield left ; this he snatched from beside the spring and ran towards Hagen. King Gunther's vassal could not outrun him ; wounded to death as he was he smote him with such force that a shower of precious stones fell from the shield and it broke to pieces. Eager he was to avenge himself, the noble guest. Hagen was laid low by his blow, and the forest clearing resounded with the crash. Had he held a sword in his hand that had been Hagen's last hour, so furious was he ; in truth he had reason for it. Gone was his healthy colour ; he could no longer stand. His strength was destined to depart, for he bore the sign of death in his pale hue ; many a beautiful lady wept for him afterwards. There Kriemhild's husband fell among the flowers. His blood flowed fast from the wound ; then, forced by his distress, he reproached those who had planned his treacherous murder.

The story that her husband had been killed by robbers, Kriemhild, of course, knew to be a lie, and her suspicions were confirmed by the fact that the wounds of the corpse began to bleed afresh when Hagen and Gunther were near. She realised, however, that revenge was beyond her power for the present, and made peace with all but Hagen. The Nibelungen Hoard was sent for, and Kriemhild soon began to gain such a reputation for generosity that Hagen grew alarmed, and added to the wrong he had already done her by persuading Gunther to seize the treasure; its recovery he made impossible by sinking it in the Rhine at a spot known only to himself.

Some thirteen years after Siegfried's death, Etzel, King of the Huns, lost his consort Helche, and was strongly urged by his counsellors to take Kriemhild in her place. Rüdiger of Bechlarn was despatched to Worms, and eventually obtained the consent of the lady herself and of her relatives, the only dissentient voice being that of Hagen, who foresaw the course that events would be likely to take. Seven more years roll by, and Kriemhild has won the love of all Etzel's court; now, at last, she can think of vengeance. She causes Etzel to invite her brothers and Hagen to a festival, which invitation they accept, all but Hagen being unsuspecting of her purpose. If he is afraid, the others tell him, he may stay at Worms, a taunt that brings out in him the fierce determination to see the matter through, whatever may betide. In spite of Ute's entreaties, the outcome of warning dreams, they set out, a thousand and sixty knights and nine thousand soldiers, on their ill-fated journey. In the difficulties and dangers that beset them from this point onward, Hagen's unfaltering courage and ever-ready resource make him the hero of the remainder of the story. He it is who, when they come to the swollen Danube, finds the ferryman, and on his refusal to take them over, slays him and accomplishes the laborious task himself. He is warned by the water-fairies that, excepting the chaplain, they will all perish at Etzel's court; in the hope of falsifying the

prediction, he throws the holy man overboard ; then, seeing him miraculously saved from drowning, he recognises the hopelessness of their position and breaks to pieces the boat when all are across, lest any should think of deserting. As they push on by forced marches, he beats off with his rearguard a night attack of the Bavarians, furious to avenge the ferryman's death. So they come to Bechlarn; their hospitable entertainment there by Rüdiger—the model of courtesy and generosity—appearing as the last short interval of sunshine before the breaking of the storm. But their stay is short; they must push on to Hunland. A warning message from Dietrich of Bern reaches them, to the effect that Kriemhild has not yet forgotten Siegfried, and though Etzel welcomes his guests cordially enough—for he has no suspicion of what is brewing—his queen's manner is cold and menacing. Giselher alone she greets with the usual kiss, whereupon Hagen binds his helmet tighter, and says such a welcome is but an ill omen. He will be welcomed, she retorts, by those who wished to see him ; has he brought the treasure he stole from her ? Not he, he replies, he has enough to carry in his shield, armour, and weapons. This calls forth the apparently courteous request that the heroes will lay off their accoutrements and enter the palace ; but Hagen declines for them all, and the first attempt at treachery is foiled. Soon after, seeing Hagen alone with Volker, whose valour is equalled by his skill in music, Kriemhild tries to induce her courtiers to avenge her on the former ; but, though he openly confesses his guilt as Siegfried's murderer, the Huns shrink back before the fierce looks and stalwart forms of the two friends. When night comes, the Burgundians rightly think it needful to guard against treachery ; Hagen and Volker volunteer to keep watch (Piper, st. 1833–1837):—

Dô garten si sich beide in liehtez ir gewant.  
 dô nam ir ietwedere den schilt an sîne hant,  
 und giengen ûz dem hûse für die tür stân.  
 dô pflâgen si der geste ; daz was mit triuwen getân.

Volkêr der snelle zuo des sales want  
 sînen scilt den guoten leint er von der hant.  
 dô gie er hin widere, die videln er genam,  
 dô diende er sînen friunden, als ez dem helde gezam.

Under di tür des hûses saz er ûf den stein.  
 küener videlære wart nie dehein.  
 dô im der seiten dænen sô suozlich erklanc,  
 die stolzen ellenden sagtens Volkêre danc.

Dô klungen sîne seiten, daz al daz hûs erdôz.  
 sîn ellen zuo der fuoge diu beidiu wâren grôz.  
 süezer unde senfter videlen er began ;  
 do entswebete er an den betten manegen sorgenden man.

Dô si entslâfen wâren und er daz ervant,  
 dô nam der degen widere den scilt an die hant,  
 und gie ûz dem gademe für den turn stân,  
 und huote der ellenden vor den Kriemhilde man.<sup>1</sup>

Towards midnight armed Huns approach stealthily, but retire again at sight of Hagen and Volker. Morning breaks, the last for most of the Burgundians ; they rise to attend early mass, but go fully armed, Hagen giving Etzel the excuse that it is his lords' custom to wear their arms for the first three days of every festival. After the festival a tournament takes place, in the course of which Volker deliberately slays a young Hun, and King Etzel with difficulty prevents the outbreak of general hostilities by declaring the deed to have been accidental. Soon after all are seated at a great banquet. Within the palace the Burgundian kings and their knights are entertained by Etzel and Kriemhild, while Dankwart and the

<sup>1</sup> Then they donned their shining armour. Each took his shield and went out of the building to stand before the door, where they loyally kept watch over the guests. Valiant Volker leaned his shield against the wall, re-entered the building, took up his fiddle, and played right skilfully for his friends. Under the porch he sat on the stone ; never was there a braver minstrel. His strings sounded so sweetly that the high-spirited warriors gave him thanks. And again his strings resounded so that the house re-echoed the music ; his valour and his skill were both alike great. Anon he began to play more sweetly and softly, and so put to sleep many a careworn hero. When they were asleep, and he assured of it, he once more grasped his shield, and, taking his stand outside before the tower, guarded his countrymen against Kriemhild's followers.

soldiery eat elsewhere. But Siegfried's widow had made good use of the interval. After a futile attempt to secure the help of Dietrich of Bern she had won over by lavish promises her husband's brother Blödelin, who, with a thousand armed followers, attacked the defenceless Dankwart and his men. Dankwart alone escaped, cutting his way to the palace hall, where he suddenly burst in covered with his enemies' blood. "You sit there too long, my brother Hagen," he cries out, "all our men are slain!" Bidding him guard the door, Hagen strikes off the head of young Ortlieb, the son of Etzel and Kriemhild, kills the lad's tutor with a second blow, and with a third cuts off the right hand of the minstrel who had brought the invitation from Etzel's court. Volker now springs up and joins in the slaughter, and their royal masters, unable to stop the fray, are soon compelled to draw in self-defence. Dietrich, however, an exile from his own land, and a guest at Etzel's court, is unwilling to take part in the feud, and receives permission to withdraw, taking with him Kriemhild, Etzel, and his own followers; then the fight continues till not a single Hun remains alive in the hall. By Giselher's advice they now throw out the corpses and prepare to defend their position. The fighting continues till nightfall, but the heroes still hold out against the overwhelming odds, and loyally reject the offer of their lives on the condition that Hagen be delivered up to Kriemhild's vengeance. The queen is now driven to the last resource of setting fire to the hall, and the survivors spend a terrible night (Piper, st. 2114-2122):—

Ir einer sprach dârinne "wir müezen ligen tôt.  
waz hilfet uns daz grüezen, daz uns der küenec enbôt?  
mir tuot von starker hitze der durst sô rehte wê,  
des, wân, mîn leben sciere in disen sorgen zergê."

Dô sprach von Tronege Hagene "ir edeln ritter guot,  
swen twinge durstes nôt, der trinke hie daz pluot.  
daz ist in solher hitze noch bezzer danne wîn.  
ez enmac an disen zîten êt nu niht bezzer gesîn."

Dô gie der recken einer, da er einen tôten vant ;  
 er kniete im zuo der wunden, den helm er abe gebant  
 dô begonde er trinken daz vliezende pluot.  
 swi ungewon ers wære, ez dûhte in grœzlîchen guot.

“ Nu lône iu got, her Hagene,” sprach der müede man  
 “ daz ich von iuwer lêre sô wol getrunken hân.  
 mir ist noch vil selten gescenket bezzer wîn.  
 lebe ich deheine wîle, ich sol iu immer wæge sîn.”

Do di andern daz gehôrten, daz ez in dûhte guot,  
 dô wart ir michel mêre, die trunken ouch daz pluot.  
 dâvon gewan vil krefte ir etesliches lîp.  
 des ergalt an lieben friunden sît inanec wætlîches wip.

Daz fiwer viel genôte ûf si in den sal.  
 dô leiten siz mit schilden von in hin zetal.  
 der rouch und ouch diu hitze in tâten beidiu wê.  
 ich wæne, der iâmer immer mêr an heleden ergê.

Dô sprach von Tronege Hagene “stêt zuo des sales want,  
 lâht niht die brende vallen ûf iuwer helmbant.  
 tret si mit den fûezen tiefer in daz pluot.  
 ez ist ein übel hôhzît, di uns diu küneginne tuot.”

In sus getânen leiden der naht in doch zeran.  
 noch stuont vor dem hûse der küene spileman  
 und Hagene sîn geselle, geleinet über rant ;  
 si warten scaden mêre von den ûz Etzelen lant.

Dô sprach der videlære “ nu gê wir in den sal.  
 sô wænent des die Hiunen, daz wir sîn über al  
 tôt von dirre quâle, diu an uns ist getân.  
 si sehent uns noh begene in strâte ir etelîchen gân.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> One of them within said: “ We are doomed to die. What is now the use of the king’s greeting? The thirst from the heat torments me so, that I fear my life will soon pass away.” Then said Hagen of Tronege: “ High-born knights and good! if any of you are tortured by thirst, drink the blood here. In such heat it is better than wine, and, at any rate, it is the best thing we can get now.” One of the warriors went to a corpse, knelt down by the wound, unbound his helmet, and drank of the flowing blood. Unused as he was to it, he found it right good. “ God reward you, Sir Hagen,” spoke the weary man, “ for the good draught you recommended. Never has better wine been poured out for me. As long as I survive I shall be grateful to you.” When the rest heard how he found it good, many more of them also drank the blood, and each who did so gained strength again; many a beautiful woman paid for it with her lover’s life. The burning woodwork kept falling upon them, but they protected themselves with



The surprise of Kriemhild and the Huns on finding their guests alive and undismayed, six hundred strong, may be imagined; but a truce was now impossible and the fighting was renewed. At last Gunther and Hagen only of the undaunted six hundred survive; all Etzel's chiefs have likewise perished, as well as Dietrich's followers, who, against his express orders, let themselves be drawn into the terrible conflict by the hot-headed Wolfhart. Old Hildebrand alone escaped, severely wounded, and brought back the news. ~~Dietrich can no longer remain neutral~~; he must avenge his brave Amelungs, and soon delivers first Hagen, then Gunther, in bonds to Kriemhild, begging her, however, to spare their lives. Having caused them to be cast into separate dungeons, she visits Hagen and offers him his life if he will tell where her treasure is. He has sworn not to discover the place to any one, he replies, during the life of any of his masters. She leaves him, and soon returns, carrying by the hair her brother Gunther's head, whereon Hagen exclaims that now the place is known to himself and God alone, and shall ever remain a secret to her. Furious at being thus tricked, she seizes his sword—once Siegfried's—and strikes off his head in the presence of Etzel, Dietrich, and Hildebrand; the last, enraged, springs forward and kills her too. Thus the poem closes, leaving Etzel and Dietrich weeping over their losses. "I cannot tell you," it concludes, "what happened afterwards, except that knights, ladies, and soldiers were seen weeping for the death of their friends. Here the story ends. That is the Nibelungen tragedy."<sup>1</sup>

their shields; smoke and heat both tormented them. Such distress, I ween, will heroes never have again. Then cried Hagen of Troneg: "Stand close to the walls; let not the brands fall on your helm-bands; tread them in the blood with your feet. This is an evil festival the queen has prepared for us." In such sufferings the night at last wore through. The bold minstrel and Hagen, his comrade, stood yet before the building, leaning on their shields and awaiting still further injury from Etzel's folk. The minstrel said: "Let us now enter the hall, that the Huns may think we have all died in these agonies they have caused us. Plenty of them will yet see us meet them in battle."

<sup>1</sup> *Der Nibelunge nôt*. Some of the MSS. end with the words: *der Nibelunge liet*, both of which expressions are commonly used as titles of the whole poem.

A sort of continuation of the poem should be mentioned here, the *Klage*, which describes the funeral honours paid to the slain, the lamenting at Etzel's court, at Bechlarn, and at Worms, and the departure of Dietrich and Hildebrand to their own country. It is found in the three chief MSS. of the *Nibelungenlied*, and in some others, and was composed in riming couplets about 1190. Its general poetic value is low, nor does it contain any variations of importance for the saga. The author, who is unknown, based his work on a text closely related to B,<sup>1</sup> in Bartsch's opinion, but had also other sources.

The other Upper German poem mentioned, the *Siegfriedslied* or *Hürnen Seyfrid* (Horny Siegfried), probably dates from the thirteenth century, though we know it only in printed texts of three hundred years later. It relates how Siegfried, as a youth, was so unruly that he had to be sent away from home. Coming to a smithy he engaged himself as a servant, but his strokes were so powerful that he broke the hammer and drove the anvil into the earth; his master's remonstrances he met by giving both him and the other assistant a sound thrashing.

The poor smith very naturally wanted to get rid of such a helper, and sent him to fetch fuel from a forest infested by dragons. Our hero, of course, exterminated a large number of these creatures, roasted them, and bathed in the melted horn from their scales, thus rendering himself invulnerable, except between the shoulder-blades. About this time Gibich was King of Worms. One day his daughter Kriemhild was carried off by a dragon, but was eventually rescued by Siegfried, who, with the help of a dwarf Eugel, slew the monster and gained possession of the Nibelungen Hoard. Being informed by the dwarf that he would be assassinated eight years later, he sank the treasure in the Rhine, and escorted the maiden back to Worms, where they were married. After eight years Hagen murdered him near a spring in the Odenwald.

<sup>1</sup> See the account of the MSS. below, p. 29.

The *Thidrekssaga*, a Norwegian poem, represents the North German version of the Nibelungen story, though, as its name suggests, it also contains much that is derived from the cycle of Dietrich von Bern (Theoderic of Verona). Composed about 1250, it is founded partly on the narratives of Germans of Bremen and Münster, partly on old epic songs from the repertoires of wandering minstrels. The existence of such songs in Lower Germany is attested by the chronicler Saxo Grammaticus; in his Danish History, written about the end of the twelfth century, he relates how a messenger to a certain Duke Canute sang "the well-known story of Grimhild's treachery to her brothers" as a warning. The following is a condensed account of this version:—

Sigurd (Siegfried) is brought up by a smith, Mimir, but when sent to work at the smithy breaks both hammer and anvil. Thereupon his foster-parent sends him to burn charcoal in a forest where Regin, Mimir's brother, dwells, transformed into a dragon for his misdeeds. After killing him in self-defence, Sigurd proceeds to cook pieces of the carcass; he tastes in order to see whether his meal is ready, and suddenly understands the language of the birds. "If this man knew what we know," they are saying, "he would take Mimir's life, for he intended Regin to murder Sigurd, and will surely avenge his brother." Sigurd now rubs himself with the dragon's blood, and immediately becomes covered with a skin of horn, except between the shoulder-blades where he cannot reach; then taking up the creature's head he returns to the smithy, throws his trophy to Mimir, and orders him to eat. In the hope of appeasing him, the latter promises him the horse Grani, descended from Odin's horse Sleipnir, and the sword Gramr, forged from the fragments of his own father's sword, originally Odin's. Sigurd was not slow to accept the gifts; but bearing in mind the advice of the birds he nevertheless took the precaution of slaying Mimir.

His next adventure takes him to Brynhild's castle, the bolted gates of which he breaks open; her knights attack

him, but she stops the combat, and bids him welcome. She tells him of his parentage, and he remains till the next day, when he rides off to Bertangaland and becomes King Isung's banner-bearer. Soon after, Dietrich of Bern, with Gunnar (Gunther), King of Niflungaland, and Högni (Hagen) amongst his followers, invades Bertangaland; he worsts Sigurd in single combat, and the youthful warrior exchanges into his service. Peace being concluded, Sigurd marries Gunnar's sister Grimhild, and suggests that Gunnar himself should marry Brynhild. Accordingly they set out for her castle, and are, with the exception of Sigurd, whom their hostess reproaches with infidelity, amicably received. He explains that as she had no male kinsmen, he had bound himself by oaths to Gunnar, and decided to take Grimhild to wife. Brynhild then agreed to marry Gunnar, but for the first three nights she bound him and let him hang on a peg till morning. The next night Sigurd, disguised as Gunnar, overpowered her, and her supernatural strength disappeared. At the end of the festivities they all returned to Niflungaland, where Gunnar, Högni, and Sigurd shared the royal dignity.

From this point the *Thidrekssaga* agrees in its main outlines, as well as in many minor details, with the *Nibelungenlied*. The two queens quarrel, and their dispute results in Sigurd's murder by Högni. Attila (Etzel) marries the widow, the ceremony taking place, however, in Niflungaland, and seven years later invites her brother to his court. At a banquet young Aldrian (Ortlieb), bidden by his mother, strikes Högni, who then commences the hostilities by cutting off the boy's head and flinging it to Grimhild. At the close of the poem we find a remarkable variation from the Upper German tradition: Högni, though mortally wounded in the combat with Dietrich, survives for a time, and has a posthumous son by a Hunnish woman; before dying he commands her to name him Aldrian, and gives her the keys of the vault where Sigurd's treasure lies buried. The lad is brought up by Attila, but is determined to avenge his kinsmen; and with

this end in view arouses the aged monarch's desire to possess the Niflung Hoard. One day they ride out into the forest; Aldrian opens the cave and shows the king the treasures, then shuts him in and leaves him to die of hunger. He himself rides away to Niflungaland, receives the kingdom from Brynhild, and rules there till his death.

In the Scandinavian North, Christianity was much less hostile to the old pagan traditions and beliefs than in Germany, and so it came about that some of the Germanic sagas have been preserved in greater purity there than in their place of origin. Such is to a great extent the case with the Nibelungen story, as reproduced in the *Eddas* and the *Völsungasaga*. The older or verse *Edda* probably assumed the form in which we have it about 1250, though some of the songs of which it consists may date from 1000 or even earlier. The younger or prose *Edda* is partly, at any rate, the work of Snorri Sturluson (1178-1241). The *Völsungasaga* has come down to us in a prose text of the early part of the thirteenth century, but the version it contains is probably a hundred years older.

According to this Norse tradition the race of the Völsungs was descended from Odin, Sigurd being the great-grandson of the principal Teutonic deity. His father Sigmund having been slain in battle, Sigurd was brought up at the court of Hjalprek, under the tutorship of a dwarf-smith, Regin. The latter was suffering under a wrong done him by his brother Fafnir, who had taken sole possession of a huge treasure to which both had an equal right, and who watched over it in the shape of a dragon.

This treasure was originally the property of a dwarf Andvari, who lived under a waterfall. He had been taken captive by Loki, the god of fire, and was forced to hand over the gold as his ransom; by way of revenge, he uttered over it the curse that it should bring death to all its future possessors. Loki had required it to pay as death-money to Hreidmar for the murder of his son Otr, the brother of Regin and Fafnir; but it was not long before these two remaining sons had a dispute with their father, in the

course of which Fafnir killed the old man, afterwards refusing to share the treasure with his brother.

Regin now obtained Sigurd's help against Fafnir, and, from the fragments of Sigmund's sword, made him one called Gram, so sharp that it would split asunder an anvil, or cut through a flake of wool floating on water. With this weapon Sigurd in due course slays the dragon, which, before dying, warns him in vain not to meddle with the treasure. Regin, who had been in hiding during the conflict, now came forward, cut out Fafnir's heart, and ordered the young warrior to roast it. While doing so, he touched it with his finger to try whether it was enough, and burnt himself; thrusting his finger into his mouth, he immediately understood the language of the birds. One said that if he were to eat the heart he would become wiser than any other man; another, that Regin was planning treachery; a third, that he would do well to kill Regin and keep the gold; a fourth, that if he possessed the gold he would be invincible. He loses no time in following their advice, and then hears them saying further that he ought now to go to Hindarfjall, a mountain in the south where Odin had put to sleep Brynhild (also called Sigdrifa), and surrounded her with a wall of flame. Formerly, as a valkyrie, she had disobeyed his commands, and the punishment allotted her was to sleep there until aroused by some fearless warrior whom she would marry. Sigurd is, of course, the man; she gives him much sage advice, explains to him the mystery of the runes, and they plight their troth.

Further south, on the banks of the Rhine, dwelt a king Giuki (Gibich). His queen Grimhild (Ute) was versed in magic, and they had three sons, Gunnar, Högni, and Gutthorm, besides a most beautiful daughter Gudrun (Kriemhild). Sigurd, whose fame had preceded him, came to Giuki's castle, and was received with great honour; but Grimhild, though aware of his betrothal to Brynhild, wished to secure him for her own daughter. To this end she gave him a magic draught of forgetfulness, and then

contrived his marriage with Gudrun. Not content with this, however, she must needs urge Gunnar to woo Brynhild, in which undertaking he was successful only by Sigurd's help; for neither on his own horse nor on Sigurd's charger Grani could he pass the wall of fire, whereupon Sigurd took on his form and acted as his proxy. Only when Gunnar and Brynhild were married did he remember his previous betrothal.

One day as the two queens were bathing in the river Brynhild refused to use the water that had flowed down past Gudrun. In the ensuing quarrel the latter betrayed the secret that it was *her* husband who had ridden through the wall of flame as Gunnar's proxy, and showed as proof the ring Sigurd had taken in sign of betrothal. As in all versions, the outcome of the quarrel is the decision that Sigurd must die, but here it is Gutthorm, not Högni, who does the deed, for the latter as well as Gunnar had sworn brotherhood with their victim. Twice Gutthorm went to Sigurd where he lay in bed, but each time the warrior's penetrating look frightened him away; the third time he was asleep, and the murderer drove his sword through the body into the down of the bed. But his attempt to escape was in vain, for Sigurd threw after him the sword Gram, and Gutthorm fell cleft in two at the door. Though Brynhild laughed cruelly on hearing the news, her mood soon changed, and after prophesying Gunnar's death, and the destruction of the Niflung race as a punishment for their disloyalty to Sigurd, she took her own life, and was burned on Sigurd's funeral pyre.

After seven years Gudrun became the wife of Atli, King of the Huns, who was soon possessed by the desire to win the riches Gunnar had appropriated after Sigurd's death. He sent a messenger to his wife's relatives inviting them to a great festival, but Gudrun gave the man runes conveying a warning to her brothers. Fate, however, was against her; the messenger altered the runes, and in spite of suspicions and presentiments the invitation was accepted. On the arrival of his guests, Atli at once demanded

Sigurd's treasures, which now he said belonged by right to Gudrun. Gunnar refused to give them up, whereon Atli answered that he had long wished to avenge the hero's death. A fierce battle then began, in which Gudrun, donning a breastplate, fought for her brothers. After a desperate conflict all the Giukungs were slain, except Gunnar and Högni, who were made prisoners. Gunnar was asked whether he would purchase his life with the treasure, but replied that his brother Högni's heart must first be cut out and brought to him. They brought him first that of a servant, but he was not to be deceived; then when they actually produced his brother's, he calmly said that Atli could now never obtain the treasure, for he and the Rhine alone knew where it was hidden. In revenge, Atli had him cast into a snake-infested dungeon, there to perish, while Gudrun planned vengeance. At the death-feast in honour of the fallen, Atli, inquiring after his two sons whose absence he had observed, was told by Gudrun that he had just drunk their blood, mixed with wine, from their skulls, and eaten their hearts. That night she and Hniflung, Högni's son, murdered the king, and, setting fire to the castle, burned his corpse and with it all his retainers. Gudrun's attempted suicide and later fortunes need not be detailed here.

Important for fixing the age of the saga are two Anglo-Saxon poems, *Widsið* and *Beowulf*, the material of which was presumably brought over during the invasions, that is, before the end of the sixth century. The former, a dry catalogue of historical and geographical names, contains a list of kings, among whom are Aetla of the Huns and Gifca of the Burgundians (vv. 18, 19). Further on, speaking of the lands he has travelled in, the gleeman names the Huns (v. 57), and the Burgundians (v. 65), and remembers that while among the latter he received from the King Gûðhere a welcome present in the shape of a ring. Gifca is the Gibich of some of the German versions, where he appears as the father of Gunther; Aetla is, of course, Attila; and Gûðhere is the Anglo-Saxon form of



Gunther, the "n" before a spirant being regularly dropped in Anglo-Saxon, while the preceding vowel undergoes compensation-lengthening.

The adventures of Beowulf in the other poem partly parallel those of Siegfried. As a young man he delivered the court of Hrôðgâr from the devastations of two dragons, and as an old man fought with and slew another monster, winning a treasure over which it kept guard, but being himself mortally injured in the combat. More important, however, is the account of Sigemund the Wælsing's exploits (vv. 874 ff.), especially of how he slew a dragon, the guardian of a ring-hoard; the monster was consumed by heat, and the warrior took possession of the treasure. For a time he was famous for his valiant deeds, but eventually became the victim of treachery. We have here the exploits of Sigurd the Völsung attributed to Siegmund, who appears in the German and Norse traditions as Siegfried's father.

The oldest literary monument proving the existence of the tradition in Germany is the *Waltharilied*, a Latin poem of the tenth century, based on an Old German alliterative hero-song, now lost. In it figure Attila, Gibicho (King of the Franks, ruling at Worms), Guntharius, his son, and Hagano Trojanus. Of the poems later than the *Nibelungenlied* dealing with the same material, the *Thidrekssaga*, the *Hürnen Seyfrid*, and the *Klage*, have already been noticed. References to the saga occur in two other poems of the thirteenth century, *Biterolf* and the *Rosengarten zu Worms*, while incidents of the story reappear in songs from the Danish island of Hven and from the Faröe Islands.<sup>1</sup>

With regard to the origin of the saga, some points may now be looked on as definitely settled, while others, especially those connected with its mythological foundations, are still subjects of contention. Practically unquestioned—

<sup>1</sup> For fuller information on the recurrence of the tradition, see Henri Lichtenberger, *Le poème et la légende des Nibelungen*, pp. 415 ff. (Paris, 1891.)

only a few ultra-patriotic Scandinavians refuse to be converted—is the German origin of the story; but whether the honour belongs to the Franks or to the Burgundians is uncertain; the opinion of W. Müller, shared by Piper, that the story originated among the latter and was developed by the former seems reasonable, in view of the historic relations of those tribes in the fifth century.<sup>1</sup>

As for the historical and mythological bases of the saga, the former present comparatively little opportunity for dispute. In the fourth century, the Burgundians occupied the district of the Upper Main, but in 406, under their king Gundicarius, invaded Roman territory. In 413 a considerable tract of land west of the Rhine, round Worms, Speier, and Mainz, was handed over to Gundicarius, whose kingdom was bounded on the east by Hunnish territory. In 435 he attacked Gallia Belgica; two years later Aëtius defeated him with great slaughter, but made peace in order to be free to quell a rising of the Visigoths, while the Burgundians hurried off to resist an invasion of the Huns, and were almost exterminated in the struggle. In 500 the country about Worms, and doubtless many of its inhabitants, became Frankish. Evidently Gundicarius, who perished with his followers at the hands of the Huns, is the Gunther of the *Nibelungenlied*; for the Latin form, *Gundicarius*, corresponds almost exactly with Old German *Gundahari*, which would regularly develop into Middle High German *Gunther*. His and his family's actual existence is further proved by a passage in the *Lex Burgundionum*, compiled by a Burgundian king in their new home in the Upper Rhone districts early in the sixth century. This king, Gundobald, mentions as his predecessors, Gibica, Godomar, Gislahari, and Gundahari.

Undoubtedly historical is Etzel (Attila), though in our poem his character is very different from that given him by contemporary chroniclers. Lord of the Huns from 433

<sup>1</sup> Cf. W. Müller, *Mythologie der deutschen Heldensage* pp. 35 ff. (Heilbronn, 1886.) P. Piper, *Die Nibelungen*, pt. i. pp. 51 ff. (Berlin and Stuttgart, 1889.).

to 453, a period including the date of the above-mentioned Burgundian disaster, he was the terror of Europe until his defeat in Western France at the battle of the Catalaunian Plains in the year 451. Up to 445 he shared the throne with his brother Bleda (Blödelin), whom he then murdered as an obstacle to his ambition. As represented in the *Nibelungenlied*, he had in his following a number of tributary Germanic tribes, and the Helche mentioned in the epic is probably his historic wife Kerka. The manner of his death partly corresponds to the account given in the Norse version: on the night following the celebration of his nuptials with the beautiful Ildico he died, according to the official report, of hæmorrhage; but a rumour quickly spread that the young queen had murdered him, and that her motive was the desire to avenge her father. The German variation may have been due to the story of Chrodihild, who, though of Burgundian descent, induced her son to exterminate the Burgundian kingly house.

The remaining historical personages were introduced later, and are therefore of only secondary importance. Dietrich von Bern is, of course, Theoderic the Great. His presence at Attila's court is consistent with the other poems relating his adventures, for he is represented as driven from his kingdom in Lombardy by Odoacer, according to some, by Ermanric according to others, taking refuge with the Huns, and eventually recovering his own. As a matter of fact, he underwent no such exile, the idea of which is taken from the life of his father Theodemer. He himself could not have been Attila's guest, for he was born two years after the death of that monarch. The only other certainly historic figure is Pilgerin, who was Bishop of Passau 971-991. A number of further identities have been suggested; possibly Gêre and Eckewart are two tenth-century margraves of the same name, and Irnfrit and Hawart may be Hermanfrid of Thüringen and Hadugôt, a Saxon duke. Some attempts have also been made to show that Siegfried and Arminius are one

and the same, but have met with little encouragement.

As far as the historical foundation is concerned, then, we have the leading incidents of the second part in the destruction of the Burgundians by the Huns in 437, even if Attila were not himself present at the catastrophe. With this was combined the story of his murder by his wife Ildico in such a manner as to make her the avenger of that disaster.<sup>1</sup> This stage having been reached, the later introduction of Dietrich would be natural on account of his supposed exile among the Huns. Later still local heroes, like Irnfrit and Hawart, or patrons like Pilgerin of Passau, would be worked in by local minstrels or copyists in the eleventh century.

About the rest of the material there has accumulated an immense mass of hypotheses of as varied a character as could well be the case. The outline of the legend is thus summarised by Professor Lichtenberger:—

“(1) Siegfried, the son of Siegmund, is born after the death of his father, and passes his early years in a forest in ignorance of his parentage; he is brought up by a smith skilled in magic; he kills a dragon, acquires the Nibelungen treasure, and becomes possessed of supernatural qualities which render him superior to all other heroes.

“(2) He awakens from an enchanted sleep a woman

<sup>1</sup> Ildico is supposed to have been of German parentage, but was not identical with Kriemhild of Worms. Her name is probably a diminutive of Hilde or a compound in *-hild*; hence her identification in the popular mind with the Burgundian princess. G. Matthaei (*Zf.d.A.*, xlvii. 1 ff.) argues for the early existence of a Bavarian Hun-saga as the basis of the first part of Simon von Keza's *Gesta Hunnorum*. Reconstructing the outline of the saga, he comes to the conclusion that, in it, Attila's last wife was a Bavarian princess Kriemhild. After Attila's death she instigated her son Aladaric to expel his half-brother Chaba, son of the non-German Helche. Though at first unsuccessful, Dietrich's help finally gained him the victory in the *proelium Crimildum*, a frightful struggle of fourteen days' duration in Sicambria (Etzelburg) itself.

In the fiendish part played by Kriemhild in the *Nibelungenlied*, in the fact that the destruction of the Burgundians takes place at Attila's court (instead of near Worms), in the introduction of the Rüdiger episode and of some of the Dietrich and Hildebrand scenes, Matthaei sees the influence of the Bavarian saga (in various stages of development) on the Franco-Burgundian.

who is surrounded by a barrier of flames impassable to any but himself;

“(3) He marries Grînhild, the sister of Gundahari, King of the Burgundians; obtains by trickery the maiden-warrior Brûnhild for his brother-in-law; and is eventually treacherously assassinated;

“(4) Gundahari and his followers are enticed into a snare and massacred by Attila, but Grînhild avenges their death by murdering him.”<sup>1</sup>

The *Nibelungenlied*, it will be noticed, practically takes up the story at the third section, though the first is summarised in Hagen’s account of Siegfried’s previous exploits (st. 87 ff.), and knowledge of the second is taken for granted. In the fourth section the German poem offers a variant in substituting Kriemhild for Attila as the actual betrayer of her brothers.

Since the last part is accounted for historically, and varies but little in the different versions, it seems probable that the original story ended with Siegfried’s death, the poetic justice meted out to the Burgundians being a later development due to the fate of the historic king of the same name as Siegfried’s mythical brother-in-law. It is generally agreed that the first part is to be taken as a myth or combination of myths, representing the phenomena of Nature during the course of a day or a year.<sup>2</sup> Siegfried, the Sun-hero, personifying the Day, destroys the Mist-dragons in the early morning, and awakens the Sun from her sleep on the mountains of the sky-line. The morning-red (the wall of flame) dies away at his approach; but in the evening the gloomy powers of mist and darkness are in their turn victorious. With this day-myth, however, there is combined a season myth. In the storms of early spring-time, the Sun-hero slays the winter Cloud-dragons, which brood over the white country-side (the glittering heath), awakens the fertility

<sup>1</sup> Henri Lichtenberger, *Le poème et la légende des Nibelungen*, p. 80. (Paris, 1891.)

<sup>2</sup> *P.G.*, vol. iii. pp. 654 ff. (Strassburg, 21900.)

of the earth, and wins the treasure of vegetation till then held captive by the winter powers. The possession of the treasure is, however, inevitably followed by the hero's death at the hands of the powers from whom he won it, and who now again become its owners. The fact that the treasure must always return to its original possessors accounts for the application of the name *Nibelungen* to the Burgundians as well as to the race from whom Siegfried won the hoard. The usual explanation that the name is always given to the possessors for the time being does not hold good, for Siegfried and Kriemhild are never termed Nibelungen.

This Siegfried myth offers interesting points of comparison with some of the god-myths, but it need not be assumed that the hero was originally divine; it is more probable that the god-myths merely exercised an influence on that of Siegfried, or *vice versâ*. Of Freyr, himself a Sun-god, it was told that he once saw from Odin's seat a beautiful maiden Gerd, and fell in love with her. She was a prisoner of the giants, and he despatched his servant Skirnir (really a reflection of himself) to free her, lending him his own horse for the purpose. The maiden's deliverance was safely accomplished by the help of rune-magic, and Skirnir received the promised reward. Siegfried's fight with the dragon, again, may be compared with the killing of the Midgard snake by Thor; while his death is partly paralleled by Balder's. He, too, was a Sun-god, and was supposed to be immortal, for all Nature had sworn not to injure him; the mistletoe alone had been overlooked as too insignificant. But one day when the gods were shooting at their invulnerable companion, Loki gave the blind Hodur a twig of mistletoe, which struck Balder and killed him.

We possess some thirty complete or fragmentary MSS. of the *Nibelungenlied*, many of which contain also the *Klage*. The three most important are:—

A, in München, copied towards the end of the thirteenth century by at least two hands.

*B*, in St. Gallen, belonging to the middle of the thirteenth century, by three hands. The text of this MS. is often termed the *Vulgate* (*gemeine Lesart*).

*C*, in Donaueschingen, from the first half of the thirteenth century.

Of these *A* offers the shortest, *C* the longest text; all three contain the *Klage*, but in the last some hundred and forty stanzas of the *Nibelungenlied* itself are missing. Of the two groups into which all the MSS. are classified, *A* and *B* belong to Group I. and end with the words, "*Daz ist der Nibelunge nôt*," while *C* belongs to Group II., and reads "*Daz ist der Nibelunge liet*."

The first discovered MS. of the *Nibelungenlied*, *C*, was unearthed in 1755 by Obereit at Hohenems; he informed Bodmer of his find, and the Swiss professor published in 1757 the second part and the *Klage*. When *A* and *B* were discovered he succeeded in getting copies of the latter and the first part of the former, and C. H. Myller founded his edition of 1782 on the material thus made available. Unfortunately these works did not meet with much encouragement;<sup>1</sup> it was Von der Hagen's indefatigable zeal which first won for the poem its place of honour in Germany and spread its fame abroad. In 1807 he published the first complete translation; in 1810 followed an edition with variant readings, which had a second edition in 1816, and a third in 1820; in 1824 appeared a new edition of his translation, with explanatory notes. Meanwhile Karl Lachmann was developing his theories and preparing his critical edition of 1826, and the scientific study of the problems connected with the epic was initiated.

With regard to the relative authenticity of the three chief MSS., Lachmann gave the preference to *A*, supposing *B* to have developed from it, and *C* from *B*, by means of interpolation and alteration. This opinion was

<sup>1</sup> Myller dedicated his edition to Frederic the Great, whose historic acknowledgment consisted in the remark that the poem was not worth a charge of powder, and that he could not suffer it in his library.

generally accepted until after Lachmann's death in 1851, when A. Holtzmann (*Untersuchungen über das Nibelungenlied*, 1854) attempted to show that *C* was the original version, *A* and *B* being derived from it. F. Zarncke took the same standpoint, but has since (in his sixth edition, 1887) practically come over to a school that has not yet been mentioned, the supporters of the text *B*. The leader of these was K. Bartsch (*Untersuchungen über das Nibelungenlied*, 1865) who pointed out that *A*, though based on an old model, is carelessly copied. He came to the conclusion that *B* and *C* represent two distinct versions of the original text, *C* being the less authentic, and that *A* is merely a degenerate form of *B*. The question cannot yet be looked upon as finally decided, except in so far as the claims of *C* are concerned. The latest important contributions to the discussion have been made by W. Braune and E. Kettner. The former (*P.B.B.*, xxv. 1 ff.) puts *C* entirely out of court and allows *B* slightly more authenticity than *A*. According to him a hypothetical MS. gave rise both to *B* and to another from which *A* was copied. The latter (*Zf.d.Ph.*, xxiv. 311 ff.) attacks Braune's arguments, in some cases successfully, and attempts to turn the scale in favour of *A*.

The question as to the authorship of the *Nibelungenlied* has perhaps been more fruitful of argument than any other of the vexed questions connected with the poem, while all the discussion has led only to the most meagre results. Many improbable and impossible claimants have been pushed forward by scholars anxious to have a name to which the great national epic of Germany might be attached; one only, the Kürenberger, calls for the special attention devoted to him below.

After the early editors of the *Nibelungenlied* had indulged in various untenable suggestions, Lachmann introduced a new element into the discussion by following the methods applied by Wolf to Homer. In 1816 he pointed out in *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der Nibelunge Nôt* (*Kleinere Schriften*, i. 1) a number of discrepancies and



interpolations in the extant form of the poem; ten years later he published his critical edition, in which a large proportion of the stanzas contained even in *A* were rejected as spurious. The remainder fell into two parts of ten *Lieder*, or Lays, each, originally independent and only loosely strung together by the first redactor. A justification of the methods employed appeared in 1836 under the title *Zu den Nibelungen und zur Klage, Anmerkungen von K. L.* This *Liedertheorie* for a time found general acceptance, and was gradually developed and modified in its details by Lachmann's followers, among whom ~~K. Müllenhoff~~ was the chief, while R. von Muth and R. Henning<sup>1</sup> also took prominent parts on Lachmann's side in the fierce disputes that broke out after his death.

Before passing on to the theory of the unity of the whole and a single authorship, two other *Liedertheorien* may be briefly noticed. Wilhelm Müller, in *Ueber die Lieder von den Nibelungen* (Göttingen, 1845), divided the whole material into eight parts, each of which originally existed as a separate poem, while four or five of them formed the foundation of our *Nibelungenlied*. Wilmanns, dealing with the second part only in *Beiträge zur Erklärung und Geschichte des Nibelungenlieds* (Halle, 1877), came to the conclusion that it had developed from an older Rüdiger tradition, with which the Dietrich saga was afterwards combined; Dankwart and Iring poems were added later, and the last adapter chose from each of these what he thought suitable.

Three years after Lachmann's death, A. Holtzmann, in *Untersuchungen über das Nibelungenlied* (Stuttgart, 1854), and F. Zarncke, in *Zur Nibelungenfrage* (Leipzig, 1854), and *Beiträge zur Erklärung und Geschichte des Nibelungenlieds* (1856), spoke out in support of the unity of the poem and the authenticity of *C*. Those who shared with them the belief in a single authorship now en-

<sup>1</sup> The most important contributions of these scholars are mentioned on pp. 35 ff.

deavoured to strengthen their position by attributing the poem to one or other of the known writers of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Several suggestions had been made and disposed of when F. Pfeiffer, in *Der Dichter des Nibelungenlieds* (Wien, 1862), made the first really scientific attempt to solve the difficulty by putting forward the Kürenberger, chiefly on the ground that the Nibelungen strophe has the same form as that of some lyric poems attributed to that knight.<sup>1</sup> In one old document, dating from between 1121 and 1138, a Magenes von Kürenberg is mentioned, in another, between 1140 and 1147, a Konrad von Kürenberg; but after all, a poet who mentions in his song *diu Kürenberges wise* (the melody and form belonging to Kürenberg) need not be Kürenberg himself. For a time Pfeiffer's suggestion found many adherents, but is now generally abandoned, especially since Vollmöller's refutation in *Kürenberg und die Nibelungen* (Stuttgart, 1874). Meanwhile K. Bartsch examined the rimes of the *Nibelungenlied* in great detail, and, from traces of assonance and other early peculiarities, decided that the original was composed about 1140, recast about 1170, and again about 1190. He, therefore, gave his support to Pfeiffer's suggestion, but Vollmöller's objections compelled him to own that the Kürenberger's claims are not indisputable.

The latest important contribution to the authorship question is E. Kettner's *Die österreichische Nibelungendichtung* (Berlin, 1897). Kettner assumes *A* to be the most authentic MS.; by an examination of the style and language he shows the *Nibelungenlied* to be more closely akin to the poetry of Meinloh and Reinmar than to the songs of the Kürenberger. He further distinguishes between the work of an author and of a redactor. The former, an Austrian knight, had access to three *Liederbücher*, containing songs on "The nuptials of Siegfried and Gunther," "Siegfried's Death," and "Kriemhild's

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Lachmann und Haupt, *Des Minnesangs Frühling*, pp. 6 ff. (Leipzig, 1888.)

Revenge." From these he constructed an epic poem in five books: I. The Wooing and Wedding of Siegfried and Gunther; II. Siegfried's Death; III. The Marriage of Etzel and Kriemhild; and IV., V. *Der Nibelunge nôt*, divided into two books on account of its length. The author's work corresponds nearly to the portion recognised by Lachmann as genuine, while the redactor, also an Austrian, but belonging to the better class of professional minstrels, added the "spurious" stanzas, made some alterations, and produced roughly the result we have in *A*.

It will be readily understood that Kettner's conclusions have not met with unanimous approval (*cf.* G. Rosenhagen's review, *Z.f.d.Ph.*, xxxi. 243); indeed, a universally accepted opinion on the subject does not yet exist. There seems, however, to be a general tendency to recognise the underlying unity of the poem and its Austrian (Zarncke thinks Tyrolese) origin. Bartsch's view of its age is at best hypothetical, and it seems safest to be content with the broad statement that it reached the form in which we now have it about 1190-1200.

The metrical form of the poem is of a simple character, which would become monotonous were it not for the peculiar laws of Middle High German versification. Every strophe consists of four lines, connected by masculine rimes on the system: *a, a, b, b*. Each line is divided by a cæsure into two parts; each first part contains four stressed syllables, of which the last usually bears only a secondary stress; in the case of the first three lines the second part contains three stressed syllables, while in the last line it has four.<sup>1</sup> Irregularities are not frequent, impure rimes are rare, and even in cases where they occur the

<sup>1</sup> Using ":" to denote the cæsure, "\*" an unstressed syllable, and "/", "\ " those with primary and secondary stress, the *full* Nibelungen strophe may be represented thus:—

The first three lines, \*\*\*/\*/\*/\*/\*/: \*//\*/\*/  
and the fourth, \*\*\*\*/\*/\*/\*/\*/: \*//\*/\*/\*/.

Any "\*" may be omitted, and, as a matter of fact, the last one of the first half of each line nearly always is, while the last "/" becomes "\ "; thus the first half-line generally *seems* to have only three stresses.

consonants are nearly always alike while the vowels vary in length merely (e.g. *man*, *stán*); cæsural rimes are occasionally met with, internal rime rarely; and a few strophes have only three stressed syllables in the last half-line. The legitimate means of obtaining variation are the omission of unstressed syllables and their introduction at the beginning of a line. Thus any first half-line, for instance, may consist of four stressed syllables, or the first stressed syllable may be preceded by one, two, and even three unstressed ones, or again, each stressed syllable, except the last, may be followed by one without stress.

Among the countless editions of the *Nibelungenlied* there are three in particular which may be termed standard editions, those of:—

**Karl Lachmann.**—Der Nibelunge Noth und die Klage nach der ältesten Ueberlieferung mit Bezeichnung des Unechten und mit den Abweichungen der gemeinen Lesart (*B*). (Berlin, 1826; <sup>5</sup>1878.) (Small ed.: Berlin, <sup>10</sup>1881.) Based on *A*.

**Friedrich Zarncke.**—Das Nibelungenlied. (Leipzig, 1856; <sup>6</sup>1887.) (Small ed.: <sup>8</sup>1894.) Based on *C*. The large edition has a valuable introduction, including a bibliography.

**Karl Bartsch.**—Der Nibelunge Nôt mit den Abweichungen von der Nibelunge Liet, den Abweichungen sämtlicher Handschriften und einem Wörterbuche. Leipzig. I. Text: 1870; II. (1) Variants: 1876; (2) Glossary: 1880. (Small ed., vol. iii. of Pfeiffer's *Deutsche Klassiker des Mittelalters*. Leipzig, <sup>6</sup>1886.) Based on *B*.

A fourth edition also deserves mention:—

**Paul Piper.**—Die Nibelungen. (Berlin and Stuttgart, 1889.) It forms two volumes of Kürschner's *Deutsche National-Litteratur*. The first contains a detailed account of previous research, a complete bibliography, and the full text of *Hürnen Seyfrid* and the *Klage*. In the second follows the text, almost identical with Bartsch's, accompanied by notes and a glossary very useful to the beginner.

An edition by **R. Henning** is in preparation, and will form vol. x. of the *Germanistische Handbibliothek* (Halle).

With regard to the authorship question and the authenticity of the chief MSS. the following works are the most important:—

**K. Lachmann.**—Ueber die ursprüngliche Gestalt des Gedichts von der Nibelungen Noth, 1816. Reprinted in Lachmann's *Kleinere Schriften* (ed. K. Müllenhoff), Berlin, 1876. *Cf.* p. 30 *f.*

**K. Lachmann.**—Anmerkungen zu den Nibelungen und zur Klage. (Berlin, 1836.)

**A. Holtzmann.**—Untersuchungen über das Nibelungenlied. (Stuttgart, 1854.) *Cf.* p. 31.

**K. Müllenhoff.**—Zur Geschichte der Nibelunge Not. (Braunschweig, 1855.) *Cf.* p. 31.

**F. Zarncke.**—Beiträge zur Erklärung und zur Geschichte des Nibelungenliedes. (Leipzig, 1856.) *Cf.* p. 31.

**F. Pfeiffer.**—Der Dichter des Nibelungenliedes. (Wien, 1862.) *Cf.* p. 32.

**K. Bartsch.**—Untersuchungen über das Nibelungenlied. (Wien, 1865.) *Cf.* p. 32.

**K. Vollmöller.**—Kürenberg und die Nibelungen. (Stuttgart, 1874.) *Cf.* p. 32.

**R. von Muth.**—Einleitung in das Nibelungenlied. (Paderborn, 1877.) Contains a survey of previous contributions to the study of the poem. The author supports the Lachmann school.

**K. Bartsch.**—Die dichterische Gestaltung der Nibelungensage. (Freiburg und Tübingen, 1883.)

**R. Henning.**—Nibelungenstudien. (Strassburg, 1883.) *Cf.* p. 31.

**F. Zarncke.**—Introduction to his sixth edition. (Leipzig, 1887.) *Cf.* p. 30. Includes a useful survey of the literature on the subject up to 1887.

**Henri Lichtenberger.**—Le poème et la légende des Nibelungen. (Paris, 1891.) Contains a critical summary of previous research and a lengthy bibliography.

**E. Kettner.**—Die österreichische Nibelungendichtung. (Berlin, 1897.) *Cf.* p. 32.

**W. Braune.**—*P.B.B.*, xxxi. 1 ff. *Cf.* p. 30.

**E. Kettner.**—*Z.f.d.Ph.*, xxiv. 311 ff. *Cf.* p. 30.

Of primary importance in connection with the study of the material of the poem are (in addition to the standard works on Germanic saga):<sup>1</sup>—

*The Correspondence between Lachmann and W. Grimm* in the years 1820–1821, published in the *Z.f.d.Ph.*, ii. (1869).

**K. Lachmann.**—Kritik der Sage von den Nibelungen, 1829; reproduced in the *Anmerkungen zu den Nibelungen und zur Klage.* (Berlin, 1836.)

**W. Müller.**—Ueber Lachmanns Kritik der Sage von den Nibelungen, in *Germ.*, xiv. (1869), 257 ff.

**R. von Muth.**—Einleitung in das Nibelungenlied. (See above.)

**A. Raszmann.**—Die Niflungasaga und das Nibelungenlied. (Heilbronn, 1877.)

**R. Heinzel.**—Ueber die Nibelungensage. (Wien, 1885.)

**H. Lichtenberger.**—Le poème et la légende des Nibelungen. (Paris, 1891.)

**B. Symons,** in *P.G.*, vol. iii. 651 ff. (Strassburg, 21900.)

**G. Matthaei.**—Die bairische Hunnensage, *Z.f.d.A.*, xlvi. 1 ff.

These lists are, of course, too short to contain every work of (sometimes temporary) importance, but are sufficiently inclusive to lead to a fairly complete knowledge of the opinions of the greatest authorities and the grounds of their faith.<sup>2</sup> The student who desires to enter more deeply into the questions connected with the *Nibelungenlied*, should follow up the references contained in the works quoted, or refer to Goedeke's *Grundriss zur Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung* (Dresden, 21884) for a full bibliography up to 1884; mention of all pub-

<sup>1</sup> *Cf.* K. Breul's "Handy Bibliographical Guide to the Study of the German Language and Literature." (London, 1895.)

<sup>2</sup> A still more select bibliography will be found in Dr. K. Breul's "Handy Bibliographical Guide to the Study of the German Language and Literature" (London, 1895), pp. 48, 87, 88, 111, 115.

lications since 1879 dealing with Germanic Philology will be found in the *Jahresbericht über die Erscheinungen auf dem Gebiete der germanischen Philologie*.

There still remain to be noticed the modern German translations and adaptations of the Nibelungen saga. The number of the former is ever increasing; Piper in his edition of 1889 names forty-two translations! Some of these have passed through a number of editions, notably that of Simrock, which reached its 52nd edition in 1894; yet none, at least of the verse translations, can be looked upon as a true reproduction of the original.<sup>1</sup>

The earlier translators, including Simrock, adhered to the metrical form of the original and attempted to reproduce its style by using expressions and words in their Middle High German signification. The modern readers to whom that signification was unknown—the very people for whose benefit the translation was made—could not fail under such circumstances to form a most incorrect estimate of the value and tone of the epic itself. It was soon realised, however, that the ideal translation should be faithful to the form and contents of the original, and at the same time readable. Later translators, L. Freytag, Engelmann, and others, endeavoured to fulfil these conditions, but in no case with complete success; for it was found impossible to produce a close translation in pure High German free from archaisms, while hampered by a set metrical form, nor could the simplicity of the original always be retained without doing violence to the modern sense of the requisite ornateness of poetry. Bartsch's translation also deserves mention, as does that of Schröter, who replaced the Nibelungen strophe by ottave rime.

Of the almost equally numerous adaptations<sup>2</sup> of the Nibelungen material, the most important are:—

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Konrad Rudolph, *Ueber die geeignetste Form einer Nibelungenübersetzung. Wissenschaftliche Beilage zum Programm des Köllnischen Gymnasiums*. (Berlin, 1890.) The author comes to the conclusion that the versification must be sacrificed in order to attain a suitable style and diction.

<sup>2</sup> A complete list will be found in K. Rehorn, *Die deutsche Saga von den Nibelungen in der deutschen Poesie* (Frankfurt a/M., 1882).

**Wagner's** *Ring des Nibelungen*, in four parts: I. Das Rheingold; II. Die Walküre; III. Siegfried; IV. Götterdämmerung.

**Jordan's** *Nibelungen*, an epic composed in alliterative verse and consisting of: I. Die Siegfriedsage; II. Hildebrands Heimkehr.

**Hebbel's** *Nibelungen*, a trilogy: I. Der gehörnte Siegfried; II. Siegfrieds Tod; III. Chriemhildens Rache.

**Geibel's** *Brunhild. Eine Tragödie aus der Nibelungensage.*

**Wilbrandt's** *Kriemhild: Trauerspiel in drei Aufzügen.*

Uhland also intended to write a Nibelungen drama in two parts, the plan of which has been preserved.



## II. ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS

The *Nibelungenlied* was naturally the first of the Old German epics to find favour with English translators, and, as one would expect, has been done into English more frequently than any other. No less than seven translations have, so far, appeared; four, those of Birch, Lettsom, Mr. Foster-Barham, and Miss Horton, are in verse; the other three, by "Auber Forestier" (Annie Aubertine Woodward), Lydia Hands, and Miss Armour, in prose.

### A. VERSE TRANSLATIONS

1. **Jonathan Birch.**—*Das Nibelungen Lied; or, The Lay of the Last Nibelungers*<sup>1</sup> (Berlin, 1848; München, <sup>2</sup>1878, <sup>3</sup>1887, <sup>4</sup>1895).

To Birch belongs the honour of first bringing the Old German Nibelungen story within the reach of English readers. At the time of its appearance Lachmann's views were, as we have seen, hardly questioned, and his edition of text *A* was the orthodox edition. Hence it was, no doubt, that Birch adopted this as his original; all the strophes marked as interpolations by Lachmann are omitted, while those he looked upon as doubtful are translated, but printed in italics. The whole is divided into twenty "legends," corresponding to Lachmann's *Lieder*.

Birch employed for his translation a metre very similar to the Nibelungen strophe, retaining the four-lined stanzas,

<sup>1</sup> There is a copy of the first edition in the University Library, Cambridge. The work is dedicated to Frederic William IV., King of Prussia, while a list of patrons includes the names of Lachmann, the brothers Grimm, and a number of English and German royalties and nobles. There is no preface or introduction.

the masculine rimes (*a, a, b, b*), and the cæsura. Further, each line consists of seven ascending feet, the cæsura following the fourth (\*/\*/\*/\*/:\*/\*/\*/); this is practically the full Nibelungen line, but it occurs so rarely in the original that Birch's verses read almost as if the first half-line contained a foot more than the Middle High German measure.<sup>1</sup> Birch's fourth line has the same number of feet as the other three, instead of one extra in the second half. The passage in which Kriemhild's dream is interpreted by her mother is a fair sample of the style of this translation (st. 1-4):—

## I

Chriemhilda, innocent as fair—dreamed as night whiled away  
That she a noble falcon mewed for many an anxious day;  
But soaring it was fiercely clutched, by wrathful eagles twain :  
—That she, entranced, must see it torn, did cause her heartfelt  
    pain.

## 2

Awake—she to her mother went, and told her frightful dream;  
To solve it thus, and then and there,—it Utie did beseem :  
“The falcon thou didst foster so, a noble knight may be?  
Heaven guard his life! or ere long time, he'll die through  
    treachery!”

## 3

“Oh, hint not at the nuptial-tie—dear mother! unto me,  
For I, by every wooing knight would unaccosted be :  
My beauty—as a royal maid, I'll carry to the grave,—  
That so no husband bring me woe—however bland and brave.”

## 4

“Reject not so decidedly!”—she said with tenderness :  
“Wouldst, while on earth, my graceful child! true joy of heart  
    possess?  
Such only flows from husband's love,—thou'lt be a matchless  
    wife!  
God grant to thee a valiant chief—of rare and spotless life.”

---

<sup>1</sup> The nearest approximation to a typical first half of a Nibelungen line would consist of three ascending feet, followed by an extra syllable before the cæsura (\*/\*/\*/\*/\:). This has been used by Lettsom, Miss Horton, and, in many lines, by Mr. Foster-Barham.

It will be noticed that though generally the translation is line for line, Birch's rendering is not as close as it might be, and this is not due only to the variant readings of Lachmann's edition as compared with Piper's, but also to the translator's weakness for ornamentation and the difficulty he had in filling out his metre. Thus, in "Chriemhilda, innocent as *fair*,"<sup>1</sup> "many an *anxious* day," "*wrathful* eagles twain," "she, *entranced*," "*frightful* dream," "*however bland and brave*," "*my graceful child*," "a valiant chief of *rare and spotless life*." The words in italics are Birch's additions; they are out of place in a translation of the *Nibelungenlied*, and destroy one of its greatest charms—its simplicity. So again, in the second passage, describing the appearance of Kriemhild and Siegfried (148–153) there is the same striving after effect:—

148

Now came she—like the morning star, bright harbinger of  
day,  
Emerging from the clouds of eve!—then fled like dream away  
From many a heart the yearning wish, that long had nestled  
there.  
—Siegfried beheld in pomp of form, Chriemhild! the much  
loved fair.

149

Full many a gem on her attire cast dazzling rays around;  
And on her rose-and-lily cheek—the sheen of love was found.  
Whatever minstrel's mind might wish, he must admit, I ween,  
That on the earth there never yet was such pure beauty seen.

150

Like as the silver tinting moon bedims the starry crowds,  
When, with its clear and gentle light, it climbs o'er murky  
clouds;  
E'en so, in truth, did she outshine the best of womankind!  
Such bright formation well might raise each hero's heart and  
mind.

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<sup>1</sup> "Innocent" I take to be a mis-translation, which will be noticed below.

151

The rich young pages gaily marched before the bland princess ;  
 Then did the knights no more observe the ways of courtliness,  
 But crowded with rude force to see the much admired fair.  
 —Sir Siegfried felt alternately—great love, and great despair.

152

And thus unto himself did say, “how could I ever be  
 So witless as to think of her?—’twas sheer insanity !  
 But if I shun thee, lovely one ! then were I better dead.”  
 Sir Siegfried with such searching thoughts grew pallid, and  
 then red.

153

Now might be seen Sieglinda’s son, dejected and forlorn  
 Resembling what on parchment is by cunning limner drawn :  
 So graceful and so bland was he, that all the world might  
 say,  
 “We ne’er looked on so brave a knight—as we behold  
 to-day !”

As in the above passages, Birch’s rimes are almost invariably good and his metre free from irregularities. Yet the general poetic level is not high ; for the author evidently had difficulty in fitting the thoughts to the metre, and sometimes his language is unsuitable and even prosy. In the second stanza “thus and then and there” is unnatural ; in the third “unaccosted” produces a decidedly unpleasant impression ; the use of “bland” in the same stanza, and in 151 and 153 is not happy ; the last line of 150 is very clumsy ; and there seems to be a contradiction in 153, for Siegfried is dejected and forlorn, yet so graceful and “bland” that all admire him. Occasionally Birch sinks very low indeed, as in the following strophe, in which Siegfried announces his intention of setting off to woo Kriemhild, accompanied by eleven knights only :—

21

“I’ll gain her by this hand of mine,—or ill must overwhelm :  
 With ten and one accomplished knights, I’ll visit Gunther’s  
 realm :  
 The which, most kind and honoured sire, I humbly beg of  
 thee,”  
 —King Siegmund gave them suits of fur, of great variety.

or this:—

215

That Brünhild's strength was passing great, I am prepared  
to own :

To her was brought within the ring—a very pond'rous stone :  
It was of large circumference, eke nearly round and strong—  
A dozen knights could hardly lug the cumbrous stone along.

There is another feature not yet mentioned which mars Birch's work, and, for that matter, all the translations, more or less: an insufficient knowledge of Middle High German. Four mistakes worth noticing occur in the above twelve strophes (the corresponding Middle High German is quoted from Lachmann's edition of 1826):—

St. 1. *in tugenden der si pflac* (in her stylish surroundings)—“innocent.” M.H.G. *tugent* meant proper behaviour as regards courtly etiquette; the signification “virtue” is a later development.

150. *des wart wol gehæhet vil maneges heldes muot* (thereby full many a warrior's mettle was roused). —“such bright formation well might raise each hero's heart and mind.” The knights were supposed, in the Middle Ages, to be spurred on by the ladies' beauty to chivalrous deeds, *i.e.* fighting in the lists, taking long journeys, fulfilling difficult tasks at their lady's behest, and the like. They became *hohgemuot*, ready to do their lady's bidding, at any sacrifice, and confident of success. The improving and elevating effect of ladies' society is a more modern discovery.

151. *die rîchen kamerære* (the finely dressed chamberlains)—“the rich young pages.”

(*Sîfride*)*wart beide liep und leit* (Siegfried felt both joy and misery)—“(Siegfried) felt great love and great despair.”

Such mistakes are especially numerous near the beginning; three occur in the opening stanzas: in the third stanza, *edel unde rîch* (of noble lineage and great power) is rendered by “rich and noble meaning”; in the fifth,

*ein rîchiu küniginne* (a mighty queen) by "a wealthy dame"; in the seventh, *Dancwart der vil snelle* (Dankwart the full doughty) by "Bold Dankwart—he so swift of foot," &c.

Judged by modern standards Birch's translation leaves much to be desired, being without introduction, not always accurate, and incomplete; but due allowance must be made for a work of over fifty years ago, whose author was (presumably) an amateur. The poetic merit, too, varies from stanza to stanza; yet the sterling worth of the old epic remains, and the rendering of it into English, though but imperfectly, was a valuable addition to our literature.

2. **William Nanson Lettsom.**—*The Nibelungenlied: The Fall of the Nibelungers, otherwise the Book of Kriemhild.* (London, 1850; <sup>2</sup>1874).<sup>1</sup>

Only two years after Birch's appeared Lettsom's translation. Unlike his predecessor, Lettsom felt the incompleteness of a mere translation without any introduction, and this led him to sum up the most interesting results of contemporary research in a preface still worth reading. The historical existence of Etzel, Dietrich, and Gunther is referred to, as are some of the attempts to account for Siegfried. Lachmann's identification of Siegfried with Balder, along with various other suggestions,

<sup>1</sup> Reviews: (a) *Westminster Review*, 1850 (vol. ii.) pp. 530 ff. The critic practically contents himself with a summary of the wooing and marriage of Brunhild, and displays his artistic taste and knowledge of the poem in the following judgment: "It is highly curious as an antiquity, but we must own ourselves unable to find in it the high poetical merit of which many German critics speak in enthusiastic terms."

(b) *Blackwood's Magazine*, lxix. pp. 55 ff., and the *Eclectic Magazine* (New York), xxii. (1851), pp. 315 ff. contain the same article.

(c) The appearance of the second edition provoked a review by F. Carter in the *New Englander* (New Haven), xxxv. (1876) pp. 695 ff., in which both the introduction and the translation are very severely handled. Carter erroneously supposed the first edition to have appeared in 1865. This mistake led to a much harsher criticism of the introduction than was really warranted, and apparently brought on a fit of ferocity fatal to an unprejudiced judgment of the translation. Its value was therefore estimated from the absolute rather than the comparative standpoint, the faults being unsparingly laid bare, and the good in it receiving no word of praise or encouragement.

Lettsom rejected in favour of the view—now no longer tenable—that he was the historical King Sigebert of Austrasia, who was murdered in 575. The Norse form of the story is then given in a pleasant style, with frequent touches of humour,<sup>1</sup> and the main divergencies of the *Vilkina Saga* (*Thidrekssaga*) from the other versions are noticed. With regard to the origin of the poem, Lachmann's rejection of nearly nine hundred strophes, his division of the remnants into twenty lays, and the inferences he drew as to the age and authorship of the genuine and spurious strophes are reviewed; due tribute is paid to that scholar's acuteness, ingenuity, and authoritative position, but his methods and results are criticised adversely, and not inaptly. The versification of the *Nibelungenlied* is next agreeably and lucidly treated by means of examples from the Middle High German original and from English poetry; there is no formidable array of rules or of strange signs to repel or weary the general reader, yet a correct and clear idea is given of the more usual types of the Nibelungen metre. In conclusion, the author tells us that he has translated from the edition of Braunfels,<sup>2</sup> whose translation into modern German has been of assistance, as well as those of Simrock, Marbach, and Beta.

The poetical superiority of this translation over the one already discussed becomes apparent even in the first passage (st. 13–17):—

## 13

A dream was dreamt by Kriemhild the virtuous and the gay,  
 How a wild young falcon she train'd for many a day,  
 Till two fierce eagles tore it; to her there could not be  
 In all the world such sorrow at this perforce to see.

<sup>1</sup> Including one example of unconscious humour: Högni, cast with bound hands into a dungeon crowded with serpents, plays on a harp *with his teeth*. It should, of course, be *toes*.

<sup>2</sup> Lettsom's copy of Braunfels' edition is in the University Library, Cambridge.

14

To her mother Ute at once the dream she told,  
 But she the threatening future could only thus unfold :  
 "The falcon that thou trainedst is sure a noble mate ;  
 God shield him in his mercy, or thou must lose him straight."

15

"A mate for me? what say'st thou, dearest mother mine?  
 Ne'er to love, assure thee, my heart will I resign.  
 I'll live and die a maiden, and end as I began,  
 Nor (let what else befall me) will suffer woe for man."

16

"Nay," said her anxious mother, "renounce not marriage so ;  
 Would'st thou true heart-felt pleasure taste ever here below,  
 Man's love alone can give it. Thou'rt fair as eye can see,  
 A fitting mate God send thee, and nought will wanting be."

17

"No more," the maiden answered, "no more, dear mother, say ;  
 From many a woman's fortune this truth is clear as day,  
 That falsely smiling Pleasure with Pain requites us ever.  
 I from both will keep me, and thus will sorrow never."

This is an atmosphere quite different from that of Birch's rendering. The language is sprightly, simple, as it should be to reproduce the original, and better chosen. One strained construction, it is true, appears in the first stanza: *at this . . . to see*; presumably a misprint for *as this . . . to see*, though the quotation is taken from the second edition. Another occurs in the fourth strophe of the next passage: *matched* for *marched*, which I have corrected for quotation (st. 287-292):—

287

Now went she forth, the loveliest, as forth the morning goes  
 From misty clouds out-beaming; then all his weary woes  
 Left him, in heart who bore her, and so, long time, had done.  
 He saw there stately standing the fair, the peerless one.

288

Many a stone full precious flash'd from her vesture bright;  
 Her rosy blushes darted a softer, milder light.  
 Whate'er might be his wishes, each could not but confess,  
 He ne'er on earth had witness'd such perfect loveliness.



289

As the moon arising outglitters every star  
 That through the clouds so purely glimmers from afar,  
 E'en so love-breathing Kriemhild dimm'd every beauty nigh.  
 Well might at such a vision many a bold heart beat high.

290

Rich chamberlains before them marched on in order due ;  
 Around th' high-mettled champions close and closer drew,  
 Each pressing each, and struggling to see the matchless  
 maid.  
 Then inly was Sir Siegfried both well and ill apaid.

291

Within himself thus thought he ; " How could I thus mis-  
 deem  
 That I should dare to woo thee ? sure 'twas an idle dream !  
 Yet, rather than forsake thee, far better were I dead."  
 Thus thinking, thus impassion'd, wax'd he ever white and  
 red.

292

So stood the son of Sieglind in matchless grace array'd,  
 As though upon a parchment in glowing hues pourtray'd  
 By some good master's cunning ; all own'd, and could no less,  
 Eye had not seen a pattern of such fair manliness.

This rendering is, in general, as close as one could wish, but there are two cases in the above passage where the translation might fail to satisfy the fastidious. In the second line of the second stanza the words of the original (*ir rōsenrōtiu varwe vil minneclīchen seein*) convey no suggestion of blushing, or, at any rate, of rapid changes of colour such as are implied by Lettsom's words. In fact, so far as one may judge from the German poem, the young lady behaves with perfect composure throughout this scene ; yet the translator speaks of her as blushing again in strophe 299. The other blemish is in the third strophe ; instead of moonlight reflected from the clouds, as in the original, we have stars glimmering *through* them. Lettsom had the reading *der schīn*, &c., and followed Braunfels' modern version in supposing *der* to refer to *sternen* in the previous line. These, however, cannot be called mistakes ;

indeed, errors of translation are comparatively rare in Lettsom's work, which often shows a considerable acquaintance with Middle High German peculiarities. Thus, in the dream passage (st. 17) *liebe* is correctly rendered by "Pleasure," and in the second passage (289, 299), *gehœhet wart der muot* and *hôhgemuot* are well turned. But there is not an entire freedom from mistakes; when Kriemhild is called "the virtuous and the gay," (st. 13), there is a misunderstanding of *tugent*, and in the Siegfried's death passage he falls into the same error as Birch in translating *der wunde* "his wound" (1009-1017):—

1009

Dear paid he for his courtesy; his bow, his matchless blade,  
His weapons all, Sir Hagan far from their lord convey'd,  
Then back sprung to the linden to seize his ashen spear,  
And to find out the token survey'd his vesture near;

1010

Then as to drink Sir Siegfried down kneeling there he found,  
He pierc'd him through the croslet, that sudden from the  
wound  
Forth the life-blood spouted e'en o'er his murderer's weed.  
Never more will warrior dare so foul a deed.

1011

Between his shoulders sticking he left the deadly spear.  
Never before Sir Hagan so fled for ghastly fear,  
As from the matchless champion whom he had butchered  
there.  
Soon as was Sir Siegfried of the mortal wound aware,

1012

Up he from the runnel started as he were wood,  
Out from betwixt his shoulders his own huge boar-spear  
stood;  
He thought to find his quiver or his broadsword true,  
The traitor for his treason had then receiv'd his due.

1013

But, ah! the deadly-wounded nor sword nor quiver found;  
His shield alone beside him lay there upon the ground.  
This from the bank he lifted, and straight at Hagan ran;  
Him could not then by fleetness escape King Gunther's man.

1014

E'en to the death though wounded, he hurl'd it with such  
power,  
That the whirling buckler scatter'd wide a shower  
Of the most precious jewels, then straight in shivers broke.  
Full gladly had the warrior ta'en vengeance with that stroke.

1015

E'en as it was, his manhood fierce Hagan level'd low.  
Loud, all around, the meadow rang with the wondrous blow;  
Had he in hand good Balmung, the murderer he had slain,  
His wound was sore upon him; he writh'd in mortal pain.

1016

His lively colour faded; a cloud came o'er his sight;  
He could stand no longer; melted all his might;  
In his paling visage the mark of death he bore.  
Soon many a lovely lady sorrow'd for him sore.

1017

So the lord of Kriemhild among the flowerets fell.  
From the wound fresh gushing his heart's blood fast did well.  
Then thus amidst his tortures, e'en with his failing breath,  
The false friends he upbraided who had contriv'd his death.

Lettsom must have failed to notice, or miscomprehended, Braunfels' translation of the line: *Sehr zürnte der Wunde; ihn zwang dazu wohl rechte Noth.*

This passage is a rather unfortunate example of his skill as a translator; apart from metrical irregularities, which will be dealt with later, and the mistake already noticed, there are a number of very unsatisfactory renderings. In st. 1009, "convey'd" is colourless; the first line of 1010 and the last of 1013 are very clumsy; "weed" (1010) and "wood" (1012) stand out disagreeably as archaisms; in 1011 the use of "sticking" is colloquial, or, at least, unpoetic, and "butcher'd" is anything but suitable—for Siegfried was not yet dead, nor was he mutilated, as the word tends to suggest; in 1014 the picture of Siegfried *hurling* his shield at his murderer is untrue to the original, and "shivers" is a word unworthy a place in the tragic context.

In the next passage, describing the watch kept by

Hagen and Volker, there is a serious mistranslation, where *Volkêr der snelle* is turned by "The swift-footed minstrel," the misconception leading also to the use of "hurried" for the simple *gie*. There was no occasion for haste, and the original gives rather the impression of leisureliness, if anything. Otherwise the passage (st. 1891-1895) is very creditable.

1891

With that his glittering hauberk each girt his waist about,  
 Each grasp'd in hand his buckler, and straight, with courage  
 stout  
 From the house forth issuing, took post outside the door,  
 And there with faith and manhood still watch'd their comrades  
 o'er.

1892

The swift-footed minstrel scarce had left the hall,  
 Ere he his good buckler set down against the wall,  
 And back hurried thither; his viol he took in hand,  
 And with it as became him charm'd the way-wearied band.

1893

Upon the stone he sat him beneath the palace door;  
 Minstrel more undaunted viol ne'er struck before;  
 He struck the strings so sweetly ever as he play'd,  
 That the meed of thanks to Folker each haughty stranger  
 paid.

1894

The house it all re-echoed, he struck so loud and shrill;  
 The minstrel's strength was matchless, nor less the minstrel's  
 skill,  
 Sweeter anon and softer when he to play began,  
 On the beds he steeped in slumber many a care-harrow'd  
 man.

1895

When they in sleep were buried, and this by proof he knew,  
 Once more in hand his buckler grasp'd the champion true,  
 And, from the room forth stalking, before the tower he  
 stepp'd,  
 And so the slumbering strangers from the men of Kriemhild  
 kept.

Unhappily the first line of the last stanza has a suggestion of nasal competition with the minstrel's per-

formance. The preceding stanza deserves notice as to some extent reflecting the sound-painting (*Klangmalerei*) of the original. "Folker" was no doubt so spelled in order to preserve for English readers the *sound* of that warrior's name. In such an instance as this very little objection to the change can be raised except on the general principle that a translator ought to retain the name forms of the original (explaining the pronunciation, if necessary); but the abuses to which Lettsom's method leads are shown in Gêre appearing as *Gary* (9, 1143, &c.), and Else as *Elsy* (1645, 1646, 1679, 1680, &c.).

In the tragic passages Lettsom's translation, though in a less degree than that of his predecessor, loses some of the naïveté of the original. Thus, in the Siegfried's death passage: "his *matchless* blade" (1009), "his broadsword *true*" (1012), "his *ashen* spear" (1009), "the *deadly* spear" (1011), "fled for *ghastly* fear" (1011), "the *whirling* buckler" (1014), "*fierce* Hagan" (1015), are ornate where the original is simple. So again in the description of the night spent in the burning hall (2188-2197, omitting 2195):—<sup>1</sup>

2188

Then *faintly* said another, "needs must we here fall dead;  
What boots us now the greeting, to us by Etzel sped?  
Ah me! I'm so tormented by thirst from burning heat,  
That in this *horrid* anguish my life must quickly fleet."

2189

Thereat outspake Sir Hagan, the noble knight and good,  
"Let each, by thirst tormented, take here a draught of blood.  
In such a heat, believe me, 'tis better far than wine,  
Nought's for the time so fitting; such counsel, friends, is  
mine."

2190

With that straight went a warrior, where a *warm* corpse he  
found.  
On the dead down knelt he; his helmet he unbound;  
Then *greedily* began he to drink the flowing blood.  
However unaccustom'd, it seem'd him passing good.

<sup>1</sup> Lettsom's stanza, 2195, is absent from editions based on MSS. A and B.

2191

“Now God requite thee, Hagan,” the weary warrior cried,  
 “For such refreshing beverage by your advice supplied ;  
 It has been my lot but seldom to drink of better wine,  
 For life am I thy servant for this fair hint of thine.”

2192

When th' others heard and witness'd with that<sup>1</sup> delight he  
 quaffed,  
 Yet many more among them drank too the bloody draught.  
 It strung again their sinews, and failing strength renew'd.  
 This in her lover's person many a fair lady rued.

2193

Into the hall upon them the fire-flakes thickly fell ;  
 These with their shields they warded *warily and well*.  
 With smoke and heat together they were tormented sore ;  
 Never, I ween, good warriors such *burning* anguish bore.

2194

*Through smoke and flame* cried Hagan, “stand close against  
 the wall ;  
 Let not the burning ashes on your helm-laces fall ;  
 Into the blood yet deeper tread every fiery flake,  
 In sooth, this feast of Kriemhild's is ghastly merry-make.”

2196

In such *extremes of* anguish pass'd off the *dreary* night.  
 Before the hall *yet sleepless* stood the gleeman wight,  
 And leaning on his buckler, with Hagan by his side,  
 Look'd out, what further mischief might from the Huns  
 betide.

2197

Then thus bespoke he Hagan, “let's back into the hall ;  
 These Huns will then imagine that we have perish'd all  
 In the *fiery* torment they kindled to our ill.  
 They'll see yet some among us who'll do them battle still.”

The italicised words are all embellishments added by the translator, and perhaps “*on the dead* down knelt he” ought to be included. It is unnecessary to notice in detail the other weak points of this passage; similar blemishes have already been noticed above.

<sup>1</sup> A misprint for “what” ?

In reading only a few stanzas of Lettsom's translation one may be disagreeably impressed by the apparent roughness and irregularity of the metre; yet this very quality may after all be urged as one of the merits of his version, for it prevents monotony, it very nearly reproduces the style of the original—which would seem still more irregular to the uninitiated—and its underlying regularity soon becomes evident. It will be seen that each line, read with the natural accent, consists of two parts divided by a cæsura; the first part contains three primary stresses followed by a secondary one, while the second part has three highly stressed syllables, the last of which carries the rime. Thus we have exactly the typical Nibelungen line. It is to be regretted that the last half-line of the stanza was not lengthened throughout by one stress, as in a few exceptional cases (*cf.* 291, 1892, 1894).

The translator introduces variety of rhythm in two ways. On the one hand (as is still more frequently the case in the Old German poem), unstressed syllables, whose presence would make a line of ascending feet, are sometimes omitted; a good effect is produced by this means in 1016, for instance:—

His lively colour fádèd; a clóud came ó'er his síght;  
Hé could stánd no lóngèr; mélted áll his míght; . . .

where the measure of the second line depicts the sudden ebbing of Siegfried's strength, till then kept up by his furious attempt to avenge himself. The same device is very successfully used in the last half-line of 1892:—

. . . chármed the wáy-weáried bánd.

and the last line of 1894:

On the béds he stéep'd in slúmbèr mány a cáre-hárrów'd mán.

On the other hand, two unstressed syllables sometimes come together—unallowable in the original, except in the *Auftakt*—*e.g.* 289, 4; 290, 3; 1011, 2; 1011, 4;

1012, 1; in English this produces anapæsts, which are quite suitably employed at any rate in the last three instances.

Lettsom's rimes are, for the most part, very pure. Of the sixty-eight quoted above, only three are bad rimes (*found, wound*, 1010; *good, blood*, 2189, 2190), while four others are slightly imperfect (*drew, due*, 290; *true, due*, 1012; *knew, true*, 1895; *renewed, rued*, 2192).<sup>1</sup> One case requires special notice, the only feminine rime, I believe, in the translation: *ever, never*, in stanza 17. Perhaps we ought to read *e'er, ne'er*. In Middle High German two such words would be counted as metrically monosyllabic, and would form a masculine rime.

The comparative freedom from misunderstanding of Middle High German constructions has been remarked. The only three evident mistranslations in the specimen passages have already been pointed out, but they are, of course, typical of others that occur. Thus, *tugent* is translated by "virtue" (3, 25); *milte* by "mild of mood" (5); *Vier hundert swertdegene die solten tragen kleit* (four hundred squires were to don knightly attire) is rendered "Sworded squires four hundred rich raiment had to wear" (32); *dô was er niemen bekant* (no one was aware of his presence, as he had just put on his *tarnkappe*) becomes "while none was there to look" (444).

On the whole, Lettsom's translation<sup>2</sup> may be looked on as a very successful one, if not of quite the first order. The introduction, and nearly thirty pages of useful and interesting notes, are excellent features; the rendering often shows considerable poetic talent, and is generally true to the spirit and matter of the original; while the metre of the Old German poem is very cleverly imitated.

<sup>1</sup> These can hardly be counted as faults; considerable allowance ought to be made for the many slight differences between the English vowel sounds and the consequent difficulty in finding a sufficient variety of exact rimes.

<sup>2</sup> A tribute has recently been paid to its quality by its partial inclusion ("Adventures," 6-8) in Dr. Garnett's "International Library of Famous Literature," vol. iv. pp. 1540-1564.



3. **Alfred G. Foster-Barham.**—*The Nibelungen Lied; Lay of the Nibelung*<sup>1</sup> (London, 1887, <sup>2</sup>1893. No. 51 of Sir John Lubbock's Hundred Books).

Before the appearance of this translation the productions of both Birch and Lettsom had reached second editions. Mr. Foster-Barham, however, was probably unaware of their existence; at any rate, they are not mentioned in his preface, where he says, "The position of the class of 'well-informed' persons with respect to the *Nibelungen Lied*, or *Lay of the Nibelung*, has probably not altered greatly since Carlyle wrote in 1831 that 'they were obliged to profess admiration, while at the same time they only knew what they admired by name,'" and again, "But the *Nibelungen Lied* itself, the great Northern Epos or German Iliad, is, I believe, still unknown in England, save to a very few; and it is this belief which must plead as my excuse for the attempt I have made to set the story in a plain and perhaps a too literal form before the reader in the following translation." A few not altogether satisfactory remarks (chiefly culled from Carlyle's Essay<sup>2</sup> on the *Nibelungenlied*) on the characters, authorship, and age of the poem, serve as the only introduction. This essay of Carlyle's is absolutely the only work on the *Nibelungenlied* to which reference is made; we are not even told which text has been followed, nor, indeed, that the translator's original was Middle High German at all. This seems probable, however, from the occurrence of mistakes which would probably have been absent in a translation from any of the good modern German versions; but a comparison of the stanzas translated with those contained in the editions of Lachmann, Von der Hagen, Braunfels, Holtzmann, Zarneke, Bartsch, Keller, and Lassberg,

<sup>1</sup> Reviews: (a) *Congregational Review*, vol. i. (London, 1887), 1104 ff., by Ruth Brindley, who praises the book unduly. (b) *Athenæum*, No. 3117 (1887), 115. (c) *Saturday Review*, No. 63 (1887), 923. The reviewer indulges in an account of the origin of the *Nibelungenlied*, throughout which he occupies the false position that the Norse is the original version of the story and the German derived from it.

<sup>2</sup> The book is dedicated to the memory of Carlyle, whose essay is discussed below, pp. 84 ff.

makes it improbable that any of these was the text employed.

Mr. Foster-Barham's version of the dream-passage is as follows (p. 3, st. 1-5):—

- 1 It chanced that Chriemhild <sup>3</sup> dreamed, by fancy sweet possessed,  
That a wild Falcon she had long caressed ;  
Him, with fell swoop, two Eagles seized, the which to view  
Brought her such grief and trouble as before she never knew.
- 2 The dream soon to Ute, her mother, told the maid ;  
Who for the best did read it, and quickly to her said,  
“ The falcon, whom thou lovest, that was a noble man :  
May God in safety keep him, for none other can.”
- 3 “ Why tell you me of men, dearest mother, say ?  
Free from love of Recken will I ever stay ;  
Thus fair till death o'ertake me would I seek to be,  
So that from men no sorrow may ever come to me.”
- 4 “ Foretell it not so fully,” the mother made reply ;  
“ Wouldst thou on earth ever taste the heart's sweetest joy,  
That comes from love of Recken, a beauteous wife thou'lt be,  
If the good God send hither some trusty knight to thee.”
- 5 “ Now, prythee, stay thy speaking,” said she, “ mother dear,  
It can on many another be amply proven clear,  
How love for its guerdon too oft receiveth pain.  
From both will I keep me, naught ill shall hurt me then.”

It will be seen at once that this translation is not marked by greater literalness than Lettsom's; in fact, it is more free, if anything, and the sense is too often missed altogether. In the first stanza, “by fancy sweet possessed” is either a mistranslation or a deliberate substitution; and “caressed” is not the equivalent of *züge*. In the next, “who for the best did read it,” seems to betray a misunderstanding, and does not quite suit the context; while “a noble man” (for *edel*) would certainly suggest to the ordinary reader a man of noble qualities rather than one of good family. In the fourth, “foretell it not so fully”

is a curious phrase, and in the fifth, *liebe* is mistranslated "love," which quite alters the meaning of the line. In general, however, the language itself is fairly well chosen, though a translator should avoid using any but English words, unless there happens to be no English equivalent. *Recken*, *Ritter*, and *Degen* are frequently used throughout the translation, presumably in imitation of Carlyle; further traces of the influence of his essay will be noticed below. Other such words that have been retained are: *Kemenātē* (p. 158, st. 1; 193, 5), *Fiedel* (289, 4), *Fiedler* (357, 1), *Fidelerere* (312, 7), *Fiedelmann* (31, 4; 356, 3; 359, 1, &c.); *Fiedelspieler* (289, 1 and 5; 319, 1; 356, 4 and 6; and often), *kind* (358, 1). There is more excuse for *shelk* (147, 3), the meaning of which is not very certain; *Tarnkappe* (17, 1; 53, 4; 53, 6; 53, 7, &c.); *Nebel-Kappe* (54, 1); and *morass* (285, 1), for *móraz*, probably mulberry wine. A note on the last of these words forms a small appendix which does not reflect favourably on the author's philological knowledge. In it he refers to the Anglo-Saxon *morāð*, and says, "This is without doubt the same word, for the Anglo-Saxon "ð" ("th" as in "thy") replaces the High Dutch "s" or "z," according to a well-recognised rule in philology. I find, however, in a 'Mittelhochdeutsches Hand-wörterbuch von Dr. Matthias Lexer, Leipzig, 1872,' &c.<sup>1</sup>

Turning now to the second passage we find the same praiseworthy simplicity of style and language, but also similar errors (44, 6 to 45, 4):—

44

- 6 Then came the lovely one, as does the rosy morn  
 Through sombre clouds advancing. From Siegfried's heart  
 love-lorn  
 Fled all the care that bound him, and which he long had known;  
 Before him now the maiden in queenly beauty shone.

<sup>1</sup> The student of Germanic philology needs no criticism of this note. For the general reader it may be well to point out that the well-recognised rule is that the Anglo-Saxon "ð" corresponds to High German "d." "High Dutch" is an unsuitable and out-of-date expression; and Lexer's is *the* Middle High German dictionary.

- 7 Upon her raiment glittered many a jewel rare,  
 Her rosy colour mantling lit up her face so fair.  
 Let who would have the choosing, his award must have been,  
 That ne'er in any country he had aught so lovely seen.

## 45

- 1 As the bright Queen of heaven steps forth before each star,  
 Above the clouds high soaring, in sheen so pure and clear,  
 So shone the beauteous maiden o'er other ladies nigh :  
 Many a hero gazing was filled with courage high.
- 2 Her Chamberlains so wealthy before her cleared the way ;  
 The fiery-tempered Degen would no longer stay ;  
 They pressed on ever nearer where they might see the maid.  
 Siegfried the brave hero was both pleased and sad.
- 3 Within himself he communed : " How could I ever deem,  
 That I thy love could conquer ? That was an idle dream ;  
 But if I now must lose thee, fain were I rather dead."  
 With such thoughts beclouded his colour came and sped.
- 4 Thus stood the son of Siegelind so beauteous to be seen,  
 As if on some parchment limned he had been  
 By art of a great master : each must own it true,  
 That ne'er yet in his lifetime so fair a knight he knew.

Apart from irregularities of versification, this passage, except in the third and fourth stanzas, gives a very fair reproduction of the original in simple and suitable language. In the fourth strophe there are two bad mistakes, *rich* is translated "so wealthy," and *hōhgemuot* "fiery-tempered." In the third, the first two lines are not quite satisfactory. True, one can picture the moon as soaring above the clouds on a windy night, and it is permissible to speak of the Queen of heaven, personified, as stepping forth ; but the combination of the two ideas is impossible.

One of the weak points of Mr. Foster-Barham's version is the frequency of impure rimes. In eleven stanzas we have already had six cases (*maid, said ; reply, joy ; plain, then ; known, shone ; star, clear ; maid, sad*) ; and even this proportion is surpassed in the Siegfried's death-passage (153, 5 to 154, 6) :—

## 153

- 5 His own turn was come now ; his bow and mighty sword  
Hagen away did carry from the Degen o'er the sward ;  
Then sprang he back so quickly where the javelin lay,  
And sought in Siegfried's linen the fatal sign to see.
- 6 As the Degen Siegfried at the brooklet drank,  
Through the cross he pierced him, that from the wound out-  
sprang  
His heart's blood, which sprouted high on Hagen's dress.  
Never since has hero suffered such cruel stress.
- 7 In his breast the weapon deeply buried lay ;  
Then in furious flight ran Hagen swift away ;  
Never sure on earth had he before so run !  
As now to strong Siegfried his fearful wound was known.

## 154

- 1 With a wild roar the hero from the brook upsprang ;  
From his shoulders stood out a cruel spearstock long.  
He thought to find beside him his bow or else his sword,  
Then had he given Hagen in truth a grim reward.
- 2 When the death-wounded hero sword nor bow could find,  
Naught else but his buckler then to him remained.  
This from the brook he raised and after Hagen ran ;  
Not e'en then outrun him could King Gunther's man.
- 3 Tho' to the death thus wounded, he struck so fiercely there  
That from the shield was showered many a jewel rare  
On the ground beneath them ; the shield then brake in two ;  
Gladly would have avenged himself the hero true.
- 4 Under his hand was Hagen fallen on the plain ;  
With the blows the woodland echoed loud again.  
Had he in hand his good sword, Hagen his death had met.  
His deadly wound now chafed him, his distress was great.
- 5 Wan was his face and pallid, stand he could no more.  
All his strength so mighty of hand and limb was o'er,  
Since that fatal token he on his dress did wear,  
Bewept he was hereafter by many a lady fair.
- 6 So amongst the flowers fell Chriemhilda's man :  
From his wound the warm blood streaming downwards ran.  
He turned then to rebuke them in this his cruel scathe,  
Who with such foul treason had compassed thus his death.

Here again a number of cases in which the original has been misunderstood require notice. The first phrase, "His own turn was come now," shows that the irony of *dô engalt er sîner zûhte* (then he paid for his courtesy) has not been appreciated. The meaning of the last line of the second stanza is entirely missed. In the sixth stanza, "gladly" is the meaning of the Modern German *gern*, and too weak for the M.H.G. *gerne*. The mistake made by both Birch and Lettsom in the seventh stanza is repeated here in translating *sô sêre zurnde der wunde* by "His deadly wound now chafed him." Lastly, in the eighth stanza, *wand er des tôdes zeichen in liechter varwe truoc* really means, of course, "for he carried in his pale colour the mark of death"; but Mr. Foster-Barham makes it refer to the cross marking Siegfried's vulnerable spot. Clearly, the translator's knowledge of Middle High German was insufficient for his task; such mistakes as these, and worse, may be found in almost any page of his work.

It will be unnecessary to quote the other specimen passages of Mr. Foster-Barham's work, as the above amply suffice to illustrate its chief characteristics. Avoidance, as a rule, of embellishment is its best feature, and in this it is more faithful to the original than either of its predecessors. On the other hand, mistakes are numerous, it teems with foreign words, and the sense is not always well expressed. In the last passage, for example, it is hard to see why Hagen should seek the fatal mark in Siegfried's *linen*; "sprouted" needs correction to "spurred"; and the phrase "suffered stress" is unnatural. "In his breast the weapon deeply buried lay" would have been more suitable if the blow had been struck from the front, while "the shield *then* brake in two" suggests that it remained intact until after the blow was given; lastly, the substitution of the plural "blows" for the singular impairs the force of the original, where Siegfried fells Hagen and shatters his shield with one mighty stroke.

As regards the form, the laxity of the riming has

already been noticed. The metre is rather irregular, but is based on the Nibelungen strophe, the lines being divided by a cæsura into two parts, each of which contains three stresses; the first part has in addition an extra final syllable. The unstressed syllables are sometimes omitted, sometimes doubled, thus allowing considerable freedom in choice both of language and of a suitably slow or fast measure; Mr. Foster-Barham, however, has not taken advantage of this as skilfully as did Lettsom.

The influence of Carlyle's Essay on the *Nibelungentied* on Mr. Foster-Barham has been referred to in the section dealing with his preface; other strong evidences of it occur in the translation itself. Sometimes a phrase or line is identical with that of Carlyle's translation, e.g. (13, 1):—

Sad was it to the Recken, stood weeping many a maid ;

Sometimes there is a similarity to Carlyle's rendering throughout a stanza too close to be accounted for merely as a translation from the same original (*cf.* 131, 7 and 132, 1, with Carlyle's version) and one of Carlyle's best stanzas:—

The third of those companions He is of aspect stern,  
 And yet with lovely body, Rich queen, as ye might discern ;  
 From those *his rapid glances*, For the eyes nought rest in  
 him,  
 Meseems this foreign Recke Is of temper fierce and grim.

is adopted almost unaltered, and without any acknowledgment of its real authorship (65, 6):—

The third of these companions, he is of aspect stern,  
 And yet of manly beauty, rich Queen, ye might discern,  
 From those his rapid glances, for the eyes nought rest in him,  
 Methinks this foreign Recke is of temper fierce and grim.

4. **Alice Horton.**—*The Lay of the Nibelungs metrically translated from the Old German text by Alice Horton, and edited by Edward Bell, M.A. To which is prefixed*

*the Essay on the Nibelungenlied by Thomas Carlyle.*<sup>1</sup> (London, 1898; Bohn's Library.)

Many of the reading public prefer to be introduced gradually, through an account of the original, to the enjoyment of a translation, rather than to be cast headlong into strange surroundings where they must find their own way, if they can, to a right understanding and appreciation of the work before them. To meet this demand, Carlyle's Essay, supplemented by footnotes and additional information in the editor's preface, has been prefixed to the translation.

First, then, it will be well to consider how far this Essay, in conjunction with the editor's additions, fulfils the requirements of an introduction. A detailed criticism of the Essay itself will be found below (pp. 84 ff.), where it is shown that both accuracy, to some extent, and scientific treatment of the subject are wanting—two serious faults. The former might have been attained by means of a few notes correcting Carlyle's errors of seventy years ago; the latter could have been introduced only at the expense of sacrificing the Essay. For the student, so generally neglected in the introductions to English books, both are indispensable; and even the "general reader" will accept what is correct and well ordered, at least as willingly as what is not.

As regards the subject matter, some of the questions that would be treated in an ideal introduction are either not touched upon or insufficiently dealt with. In the first place, the various versions of the story—Upper German, Lower German, and Norse—deserve much more notice than they receive either in the Essay or in the preface. The only poems of importance for the saga dealt with by Carlyle are the *Nibelungenlied* itself and *Hürnen Seyfrid*. The *Volsungasaga* and *Thidrekssaga* are mentioned in the preface, as relating Siegfried's early adventures and Theodoric's history; but no further indication of their

<sup>1</sup> Reviewed by me: *M.L.Q.*, iii. (1900), 131 ff.



contents is given. The historical basis of the tradition was only partly known to Carlyle, who recognised Attila and Theodoric the Great. Mr. Bell also refers in a footnote to the defeat of the Burgundians by the Huns, and the occurrence of the names Godomar, Gislahar, and Gundahar in the *Lex Burgundionum*, and mentions Bishop Pilgerin of Passau in the preface. As for the mythological groundwork, Von der Hagen's theories are summed up in the Essay; it is to be regretted that the editor did not add a survey of the advances made later by Lachmann, Raszmann, Heinzel, Zarnecke, and others.

Of the MSS. of the poem, the three chief ones are briefly mentioned in the preface; *B*, as edited by Bartsch, is the basis of Miss Horton's translation. A good feature of the book is a reproduction of a page of this MS. after a facsimile in Dr. O. Henne am Rhy's *Kulturgeschichte des deutschen Volkes* (Berlin, 21892); it is a pity that the transcript is not more exact.<sup>1</sup> What information Carlyle was in a position to offer about the origin and authorship of the poem is now largely out of date; the claims of some of the possible authors mentioned by him are finally disposed of, but the editor's remark that, "so far as concerns the authorship of the poem, as it now exists, nothing has been discovered since Carlyle's time," is true, if positive and generally accepted results are alone worthy of notice. Of the many theories connected with the origin of the poem, Lachmann's *Liedertheorie* is noticed in the preface, but the labours of his followers and opponents are passed over, not excepting even Bartsch's views.

The style and language are well depicted in the Essay, Mr. Bell improving on Carlyle's description of the versification by quoting a normal strophe; the stressed syllables he marks with accents, but does not give a technical

<sup>1</sup> Undeniable mistakes are: *chuneginne* (*chüneginne*), i. 3; *kunich* (*künich*), i. 4; *Helchen* (*helchen*), i. 9; *groziu* (*groziu*), i. 12; *heren* (*heten*), i. 15; *een* (*cen*), i. 16; *Sas* (*Saz*), i. 25; *friundschefte* (*friuntschefte*), i. 30; *heidenische* (*heidenischen*), i. 35.

account of the metre. In place of a bibliography, we have first the few out-of-date references in the Essay, and, secondly, a reference for students to "the works of Rasszmann (*sic*) and Simrock; to Magnusson and Morris's translations of the Icelandic Sagas; to a recent work by Professor Ker on 'Epic and Romance';<sup>1</sup> and also to Miss J. L. Weston's excellent 'Legends of the Wagnerian Drama.'"<sup>2</sup> The previous translations are mentioned at the beginning of the preface.

The combination of Carlyle's Essay with the editor's supplementary remarks, then, fails in several respects to form a thoroughly satisfactory introduction. Yet it undoubtedly deserves some words of recognition; it is an advance on any previous introduction, being more complete and modern than Lettsom's or "Auber Forestier's,"<sup>3</sup> though something corresponding to the former's account of the other versions of the saga and the versification of the original, and to the latter's discussion of the mythological basis, should have been added. And there is one part of Carlyle's Essay which has permanent worth, and is eminently suitable for inclusion—his account of the *Nibelungenlied* itself. Though marred by a few technical mistakes, it is unsurpassed in force and charm, and cannot fail to whet the reader's appetite for the enjoyment of the poem.

Proceeding now to inquire into the merits of the translation itself, we learn from the preface that Miss Horton's aim has been the highest possible, viz., to reproduce the manner, matter, and metre of the original. The dream-passage is rendered thus (st. 13-17):—

13

Meanwhile, amid this splendour, the maid Kriemhilda dreamed  
That she had reared a falcon—strong, fair and wild he seem'd—  
And that two eagles tore him, and eke before her eyes;—  
No worse grief could life bring her in any evil guise.

<sup>1</sup> Actually Professor Ker hardly does more than mention the *Nibelungenlied*.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 112.

<sup>3</sup> See pp. 72 ff.

14

Quick to her mother Uté she told the vision dread,—  
 Who, after her own manner, the dream interpreted :  
 “This falcon of thy rearing, thy noble husband he,—  
 And now may God defend him, or he is lost to thee!”

15

“What sayest thou of husbands, O dearest mother mine?  
 Never for hero's wooing shall I, your daughter, pine!  
 Spotless and fair would I be, as now, unto my death;—  
 I would forego the sorrow that lurks man's love beneath.”

16

“Forswear not Love thus lightly,” her mother answer gave,  
 “If heart's joy ever reach thee in life, as women crave,  
 Through man's love thou must gain it;—thou wert a seemly  
 bride  
 If God do not deny thee a good knight at thy side.”

17

“Ah, let alone such counsel, my mother dear, I pray!  
 By many a woman's witness 'tis proven, clear as day,  
 How heart's delight too often with sorrow sore is paid;—  
 Lest such mischance befall me, I'll shun them both,” she said.

The closeness of this translation, in which line corresponds to line, often indeed half-line to half-line, is beyond praise; but it has sometimes been attained at the expense of an artistic blemish. Thus, “he seemed,” and “and eke before her eyes,” mar the first strophe; while in the next “and now” is superfluous, for Siegfried had not yet appeared on the scene. It is, of course, a task requiring a thorough command of language and some ingenuity to produce a translation so literal as this, and at the same time to make use of so regular a metre; for it is not often that Miss Horton allows herself to depart from the ascending feet of which her lines consist. The second specimen passage is marked by the same closeness, and by language all but as simple and graceful as that of the original (st. 281–286):—

281

Then came the lovely maiden : even as morning-red  
 From sombre clouds outbreaking. And many a sorrow fled  
 From him whose heart did hold her, and eke so long had held :  
 When thus the winsome fair one before him he beheld.

282

Upon her raiment glittered full many a precious stone :  
 Her rosy blushing colour with lovely radiance shone.  
 Though any would deny it he could not but confess,  
 That on this earth he never had seen more loveliness.

283

Just as the moon in brightness excels the brightest stars,  
 And, suddenly outshining, athwart the clouds appears ;  
 So seemed she now, comparéd with dames of fairest guise.  
 Then did our gallant hero feel his bold spirits rise.

284

One saw before her marching the chamberlains, in state,—  
 But the high-mettled warriors their order would not wait :  
 They thronged to where, in passing, the fair maid they could  
 see.  
 The while Sir Siegfried suffered both joy and misery.

285

Sadly he thought within him : “ How can it ever be ?  
 It is mere foolish dreaming that I should marry thee !  
 Yet to be still a stranger !—then were I better dead ! ”  
 And, thinking so, his colour did change 'twixt white and red.

286

There stood the son of Siegmund ; as winsome did he look  
 As if his form were limnéd upon a parchment-book,  
 By hand of cunning master ; and all men said of him,  
 That there was no man like him, so fine and fair of limb.

Both manner and matter are almost perfectly reproduced ; all that one can take exception to is the use of an archaic form like “ eke ”—usually Miss Horton has wisely avoided archaisms—and the “ suddenly outshining ” (st. 283), which is not in the German.

So far there have been no mistranslations to note, but

two cases occur in the Siegfried's death passage (980-988):—

980

His courtesy and breeding, then met with their reward :  
For Hagen to the background withdrew his bow and sword.  
Then sprang again towards him to where he found the spear,  
And looked to find a token the hero's coat did bear.

981

And whilst the noble Siegfried drank of the rippling flood  
He stabb'd him through the cross-mark, and through the  
wound his blood  
Straight from his heart outspurted, and Hagen's shirt was wet ;  
So foul a misdeed never befell a hero yet.

982

He left the lance within him close to his heart stuck tight ;  
And grimly then did Hagen betake himself to flight,  
As in his life he never from mortal man did flee.  
The stalwart Siegfried, feeling how sorely smit was he,

983

All madly from the fountain in rage and anguish sprang,  
Whilst from between his shoulders a long lance-shaft did hang.  
The chieftain thought to find there his bow, or else his sword :  
Then verily had Hagen not gone without reward.

984

But when the knight sore-wounded his sword had fail'd to find,  
And saw that they had left him naught save his shield behind,  
He gripp'd it from the well's side, and after Hagen ran :  
Then vainly to escape him essay'd King Gunther's man.

985

Though he to death was wounded, so mightily smote he,  
That from the hero's buckler there fell abundantly  
The precious stones that deck'd it ; the shield itself did break ;  
The noble guest his vengeance had else been fain to wreak.

986

Yet by his hand must Hagen lie stretch'd upon the ground.  
So hard, in sooth, his blows were, they made the glebe resound.  
Had he his sword had handy, then Hagen had been slain.  
The wound was burning sorely, and made him writhe with pain.

987

His cheeks had lost their colour ; no longer stand could he,  
 And all his strength of body was failing utterly ;  
 Death's sign upon his forehead in pallid hue he bore :  
 Fair women soon were mourning for him with weeping sore.

988

Then fell Kriemhilda's husband upon the flowery sward :  
 One saw from out the lance-wound, how fast his life-blood  
 pour'd.  
 Upbraiding then began he,—forced by his mortal pain,—  
 Those who had thus betray'd him and treacherously slain.

The mistakes have, no doubt, been observed in the fourth lines of stanzas 981 and 986 respectively ; it is unnecessary to repeat the corrections. Otherwise there is little opening for criticism of the language employed, except that "to the background" suggests stage scenery ; "how sorely smit was he" is clumsy, and the scene is slightly weakened by the substitution of the plural "blows" for the singular. "Stuck tight" is, perhaps, too colloquial, and the order of words is sometimes strained.

The next passage describes the watch kept by Hagen and Volker (1832-1836).

1832

Then in their shining raiment they twain their bodies clad,  
 And each of them his buckler upon his forearm had.  
 They went without the castle to stand the gateway by,  
 And there the guests they guarded : 'twas done right faithfully.

1833

Volker the ever-ready then from his arm unbraced  
 His shield—it was a good one—which 'gainst the wall he  
 placed.  
 Back to the hall he hasten'd, and there his fiddle seized,  
 And as became a hero, his friends therewith he pleased.

1834

Beneath the doorway sat he upon a seat of stone ;  
 A braver fiddle-player in sooth had ne'er been known.  
 With such sweet-sounding music upon the strings he play'd,  
 That all the high-born strangers their thanks to Volker paid.

1835

The sweet clang of his viol made all the house resound.  
His strength and skill together right excellent were found.  
More softly and more sweetly to fiddle he began,  
And lull'd upon their couches full many a troubled man.

1836

And when they all were sleeping, and he thereof was sure,  
The thane took up his buckler upon his arm once more,  
And went outside the chamber before the tower to stand,  
To guard the sleeping strangers against Kriemhilda's band.

Here, "ever-ready" does not quite give the meaning of *snel* (bold, brave). The word *snel* has precisely the same meaning as *balt*, *küene*, &c., and *Volker der snelle* is a sort of formula, having no special reference to the warrior's thoughtfulness and resource as exemplified in playing the Burgundians to sleep. The misunderstanding of this word, presumably, has led Miss Horton, as it did Lettson, to attribute to Volker's actions a haste not in the original. "Thane," again, in 1836, though etymologically the same as *degen*, has a different signification.

Miss Horton's version of the scene in the burning hall, however, is a most faithful, almost faultless, reproduction of the Old German (2113-2120):—

2113

Quoth one within the palace: "Needs must we all lie dead!  
What profits us the greeting that from the king we had?  
The burning heat so sorely with thirst doth torture me,  
I trow that in this torment my life will quickly flee."

2114

Then Hagen spake, of Tronjé: "Ye noble knights and good,  
Whoe'er by thirst is troubled may quench it here with blood.  
In heat like this 'tis better than wine of any kind,  
And at this time, moreover, no better may we find."

2115

So went one of the warriors to where a corpse he found:  
He knelt to where the wound was, his helmet he unbound,  
And then he fell to drinking the oozing stream of blood;  
Unused as he was to it, he thought it passing good.

2116

“Requite thee God, Sir Hagen,” that man so weary spake,  
 “Seeing that thou hast taught me so well my thirst to slake!  
 A better wine right seldom hath been pour’d out for me.  
 Live I for some while longer, I’ll aye be bound to thee.”

2117

The rest being told about it, and how he found it good,  
 Then were there many others who also drank the blood.  
 Thereby each one among them began to gain new life—  
 In dear ones it was paid for by many a goodly wife.

2118

Within the hall about them the sparks fell thick around,  
 Upon their shields they caught them and turn’d them to the  
 ground.  
 The fire and smoke together distress’d them terribly.  
 I trow that heroes never felt greater misery.

2119

Then Tronian Hagen shouted: “Stand closer to the wall!  
 Let not the burning embers upon your helm-bands fall,  
 But in the blood more deeply trample them with your feet:  
 This feast the queen hath made us is but a sorry treat!”

2120

In such distressful doings the night to ending wore,  
 And still the gallant minstrel kept watch the house before  
 With Hagen his companion; upon their shields they leant,  
 From Etzel’s folk awaiting some further detriment.

The few mistranslations in the specimen passages have already been commented on. In the earlier portion of her work, especially, Miss Horton has too often fallen into some of the usual errors made by translators from Middle High German. Thus: *ir edel lîp* becomes “her noble form and face” (3); *drie kûnege edel unde rîch*, “three noble kings and wealthy” (4); *die herren wâren mîlte*, “these princes were right gentle” (5); *ein rîchiu kûne-ginne*, “a queen exceeding rich” (7); *Dancwart der vil snelle*, “Sir Dankwart the swift-footed” (9); but later on such mistakes grow less frequent. There are other misinterpretations which might have been avoided by reference to annotated editions, or careful examination of the



syntax; for example, in stanza 22, *waz éren an im wüehse* (what fine qualities developed in him) becomes "How noble was his stature"; in 39, *Der herre hiez lîhen Sîvrit den jungen man | lant unde bürge, als er het é getân* (Siegfried's father caused him to give the nobles their lands and castles in fief, as he had previously done himself) is rendered "Then did the king make over to young Siegfried, the loan | Of both his lands and castles, as he afore had done"; in 121, *uns mac wol wesen leit* (we may well regret), "Well do we to be wrath"; in 277, *Vil manec recke tumber des tages hete muot, | daz er an ze sehene den frouwen wære guot, | daz er dâ für niht næme eins rîchen kûniges lant* (That day many a young warrior felt that he would not take a kingdom in exchange for the fine impression he would make on the ladies); "And many a knight on that day had younger gladly been, | That he might be of women more favourably seen; | Instead whereof he'd care not a kingdom rich to own!"

The quotations show that the metrical form used by Miss Horton consists of stanzas of four lines, each containing six ascending feet; every line, including the fourth, is divided by a cæsura into two equal parts, except that the first has an extra syllable before the cæsura, which is thus made feminine. The rimes are all masculine, like those of the original, but their quality is not altogether satisfactory, for there are eleven decidedly poor rimes in the thirty-four strophes quoted—a rather high proportion in face of the general purity of the rimes in the German poem. The regularity of the versification is pleasing at first, but some degree of monotony is inevitable in nine thousand lines of riming couplets composed almost exclusively of ascending feet. This would have been relieved to some extent if the lengthened fourth line of the stanza had been retained, as in Miss Nichols' translation of *Gudrun*,<sup>1</sup> and at the same time one of the prominent features of the original would have been preserved.

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 163 ff.

Before proceeding to the prose versions, it will be well to sum up briefly the respective merits of the two best verse translations—Lettsom's and Miss Horton's. The former shows greater skill in versification, perhaps more poetic talent, and a sounder knowledge of the language of the original; the latter excels, generally, in reproducing the spirit of the Old German, avoiding embellishment, and using simple natural language. Both are good; neither perfect. May some future translator combine and surpass the good features of each!

## B. PROSE TRANSLATIONS

1. **Auber Forestier (Annie Aubertine Woodward).**—*Echoes from Mist-Land; or, the Nibelungen Lay.*<sup>1</sup> (Chicago, 1877.)

Before the appearance of this work, the only translations of the *Nibelungenlied* into English were those of Birch and Lettsom, neither of which appears to have become well known on the other side of the Atlantic. This circumstance caused Miss Woodward, desiring to draw her countrymen's attention to the story in a form which should commend itself to as large a class of readers as possible, to produce the earliest prose translation. It is not a close and literal, but a free rendering into simple English prose, not remarkable for extraordinary vigour, but having no serious faults. So considerable is the freedom sometimes that one is tempted to call it an account rather than a translation, and the *naïveté* of the Old German has been sacrificed in order to make the work more palatable to the modern general reader. The minute clearness of detail is lost, while the construction is more continuous, the style more flowing, and the progress of the story more rapid. The following passage is a good example (p. 193):—

<sup>1</sup> A copy of this book is to be found in the British Museum.

"They were tormented with the heat and smoke, and many began to complain of an unbearable thirst. Sir Hagen, hearing this, bade the knights take a draught of blood, assuring them that in such a heat it was better than wine. Immediately one of the warriors knelt down beside a corpse, and, seizing a helmet, drank of the flowing blood.

"'Now God requite you, Hagen,' cried he, 'for telling me of such refreshing drink!'

"When the others heard this, and saw with what delight he drank, many followed his example, and found their failing strength renewed. The fire-flakes fell thickly into the hall, but the warriors warded them off with their shields, and extinguished them in the blood underfoot."

In this passage one still feels something of the atmosphere of the *Nibelungenlied*, but occasionally the tone is unpleasantly modern, for instance (p. 23):—

"King Gunther, in view of bringing about a little scheme which had for some time been working in his own mind, carelessly asked his friends to suggest the most probable means of heightening the pleasures of the day. Ortwin promptly exclaimed that the only thing lacking to render the festival perfect was the presence of the ladies and children, and he proposed that the deficiency should be remedied forthwith. The king, who had long surmised the state of Siegfried's heart, joyfully acceded, delighted to have at last an opportunity of introducing his fair sister to the noble knight."

The text used by Miss Woodward as her original was, according to the preface, mainly that of Simrock. Traces of an imperfect knowledge of Middle High German are comparatively rare, but not altogether absent, in spite of the freedom of the translation. As usual the first "Adventure" provides a fair crop of mistakes: "trained to every *virtue*," "three kings noble, valiant, and *rich*," "a *wealthy* queen," "Dankwart the *swift*," all occur on the first page. At the top of the second there is a curiously

involved passage about Volker: "but, be it here observed, he could wield his bow, the far-famed sword Fiddlebow, one side of which was a keen-edged sword, equally well in beating strange music on the helmets of his enemies in battle." On the same page Kriemhild is spoken of as "caressing" the falcon, and on the next is made to say: "Love ever bringeth sorrow in its train, as I have seen."

The introduction, though not altogether scholarly, deserves some notice. The original discovery of the earliest found MS. is mentioned, and allusion is made to some of the commentators and editors, but the names of Lachmann, Holtzmann, Zarneke, and Bartsch are conspicuous by their absence. The Lassberg MS. is called "Lassburg," and the authoress falls into a striking anachronism in remarking that "Charlemagne drove the last heathen Germans, the Saxons, at the point of the bayonet to the waters of baptism" (p. xxvi.). The major part, however, concerning the basis of the saga, is more satisfactory, being compiled chiefly from Raszmann's<sup>1</sup> and Anderson's<sup>2</sup> works on Teutonic mythology. A brief comparison of the Teutonic with the Indian and Persian Epos is followed by some observations on Norse mythology and the Norse account of the Hoard; the analogy between the Siegfried and Brunhild story and the myth of Frey and Gerd, and Balder's similarity to Siegfried are then pointed out, and reference is made to the fairy-tale of the Sleeping Beauty.<sup>3</sup> The parts played by Siegfried and Hagen in the Scandinavian versions are summarised, and, lastly, a rather incomplete and not quite accurate account of the historical basis is given.

2. **Lydia Hands.**—*Golden Threads from an Ancient Loom; Das Nibelungenlied, adapted to the use of young readers.*<sup>4</sup> (London, New York, 1880.)

<sup>1</sup> A. Raszmann, *Die deutsche Heldensage und ihre Heimat.* (Hannover, 1857-58.)

<sup>2</sup> R. B. Anderson, "Norse Mythology." (Chicago, 1875.)

<sup>3</sup> This fairy-tale is now no longer supposed to be connected with the Siegfried-Brunhild saga. See *P.G.*, iii. 644 (21900).

<sup>4</sup> A copy of this is to be seen in the British Museum.

As the title suggests, this volume is rather an adaptation than a translation. The story is abridged, recast, and supplied with details and motives more suitable to tender childhood than some of those of the original, and the style is attractive and simple. The matter is re-arranged and divided into nine chapters; thus, while the first relates the dream episode, the second gives an account of Siegfried's youth; the third of his conquest of the Hoard; the fourth of his journey to Worms, and so on. In the second and third chapters the Norse versions are freely drawn upon, but the dubious parts toned down. Siegfried, for instance, goes to Isenland, and is for a time an admirer of Brunhild; but his guilt is removed, for "he found that though the casket was fair, the jewel within was not worth the having; so he left Isenland and its proud queen, vowing that she should be no wife to him." Similarly such scenes as Brunhild's sulkiness on the bridal night, Siegfried's struggle with her the next night, and Kriemhild's vituperation, are softened. It is in the same spirit, no doubt, that Siegfried is painted lighter and Hagen darker than they actually appear in the original.

Only rarely is the Old German poem at all closely followed. The passage describing Siegfried's death, for instance, is reproduced as follows (pp. 39 *f.*):—

"Then the hot and thirsty man threw down the heavy armour wherewith he was girded, and taking a golden drinking horn from his belt, stretched himself upon the green grass, and drank great draughts of the sweet refreshing water.

"But suddenly Gunther and Hagen were on the spot, and while the weak and wicked king hid himself behind a stately beech tree, the bold, perfidious Hagen seized a lance, and taking sure aim at the little red cross on Siegfried's garment, plunged the weapon into his body.

"With a cry of anguish the noble Siegfried fell prone to the ground, the red blood poured forth in torrents from the gaping wound, the green sward drank it up, and

the flowers of the field were wetted with the red deluge."

There is no mention of the hero's courtesy in allowing the king to drink first, nor even of his attack upon his murderer. Yet this passage is more closely translated than most, and consequently the reference in the preface to "occasional departures from the strict letter of the text" is somewhat misleading.

Miss Hands seems to have had her attention first drawn to the *Nibelungenlied* by the Essay of Carlyle, to whom her book is dedicated. What text she followed does not appear and is not important; Simrock's translation, she informs us, helped her to study the poem in the original. The delightful illustrations of Julius Schnorr (von Carolsfeld), the easy style, and the elimination of all that is doubtful, combine to make an excellent book for children.

3. **Margaret Armour**.—*The Fall of the Nibelungs done into English by Margaret Armour. Illustrated and decorated by W. B. Macdougall.*<sup>1</sup> (London, 1897.)

Taking Simrock's edition as her original, but following Bartsch and Niendorf at the end of the twenty-seventh and beginning of the twenty-eighth Adventures—as the Prefatory Note explains—Miss Armour has produced a spirited and, generally, a fairly close translation. Her style, though necessarily more continuous than that of the Old German verse, is simple and vivid; words of Romance origin are rare, and the construction is never involved. Unfortunately, the desire to permeate the whole with a mediæval flavour has led to the use of too many archaisms. Thus at the beginning of the second Adventure (p. 4):—

"There grew up in the Netherland a rich king's child

<sup>1</sup> Reviewed by Mr. Francis Thompson (*Acad.*, lii. p. 302). Mr. Thompson speaks favourably of the book, and criticises the style of the epic itself, although unable, as he confesses, to read "the crabbed Mediæval German."

whose father hight Siegmund and his mother Sieglind, in a castle high and famous called Xanten, down by the Rhine's side. Goodly was this knight, by my troth, his body without blemish, a strong and valiant man of great worship; abroad, through the whole earth, went his fame. The hero hight Siegfried, and he rode boldly into many lands. Ha! in Burgundy, I trow, he found warriors to his liking. Or he was a man grown he had done marvels with his hand, as is said and sung, albeit now there is no time for more word thereof."

As a fair specimen of Miss Armour's skill, the passage describing Siegfried's death may be quoted (p. 106):—

"Hagen carried his bow and his sword out of his reach, and sprang back and gripped the spear. Then he spied for the secret mark on his vesture; and while Siegfried drank from the stream, Hagen stabbed him where the cross was, that his heart's blood spurted out on the traitor's clothes. Never since hath knight done so wickedly. He left the spear sticking deep in his heart, and fled in grimmer haste than ever he had done from any man on this earth afore.

"When stark Siegfried felt the deep wound, he sprang up maddened from the water, for the long boar spear stuck out from his heart. He thought to find bow or sword; if he had, Hagen had got his due. But the sore-wounded man saw no sword, and had nothing save his shield. He picked it up from the water's edge and ran at Hagen. King Gunther's man could not escape him. For all that he was wounded to the death, he smote so mightily that the shield well-nigh brake, and the precious stones flew out. The noble guest had fain taken vengeance.

"Hagen fell beneath his stroke. The meadow rang loud with the noise of the blow. If he had had his sword to hand, Hagen had been a dead man. But the anguish of his wound constrained him. His colour was wan; he could not stand upright; and the strength of his body

failed him, for he bare death's mark on his white cheek. Fair women enow made dole for him.

"Then Kriemhild's husband fell among the flowers. The blood flowed fast from his wound, and in his great anguish he began to upbraid them that had falsely contrived his death."

It is difficult to decide whether "well-nigh brake" is due to a misunderstanding of the original, but there is no doubt about "But the anguish of his wound constrained him."

The least satisfactory feature of Miss Armour's work is her astounding inaccuracy, especially in the earlier portion. A most unfortunate error occurs in her translation of the very first stanza, where *von weinen und von klagen* is rendered "of wine (!) and of mourning." Immediately below *tugende* is mistranslated "virtues" (as often, *cf.* pp. 4, 44, &c.); *edel*, "noble" (also p. 2; but generally left untranslated); *rich*, "rich" (also pp. 2, 6, &c.); and *milte*, "courteous" (*cf.* p. 45, "fair"). The second page brings new mistakes in addition to repetitions of some of the above: *Dancwart der snelle*, "Dankwart the swift" (similarly p. 217, "nimble," p. 226); and *dise hêrren muosen pfliegen des hoves unt der êren* (the business of these nobles was to see to the keeping up of state at court) "These last three served at court and pursued honour." On the same page the dream passage opens thus: "Now it so fell that Kriemhild, the pure maid, dreamed a dream that she *fondled* a *wild* falcon, and *eagles wrested* it from her" (the italics are mine), which is anything but true to the original: she trained a fine mettlesome falcon which was slain, presumably while being flown, by two eagles. The falcon represents her future husband, the eagles the two principal parties to his murder, Gunther and Hagen. The words *edel man* (suitor, or husband, of noble descent) are unsatisfactorily rendered "noble man," and *wie liebe mit leide ze iungest lônem kan*, "that the meed of love is sorrow." More than



a dozen mistakes in the first two pages, or, more correctly, in a page and a half! It is only fair to add that the later part is better than the beginning, but few pages will be found quite free from inaccuracies. Yet the existence of good annotated editions and dictionaries should now make a seriously faulty prose translation impossible.

### III. REPRINTS OF THE OLD GERMAN TEXT

UNFORTUNATELY no English edition of the *Nibelungenlied* exists as yet,<sup>1</sup> but selections in the original Middle High German are to be found in the following:—

**F. Max Müller.**—*The German Classics from the Fourth to the Nineteenth Century*<sup>2</sup> (Edin. 1858; new ed., revised, enlarged, and adapted to Wilhelm Scherer's "History of German Literature," by F. Lichtenstein and E. Joseph; Ox. Clar. Press, 1886).

Pages 112–150 are devoted to the *Nibelungenlied*. An introductory paragraph (in German) mentions the three chief MS. groups, the editions of Lachmann, Holtzmann, Zarneke, and Bartsch, and Pfeiffer's suggestion of the Ritter von Kürenberg's authorship. Three passages are quoted, headed, "VIII. Lied," "Aus dem XIV. Lied," "Aus dem XX. Lied." These correspond to *Av.* xvi.; most of *Av.* xxv., with the beginning of xxvi.; and the last two-thirds of *Av.* xxxvii. The text corresponds almost exactly with that of Lachmann's edition of 1826, omitting the "spurious" stanzas, while the translation given is that of Simrock.

In the first edition the specimens consisted of the first three *Aventiuren*, accompanied by Simrock's translation.

**A. M. Selss.**—*A Brief History of the German Language, with five books of the Nibelungenlied*. (London, 1885.)

In this, *Aventiuren* i., ii., xv., xvi., xvii. (except the last two stanzas), are printed on the basis of Zarneke's edition, with numerous explanatory notes. There is no

<sup>1</sup> An edition by Professor H. G. Fiedler is in preparation, and will be published by the Clarendon Press.

<sup>2</sup> Reviewed in *M.L.N.*, ii. 331–334, by Julius Goebel. Also *Acad.*, 1886 (2), p. 274.

introduction, the text swarms with misprints, and the notes are often quite misleading. Thus, referring to xv. 22, "*lintrachen*, the dragon, fr. *linde*, soft"; xv. 32, "*tougen*, he sent thence trusty men, from *touge*, dark"; xvi. 2, "*nâmens im*, they conducted his person."

**Joseph Wright.**—*A Middle High-German Primer, &c.* (Oxford, 1888, <sup>2</sup>1899.)

Among the illustrative texts (pp. 89 ff.) is *Aventiure* xvii. of the *Nibelungenlied* quoted from Bartsch's edition of 1879. A glossary and notes remove all the beginner's difficulties.

#### IV. ACCOUNTS, ESSAYS, AND MISCELLANEOUS ARTICLES

1. **Henry William Weber**, in Weber, Jamieson, and Scott's "Illustrations of Northern Antiquities from the earlier Teutonic and Scandinavian Romances, &c." (London and Edinburgh, 1814), contributed amongst other articles an account of "*Der Nibelungen Lied*, The Song of the Nibelungen,"<sup>1</sup> which comprises the third section (pp. 167 ff.) of the large quarto volume. The division of the original into Adventures is retained, verse renderings are numerous, and three of the stanzas, describing the appearance of Kriemhild on the occasion of her first meeting with Siegfried, are quoted in a footnote, "lest the author of the extract should be suspected of embellishing." On the fly-leaf is to be found the opening stanza of the poem, also in the original language.

Weber unfortunately misinterpreted many passages, and his notes are sometimes misleading, but such errors are easily excused in a work which was written when the study of Old German was in its infancy, and which has the distinction of first introducing Old German literature to the English public. The form of the verse renderings is based on that of the original, though it does not always reproduce the lengthened fourth line of each stanza and is more irregular; the *first* half of a line sometimes contains four stressed syllables. The poetical talent displayed in the versified pieces is not of a very high

<sup>1</sup> Briefly described in my article, "The *Nibelungenlied* in English," *M.L.Q.*, iii. (1900), 131 ff. Nominally in review of the "Northern Antiquities" appeared an article in the *Edinburgh Review*, xxvi. (1816), 181 ff. The page-heading, "Antient German and Northern Poetry," is more descriptive of the contents of the article, which touches on all the most important Old German literature then known.

order, and the frequent introduction of Scotch words is trying to the Southern reader, for whose benefit a glossary is added at the end of the volume. The following stanzas from the first Adventure are a fair sample:—

One night the queen Chrimhilt dreamt her, as she lay,  
How she had trained and nourished a falcon wild and gay,  
When suddenly two eagles fierce the gentle hawk have slain :  
Never, in this world, felt she such bitter pain.

To her mother, dame Uta, she told her dream with fear :  
Full mournfully she answered to what the maid did speir,—  
“ The falcon whom you nourished, a noble knight is he ;  
God take him to his ward ! thou must lose him suddenly.”

“ What speak you of the knight ? dearest mother say :  
Without the love of champion, to my dying day,  
Ever thus fair will I remain nor take a wedded fere,  
To gain such pain and sorrow, though the knight were with-  
out peer.”

“ Speak thou not too rashly,” her mother spake again ;  
“ If ever in this world thou heartfelt joy wilt gain,  
Maiden must thou be no more ; leman must thou have :  
God will grant thee for thy mate some gentle knight, and  
brave.”

With all its faults, Weber's abstract gives a fair general idea of the *Nibelungenlied*, and was practically the only recognition of it in England until Carlyle's Essay of seventeen years later.

The first section of this volume (pp. 3 ff.) consists of an article, also by Weber, “ On the Antient Teutonic Poetry and Romance.” In the course of it the *Nibelungenlied* receives notice (p. 25). The author mentions the chief MSS. and the editions of Bodmer, Miller (*sic*), and Von der Hagen.

The account of the *Nibelungenlied* is followed by a short summary of the *Klage* (pp. 211–213), and one of the more attractive portions of that somewhat tedious composition is translated into English riming couplets with four ascending feet to the line ; a metrical form similar to that of the original.

2. **Anonymous Article** on *Das Nibelungenlied*, *The Song of the Nibelungen*, in the *London Magazine*, vol. i. pp. 635 ff. (London, 1820.)

This article was written to satisfy the curiosity of those impressed by Fuseli's<sup>1</sup> picture exhibited that year in the Royal Academy with the title: "Chriemhild, the widow of Siegfried, the Swift, exposes his body, assisted by Siegmund his father, King of Belgium, in the Minster at Worms, and, swearing to his assassination, challenges Hagen, Lord of Trony, and Gunther, King of Burgundy, her brother, to approach the corpse; and, on the wounds beginning to flow, charges them with murder." It is explained that the reference is to an ancient German poem of unknown authorship, the *Nibelungenlied*: Weber's extract of this is mentioned, and a brief analysis given. The analysis is well written, and shows some signs (*e.g.* in quotations and occasional full translations) of an acquaintance with the original; but the writer falls into several errors: Brunhild's land is called Iceland; Dietrich is spoken of as a Swiss chief; and the concluding remarks about the metre are quite misleading, though perhaps that was inevitable eighty years ago. Even Carlyle, as we shall see, had no correct understanding of the versification of the poem.

3. **Anonymous** (Edgar Taylor and another).—*Lays of the Minnesingers*<sup>2</sup> (London, 1825), pp. 113–115. Three stanzas (= Piper, 282–284) are quoted and translated.

4. **Thomas Carlyle**.—*The Nibelungen Lied* in the *Westminster Review*, xxix. 1–45. (London, 1831; reprinted among the Critical Essays.)

<sup>1</sup> Henry Fuseli (Johann Heinrich Füssli) exhibited five other pictures, the subjects of which were taken from the *Nibelungen* story. In 1807: "Criemhild, the widow of Sivrit, shows to Trony, in prison, the head of Gunther, his accomplice in the assassination of her husband." In 1814: "Sigelind, Sivrid's mother, roused by the contest of the good and evil Genius about her infant son," and "Criemhild mourning over Sivrid." In 1817: "Criemhild throwing herself on the body of Sivrid, assassinated by Trony," and "Sivrit, secretly married to Criemhild, surprised by Hagen of Trony on his first interview with her after the victory of the Saxons." (*Cf.* Knowles, "Fuseli, Life and Writings." London, 1831.)

<sup>2</sup> Reviewed: *Edinburgh Review*, xliii. (1826), p. 107.

Ostensibly a review of Simrock's modern German translation, this essay is in reality an account of the mediæval epic itself; even the translator's name occurs only once, when his version is referred to as the last of many. After a few observations on the researches already made in Germany, and on the inadequate notice with which the subject had been favoured in England, Carlyle makes it his first care to conduct us as far as necessary into the "weltering chaos of antique tradition" composing Teutonic mythology. This he achieves by the curious method of epitomising the contents of three<sup>1</sup> of the romances of the *Heldenbuch*, viz., *Kaiser Otnit*, *Hugdietrich und Wolfdietrich*, and *Der grosse Rosengarten*, all of them of later date than the *Nibelungenlied*, and teeming with dwarfs, giants, dragons, and the most singular adventures. A dwarf Elberich appears in the first, though in a character very different from that of Alberich in the *Nibelungenlied*; Wolfdietrich, in the second, is supposed by Carlyle to become "one day the renowned Dietrich of Bern," though the similarity of name seems to be the only connecting link; in the third we do meet with a large number of the names of leading characters in the *Nibelungenlied*, but not in such a connection as to throw much light on the latter. Next follows an account of Siegfried's early adventures, as related in *Hürnen Seyfrid*, a tangled composition—extant in prints of the sixteenth century—of the same type as the *Heldenbuch* romances, but having a nearer connection with the *Nibelungenlied*; its introduction here avoids the interruption of the story later.

And now we come to the epos itself, his account of which, though marred by technical mistakes, is unsurpassed in force and charm. His description of the metre as running on "in more or less regular Alexandrines, with

<sup>1</sup> These and a fourth, *Laurin*, which Carlyle merely mentions, are abstracted in the same order in Weber's "Northern Antiquities," where they are followed by summaries of the *Nibelungenlied* and *Klage*. Carlyle had, however, studied the *Nibelungenlied* in the original, and, partly at any rate, the *Heldenbuch* romances. His Essay has constant references to Von der Hagen (one of the earliest editors of these Old German poems), whose zealous labours he regards with admiration and wonder.

a cæsural pause in each, where the capital letter occurs," is by no means satisfactory; *rechen* is said to have the same root as *rich*; the idiomatic use of *lîp* with a genitive or possessive pronoun to signify an individual and not his body, is misunderstood; *wîsiu wîp* is translated "*white Mer-women*"; *als ie diu liebe leide zaller iungeste gît*, "in grief . . . had ended, as all *love* is wont to do," &c. But these errors of seventy years ago are excusable, and do not diminish the permanent worth of his Essay—the fascinating abstract of the story and the sympathetic appreciation of the characters, motives, and tone.

Considerable stress is laid on the dramatic character of the poem, of which, as he says, "those thirty-nine *Aventiuren* (Adventures) . . . might be so many scenes in a tragedy," and he enlivens his summary by happy turns and comments of his own that bring the characters even nearer to us than does the original. He renders into verse thirty-eight stanzas (dealing for the most part with the crossing of the Danube), and into prose six (the first meeting of Kriemhild and Siegfried). The latter—apart from two slight inaccuracies and the turning of *degen* by the German word *Rechen*, for which he seems to have taken a great liking—is a close translation into suitable straightforward Saxon English. His verse is not so successful. The metre may be roughly described by the words he himself applied to the Old German poem, and the attempt to produce a too literal translation has sometimes resulted in language that is not only antique but fantastic. The first two stanzas run as follows:—

We find in ancient story Wonders many told,  
Of heroes in great glory With spirit free and bold;  
Of joyances and high-tides, Of weeping and of woe,  
Of noble Rechen striving, Mote ye now wonders know.

A right noble maiden Did grow in Burgundy,  
That in all lands of earth Nought fairer mote there be;  
Chriemhild of Worms she hight, She was a fairest *wife*;<sup>1</sup>  
For the which must warriors A many lose their life.

<sup>1</sup> A footnote explains that *wife* is used in the general sense "woman," in order to keep a rime corresponding to *wîp*: *lîp*.



Still, the general standard reached is decidedly higher than this. Compare the striking description of Hagen, as the four heroes stand awaiting admission to the castle of the Amazonian Brunhild (Bartsch, 413):—

Der dritte der gesellen    der ist sô gremelîch,  
 unt doch mit schœnem lîbe    kûneginne rîch.  
 von swinden sînen blicken,    der er sô vil getuot,  
 er ist in sînen sinnen,    ich wæne, grimmè gemuot.

with Carlyle's rendering:—

The third of those companions He is of aspect stern.  
 And yet with lovely body, Rich queen, as ye might discern ;  
 From those his *rapid glances*, For the eyes nought rest in him,  
 Meseems this foreign Recke Is of temper fierce and grim.

Or, again, the stanza in which Hagen, undeterred by the warning of the mermaids, and scorning to repeat it to his master, asks, without further ado, to be shown how the Danube may be crossed (Bartsch, 1543):—

Dô sprach in grimmen muote    der küene Hagene  
 "daz wære mînen hêrren    müelîch ze sagene,  
 daz wir zen Hiunen solden    vliesen alle den lîp.  
 nu zeige uns überz wazzer,    daz aller wîseste wîp.

with:—

Then spake Von Troneg Hagen, His wrath did fiercely  
 swell :  
 "Such tidings to my master I were right loath to tell,  
 That in King Etzel's country We all must lose our life :  
 Yet show me over the water, Thou wise all-knowing *wife*."

where, however, the abruptness of *nu zeige*, &c., is not reproduced.

The article concludes with a summary of the results of Von der Hagen's researches on the age, sources, and development of the poem. Such information as is given on these points is now, of course, largely out of date, but was even then incomplete. Lachmann's *Liedertheorie* receives no mention.

5. **Zander**, on *Chivalrous Romances of the Germans*, in the *Dublin University Magazine*, ii. 30-32. (Dublin, 1833.)

6. **Anonymous Article** on *Teutonic and Scandinavian Romances: The Song of the Nibelungen*, in the *Penny Magazine*, v. 409 ff., 431 ff., 449 ff. (London, 1836.)

The article appears to be based mainly on Weber's "Northern Antiquities." After a short general outline of Old German poetry we find an abstract of the *Nibelungenlied*, with frequent quotations, including versified translations, from Weber. Weber's errors are not all reproduced, but neither are they all omitted or corrected; and it seems very possible that the author knew the poem only from his account. If he had known the original, or a modern translation, or even Carlyle's Essay, he would scarcely have written: "Sir Siegfried was full wroth with Hagen for having forgotten the wine. That traitor said the wine had not been forgotten, but carried to another well in a different part of the forest. On this Siegfried proposed a foot-race (we suppose to go and fetch the wine), and throwing off part of his garments, and all his arms, to run the lighter, started with the rest whom he far outran." It would be difficult to crowd more mistakes into so few sentences.

The text is accompanied by engravings of designs by Cornelius and two of Schnorr von Carolsfeld's Munich frescoes.

7. **Henry Hallam**.—*Introduction to the Literature of Europe*. (Edinburgh, 1842, 41854.) Vol. i. pp. 37-39.

8. **Anonymous Article** in review of *Gottling's "Ueber das Geschichtliche im Nibelungenlied"* (Rudolstadt, 1838), in the *Eclectic Review*, New Series, xi. 647 ff. (London, 1842.)

An utterly worthless article, apparently consisting of hurried and careless gleanings from the contents of the book reviewed. Here is a typical sentence: "The Niebel-

ungen klage (lament) begins with the revengeful feelings of Brunhildis, when she discovers her ring and girdle, as trophies, in the hands of Siegfried, whom she causes to be assassinated by Hagen of Torenge, with the privity of Günther." (!!!)

9. **F. L. Thimm.**—*The Literature of Germany.* (London, 1844.) Pp. 5, 6.

10. **Joseph Gostwick.**—*The Spirit of German Poetry: a series of Translations from the German poets.*<sup>1</sup> (London, 1845.)

The second chapter of this work (pp. 7 ff.) is devoted entirely to the *Nibelungenlied*, a few words in characterisation of its warlike heathen spirit, and the probable early origin of its groundwork, leading up to a brief sketch of the contents. Only the main incidents are included in the summary, but several of the most striking passages are reproduced in very passable verse translations. Among the occasional errors is one which gives rise to an unjust criticism, the summary being concluded thus: "The rhapsodist gives one short moral (and a very *bad* one) to all this murder, saying—

Thus *lwe* doth evermore its dole and sorrow bring."

Gostwick had a curious manner of compressing the matter of two or more strophes into one. The following stanza, for example, corresponds to sts. 282, 283 of the original:—

She came out from her chamber ; so comes the morning red  
Forth from the gloomy clouds ; upon her dress were spread  
Bright gems ; her glowing cheeks her secret love confessed.  
Of all the maids on earth she the fairest was and best.

It is interesting, too, to note that Gostwick thought that "the only interest which this singular old epic retains is its style."

<sup>1</sup> There is a copy in the British Museum, the cover of which is dated 1846.

11. **William Howitt** on *A Scene in the Nibelungenlied*, in the *People's Journal*, ii. 155 ff. (London, 1846.)

A short paper, explaining and accompanying an engraving of Cornelius' picture of the fight at Attila's court, and consisting of a very concise epitome of the whole poem. Howitt promised a more detailed account on some future occasion, and wondered it had never been translated into English.

12. **Anonymous**.<sup>1</sup>—*The Niebelungen Treasure. A Tragedy in Five Acts, by Ernest Raupach. Translated from the German with Introductory Remarks*.<sup>2</sup> (London, 1847.)

The introductory remarks consist for the most part of a very readable extract of the *Nibelungenlied*, though occasional divergencies show that the writer was at most superficially acquainted with the original. Thus (p. xvi.): "After the hunt, a foot-race is proposed to a well at some distance, where the wine had been carried expressly under pretence of cooling it, and Siegfried, throwing off his armour, starts with the rest. He arrives first, and while he lies down to drink, Hagen plunges a lance between his shoulders, where alone he is vulnerable. The hero, though mortally wounded, starts up and seeks his weapons, but in vain! and, sinking down exhausted, he expires," &c. Similarly, the commencement of hostilities at Etzel's court and the course of the combat are related, with numerous deviations from accuracy, in place of which a vivid imagination does duty.

In criticising the chief characters the writer is rather severe on Hagen, who is described as a "ruthless, implacable murderer, whose restless cruelty is ever in search of new victims," and is contrasted with Raupach's Hagen, whose conduct depends only on his loyalty and devotion to his sovereign. The few observations on the age and origin of the poem are now out of-date, and were even then

<sup>1</sup> Comparison with the "Poets and Poetry of Germany" of Madame de Pontès shows her to have been the authoress. Cf. p. 93.

<sup>2</sup> There is a copy in the Cambridge University Library.

unreliable. Lachmann is said to be one of those who maintained the opinion that the whole was composed by two different persons, and the language is stated to be "the ancient Teutonic dialect." (!)

13. **Charles E. Blumenthal** on *The Niebelungen: a Few Weeks with a Student in the Country*, in *Godey's Lady's Book*, xlix. 200 ff., 339 ff., 385 ff. (Philadelphia, 1848.)

A number of ladies and gentlemen on a picnic indulge in a round of flirtation, crystal-gazing, magic, and literature, the last consisting of an often interrupted paper on the *Nibelungenlied*. The account of the poem is fairly reliable, and contains many metrical translations—borrowed without acknowledgment from Birch.<sup>1</sup> Carlyle, Von der Hagen, and Lachman (*sic*) are referred to, but little real knowledge of the subject is displayed. The whole, for instance, is said to consist of sixteen different poems woven into one; and *Siegfried* is explained as meaning *with the horny skin!* Were it not for a short analysis of the Norse versions of Siegfried's early adventures, the whole article might be suspected of being based on Birch's translation and Carlyle's Essay only.

14. **Anonymous Article** on *Simrock's translation* in the *Eclectic Review*, xxiv. 26 ff. (London, 1848.)

Nominally a review of Simrock's translation, this article, like Carlyle's, is really an essay on the old German poem. After some observations on the growth of saga, the contents of the *Völsungasaga* and *Thidrekssaga* are briefly summarised, the more considerable divergencies from the *Nibelungenlied* being especially noted. As regards the origin and authorship, the writer brings forward the supposition that the whole is a combination of three older compositions dealing with Siegfried and Brunhild, the destruction of the Burgundians, and Dietrich of Bern respectively; Heinrich von Ofterdingen (now recognised as mythical) is mentioned as likely to have been the final

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 39 ff.

compiler, and his compilation is dated 1210 on the authority of Lachmann, whose *Liedertheorie* is, however, passed over.

After this introduction follows a fairly full, but not very attractive, account of the contents, interspersed with verse translations—presumably from the original Old German. The summary is reliable on the whole, but betrays carelessness at times,<sup>1</sup> and lack of appreciation of some of the most striking passages. The story of Siegfried's murder is summed up in one sentence: "Siegfried was stabbed by the wily courtier, through the fatal spot pointed out to him, and his lifeless body was carried home from the forest;" and the incidents of the fateful journey to the land of the Huns are all omitted. The grand finale, in which Kriemhild at last wreaks her vengeance on Hagen, but is immediately slain by the indignant Hildebrand, is related in a business-like *précis* style, like that employed in the account of Siegfried's death: and the humour in the description of Volker, the minstrel-warrior, seems to have been quite missed, for the writer says: "He has a strange sort of fiddle-bow, made of steel; it is a sword as well as a bow," &c.

15. **Anonymous** Review of Vilmar's *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der deutschen National-Literatur*, in the *British Quarterly Review*, vii. (1848), 133-139. Extracts from the book reviewed.

16. **Joseph Gostwick**.—*German Literature*. (Ed., 1849.)

This book, which belongs to Chambers' Instructive and Entertaining Library, contains a fairly detailed account of the *Nibelungenlied* (pp. 18-31), interspersed with metrical translations. It is based on the same author's "Spirit of German Poetry" (1846), but includes also a specimen of the original, accompanied by a modern German and an English translation.

<sup>1</sup> Thus Hagen is twice spoken of as "Troneg von Hagen" (pp. 33, 39), twice as "Troneg Hagen" (pp. 43, 46), while the word "Hockgezit" occurs three times (pp. 34, 36, 42).

17. **F. A. Moschzisker.**—*A Guide to German Literature.* (London, 1850.) Pp. 8 f.

18. **Madame L. Davésiés de Pontès.**—*Poets and Poetry of Germany.* (London, 1858.)

The authoress treats a number of the poems of the Nibelungen cycle in chapters iii. and iv. (pp. 69–111). Chapter iii. is almost entirely devoted to a lengthy extract of “The Horny Siegfried”; a few introductory remarks compare the hero very favourably with Achilles, and refer to the rival theories claiming him as a Scandinavian and as a German. The next chapter is an emended and extended version of the Introduction to the anonymous translation of Raupach’s *Nibelungen Hort*. As Madame de Pontès styles herself on the title-page of the present work “Translator of the Nibelungen Treasure,” she was doubtless the writer of that Introduction. An idea of the alterations made will be gained from a comparison of the following extracts with the criticism on p. 90:—

“After the hunt, a foot-race is proposed to a rill at some distance, whither the wine has been carried under pretence of cooling it. Siegfried, throwing off his armour, starts with the rest. He arrives first, and while he lies down to drink, Hagan plunges a lance between his shoulders. The hero, though mortally wounded, starts up and seeks his weapons, but in vain. Hagan has removed them from his side. Sinking down exhausted he expires,” &c. (p. 88).

Here there is practically no improvement, but in discussing Hagen’s character she treats him much more fairly than before:—

“Hagan, the instrument of her revenge, appears at first sight a ruthless implacable murderer whose restless cruelty is ever in search of new victims; yet, on closer examination, we shall find that strangely blended with all his fiercer qualities, nay, perhaps, at the very source of all, are loyalty and devotion to his king, a devotion which

banishes every other feeling whether of pity, honour, or remorse.

“Such a character, however guilty, cannot fail to command some degree of respect,” &c. (p. 94).

The mistake about Lachmann’s views is not repeated; in fact he is not even mentioned, and the only authorities named in connection with the origin of the poem are “the brothers Schlegel, no mean authority.” Lastly, the offending phrase “the old Teutonic dialect” has been removed.

It is hardly necessary to add further examples of the carelessness that pervades the whole of the two chapters. I will only mention a few cases from the references:—“Raazmann” (p. 70), “Villmar Geschichte deutscher Literatur” (p. 71), “Der Klage” (p. 104), and “verse 50187 (!) of the *Nibelungenlied*.”

The chapter concludes with a short account of *Etzels Hofhaltung*, one of the *Heldenbuch* poems belonging to the Dietrich cycle.

19. **Rev. F. Metcalfe.**—*History of German Literature*. (London, 1858.) Pp. 44-48. Based on Vilmar.

20. **F. Max Müller.**—*Old German Love Songs*. (1858.) Reprinted in “Chips from a German Workshop.” (London, 1870.) P. 57.

21. **Gustav Solling.**—*Review of the Literary History of Germany*. (London, 1859.) Pp. 42-64.

Contains a summary of the *Nibelungenlied* condensed from Vilmar’s.<sup>1</sup> Three stanzas from the Middle High German are quoted, together with a modern German translation, and Lettson’s English version is mentioned.

22. **Gustav Solling.**—*Diutiska*. (London, 1863.) Pp. 36-50.

Agrees almost word for word with the above.

<sup>1</sup> I am indebted to Professor Fiedler for drawing my attention to “A Lecture on German Literature, delivered at Hanover Square Rooms” (printed for private circulation); by Gustav Solling. This contains the same summary of the *Nibelungenlied*, as far as Siegfried’s death.



23. **Andrew Ten Brook.**—*The Nibelungen Lied* in the *Methodist Quarterly Review*, xxiv.619 ff. (New York, 1864.)

This article, professedly based on Braunfels' edition (1846), and Von der Hagen's (1810, 1816, 1820, 1842), opens with a comparison of the doubtful authorship of both the *Nibelungenlied* and the *Iliad*. The writer exposes the extent of his real acquaintance with the subject in such sentences as this: "It is written in Gothic—that is, Old High German—a branch of the language into which Ulphilas translated. . . ." In reading the epitome which follows one is led to doubt whether the author's knowledge of even modern German extended to the ability to read German type, for Giselher appears as Eiselher!

The Munich frescoes of the *Nibelungenlied* and the *Odyssey* are described, and the characters and tone of the two epics compared.

24. **John Malcolm Ludlow.**—*Popular Epics of the Middle Ages of the Norse-German and Carolingian Cycles*. (Lond. and Camb., 1865.) Vol. i., part ii., chap. vi. pp. 105 ff.

The greater part of this chapter of seventy-five pages is given up to a detailed summary of the *Nibelungenlied* which, though lacking the spirit of Carlyle's, is about equally reliable.<sup>1</sup> The theme of the *Klage* is touched upon (pp. 175 ff.), the really pathetic scene in which Rudiger's wife and daughter receive news of the catastrophe being treated in detail; and "Horned Siegfried" is briefly noticed in another chapter (p. 306).

Ludlow considered of little moment the vexed questions of authorship; while admitting that Lachmann's *Liedertheorie* is probably substantially right, he is delighted to hear from a German friend that in Germany "public

<sup>1</sup> There are, however, several evident errors. For instance, "if he should displease her" (p. 114) corresponds to *sol aber ich dich vremen*; *einen bouc*, a ring, is taken to mean "a pouch of red gold" (p. 135); "Kriemhilt's 'faithful body' is wrung with such anguish that they have to sprinkle her 'very thick' with water" (p. 122), clearly a misunderstanding of *dô ranc mit solhem iâmer ir getriuwer lîp, | daz man si mit dem brunnen dicke dâ begôz*.

opinion in general takes no interest at all in the debate, no more than it did to any amount when Lachmann started his theory."

With regard to the sources and relative antiquity of the various parts of the saga, Ludlow held views which would now no longer be accepted, distinguishing four sub-cycles: the Norse story Sigurd, blending almost at once with the German—probably Rhine-Frankish—of Gunnar and Haugn; to these were added the Gothic or Germanic traditions of Atla, and lastly, the South-Gothic saga of Dietrich of Bern. The suggestion is made that Sigurd, as a Norse sea-rover, may have sailed or rowed up the Rhine as far as the land of the Riparian Franks; coming thus from the Netherlands he might later be thought of as a prince of that country. In the *Nibelungenlied* itself he sees the work of at least three distinct authors, the earliest of whom followed the Norse legend, and depicted the catastrophe at Etzel's court. This great poet, he feels, could not have produced what he looks upon as the youngest portion—the commencement—so devoid of character, and so out of keeping with the close. Though possessed of a real critical faculty, Ludlow had but little taste for precise scientific criticism and failed to advance any convincing reasons for his views; his suggestions are conjectures founded on the general impressions made by a perusal of the Norse and German versions and the related sagas. The "Edda Legends of Sigurd, Gudrun, and Atla" are treated separately (chap. iv. p. 65 *ff.*), and the more modern tone and higher ethical standard of the *Nibelungenlied* are emphasised.

Weber's "Northern Antiquities," Carlyle's Essay, and Lettsom's translation are mentioned. While praising the spirited style of the second of these, Ludlow rightly deplores the arrangement of the matter, which he considers due to the influence of the first.

25. **A. M. Selss.**—*A Critical Outline of the History of German Literature.* (London, 1865, <sup>5</sup>1896.) Pp. 44–51.

26. "**Coelo Ictus.**"—*The Nibelungenlied*<sup>1</sup> in the *St. James's Magazine*, xvi. 377 ff. (Lond., 1866.)

On an introductory paragraph of little value follows a short epitome of the epic with some verse renderings taken from Chambers' "Handbook to German Literature." The writer can hardly have read the poem for himself. Hagen is named "Haco" throughout, and such a passage as the following leaves little room for doubt; "Brunhilt seems to have been a termagant, and led King Gunther a terrible life; Siegfried, having interfered in these quarrels on the King's request, fared as those generally do who interfere in such matters, and the Queen's jealous nature began to seek a way of revenge upon him and his wife Kriemhilt, whom Brunhilt hated also with a perfect hatred. Matters thus became so unpleasant at the Burgundian court that the Dragon-slayer returned to his father Siegmund. . . . Some years now elapse, in which Kriemhilt is happy in her husband's love; while Brunhilt is making her husband miserable." At the conclusion the writer says: "Unfortunately, no English translation of the poem exists," thus giving further proof of the careless preparation of his article.

27. **E. P. Evans.**—*Outlines of German Literature.* (New York, 1869.)  
[Unobtainable.]

28. **Sir G. W. Cox** and **E. H. Jones.**—*Popular Romances of the Middle Ages.* (London, 1871; <sup>2</sup>1880.)

The spirited, though sometimes rather free, account of the *Nibelungenlied* (pp. 276 ff.) is divided into three parts: 1. The Wedding of the Queens; 2. the Crosslet on the Vesture; 3. the Vengeance of Kriemhild. Some incidents of the original story, such as the account of Gunther's first night of married life, are toned down to suit fastidious modern taste, while others, such as the thrashing adminis-

<sup>1</sup>This worthless article reappeared anonymously in the *Dublin University Magazine*, lxxx. 232 ff. (Dublin, 1872.) Cf. p. 99. Revised and expanded it was included in W. T. Dobson's "Classic Poets." (Cf. p. 102.)



tered to Kriemhild by her fond husband, are omitted entirely. In other cases the reason for alteration or omission is less evident; Hagen and the chaplain are made to be the only persons in the boat at the time of the former's attempt to drown the one man whose return had been foretold, and the interview between Hagen and the water-fairies is not related.

Jones, as appears in the preface of "Tales of the Teutonic Lands," by the same authors (see p. 99), was the writer of this account. He evidently had the scenes he depicted vividly before him, but this sometimes led him to exceed the simple barbarity of the Old German, and to adopt a rather gruesome style. Thus:—

"King Etzel sorrowed for Hagan. He bent his grey head upon his hands, and leaned his elbows on his tottering knees. He mouthed and whined. 'Alas for Hagan! Well - a - day! To think the noblest knight that ever wielded sword should die by a woman's hand at last. I need must weep for him.'

"But Hildebrand ran down into the dungeon; saw Kriemhild gloating like a fiend over the headless corpse; and, half in fury, half in pity, drew his sword, and struck the mad woman dead."

In general, however, the reader would form a very fair idea of the tone of the original.

29. **Anonymous Article** on *The Nibelungenlied*, in the *St. James's Magazine*, xxviii. 117 ff. (London, 1871.)

A short, and not very satisfactory account of the poem, with a large number of mediocre verse translations. Supposing the writer to have read the passages translated, he cannot have penetrated much more deeply into the epic than was necessary for that purpose. A short extract from his epitome will make this clear:—

"After a year (ten: *cf.* st. 716) has passed, Siegfried and Kriemhild are invited to revisit the court of Worms; for Brunhilda has resolved to avenge some fancied insult of

the prince (!). Brunhilda appeals to Hagen to help her in her revenge—an appeal congenial enough to the treacherous, jealous knight. He undertakes to conduct the plot, and King Gunther becomes a confederate.”

Never a word of the quarrel between the two queens!

30. **Sir G. W. Cox** and **E. H. Jones**.—*Tales of the Teutonic Lands*. (London, 1872.)

This contains a reprint of the account of the *Nibelungenlied* from the same authors' "Popular Romances of the Middle Ages," (see p. 97).

31. **Anonymous Article** on *The Nibelungenlied* in the *Dublin University Magazine*, lxxx. 232 ff.<sup>1</sup> (Dublin, 1872.)

A reprint of the worthless essay by "Coelo Ictus," in the *St. James's Magazine*, xvi. 377 ff. (see p. 97).

32. **J. Gostwick** and **R. Harrison**.—*Outlines of German Literature*. Pp. 16–22. (London, 1873; <sup>2</sup>1883).

33. **J. Gostwick**.—*German Poets*. Pp. 9–16. (London, 1874.) Abridged from the same author's "German Literature" (1849).

34. **A. G. Richey**.—*The Teutonic and the Celtic Epic. The Nibelungenlied and the Tain Bo Cuailgne in Fraser's Magazine*, lxxxix. 336 ff. (London, 1874.)

The writer compares Rüdiger's unwilling but inevitable combat with the Burgundians with a parallel case in the Keltic epic, where Ferdiad is induced to engage his former fellow-pupil Cuchulaind. A summary of each of these episodes, accompanied by numerous full translations, in the case of the *Nibelungenlied* from Lettsom, shows the superiority of the German treatment of the motives. At the same time the general epic style of the German is found to surpass that of the Irish poem in its simplicity and directness.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Criticism of W. T. Dobson's "Classic Poets," p. 102.

35. **Henry Eckford.**—*Siegfried the Dragon-killer. The Nibelungen-Lied and Kriemhild's Revenge*, in the *Penn Monthly*, v. 60 ff., 122 ff. (Philadelphia, 1874.)

After some introductory remarks comparing the *Nibelungenlied* and *Gudrun* with the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, and a description of the Nibelungen metre (as consisting of eight alternately riming lines), follows an abstract of the Old German epic. This extract is noteworthy as being clearly based on an acquaintance with the original text (Holtzmann's, the writer informs us), and as showing a tolerable knowledge of Middle High German.

A large number of stanzas are literally translated into a metrical form closely corresponding to that of the *Nibelungenlied*; unfortunately the language is often unnatural and the construction awkward, thus! "From the spring the sworder sprang as he were daft," "Beside the rim his shield upon, near him there was nought," "Mid these lofty honours dream did dream Kriemhild," "She hurled with nimble swords, her love to guard, the spear."

The article concludes with another comparison with the Greek epic as regards motives and sources.

36. **A. Putzker** on *The Lay of the Nibelungen*, in the *Overland Monthly*, xv. 413 ff. (San Francisco, 1875.)

After a defence of the study of languages as an education, the writer gives a reliable but rather short account of the Nibelungen story, recommending a perusal of the poem, *not in the Old German*, but in a modern translation. Simrock's is suggested, and Birch's mentioned as existing.

37. **J. M. Hart.**—*Jordan's "Nibelunge,"* in *The Nation*, xxii. 214. (New York, 1876.)

A brief review, including a few observations on the results of (then) recent investigation as to the origin and authorship of the Old German poem. Students are advised to use Bartsch's annotated edition in connection with his or Simrock's translation. Birch's version, it is added, might be of help. *Cf.*, however, pp. 39 ff. It would have been better to recommend Lettson's.

38. **Leda M. Schoonmaker.**—*The Nibelungen Lay*, in *Harper's Magazine*, lv. 38 ff. (New York, 1877.)

A rather careless article, opening with an account of the Lassburg (*sic*) MS., followed by a bare mention of the labours of Bodmer, the brothers Grimm, Lachmann, and Gervinus, and of the uncertainty as to the date and authorship of the poem. A few observations on the possible identity of Siegfried with Balder, and the historic existence of Attila, Theodoric, and Gundicarius, then lead up to a pleasingly written abstract of the story. Some idea of the style of the original is conveyed by the quotation of a few stanzas from "Littsom's (*sic*) English translation of the *Lay*, as edited by Professor Lachmann." As a matter of fact, Lettson's translation was neither edited by Lachmann nor based on that scholar's edition. Occasional minor inaccuracies are to be met with in the epitome; Gunther, for instance, is said to exchange a sign with Hagen, and to remove the hero's sword with his own hands, and Siegfried *hurls* his shield after the fleeing murderer; Kriemhild, again, after striking off Hagen's head is described as "clasping the hallowed weapon to her bosom, heedless of the wounds the sharp blade cuts in naked hands and bosom"; and to several of the manuscripts, we are informed, there is a third part attached, "styled the *Plage* (*sic*), or Lament." Perhaps the last of these mistakes may be attributed to the *Druckfählerteufel*.

39. **Bayard Taylor.**—*Studies in German Literature*. (New York, 1879.)

The fourth lecture (pp. 100 ff.) is almost entirely devoted to the *Nibelungenlied*. As it stands, it contains much that is misleading, especially in the remarks on origin and the like, though even the summary of the poem and the translations themselves are not free from errors. The Burgundians are wrongly stated to have inhabited the region between Geneva and Lyons at the time of Attila, and to have been defeated by him in 451; then to have moved northward, and to have occupied the country from

the Rhine westward. Lachmann, we read, "has fixed upon twenty lays, or separate chapters of the poem, as being of ancient origin; the remaining nineteen he considers as additions made about the close of the twelfth century" (!) It is also stated that the poem was quite certainly reproduced between 1190 and 1200 in two different copies, "one of which, called the 'Vulgata,' addressed itself to the common people" (!) It is most deplorable that Taylor did not live to prepare the book for publication himself; some at least of the many blunders might then have been avoided.

The epitome of the poem is in itself fairly accurate, but the translations again show carelessness and superficiality. Misprints in quotations of the original text one finds without surprise, e.g. *reigen* (for *veigen*), *beidin* (for *beidiu*); but some of the mistranslations are inexcusable: *si klaget in inneclîche beidiu mâge unde man*, "sore was the lamentation of maiden and of man"; *ir und sîner mâge* (kinsmen of his and hers), "for her and for her mother"; *sîn varwe*, "her colour"; *den vil zierlîchen degen*, "the service of his sword," &c. Taylor had, however, considerable poetic feeling and expression, and some of his translations are very successful.

The *Klage* also receives brief mention.

40. **James Sime** on *German Literature* in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol. x. (<sup>9</sup>1879), p. 524.

41. **W. Ebeling**.—*Analysis of the Nibelungen*, in *The Western*, vol. v., new series, pp. 219 ff. (St. Louis, 1879.)

A fairly full account of the story, but betraying some carelessness in minor details. Alberich is called *Abberich*; Dankwart, *Dankwort*; Giselher, *Gieseler*; and Hagen is made to kill Siegfried with the sword Balmung. The style varies curiously from a kind of rugged conciseness to modern flowery verbosity.

42. **W. T. Dobson**.—*The Classic Poets*. (London, 1879.) Pp. 56-94.



The account of "The Lay of the Nibelungen" included in this work is a revised (and improved) version of the article by "Coelo Ictus" in the *St. James's Magazine*, xvi. 377 ff. (cf. p. 97), an article which reappeared anonymously in the *Dublin University Magazine*, lxxx. 232 ff. (cf. p. 99). These two previous articles, therefore, presumably came from Dobson's pen.

The passage parallel to that quoted from the *St. James's Magazine* runs here as follows: "Brunhilt proved to be a veritable scold, and led her husband a terrible life, causing discomfort to all connected with the court; their quarrels became at last so frequent, that Siegfried ventured at the king's request to remonstrate with her, and fared as those generally do who interfere in such matters. The queen's jealous nature took fire at Siegfried's remonstrance, and resolving to be revenged she seized every opportunity of venting her spleen and spite against the Dragon-slayer and Kriemhilt. Matters thus became so unpleasant at the Burgundian court that Siegfried returned to the court of his father Siegmund. . . . Some years now elapse, in which Kriemhilt is happy in her husband's love, while Brunhilt is making her husband miserable."

True, this does not point to any closer acquaintance with the poem itself than the original article of "Coelo Ictus," but the essay as a whole is more detailed; Weber and Carlyle are quoted, and a large number of verse translations (drawn without acknowledgment partly from Gostwick's "German Literature," partly from Lettson's translation) are added. The fact, however, that such passages as the above are retained shows how superficial must have been the author's acquaintance even with the English translation.

43. **M. F. Reid.**—*A Handy Manual of German Literature.* (Edin. and Lond., 1879.) Pp. 33-36.

44. **James K. Hosmer,** in *A Short History of German Literature.* (London, 1880; <sup>2</sup>1892) treats the *Nibel-*

*ungenlied* at some length, devoting to it chapters ii. and iii. (pp. 23-77).

Chapter ii. consists of a few introductory remarks followed by an epitome, based to a large extent on Vilmar;<sup>1</sup> in order to give his readers an impression of the rude and vigorous verse, Professor Hosmer quotes, with slight variations, eight of Carlyle's stanzas.<sup>2</sup> The outline of the poem, though in the main accurate enough and not wanting in spirit, is here and there open to criticism. Kriemhild, for instance, in her interview with her mother, is represented as making the somewhat trite observation, "Unless I love a hero, I will remain a maid till death"; again, after her quarrel with Brunhild, she is made to say: ". . . and for true heart friendship I shall always again be prepared," precisely the opposite of her actual remark. The fanciful description of Dietrich of Bern, too (p. 37), is foreign to the original.

Chapter iii. opens with a series of quotations from Kurz,<sup>3</sup> Carlyle, Heine, and Frederic the Great,<sup>4</sup> in illustration of the estimation in which they held the *Nibelungenlied*, and proceeds then to a popular and incomplete account of its origin, based chiefly on the works of Hermann Fischer<sup>5</sup> and Simrock. Some slips occur, as where the number of extant MSS. is said to be over fifty, or where Gernot is mentioned as one of the historical personages. Following Kurz, the author then treats the characters, motives, and tone of the poem in an attractive and more detailed manner.

45. **W. de B. Fryer** in the *Penn Monthly*, xii. 401 ff., 492 ff. (Phil., 1881.) [Unobtainable.]

<sup>1</sup> A. F. C. Vilmar, *Geschichte der deutschen Nationalliteratur*. (Marburg, 1848; <sup>25</sup>1900.)

<sup>2</sup> By some curious error Professor Hosmer has introduced these verses as Birch's, referring to "strophe 1453 et seq." They are not to be found in Birch's translation, which, moreover, does not consist in so many as 1453 stanzas.

<sup>3</sup> H. Kurz, *Geschichte der deutschen Litteratur*. (Leipzig, 1851-59; <sup>8</sup>1892.)

<sup>4</sup> Cf. p. 29, foot-note.

<sup>5</sup> Hermann Fischer, *Die Forschungen über das Nibelungenlied seit Lachmann*. (Leipzig, 1874.)

46. **E. Nicholson.**—*Student's Manual of German Literature.* (London, no date; acquired by the British Museum in 1882.) Pp. 71–86.

47. **George Theodore Dippold.**—*The Great Epics of Mediæval Germany.* (Boston, 1882.)

The first five chapters (pp. 1–158) of this excellent little book are taken up with the *Nibelungenlied*, the abstract of the poem filling chapters i. and ii. If not always very spirited, the abstract is reliable and detailed, though the bridal-night scene between Gunther and Brunhild is somewhat toned down. Almost without exception the translations are a faithful reproduction of the Middle High German text, but their poetic value is not particularly high, *e.g.*:—

He strode along the river to find a ferryman.

At once he heard a splashing,—to listen he began :

Within a beauteous water some mermaids sported gay,

Who had been there for bathing beneath the cool clear spray.

It will be noticed that the last hemistich has three stresses only.

There is a slight inaccuracy in the statement that the whole poem is divided into two parts each containing nineteen songs, for there are altogether thirty-nine; and the word *liebe* is mistranslated *love* in one case (p. 3), but correctly rendered by *joy* in another (p. 47). Another not quite satisfactory translation occurs (p. 7) where *des wart dâ wol gehæhet den zieren heleden der muot* is turned: "This well might raise the courage of heroes of great fame."

Chapter iii. deals with the "Nibelung Epics and Sagas in the North," and the "Lay of Siegfried" (*Hürnen Seyfrid*). The fourth chapter contains an interesting and accurate account of the relations between the Northern and the German versions, and the influence of history on the development of the story. In the fifth, Professor Dippold treats the mythical elements and their combina-

tion with the historical, mentions the *Klage*, gives an account of the MSS. and the authorship question, and carefully describes the metrical form. In general he favours Simrock's views, of which he gives a summary; they resemble, to a large extent, the conclusions to which modern scholars have arrived, and were a very reasonable mean between the extreme opinions of the Lachmann school, on the one hand, and of their opponents, on the other.

In conclusion a number of the most important translations into modern German and English are mentioned,<sup>1</sup> as well as Carlyle's Essay and Gostwick's "Spirit of German Poetry." Geibel's drama "Brunhild" (translated by Professor Dippold, 1879) receives considerable attention, and Jordan's *Nibelunge*, Wagner's *Ring der Nibelungen*, William Morris's "Sigurd the Volsung," as well as the paintings of Peter von Cornelius and Julius Schnorr von Carolsfeld are criticised.

One of the very praiseworthy features of Professor Dippold's book is the number of important references by means of which the student can penetrate more deeply into the study of the poem and the many questions connected with it. There are also some valuable notes, in which the suggested authorship of the Kurenberger, among other things, is treated in detail.

48. **Alfred Nutt**.—*Mabinogion Studies: I. Branwen, the daughter of Llyr*, in the *Folk Lore Record*, v. 1 ff. (London, 1882.)

A short epitome of the second part of the *Nibelungenlied* (pp. 20 f.) is given for comparison with the Keltic story of Branwen. Mr. Nutt points out in his article a number of features common to both stories, and suggests, for the first time, that the Teutonic saga exercised an influence on the Welsh tale.

<sup>1</sup> A note (pp. 304-309) discusses De la Motte Fouqué's *Sigurd der Schlagentöter*, Ernst Raupach's *Der Nibelungenhort*, Hebbel's *Die Nibelungen*, and names a number of other modern German adaptations of the Nibelungen material.

49. **M. W. MacDowall.**—*Epics and Romances of the Middle Ages.* (London, 1883; <sup>2</sup>1884.)

Part ii. of this work contains an adaptation of the account of the Nibelungen saga as told in Wilhelm Wagner's *Unsere Vorzeit.* (Leipzig, <sup>4</sup>1889.)

The details of the story are by no means strictly adhered to; Kriemhild, for example, after receiving her death-blow from Hildebrand, intercedes to save him from punishment.

50. **Karl Blind.**—Wagner's "*Siegfried*" and the City of the Nibelungs, in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, xxx. 462 ff. (London, 1883.)

An interesting account of the localisation of the Nibelungen story in the Rhine districts, especially near Worms.

51. **Rasmus B. Anderson.**—Schroeter's Translation of the *Nibelungenlied*, in *The American*, v. 487. (Phil., 1883.) [Unobtainable.]

52. **James Sime.**—*The Nibelungenlied*, in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol. xvii. 474 ff. (London, <sup>9</sup>1884.)

This article contains short epitomes of the Norse and the German versions of the saga. Two slight errors mar the general accuracy of the latter: Brunhild's country is named Iceland, and Hildebrand is called a Hunnish warrior. Some of the questions of criticism are lightly touched upon, the historical basis rather inadequately, the metre roughly, the characters in a little more detail.

In conclusion, Bodmer's discovery of the first found MS. is referred to, as well as the early editions, while the theories of Lachmann, Holtzmann, Pfeiffer, and Bartsch are outlined. The only English work mentioned is Carlyle's Essay.

53. **Mrs. F. C. Conybeare.**—*History of German Literature* (translated from Wilhelm Scherer's *Geschichte der deutschen Litteratur.*) (Ox. Clar. Press, 1886.) Pp.

54. **Gudbrand Vigfusson** and **F. York Powell**.—*Sigfred-Arminius and other papers*. (Ox. Clar. Press, 1886.)

An ingenious, but unconvincing attempt to prove the identity of Arminius with Siegfried. Actually the latter has very little in common with the historic chief of the Cherusci, but it seems possible enough that the German name of Arminius *may* have been Siegfried or some other compound of *sieg*. (Cf. p. 25.)

55. **F. H. Hedge**.—*Hours with German Classics*. (Boston, 1886.)

Of this book, based on lectures originally delivered at the Harvard University, two chapters are devoted to the *Nibelungenlied*. Chapter iii. (pp. 25-47) contains a detailed account of the poem, diversified by a number of quotations from Lettsom's English version. Except for an occasional minor inaccuracy (*e.g.*, Kriemhild is said to have been thirteen years married to Attila, and Dankwart represented as being aware of Bloedelin's intention to attack him) the abstract is quite satisfactory. It is preceded by an account of Siegfried's early adventures, and a few remarks on the origin and authorship of the poem. Professor Hedge avoids any detailed discussion of these questions, however, and contents himself with merely indicating the chief theories. Sometimes he seems to be relying too implicitly on Bayard Taylor's "Studies in German Literature" (*cf.* p. 101), the influence of which is unmistakable in the following sentence, for example (p. 26): "Lachmann detected, as he thought, twenty distinct poems in the thirty-nine cantos which compose the present work; the remaining nineteen he supposes were added and intermixed by the compiler to give unity and wholeness to the poem."

Chapter iv. (pp. 48-55) is devoted to an interesting comparison of the *Nibelungenlied* with the Iliad as regards characters, social life, descriptive style, and so forth.

56. **Ruth Brindley.**—*The Nibelungen Lied*, in the *Congregational Review*, i., 1104 ff. (London, 1887.)

Nominally a review of Mr. Foster-Barham's translation—which receives undue praise—this is really an essay on the German epic, and consists not of a summary of the contents, but of a general discussion of its origin, authorship, character, &c. Unfortunately much that is valuable is mixed with a little that is misleading; the writer seems to look upon Scandinavia as the birthplace of the saga, and gives a false idea of the age of the Eddas by saying that the epic may be traced back into the dim ages when history was only tradition, “nay, farther back still, to Scandinavian Eddas and Hindoo cosmogony.” There is nothing to show that Miss Brindley had studied the Old German text, but she had evidently read up a considerable amount of the literature on the subject.

57. **Isabel T. Lublin.**—*Primer of German Literature*. (London, 1888.) Pp. 21–27. Adapted from H. Kluge's *Geschichte der deutschen National-Litteratur*. (Altenburg, 1869; <sup>28</sup>1897.)

58. **Karl Neuhaus.**—*German Epic Tales in Prose*. (London, 1888.) One of the series of Whittaker's Modern German Authors.

Vilmar's summary of the *Nibelungenlied* is reproduced in this little book, which is intended as a school reader. In an introduction in English, Dr. Neuhaus treats the main points of interest in connection with the poem (pp. v.–xxiii.). The Norse version is summarised, and the historical basis of the story is dealt with at some length. Some of the attempted identifications of Siegfried with historical personages are referred to, but the generally accepted explanation of the hero's adventures as representing nature-myths passes entirely unnoticed. The three chief MSS. are named, together with an edition based on each (for C., Holtzmann's; Zarncke's is not mentioned), and the metre of the original correctly described.

In conclusion, the first "Adventure" is quoted from Bartsch, and accompanied by an English translation. There are a few misprints in the old text, *e.g.*: *macgraven* for *maregraven* (st. 9); *ein srehte* for *eins rehte* (16). Dr. Neuhaus's verse is at times quite passable, and for this he, as a foreigner, deserves all praise; but it sometimes degenerates into mere doggerel, as in st. 19:—

That was the self-same falcon, which in her dream she saw,  
 As mother Ute told her. Revenge and fearful awe  
 Wreaked on her nearest kinsmen, the stayers (*sic*) of that  
     kite,  
 Whose bloody death shall cost the life of many a gallant  
     wight.

His metre bears some resemblance to the Nibelungen strophe, but is very irregular, the half-lines having sometimes three, sometimes four stresses. Internal rime is occasionally used, even within the same hemistich, "Him shalt thou plain untimely slain, save God the doom reverse." The translation itself is not particularly accurate: *rich* is turned by *rich in gear* (st. 4), *of boundless wealth* (7); *mitte* by *right gentle* (5); *snelle* by *speedy-footed* (9), &c.

59. **G. T. Dippold.**—*Richard Wagner's Poem: The Ring of the Nibelung.* (New York, 1888.)

The most important of the various versions of the Nibelungen story used by Wagner are abstracted and compared, among them the *Nibelungenlied* and *Hürnen Seyfrid*. As Wagner generally followed the Norse in preference to the German versions, the latter are not so fully dealt with as the former.

60. **Benjamin W. Wells.**—*Sigfried - Arminius*, in *Modern Language Notes*, iii. 124. (Baltimore, 1888.)

A summary of all the arguments tending to establish the identity of Siegfried and Arminius. The writer falls into a remarkable error in stating that "Arminius died in exile in Italy; Siegfried in a foreign land, at Etzel's



court." Mr. Wells could hardly have written this if he had read the *Nibelungenlied*.

61. **Karl Neuhaus**.—*Auszüge aus dem Nibelungenlied*, in *Im Ausland* (the organ of the German Teachers' Association), April 1889, pp. 30 ff.

A verse translation of the first two *Aventiuren*, each of which is preceded by a short prose summary. The first is identical with that in the same author's "German Epic Tales in Prose" (1888), and the second in the same style.

62. **Mrs. Mody**.—*Outlines of German Literature*. (London, 1889.) Pp. 13-15.

63. **A. Ten Brink**.—*The Nibelungenlied*, in the *Chautauquan*, xiv. 196. (Meadville, 1892.)

[Unobtainable.]

64. **E. F. Henderson**.—*The History of Germany in the Middle Ages*. (London and New York, 1894.) Pp. 430-432.

65. **M. E. Phillips**.—*A Handbook of German Literature*. (London, 1895, <sup>2</sup>1900.) Pp. 8-11.

66. **Mrs. M. J. Teusler**.—*Outlines of German Literature*. (Richmond, United States, 1895.)

[Unobtainable.]

67. **J. A. Joerg**.—*Outlines of German Literature*. (London, 1895.) Pp. 5-7.

68. **A. R. Lechner**.—*Legends of German Heroes of the Middle Ages*. (London, 1895.)

Contains an account of the *Nibelungenlied* in German, from J. Schrammen's *Deutsche Heldensage*, preceded by a very brief introduction (pp. 1-2). The preface and notes include a few quotations from the M.H.G.

69. **Jessie L. Weston.**—*Legends of the Wagner Drama.* (London, 1896.)

The greater part of this excellent little book deals with the *Nibelungen Ring* (pp. 9–151) as the most important of Wagner's productions. After briefly sketching the origin and development of the legend (pp. 10–13), Miss Weston describes and epitomises the Norse, Low German, and High German versions, the *Nibelungenlied* occupying pp. 41–50. Succeeding chapters deal separately with each portion of the whole drama, discussing step by step the original form of the legend, and the version chosen by Wagner for reproduction.

70. **H. A. Guerber.**—*Legends of the Middle Ages.* (New York, 1896.)

[Unobtainable.]

71. **Kuno Francke.**—*Social Forces in German Literature.* (New York, 1896; <sup>3</sup>1899.) Republished as "A History of German Literature as determined by Social Forces." (London, 1901.) Pp. 77–82.

72. **Gustav Gruener.**—*The Nibelungenlied and Sage in Modern Poetry*, in the *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, xi. 220–257. (Baltimore, 1896.)

This essay consists of an examination into the question as to whether any of the attempts to produce a drama or epic based on the Nibelungen story have been, or can ever be, entirely successful. Of all yet written the palm is given to William Morris's "Sigurd the Volsung," on account of its organic completeness and dignified simplicity, but the versification is condemned as monotonous and heavy, and the story as often prolix and repetitious. It is no "higher form" than the *Nibelungenlied*, and the attempt to recast the story must, Mr. Gruener thinks, always end in failure.

An appendix contains a list of "Works in Modern

Poetry based upon the Lied and Sage." All those mentioned are German except Morris's.

73. **H. G. Fiedler.**—*A Third German Reader and Writer.* (London, 1896.) Pp. 32-44; 97-111.

74. **Julius Goebel.**—*On the Original Form of the Legend of Sigfrid*, in the *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, xii. 461. (Baltimore, 1897.)

The writer has no belief in an original Siegfried myth. At the same time he believes the Norse version to be less authentic than is usually assumed, and to show many distinct traces of remoulding on the pattern of the myth of Wodan. The earliest form of the Siegfried tradition, he thinks, is nearly represented by the Siegmund passage in *Beowulf* (cf. p. 118), and by the *Hürnen Seyfrid*. A full and detailed account of the results of his researches is promised in a larger work.

75. **Charles Harvey Genung.**—*The Nibelungenlied*, in Warner's "Library of the World's Best Literature," xviii. 10,627 ff. (New York, 1897.)

A number of selections from Lettson's translation are preceded by a concise introduction comparing the German epic with the Iliad, and giving an account of its origin, re-discovery, and restoration to popular favour. The theories of Lachmann, Holtzmann, and Pfeiffer are noticed; and a brief outline of the story is followed by a short discussion of the chief characters and motives.

76. **Camillo von Klenze.**—*The Sigfrid Stories, in the Nibelungenlied and Elsewhere*, in *Poet Lore*, x. 543 ff. (Boston, 1898.)

A well-written account of the Elder Edda and Nibelungen versions of the Siegfried story, preceded by an interesting outline of its development from personifications of natural phenomena, and their amalgamation with history

and tradition. Apart from the fact that Brunhild's country is erroneously identified with Iceland, the article is in every way admirable. The last paragraphs contain mention of the most important modern works founded on the ancient saga: Hebbel's trilogy, *Die Nibelungen*; Geibel's tragedy, "Brunhild"; Jordan's epic, *Die Nibelunge*"; Ibsen's drama, "The Warriors of Heligoland"; William Morris's "Sigurd the Volsung"; and Wagner's *Ring des Nibelungen*.

77. **Bertha Palmer.**—*Stories from the Classic Literature of Many Nations.* (New York, London, 1898.) Pp. 137-143.

Contains twenty-eight stanzas from Lettson's translation.

78. **Zenaide A. Ragozin.**—*Tales of the Heroic Ages.* (New York, 1898.)

This book, addressed especially to the young, but also to adults, and intended for use as a school reader, contains the stories of "Siegfried, the Hero of the North," and "Beowulf, the Hero of the Anglo-Saxons." The former occupies pp. 3-199, and is followed by a "Note on the *Nibelungenlied*," pp. 200-210.

The story of Siegfried and Kriemhild is told in a simple but vivid style, with a flavour of the antique; once or twice, but very rarely, the effect is slightly marred by some too prominent modernism, such as, "What's the odds?" *Siegfried replied.* The original is freely pruned, rearranged, and condensed. The whole motive, for example, of the bridal night is fundamentally altered, Kriemhild's position in the quarrel with Brunhild being that, since Siegfried had wrestled with and beaten Brunhild, the latter was now his bondswoman, and could not therefore claim the honours of a queen. The lyrical passages are, in general, cut down or omitted in favour of the dialogue and epic parts; but the main object of most of the alterations seems to be the desire to inculcate lofty ideals. Thus,

when Hagen wantonly slays the Hun at the tournament, he is represented as forced to the act by the danger in which his friend Volker stood.

The Note mentions the unsettled authorship question and the three chief MSS., and notices briefly the mythological and historical bases of the saga. The information about the MSS. is not absolutely accurate, but the errors are of little importance in a work of this sort.

79. **Rev. A. J. Church.**—*Heroes of Chivalry and Romance.* (London and New York, 1898.) Pp. 215-342.

A free account, based on the translations by Lettsom and Miss Horton, and adapted to the requirements of juvenile readers as regards both style and matter. Illustrated.

80. **Anonymous.**—*Short Sketches of Long Romances.* (London, 1899; <sup>2</sup>1901.)

The *Nibelungenlied* occupies pp. 17-23 of this sixpenny booklet. A few words of introduction are followed by a very condensed abstract of the poem. It is not quite accurate, e.g. "When she had gone to Hungary to be married to Etzel, her brother, Gunther, nefariously took possession of the Nibelung hoard, whereby all his people became Nibelungs" (pp. 19-20), and its shortness necessarily does injustice to the old epic.

81. **Richard Garnett.**—*International Library of Famous Literature.* (London, 1900.)

Dr. Garnett has included in vol. iv., pp. 1540-1564, three "Adventures" from Lettsom's translation.

82. **John Clarke, M.A.**—*A History of Epic Poetry.* (Edinburgh, 1900.)

Chapter iv. of this book (pp. 198-218) deals with "The German Epic," under which heading the *Nibelungenlied* and Klopstock's *Messias* receive attention. The author gives a short outline, not only of the *Nibelungenlied* itself, but also of the Scandinavian version of the saga, and discusses the motives, characters, and style of the poem

with the purpose of showing up its chief merits and defects. In the earlier part, especially, Mr. Clarke finds fault with the garrulity and slow progress of the story, and considers the metre throughout to be lacking in dignity. The clear drawing of the characters is praised, however, and the power and pathos of the catastrophe fully recognised. In short, the epic value is estimated fairly, though without any great brilliancy or originality.

83. **Miss M. Watson.**—*The Nibelungenlied*, in the *Dublin Review*, cxxvi. 297 ff. (Dublin, 1900.)

A careful and readable summary based on the modern German translation by Junghans (Reclam).

84. **R. W. Moore.**—*History of German Literature*. (New York, 1900.) Pp. 28–36.

85. **F. E. Sandbach.**—*The Nibelungenlied in English*, in the *Modern Language Quarterly*, iii. pp. 131 ff. (London, 1900.)

A review of Miss Horton's translation.

86. **C. Wenckebach.**—*Ausgewählte Meisterwerke des Mittelalters*. (Boston, 1900; Heath's Modern Language Series.) Pp. 41–72.

An outline of the poem in German, with numerous quotations in modern German verse. The Norse version is given on pp. 3–20.

87. **F. Geibler.**—*Deutsche Sagen*. (New York, London and Bombay, 1901.) Pp. 8–10.

In simple German as a school reading piece.

88. **J. G. Robertson.**—*A History of German Literature*.<sup>1</sup> (Edinburgh and London, 1902.) Pp. 59–71.

A condensed but scholarly account, with numerous quotations. All questions of primary importance in con-

<sup>1</sup> Reviewed by me: *M.L.Q.*, vi. (1903). Pp. 25 f.

nection with the poem are touched upon, and the information given, though not very detailed, is thoroughly reliable. The footnotes contain modern German translations of the passages quoted, as well as valuable references.

89. **H. B. Cotterill.**—*Selections from the Nibelungenlied.* (London, Part i., 1902; Part ii. 1903.)

The introduction (pp. 3-17) is much more complete than usual for a school reader, but not quite free from inaccuracies. The Burgundian kingdom is described as including both the middle Rhine and their later settlement in the Rhone valley (p. 7); in the account of the Norse version, Siegfried is represented as receiving the magic potion *after* his marriage to Gudrun (p. 11), and in the summary of the *Nibelungenlied*, Hagen kills Etzel's son *before* the massacre of the Burgundian soldiery (p. 16). Possibly "Reigin" (pp. 10, 11) and "Aventurien" (p. 4), are misprints, but they are not corrected in the reprint of the introduction in Part ii.

90. **M. Bentinck-Smith.**—*Northern Hero Legends*, translated from O. Jiriczek's *Deutsche Heldensage.* (London, 1902; Dent's Cyclopædic Primers.) Pp. 10-61.

91. **Winifred Faraday.**—*The Edda.* (Nutt's Popular Studies in Mythology, Romance, and Folklore. London, 1902.)

In Part ii., "The Heroic Mythology of the North," the story of the Volsungs is told (pp. 8-27), and comparisons are made between the Scandinavian and German versions.

92. **Rev. E. Cobham Brewer.**—*The Reader's Handbook.* (London, 1902.)

Contains short and very unscholarly articles on Etzel (p. 343), Hagan (462), Kriemhild (583), Nibelungen Lied (752 *f.*), Nibelungen Nôt (753), Siegfried (1004).

93. **C. Wenckebach.**—*Deutsche Literaturgeschichte.* Part ii. (1100-1624). In preparation (Heath & Co.).

## INFLUENCE OF THE *NIBELUNGENLIED* ON ENGLISH LITERATURE

**Anglo-Saxon.**—That the *Nibelungenlied*, as a complete epos, either in the form in which we have it, or in some corresponding complete form, has had any direct influence on English literature prior to the nineteenth century is most improbable. G. Binz, in *Zeugnisse zur germanischen Sage in England* (*P.B.B.*, xx. 204), considers it doubtful whether we are justified even in assuming the existence of the saga itself in Britain before the Norman Conquest. While admitting the probability that the Anglo-Saxons were acquainted with historical songs both about the Burgundians and about the Völsungs (Wælsings), he suggests that the real Nibelungen Saga was brought over by the Normans, but never flourished in these islands. Very different is the view of S. Bugge (*P.B.B.*, xxii. 115 ff.), who holds that the Norse form of the story originated in Britain under the influence of the Anglo-Saxon version of the saga. Binz relies chiefly upon the unsatisfactory character of the references in Anglo-Saxon literature, Bugge on the appearance in the Eddas of words of distinctly Anglo-Saxon origin.

Two of the Old English poems in which references to the saga occur—*Widsið* and *Beowulf*—have been mentioned in the introductory section (p. 22), but now require more detailed notice.

*Beowulf.*—The saga material of Beowa probably originated among the Angles and Saxons in their old home near the mouth of the Elbe, and was brought by them to Britain. There the songs to which it and the historical story of Beowulf gave rise were welded, early in the eighth



century into a *Beowulf* epos.<sup>1</sup> The contents of the poem may be summarised thus—

Hrôðgar, king of the Danes, built a magnificent banqueting-hall, Heorot (Hart), but the enjoyment of the feasts was interfered with by a terrible monster named Grendel, whose habit it was to regularly carry off and devour one of the carousers. Beowulf came to Hrôðgar, offered his services, and succeeded not only in wounding Grendel, but also in slaying its dam, a sea-monster. He then returned to his own country, became king in his father's stead, and in his old age fought with and slew a dragon, winning its hoard but succumbing to the wounds received in the combat.

An epic with such a plot could not long remain free from contamination by the story of Siegfried the youthful slayer of dragons, supposing this story to have been known to the Teutonic inhabitants of Britain. It is, therefore, not surprising to find the following passage in *Beowulf* (875–900),<sup>2</sup> where a thane of Hrôðgar compares Beowulf's exploit with what he had heard told of Siegmund the Wælsing. He related—

<p>þæt hê fram Sigemunde &lt; s &gt; ellen-dædum, Wælsinges gewin, þára-þe gumena bearn fæhðe ond fyrena, þonne hê swulces hwæt eám his nefan, æt niða gehwám Hæfdon eal-fela sweordum gesæged, æfter deað-dæge syþðan wiges heard hordes hyrde : æþelinges bearn frêne dæde : hwæpre him gesælde,</p>	<p>secgan hýrde uncûþes fela, wide siðas, gearwe ne-wiston, bûton Fitela mid hine, secgan wolde swa hié â wæron nýd-gesteallan. eotena cynnes Sigemunde gesprong dôm unlýtel, wyrn âcwealde, hê under hârne stân, âna genêðde ne-wæs him Fitela mid ; ðæt þæt swurd þurhwôd</p>
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<sup>1</sup> Cf., *P.G.*, iii. 650 (21900), and G. Körting's *Grundriss der Geschichte der englischen Litteratur* (Münster, 31899), p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> Éd. A. Holder, *Beowulf*. (Freiburg und Leipzig, 1895.)

wrætlicne wurm,	þæt hit on wealle ætstôð,
dryhtlic iren :	draca morðre swealt.
Hæfde âglâca	elne gegongen,
þæt hê beâh-hordes	brûcan môte
selfes dôme ;	æâ-bât gehl(e)ôð,
bær on bearm scipes	beorhte frætwa
Wælses eafera :	wurm hât < e > (ge)mealt.
Sê wæs wreccena	wide mârrost
ofer wer-þeóde,	wigenþra hleó
ellen-dáedum :	hê ]æs áron dâh. <sup>1</sup>

This is clearly Siegfried's fight with the dragon attributed to his father Siegmund,<sup>2</sup> and the passage shows a remarkable agreement with the *Hürnen Seyfrid* in mentioning the rock, the melting of the dragon, and the winning of the treasure. This similarity, connected with other considerations, has led J. Goebel (*M.L.A.A.*, xii. 461) to the conclusion that this Beowulf passage and the *Hürnen Seyfrid* represent with the greatest authenticity the original form of the tradition.

With regard to the names mentioned in the above passage, Wælsing is the Norse Völsungr, to which corresponds the German Welisung, the existence of which

<sup>1</sup> . . . What he had heard tell of Sigemund, many mighty deeds and much that was strange, the Wælsing's combat and his far journeys, of his feuds and crimes, of which none of the sons of men knew fully except Fitela together with him, when he wished to speak about any such things, uncle to nephew, for they were always together in the combat, comrades in need. With their swords they had slain many of the giants' race. No little fame sprang up for Sigemund after his death, for he, brave warrior, had slain the dragon, the guardian of the Hoard. He, the son of a prince, dared the bold deed without comrade under the gray rock: Fitela was not with him. Yet it chanced fortunately that his sword pierced the dread monster, so as to stick in the rock, the splendid weapon: the dragon perished. The hero had won by his valour the right to use the treasure as he might desire. He loaded his boat, he bore the bright jewels into the vessel's bosom, the son of Wæls; heat melted the dragon. He was by far the most famous of heroes among the peoples of the earth, by reason of his valiant deeds, he, the warriors' safeguard: on this account did he win his great honours.

<sup>2</sup> T. Arnold has in his "Notes on *Beowulf*" (London, 1898) a chapter on "Allusions connecting *Beowulf* with the Nibelungen Lay" (pp. 67-81), in the course of which he favours the theory of a Norse origin for the Siegfried saga. He seems to base his view principally on the one strophe (Bartsch, 739) in which the Nibelungen castle is spoken of as in Norway. Stopford A. Brooke also remarks on the connection of this passage with the Nibelungen Saga in his "History of Early English Literature" (London, 1892), vol. i. p. 88.

name in Germany is proved for the ninth century. Fitela represents the Norse (Sin)fjötli, Sigurd's half-brother, and the German name (Sintar)vizzilo, found in Bavarian records of the ninth and tenth centuries.

Of nearly the same age as *Beowulf* is the poem known as *Widsið*, some parts of which were considered by Ten Brink to be assignable to the middle of the sixth, while the greater portion was probably composed in the eighth century.<sup>1</sup> A scōp, or gleeman, to whom the name *Widsið* is given, recounts very drily his wanderings in foreign lands. He begins by enumerating a goodly number of sovereigns and their kingdoms, among the first few of which appear (ed. Wülcker,<sup>2</sup> 18 f.):—

Aetla weold Hunum,  
Becca Baningum,

Eormanric Gotum,  
Burgendum Gifica.<sup>3</sup>

Aetla is, of course, Attila (Etzel), and Gifica the Gibich of some of the German poems of the cycle, the *Giuki* of the Norse.

The catalogue of kings completed, the singer proceeds to a list of the countries he claims to have visited in person. He was with the Huns, he says, with many others, and (65 ff.):—

and mid Burgendum,  
me þær Guðhere forgeaf  
songes to leane;

þær ic beag geþah :  
glædlicne maþþum  
næs þæt sæne cyning.<sup>4</sup>

As *Widsið* usually contents himself with simply naming the country or people visited, this special notice is somewhat remarkable. Now the other personages likewise favoured with more than mere mention are (apart from his own lord and lady, Eadgils and Ealhild, 93 ff.):—

<sup>1</sup> Cf. G. Körting's *Grundriss der Geschichte der englischen Litteratur*, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup> The passages are quoted from Grein's *Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Poesie*, revised and edited by R. P. Wülcker (Kassel, 1881).

<sup>3</sup> Aetla ruled over the Huns, Eormanric over the Goths, Becca over the Banings, and Gifica over the Burgundians.

<sup>4</sup> . . . and with the Burgundians, where I received a ring : Guðhere gave me an acceptable present in reward of my song ; he was no sluggish king.

Alexander (15 *ff.*), Offa (35 *ff.*), Hroðgar (45 *ff.*), Aelfwine, *i.e.* Alboin, king of the Lombards (70 *ff.*), Cæsar (76 *ff.*), Eormanric (88 *ff.* and 110 *ff.*), and Wudga and Hama, the Witege and Heime of the Dietrich cycle (130 *ff.*). All of these were historical or legendary heroes whose deeds were immortalised in epic song; their names would be familiar to the audience, and the singer would both please his hearers and increase his reputation by showing a special acquaintance with them. The mere occurrence of the names of Attila and Gîbich in the first passage shows no more than that they were not entirely strange in Anglo-Saxon ears; but the second extract seems to show that Gûðhere (Gunther)<sup>1</sup> was a name famous enough to require a special setting. It would, then, be fair to assume that his brave but disastrous struggle against the hosts of Attila was the subject of epic songs in England just as much as were the exploits of the other heroes singled out for special mention.

Gunther is mentioned again in the *Waldere Fragments*: on leaf A, v. 25 and on leaf B, v. 14; in the second case his name is not mentioned, but he is addressed by Waldere as *wine Burgendā*, "friend (*i.e.* lord) of the Burgundians." But these fragments belong to a poem that was probably translated directly from an Old German original, for which reason the references noticed cannot be adduced as witnesses to the existence of the Burgundian story in England.

The recent attempt of two American scholars, W. W. Lawrence and W. H. Schofield (*M.L.A.A.*, xvii. 2), to show that Cynewulf's First Riddle in the Exeter Book is a translation from the Norse, and consists of part of Signy's monologue on hearing that Sinfjötli and Sigmund are ready to avenge Völsung on Siggeir does not appear to meet with acceptance. (*Cf.* Mr. Gollancz's and Pro-

<sup>1</sup> *Gûðhere* is the correct A.S. equivalent of the H.G. *Gunther*, the *n* before a spirant being regularly lost in A.S. while the vowel preceding underwent compensation-lengthening. *Gûðhere* would become in M.E. *Gowther*, the name borne by the hero of the fifteenth century romance of "Sir Gowther."

fessor Bradley's views as expressed in the *Athenæum*, Nos. 3913, 3919.)

While the literary remains are thus insufficient to prove the existence of the fully developed Nibelungen saga among the Anglo-Saxons, it is clear that at least the two sagas which combined to form it were separately known. In addition, however, we have a most interesting witness to the popularity of Germanic saga in the shape of an ivory casket dating from the first half of the eighth century, or earlier. Discovered in France, at Clermont, it originally bore the name of the Clermont Runic Casket; it was acquired by Mr. Franks, an Englishman, presented by him to the British Museum, and is now known as the Franks Casket. The sides and top are decorated with rude carvings and Anglo-Saxon runic inscriptions on such different subjects as the Adoration of the Magi, the Siege of Jerusalem, the Wieland (Wayland) Saga, and possibly, the Siegfried Saga.

The carvings with which we are concerned are on the right hand side, at present in a museum at Florence; in the British Museum the missing parts are represented by photographs. If Elis Wadstein's<sup>1</sup> surmises are correct, three scenes from the Siegfried story are represented with details strongly resembling the Norse version of the *Guðrunarqviða*. The accompanying inscriptions he reads and explains as follows:—

1. *Hér hos sitæþ | on hærm-bergæ | ág-l(ác) drigið swið.* "Here the horse sits on the sorrow-hill, suffers strong torment." According to the Norse version, Siegfried's horse Grani sorrowed deeply for his master. The carving on the left represents the animal, clothed as a man, sitting on a tumulus and holding twigs of weeping-willow. (?)

2. *Hiri erta.* "Her incitation," *i.e.* Brunhild inciting Gunther and Hagen to murder Siegfried. On the left of the carving two men and a woman are represented, the

<sup>1</sup> E. Wadstein, "The Clermont Runic Casket" (Upsala, 1900), pp. 31 ff.

latter apparently urging on the former to some distasteful action.

3. *Egis-graf*, | *sær-den sorgæ* | and *sefa-tornæ*. "The grave of awe, the grievous cave of sorrows and afflictions of mind." The central part of the carving shows a tumulus containing the hero's remains, over which a horse (Grani) and a woman (Kriemhild-Gudrun) mourn.

It must be confessed that this short summary fails to do justice to the learning and ingenuity displayed by Wadstein, and possibly gives the impression that his explanations are very far-fetched. A perusal of his book, however, forces one to admit that even if some of his assumptions are not warranted, his general explanation of the carving as representing scenes from the Nibelungen saga is possibly enough the true one.

Curiously enough none of the figures is actually named, a fact which may be explained by the supposition that the story was so well known that the carver considered it unnecessary to add such explanations; the carvings and inscriptions were enough to speak for themselves. Further, if the three figures on the right are actually meant for Brunhild, Hagen, and Gunther, this scene must represent the story in a stage of development subsequent to the fusion of the Siegfried saga with the Burgundian legend. Such a knowledge of the fully developed saga in England of the eighth century would fit in well with Bugge's theory that it was communicated by Anglo-Saxons to the Norsemen settled in Northumbria.

At best, however, Wadstein's theory rests on an insecure foundation and slender supports. Professor A. S. Napier deals with the question in his contribution<sup>1</sup> to the "English Miscellany" presented to Dr. Furnivall in honour of his seventy-fifth birthday. He is entirely unconvinced by Wadstein's arguments, points out some of their weaknesses,

<sup>1</sup> Reprinted separately. (Ox. Clar. Press, 1901). Cf. also W. Vietor, *Das angelsächsische Runenkästchen* (Marburg, 1901), Part i. (plates); Part ii. (explanatory text) to follow.

and believes the true explanation of the pictures to be not yet found. He interprets the runes thus:—

Top : *her hos sitæþ on hærmbergæ agl* ( )  
 Right : *drigiþ swæ*  
 Bottom : *hiri ertaegisgrafsærd* ( ) *n sorgæ a*  
 Left : *nd sefu tornæ.*

This he suggests, may be read as three alliterative lines:—

*Her hos sitiþ on harmbergæ | agl(æ) drigiþ swæ hiri ertæ gisgraf | sær d(æ)n sorgæ and sefu tornæ*, giving the following connected sense:—"Here 'hos' sits on the sorrow-hill, endures tribulation as Ertæ (Ercæ?) had imposed upon her, rendered wretched by sorrow and anguish of heart." *Hos* remains unexplained, while *Ertæ* is taken as a female proper name.

**Middle English.**—In the literature of the Middle English period there is, so far as I know, only one reference to the Nibelungen story that can be looked upon as at all certain. This was pointed out by Professor W. P. Ker in *Folk Lore*, ix. 372, and occurs in the metrical romance of "Sir Degravant," in the following passage (vv. 525 ff.):—

*Y hade leve she were myne | Thane alle the gold in the Reyne | ffaused one florene, | She is myne so dere* (MS. *drere*).

Whatever the third of these lines means, the second clearly contains a reference to the Nibelungen Hoard. But such an expression may be only proverbial, and point to an earlier rather than a contemporary knowledge of the story.

Worth noticing here is one other passage in Middle English literature first remarked by Weber in the "Illustrations of Northern Antiquities," (*cf.* p. 82). It consists of an interesting parallel to Gunther and Brunhild's wedding-night scene, and occurs in the metrical romance of "Sir Bevis of Hampton," the Auchinleck MS. of which dates from the first quarter of the fourteenth century. The

English versions are derived from a French source, similar to the Anglo-Norman *Boeve de Haumtone*, but Bevis was originally an English hero.

After an adventurous career in the East, Sir Bevis brings back to Europe a lady, Josian, who is to become his wife. Leaving her at Cologne, he proceeds to his home in the Isle of Wight for the purpose of driving out his villainous old stepfather, and thus gives a certain unscrupulous Earl Miles an opportunity of wooing Josian. Eventually forced into marrying him, she determines at all costs to remain faithful to her betrothed; on retiring for the night she persuades Miles to dismiss the attendants, attacks him unawares, and strangles him with her girdle. According to the Anglo-Norman poem (ed. A. Stimming, *Der anglonormannische Boeve de Haumtone*: Halle, 1899), she throws the girdle over his head, pulls, and breaks his neck (vv. 2110-2116). In the English versions, however, the parallel to the scene in the *Nibelungenlied* is closer, for Josian carries the girdle over a curtain pole (or, as one MS. has it, a beam), and leaves the corpse hanging all night (cf. E. Kölbing's edition, "The Romance of Sir Beues of Hamtoun" (London, 1894); vv. 3219-3224). Summaries of the poem are to be found in J. Ashton's "Romances of Chivalry" (London, 21890), and G. Ellis's "Early English Metrical Romances" (London, 21848).

Although it is safer to assume that this parallel is accidental, or that the motive was in existence before its application in the two poems, the faint possibility remains, that either the author or the translator of "Sir Bevis" borrowed it from a version of the Nibelungen tradition. It is to be observed, too, that a reminiscence of Germanic saga appears in another part of the romance (Auchinleck MS., 2605) where Wade, presumably the fierce old Wate of *Gudrun*, is mentioned.

**Modern English.**—All knowledge of the Nibelungen saga having died out, as may fairly be assumed, early in the Middle English, or even in the Old English period,



the story remained unknown in this country until its reimportation by Weber in his "Northern Antiquities." His book was known and appreciated probably by only a select few, on whom, however, its influence was considerable, not least, as we have seen, on Carlyle. The general tendency of this influence was, however, scientific and scholarly. Weber's readers developed an interest which led them to study the *Nibelungenlied* and other Old German poems in the original, or in translation, and in some cases to communicate the results of their study to the public in essays and articles. This has, indeed, been the tendency even up to the present; a purely literary use of the saga material, or of any part of it, has been quite exceptional.

The earliest adaptation of the story in this sense is in the anonymous *Popular Tales and Romances of the Northern Nations*<sup>1</sup> (London, 1823), one of which is entitled, *The Hoard of the Nibelungen*, vol. iii. 199-250). The whole book is of the ghostly romantic type so much in vogue early in the last century, and the tales are written in a style suggestive of winter evenings and bated breath. The opening of *The Hoard of the Nibelungen* affords a good illustration:—

"It was a gloomy autumnal night, as the moon, sinking amidst dark clouds, cast a fearful light upon the ruins of the fortress of Worms on the Adda, before which two sentinels were pacing to and fro, being stationed there in order to prevent the approach of any one towards the treasures which were supposed to be concealed within the vaults of the ancient castle."

Soon after the ghost of Monk Ilsan<sup>2</sup> appears and rides away, whereupon one of the sentinels relates how the monk is doomed to watch over the Hoard, and explains that no mortal hands can remove it, except in the ghost's absence.

<sup>1</sup> There is a copy in the British Museum.

<sup>2</sup> A prominent character in the *Rosengarten zu Worms*, where he represents the ex-warrior who has entered a monastery but lost none of his pugnacity.

This leads up to an extraordinarily garbled version of the Nibelungen story, in which we recognise as characters King Gibich of Rhetia and his daughter Grimhilda; Brunilda, the betrothed of Gundachar; also Rudiger, the minstrel Volker, Hagen of Troy, Ezzel, Dietrich of Bern, and Hildebrand. Siegfried's place is taken by Fradolfo, brother of Brunilda and possessor of the Hoard in virtue of his descent from the kings of the Netherlands.

The plot of the story may be summed up thus: Grimhilda is jealous of Brunilda's jewels, and proceeds to scheme for the treasure, which she eventually obtains by marrying Fradolfo, who murders Gibich and seizes Rhetia. The Burgundians, incensed, attack Grimhilda's castle after Fradolfo has been slain by Hagen, but without success. By magic spells she makes herself appear very beautiful, and convinces them for a time of her innocence. She now prepares an enchanted garden (here we see the influence of the *Rosengarten zu Worms*), into which she entices most of the characters, including Ezzel, who falls in love with and marries her. At a banquet she accuses Hagen of having murdered Fradolfo and stolen the Hoard; the guests take sides and fight, Grimhilda urging them on; but Hildebrand suddenly appears and kills her, whereupon the enchantment is removed, and the survivors stop fighting. Ilstan only, who had been Grimhilda's accomplice throughout, was put to death.

In conclusion, the sentinels descend to the vaults in search of the treasure, and soon after exchange their service for a life of opulence.

The next work influenced by the *Nibelungenlied* is one on a much higher literary level, the Hon. and Rev. William Herbert's *Attila, King of the Huns* (London, 1838), consisting of two parts; *I. Attila, or the Triumph of Christianity: a poem*; and *II., Attila and his Predecessors: an Historical Treatise*.

The second part does not properly belong to this section, and, moreover, contains nothing of interest beyond a few references to the *Nibelungenlied*, and theories as to the

identity of Attila with Siegfried and the British King Arthur (pp. 518, 523-526, 535). Some passages in the poem, however, are based on the Norse and German versions of the Nibelungen saga. "The history of Hilda," Herbert says in his preface, "is conformable with the accounts given in the Scandinavian and Teutonic legends, reconciling their differences. The name of Escam, the daughter and wife of Attila, mentioned in the history of Priscus, is applied to the legends concerning the younger Hilda, who was his daughter and wife." Considering Attila identical with Siegfried, Hilda thus takes the rôle of Brunhild (Siegfried's first betrothed, according to the Eddas), Escam that of Kriemhild, who is supposed to be identical with (H)ildico, Attila's last wife and reputed murderess.

The first part of Book vii. (the whole consists of twelve books and a "Farewell," and comprises some 7500 lines of blank verse) relates how Hilda is divorced by Attila in favour of Escam, and handed over, drugged, to Gunther of Burgundy. In Book xi., having learned by her magic arts that Attila's fall is at hand, she induces Gunther to plot his murder with the help of Hagen. She herself pays an apparently friendly visit to the Hunnish court, but Escam, becoming jealous and suspicious, tells three dreams of ill omen she has had: that Attila had been slain by two wild boars, that he had been overwhelmed by the fall of two mountains,<sup>1</sup> and that he had been stung by two snakes. Hilda betrays herself by changing colour, but at this moment Gunther and Hagen appear. She contrives to warn them by passing them a ring wrapped in wolf skin, whereupon Hagen springs up, resolved to sell his life dearly. After his sword has broken, he is overpowered; his heart is cut out and carried to Gunther, who is left to die in a vault infested by snakes. Book xii. tells of Hilda's revenge more or less in accordance with the Norse tradition.

<sup>1</sup> In the footnote to p. 240, four lines of the *Nibelungenlied* are translated as testimony to the source from which these two dreams are taken.

Herbert's numerous translations of Scandinavian poems testify to his knowledge of that literature, but the extent of his acquaintance with the *Nibelungenlied* is doubtful, for he states in a footnote to p. 242 that it, as well as the Edda, relates the device by which Hilda warned her husband. He first read the Upper German version in Weber's "Illustrations of Northern Antiquities," to which he referred the year after its appearance in his notes to a poem on *Brynhilda*, printed in "Helga: a Poem" (London, 1815).

The lines containing the speech in which Hilda incites her husband to murder Attila will provide a favourable example of his style (xi. 336-366):—

She sought the loathed abode  
 Of Gunther, to whose bed by treason given  
 She dwelt estranged from love, with might and scorn  
 Denying his approach. "Arise," she cried,  
 "If ever love within thee, or bold hopes  
 Have lit a generous spark. The heaven-sent plague  
 Vexes e'en now the Hun, and with poised wing  
 Destruction hovers o'er his host. Arise,  
 And be the minister of deadly hate!  
 Revenge must blot the treason out, that soil'd  
 My wedded couch with shame. I brook not, I,  
 Two husbands; nor divide to mortal man  
 Or bland endearments, or the power which makes  
 Man higher than the angels. Choose thou scorn  
 And hatred that shall wither all thine hopes  
 Now and hereafter, or the long-sought meed  
 Which I unwilling to revenge assign.  
 Gentle acceptance; and therewith, the might  
 That springs from Scandian magic, and the old lore  
 Of that dark cabbala, to Gozan brought  
 By Shalmanezar's captives, or the signs  
 Symbolic, borne to utmost Orient  
 By Manes, wisest of the sons of earth.  
 Arise, and seal with sacramental blood  
 Our hymeneals, and supremely blest  
 With Hilda reign!" This said, on him she bent  
 A smile so full of witchery, it stole  
 His senses, and o'er all his thoughts enthral'd  
 Such blandishment and soft persuasion threw,  
 That life seem'd nothing worth, without the love  
 Of that pernicious matron, won by guilt.

In 1848 an anonymous author produced for the especial delectation of children, "The Heroic Life and Exploits of Siegfried the Dragon Slayer: an Old German Story" (London, 1848), with eight illustrations, designed by Kaulbach, and very crudely coloured. The material of this work seems to have been collected from a variety of sources, among which the *Nibelungenlied*, *Hürnen Seyfrid*, and some of the *Heldenbuch* romances are readily distinguishable; at the same time the author's imagination has also had free play. The contents are divided into fourteen "Adventures," as follows (the observations in brackets are mine):—

1. Of King Siegmund, and of Heroes, Dwarfs, Giants, and Dragons of Ancient Times. (Introductory.)

2. Of Siegfried the Swift, how he grew up to be a Hero, and of his throwing the Spear. (Marvellous record of youthful prowess.)

3. Of the Emperor Otnit and Wolfdietrich, and how Siegfried asked permission to go out into the World. (From the *Heldenbuch* romances: *Otnit* and *Hugdietrich und Wolfdietrich*.)

4. How Siegfried the Swift went through the Wilderness, and what he encountered there. (He catches a stag with a golden crown, finds an underground smithy, and frightens the dwarfs into politeness.)

5. Mimer relates the Adventures of Wieland, the best of all Smiths and Armourers.

6. How Siegfried brings an Urochs to the Smiths. (Imitation of the bear scene in the *Nibelungenlied*.)

7. How Siegfried learns to be a Smith, and how he was sent by the treacherous Mimer to the Dragon. (Norse version.)

8. How Siegfried fights with the Dragon, and bathes himself in his blood. (As in the *Thidrekssaga* and the *Nibelungenlied*.)

9. How Siegfried comes again to the Smithy, and settles accounts with Mimer. (Norse.)

10. Siegfried sees the great Dragon, and meets a King of the Dwarfs.

11. Siegfried's fight with the faithless Giants under the Drachenstein.

12. Of the great Wonders which Siegfried saw in the Dragon's Rock.

13. How Siegfried first sees the King's Daughter, and is received by her.

14. Siegfried's fight with the Dragon.

Adventures 10-14 are based on the *Hürnen Seyfrid*. In conclusion, it is remarked that the sequel is told in other songs and legends, the "Rose-garden of Worms" is mentioned, and some old Worms customs connected with the tradition are referred to.

We now come to a work which stands in the first rank of modern adaptations of the old sagas, William Morris's "The Story of Sigurd the Völsung, and the Fall of the Niblungs" (London, 1877; Kelmscott Press, 1898). Though the poem follows in general the Scandinavian version of the story, the influence of the Old German poem is noticeable in two ways. In the first place, as F. Hueffer pointed out in his review in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, xix. (N.S.) 46 ff., Morris's metre is practically that of the *Nibelungenlied*. Each line contains six stresses, after the third of which follows usually a syllable without stress, then the cæsura. As a rule the feet are iambic, but anapæsts are frequent, especially at the beginning of the line and after the cæsura. The rime, too, is masculine, but there is no division into strophes.

As regards the contents, Morris adhered for the most part more or less closely to the Norse tradition, but the influence of the *Nibelungenlied* is sometimes discernible in details as well as in one important motive. Gudrun does not warn her brothers of the intended treachery; on the contrary she is bent on avenging Sigurd's death, and with this end arouses Atli's desire for the Nibelungen

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Gustav Gruener's "The Nibelungenlied and Sage in Modern Poetry," *M.L.A.A.*, xi. 220 ff. Noticed on p. 112.

treasure. Among the lesser traces of the influence of the German poem are the constant use of the phrases, "the need of the Niblungs," and "The Niblungs' need" towards the end of the poem; the substitution of the *falcon* for the *hawk* in Gudrun's dream (p. 176); Hogni's advice to his comrades to throw out the corpses from the hall after the first conflict (p. 363); his ruse of allowing some of the Huns to enter, that they may be the more easily slain (p. 364); and the drinking of the blood of the slain (p. 366).

The third of these occurs in the following passage, as also an addition which seems to have been suggested by the *Nibelungenlied* scene where Volker plays the weary Burgundians to sleep (pp. 363 f.) :—

Then biddeth the heart-wise Hogni, and men to the windows  
climb,

And uplift the war-grey corpses, dead drift of the stormy time,  
And cast them adown to their people: thence they come aback  
and say

That scarce shall ye see the houses, and no whit the wheel-worn  
way

For the spears and shields of the Eastlands that the merchant  
city throng;

And back to the Niblung burg-gate the way seemed weary-long.

Yet passeth hour on hour, and the doors they watch and ward  
But a long while hear no mail-clash, nor the ringing of the sword;  
Then droop the Niblung children, and their wounds are waxen  
chill,

And they think of the Burg by the river, and the builded holy  
hill,

And their eyes are set on Gudrun as of men who would beseech;  
But unlearned are they in craving and know not dastard's speech.

Then doth Giuki's first-begotten a deed most fair to be told,

For his fair harp Gunnar taketh, and the warp of silver and gold;

With the hand of a cunning harper he dealeth with the strings,

And his voice in their midst goeth upward, as of ancient days

he sings

Of the days before the Niblungs, and the days that shall be yet;

Till the hour of toil and smiting the warrior hearts forget,

Nor hear the gathering foemen, nor the sound of swords aloof:

Then clear the song of Gunnar goes up to the dusky roof,

And the coming spear-host tarries, and the bearers of the woe

Through the cloisters of King Atli with lingering footsteps go.

Although "Sigurd the Völsung" is the only work by Morris in which the influence of the *Nibelungenlied* is strongly marked, he was acquainted with the old epic at least as early as 1856. In that year he contributed to the *Oxford and Cambridge Magazine* (started by himself and a few friends in January 1856, but discontinued after twelve months), a tale entitled, "The Hollow Land," and headed by a quotation from the *Nibelungenlied*.<sup>1</sup> It was probably due to Morris's influence that Burne-Jones, who was associated with him in bringing out the magazine referred to, painted in the same year "a city background to a picture of the *Nibelungenlied*."<sup>2</sup>

One book remains to be noticed: J. Baldwin's "The Story of Siegfried" (London, undated; acquired by the British Museum, 1883).

The materials for this story, told especially for young people, are gathered from nearly all the numerous versions of the saga. In some parts the *Nibelungenlied* is followed, in others the Eddas or the Völsungasaga, and occasionally the minor poems. Episodes from Teutonic mythology are also woven into the story, but the details are largely products of Baldwin's imagination.

The whole is divided into twenty "Adventures," of which the first eight (pp. 1-114) are chiefly concerned with Siegfried's early fortunes, *i.e.* those prior to the point at which the *Nibelungenlied* takes up the story. Adventure ix. relates "The Journey to Burgundy-Land," making Siegfried arrive there unawares, and contrary to his father's advice. Kriemhild's dream appears in x., but xi., "How the Spring-time came," contains the story of Idun and her apples. The remaining Adventures continue the story up to Siegfried's death, and the bringing of the Hoard to Burgundy. Interruptions occur, however, in xiii. (the story of Balder), xv. (containing "Alberich's Story"), and xvii. (the story of Loki). Apart from these digressions, the latter part of the book is based mainly on

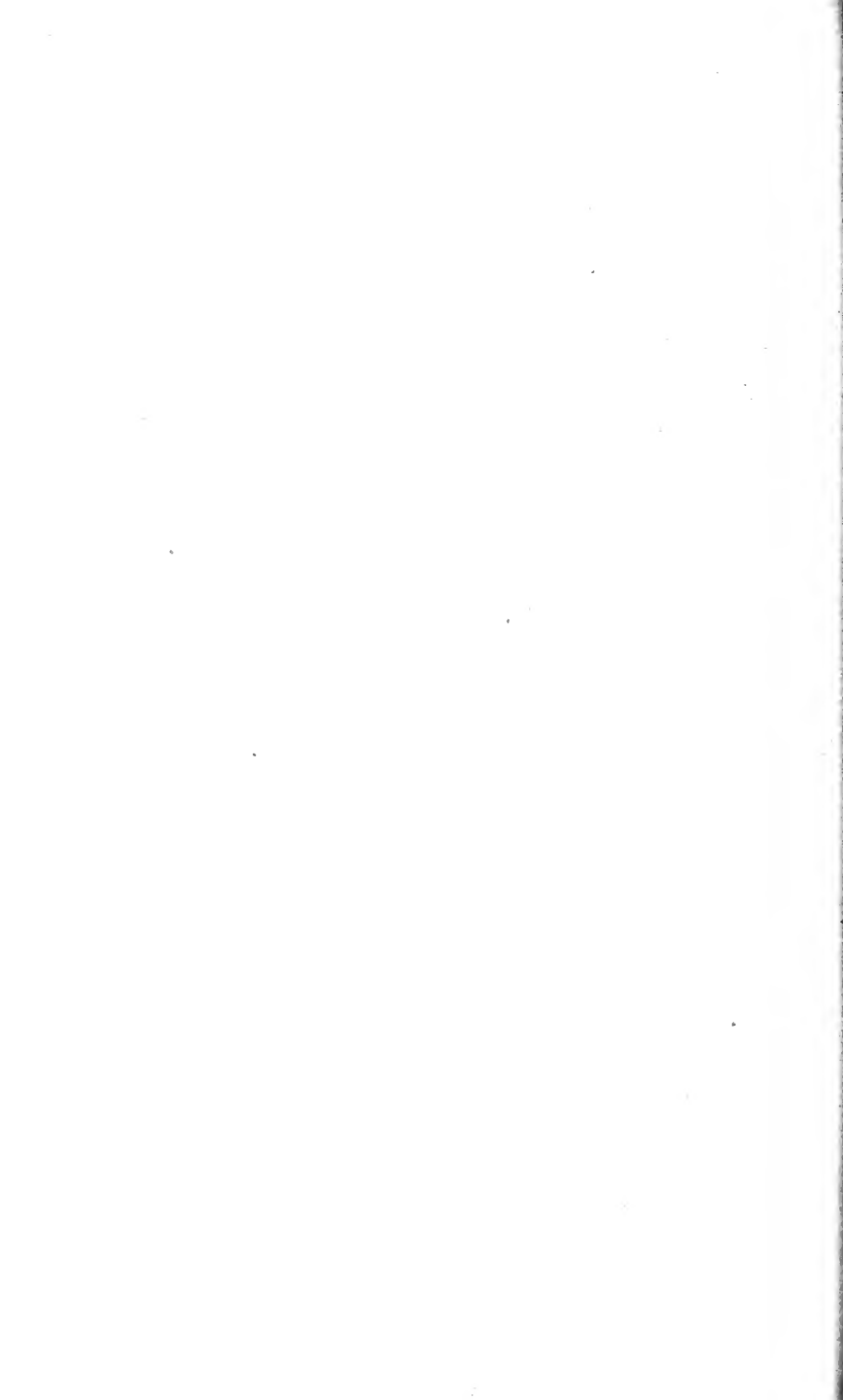
<sup>1</sup> M'Kail, "Life of W. Morris," vol. i. p. 98.

<sup>2</sup> Bell, "Edward Burne-Jones," p. 26.

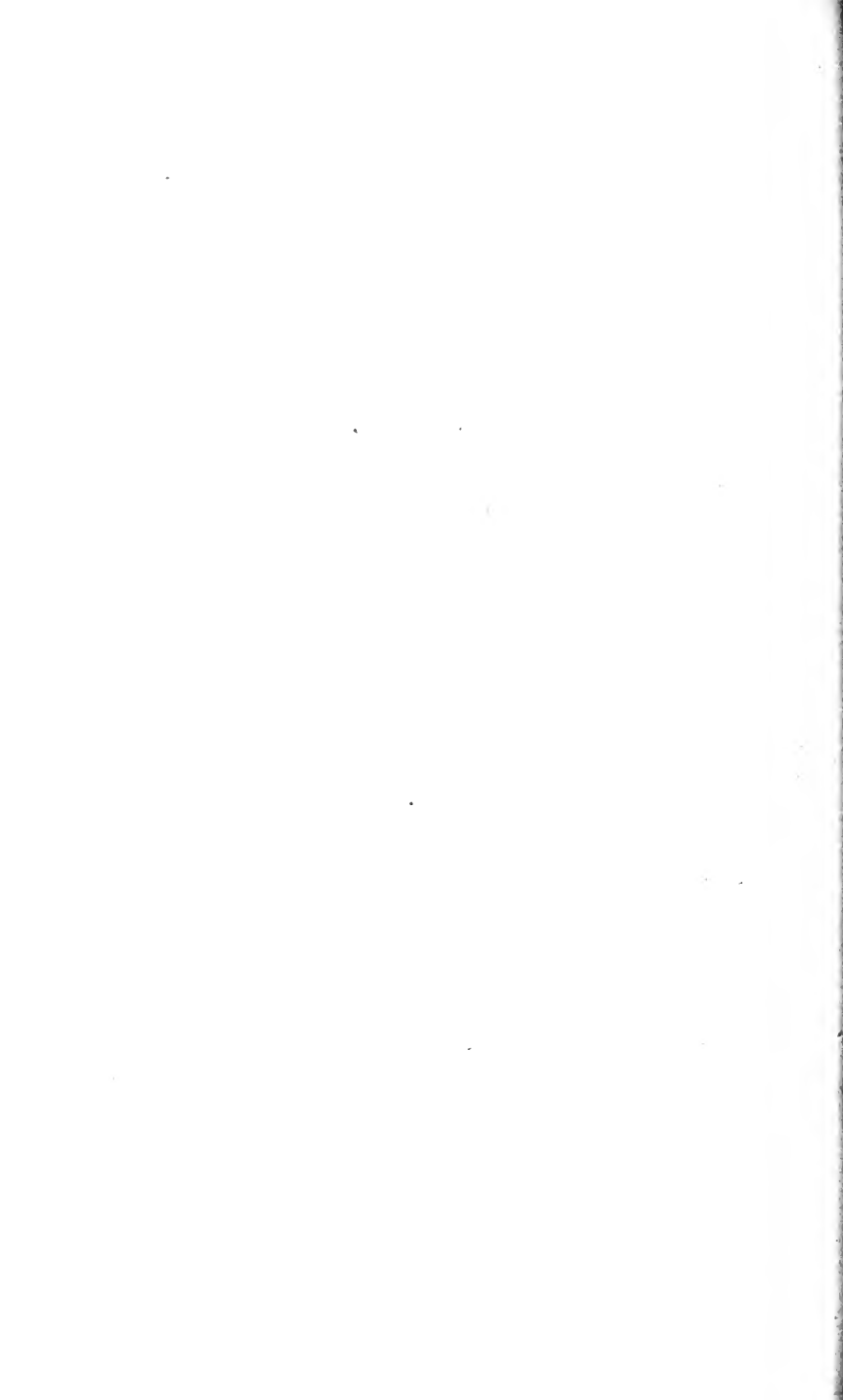


the *Nibelungenlied*. Some useful notes occupy pp. 294-306, with a number of quotations from and references to other works, among them: Carlyle's Essay, Morris's "Sigurd the Volsung," Weber's "Northern Antiquities," and the translations of Auber Forestier and Lettsom.

The tone of the book is thoroughly healthy and breezy, as well as imaginative and poetical. To the student it would be of little value, but it is eminently fitted for its purpose as a book for young people.



GUDRUN



# GUDRUN

## I. INTRODUCTORY

THE name *Gudrun* (*Kudrun*) has been given to an epic poem of which the latter portion only relates the fortunes of Gudrun, daughter of Hetel; but, since this latter portion comprises 1143 of a total of 1705 stanzas, it is easy to understand how the name of its heroine came to be applied to the whole poem. The oldest part, however, is certainly the Hilde saga, which immediately precedes that of Gudrun and occupies 359 stanzas, while the story of Hagen (1-203) is a comparatively recent addition. The following abstract of the poem will show the relation of the three parts to one another:—

1. *Hagen's Adventures*.—There dwelt in Ireland a mighty king named Sigeband, the son of Gêr and Ute. On the death of his father, Ute advised him to take a consort, and he accordingly wooed (by proxy) and won a Norwegian princess, Ute. She bore him a son, Hagen, who gave early promise of his later exploits; for at the age of seven he already showed a marked distaste for ladies' and a corresponding delight in men's society, and constantly begged for a helmet and coat-of-mail.

One day, as a tournament was being held, the pleasure of the assembled guests was brought to a sudden end; for, while all but the boy and his nurse were busy merry-making, a dark shadow fell upon them like that of a cloud, and an immense griffin swooped down. The nurse fled in terror, and the boy was carried off and mourned for as dead. The monster, however, instead of itself devouring Hagen, kept him as a dainty morsel for its young; but

the boy escaped and made his way to a cave where dwelt three princesses, who had had miraculous escapes similar to his own. Though at first afraid that he might be some savage dwarf or sea-sprite, they were soon reassured by his story, provided him with a repast of the roots and herbs which formed their only sustenance, and allowed him to share their place of refuge.

Soon afterwards a pilgrim ship was wrecked on the coast near by, and Hagen secured the armour and weapons of one of the corpses. But before he could get back to the cave the griffins were upon him and a desperate struggle ensued. Hagen, of course, slew them all, so that from that time he and the maidens could walk abroad in safety.

After some years it was decided to set off together for the coast in the hope of being taken up by some passing vessel; and this good fortune soon befell them. The first requisite for the ladies was, of course, decent clothing, and the second, good food; after the provision of which they deigned to disclose their identity to the master of the vessel. One was Hilde of India, the second Hildeburg of Portugal, and the third a princess from Îserland. But when Hagen in his turn declared his name and parentage, the master announced that he was at feud with Sigeband and would now hold the youth as a hostage. Hagen, however, boldly refused to submit to this treatment, whereupon the crew were ordered to attack and bind him; but he quickly turned the tables on his would-be captor by flinging thirty of his assailants overboard, and compelling the remainder to steer towards Ireland.

On their arrival, Ute immediately recognised her long-lost son, and, after a touching display of parental joy, graciously welcomed the princesses, one of whom, the beautiful Hilde of India, ultimately became Hagen's wife.

Sigeband abdicated soon after in favour of his son, and the latter became renowned for the justice and energy of his rule. Every year he beheaded some eighty transgressors of the law; to the poor he was considerate, but

his enemies and the arrogant went in such terror of him that he won for himself the name of "The devil of all kings" (*Válant aller kúnege*). To fill the cup of his happiness, there was born to him a daughter, Hilde, who grew to such beauty that her fame went about into all lands. But all suitors for her hand were disdainfully rejected, for Hagen was determined that she should be given to none less powerful than himself.

2. *The Hilde Saga*.—In Ortland (Jutland), the land of the Hegelings, there dwelt a powerful young monarch, Hetel, who determined to propose for the hand of the lovely Hilde. When Horand of Denmark informed him that all ambassadors sent on this errand were either put to the sword or hanged, Hetel only grew the more eager, and straightway sent for his uncle Wate, whose assistance was considered indispensable. Wate, however, bursts out angrily: "Whoever has suggested me for this duty would not be sorry to see me dead. I have Horand and Frute to thank for this; but they must share the task with me." Then, seeing them, he advances with the sarcastic greeting: "May God reward you both for being so careful of my honour!" Horand pacifies him by the reply that he is always ready to go where he can serve fair ladies, and the three warriors lose no time in planning and preparing for their enterprise. A fine vessel, decked over to conceal a strong force of fighting men, is soon made seaworthy and laden with weapons and rich clothing; every detail is carefully attended to, and they set sail for Ireland.

Quickly carried by a favourable wind to their destination, they announce themselves as merchants and request a safe-conduct, which is readily granted. As a preliminary to cordial relations, a present of costly jewels is sent to Hagen, but so out of proportion does the gift seem that he inquires somewhat suspiciously whence they come. Horand, pretending to cast himself on the king's mercy, now professes that they are exiled princes, expelled by Hetel, lord of the Hegelings. As this explanation agrees with their martial bearing, Hagen offers them his protection;

the goods are got ashore, and the generous strangers rapidly attain popularity.

One evening Horand charms the assembled court with his sweet singing (ed. Martin,<sup>1</sup> st. 372-374, 383, 384, 389):—

Daz kam an einen âbent daz in sô gelanc,  
daz von Tenemarke der küene degen sanc  
mit sô hêrlîcher stimme, daz ez wol gevallen  
muose al den liuten. dâ von gesweic der vogellîne schallen.

Daz hôrte der künic gerne und alle sîne man,  
dâ von von Tenen Hôrant der vriunde vil gewan.  
ouch hete ez wol gehœret diu alte küniginne.  
ez erhal ir durch daz venster, dâ si was gesezzen an der zinne.

Dô sprach diu schœne Hilde “waz hân ich vernomen?  
diu aller beste wîse ist in mîn ôren komen,  
die ich ze dirre welte von ieman hân ervunden.  
daz wolte got von himele, daz si mine kamerære kunden.”

Dô sprâchen Hagenen helde “herre, lât vernemen.  
nieman lebet sô siecher, im möhte wol gezemen  
hœren sîne stimme, diu gêt ûz sînem munde.”  
“daz wolte got von himele,” sprach der künec, “daz ich si  
selbe kunde.”

Dô er drî dœne sunder vol gesanc,  
alle, die ez hôrten, dûhte ez niht sô lanc.  
si hætens niht geachtet einer hende wîle,  
obe er solte singen, daz einer möhte rîten tûsent mîle.

Diu tier in dem walde ir weide liezen stên.  
die wûrme, die dâ solten in dem grase gên,  
die vische, die dâ solten in dem wâge vliezen,  
die liezen ir geverte. jâ kunde er sîner vuoge wol geniezen.<sup>2</sup>

The princess Hilde was so charmed by the singing that she persuaded Horand to visit her secretly and sing

<sup>1</sup> Ernst Martin, *Kudrun* (Halle, 1883). Professor Martin has also published the poem in an annotated edition, *Kudrun* (Halle, 1872, <sup>2</sup>1902).

<sup>2</sup> It happened one evening that they had the good fortune to hear the bold warrior from Denmark sing, and that with so beautiful a voice that every one was delighted. His singing silenced the warbling of the birds. The King and all his men were charmed, and Horand won many friends. Nor did the Queen fail to hear; the sweet strains were carried up through a window to where she sat by the battlements. Then said fair Hilde,



specially for her. This was precisely the opportunity for which he had been longing; he tells her in confidence that they are not really exiles, but have been sent by their lord, Hetel, to woo her, and pleads his prince's cause so well that she expresses her willingness to accept him.

The Danes now devise a plan for carrying off Hilde, and a few days later ride to court to take leave of their host. His expressions of surprise and disappointment they meet with the story that a messenger has come from Hetel offering pardon and peace, and that they are anxious to return to their friends and kinsfolk. Hagen offers the usual parting gifts; but they reply that they are too rich to accept them, and beg him instead to visit their vessel, with his wife and daughter, to inspect their treasures. The next morning, therefore, the King and his court come down to the strand and board the ship. Jewels, fine clothes, and weapons are freely displayed and admired, but in the pressing and crowding the princess is enticed away from her mother. Then suddenly the concealed warriors pour out from their hiding-place and drive all but Hilde and her maid Hildeburg from the vessel; the sails are unfurled, and the strangers make off with their prize.

Hagen promptly took measures for pursuit; but the wily Danes had scuttled his ships, and thus secured a week's start. They arrived safely in Wåleis (probably on the coast of the Netherlands), were met there by Hetel, and rested there after the fatigue of the voyage. But one evening a fleet appeared on the horizon, and they had hardly time to prepare for the fray before Hagen and his

“What do I hear? The most lovely melody of all I ever heard has sounded in my ears. Would to God in Heaven that my chamberlains could sing it.” . . . And Hagen's knights spoke: “My lord, let him be heard. There is no one so ill that he might not well listen to his voice.” “Would to God in Heaven,” said the King, “that I could sing this melody.”

He sang three complete songs, but none of those who heard him had noticed how much time had passed. They would not have thought it more than a moment if he had sung till a man might have ridden a thousand miles. . . . The animals in the forest ceased their eating. The insects no longer crawled through the grass; the fishes no longer swam about in the waters. In truth he could make good use of his skill.

followers were upon them. A fierce battle ensues, in the course of which Hagen and Hetel engage in single combat, while Hilde looks on in suspense. Hetel is wounded, but Wate attacks Hagen and deals him such a blow that he all but succumbs; whereupon Hilde calls upon her future lord to save her father. He immediately announces a truce; the combatants separate, and Wate, who is skilled in herbs, attends to the wounded, refusing, however, to treat Hagen until he has made peace with Hetel. To do this he was soon persuaded by the affection he bore his daughter, whom he even accompanied to Hetel's capital in order to assist at the marriage ceremony. There the magnificence and power of the King of the Hegelings made such a favourable impression on him that on his return he told his Queen: "If I had more daughters I would send them all to the Hegelings."

3. *The Story of Gudrun.*—In course of time, Hilde gave birth to twins, a boy named Ortwin, and a girl, Gudrun. The latter bloomed into loveliness exceeding even that of her mother, but all the numerous suitors for her hand were rejected by Hetel, not excepting even Siegfried (Sîvrit) of Moorland, who vowed he would avenge the insult.

Hartmut of Normandy, too, heard tell of Gudrun's charms, and his mother, Gerlind, counselled him to try his fortune. Hetel, however, refused him as he had done all previous suitors on the ground that he held lands from his father-in-law, Hagen. A visit paid by Hartmut himself, *incognito*, failed to produce any better result; the princess, indeed, found his appearance all that could be desired, but showed him no more favour than to advise him to return home before his identity was discovered.

The next suitor was a neighbouring prince, Herwig of Zealand (in the Netherlands). Rejected like the rest, he declares that he will return at the head of an army to win his bride; but the threat does not disturb Hetel, who looks down upon him as a comparatively petty ruler. Early one morning, however, the Zealanders, with Herwig

at their head, appear before Hetel's castle. Hasty preparations for defence are made, while Hetel sallies out with part of his forces to meet the invaders; but Gudrun soon sees the defenders pressed back and her father engaged in single combat with the gallant young prince. She scarcely knows which of the two she would rather see victorious, for her natural affection on the one hand is counterbalanced by a growing interest on the other; so she calls upon them to make a truce for her sake, that she may inquire into Herwig's descent. After removing his armour and making himself presentable, the young man is brought before Hilde and Gudrun, and the latter declares she will become his. In consideration of his valour, Hetel gives his consent, but stipulates that the marriage shall not take place for a year. Meanwhile the young people are betrothed, and Herwig returns to Zealand.

As soon as this news reached Siegfried of Moorland, he promptly got together an immense army, invaded Zealand, devastated the country with fire and sword, and besieged Herwig in his fortress. The latter, however, managed to send an appeal for help to Hetel, who lost no time in summoning his vassals and marching to the assistance of his prospective son-in-law. Siegfried was now in his turn hard pressed, driven to the sea-coast, and besieged by the combined forces of his opponents.

Hearing of the defenceless state of the land of the Hegelings, Hartmut determined to make a sudden descent and carry off Gudrun. Ten thousand men were collected, and with this army he and Ludwig unexpectedly appeared before Matelane, Hetel's capital. Hartmut's demand that Gudrun should go with him to Normandy and become his wife met with a defiant refusal; whereupon he advanced to the attack, the Hegelings, though vastly inferior in numbers, foolishly meeting their assailants outside the gates. In spite of a brave resistance they were driven back; the castle was taken, and Gudrun was carried off, together with sixty-two of her attendants.

Such were the tidings that the messengers of Hilde speedily brought to Hetel's camp. By Hagen's advice the King and Herwig hastened to offer generous terms to Siegfried of Moorland, who, having no alternative but surrender or death, was only too glad to accept. Peace was concluded, and Siegfried was so touched by the generosity of his former foes, that on learning the calamity which had befallen them, he immediately offered his assistance. Then, that not a moment of precious time might be lost, some vessels belonging to a party of pilgrims were commandeered, and the pursuit of the Normans began. The latter, meanwhile, unaware of any necessity for haste, were resting on the Wülpensand (an island at the mouth of the Scheldt), a delay which all but cost them the fruits of their enterprise (st. 853-855, 858-861):

Dô sach der marnære ûf den ûnden wagen  
 ein schif mit rîchen segelen. dem kûnege hiez erz sagen.  
 dô daz gesach her Hartmuot und ouch al die sîne  
 (in den segelen wâren kriuze), si jâhen ez waren pilgerîne.

Schiere sâhens vliezen drî kiele guot  
 und niun kocken rîche. die truogen ûf der vluot  
 manegen, der selten truoc durch die gotes êre  
 daz criuze: des engelten muosen die ûz Ormanîe sêre.

Si kâmen in sô nâhen daz man die helme sach  
 ab den schiffen schînen. sich huop ir ungemach  
 unde ir schade sêre Ludwîgen und den sînen.  
 "wol ûf!" sprach dô Hartmuot, "hie koment die grimmen  
 widerwarten mîne."

Lûte ruoft dô Ludewîc an alle sîne man  
 "ez was gar ein kintspil swes ich ie began:  
 nû muoz ich aller êrste mit guoten helden strîten.  
 ich gerîche immer der ir under mînem vanen getar erbîten."

Hartmuotes zeichen truoc man ûf den sant.  
 diu schif sô nâhen wâren, daz sis mit der hant  
 mit scheften mohten langen bî in an dem grieze.  
 ich wæn her Wate der alte sînen schilt dâ niht mûezic  
 lieze

Sô rehte grimmicliche werte man nie ein lant.  
 die von Hegelingen drungen ûf den sant.  
 mit speren und mit swerten stritens alsô sêre.  
 einander si dô werten, daz si des koufes sit niht gerten mêre.

Si wâren allenthalben an daz stat gestân.  
 nâch winden von den alben sach man nie snê gân  
 sô dicke sô dô dræten die schüzze von den henden.  
 ob siz nû gerne tæten, sô mohte den schaden nieman wol  
 erwenden.<sup>1</sup>

The battle raged fiercely till nightfall, when it became impossible to distinguish friend from foe. Though the Hegelings had lost their King Hetel, they had effected a landing; and now both armies bivouacked in sight of each other's watch-fires. In the darkness of the night, however, the Normans contrived to slip away to their ships; only when morning broke did their enemies discover their flight. Further pursuit was useless, so they first buried all the corpses; then, fearing that their want of success had been due to the lawless requisitioning of the pilgrims' ships, founded a monastery on the spot as an act of atonement.

Crestfallen, and expecting but a poor welcome, Wate

<sup>1</sup> Then the captain (of the Norman fleet) saw a vessel with large sails riding on the waves, and sent word to the King. But when Hartmut and his followers saw it, they declared that the men on board were pilgrims, for upon the sails were crosses. Soon they saw sailing towards them three good longships, and nine fine barques (the exact meanings of *kiel* and *kocke* are uncertain; the former probably designated a larger, the latter a smaller but more broadly built type of vessel). These carried on the sea many a man who had never donned the cross to the glory of God; for that the Normans had to pay dearly. They came so close that the glitter of helmets could be seen in the ships; danger and hurt were at hand for Ludwig and his men. "To arms!" cried Hartmut then, "here come my fierce enemies." Thereupon Ludwig called loudly to all his men, "Whatever I have gone through before this was mere child's play; now for the first time I must fight with warriors worthy the name. I will ever reward those who dare to stand by my flag." Hartmut's ensign was carried to the shore. The ships were so near that they could touch them from the beach with the spears they held in their hands. Old Sir Wate, I ween, did not let his shield lie idle then. With such fierceness was a shore never defended; but the Hegelings pressed on to the beach, so valiantly did they fight with spear and sword. Both parties then gave and took in such a manner that they wished for no more such dealing afterwards. All along the shore they were ranged. Snow after mountain winds was never seen to fall so thickly as the javelins sped from their hands. Even had he wished to, no one could have prevented the injury done there.

and his comrades returned to Queen Hilde, and the whole country was soon filled with weeping and lamentation. But the old veteran knew how best to administer comfort. "When our boys and youths are become men," he says, "we will repay Ludwig and Hartmut." Buoyed up by these thoughts of revenge the surviving warriors return to their homes, and the poem follows the fortunes of the captive Gudrun during the time of waiting.

The Normans reached home without further misadventure, but Gudrun's determination to be true to Herwig was proof against entreaties, arguments, and threats. She was therefore handed over to the supervision of Gerlind, who, in spite of Hartmut's request that she should be well treated, did not hesitate to exact from her and her maids all sorts of menial duties. But they bore these indignities uncomplainingly, and Gudrun rejected all her suitor's repeated offers to make her Queen of Normandy; nor could Hartmut's sister Ortrun, between whom and the captive princess a warm friendship sprang up, shake her resolution. At last Gerlind conceived an idea for still further adding to Gudrun's hardships, and forced her and Hildeburg, who voluntarily shared her task, to spend their days in all weathers, year in, year out, in washing linen on the sea-shore.

After the battle on the Wülpensand thirteen years had passed before the Hegelings felt themselves strong enough to attack the Normans in their own country. Then, at last, Wate, Ortwin, and Herwig collected a great army and set sail. After a somewhat stormy voyage, and a narrow escape from shipwreck on a magnetic mountain, they sighted the Norman coast. Unobserved they landed at a point not far distant from Ludwig's castle, and Ortwin set off with Herwig to reconnoitre and, if possible, obtain news of Gudrun.

She, meanwhile, had been told of the approach of help by an angel, which appeared to her in the shape of a swan, and on the following day the two women saw gliding towards them a small boat, in which were two men. In spite

of their joy a sudden sense of shame at their occupation and mean dress impelled them to leave the linen and take to flight, but the strangers, mistaking them for washerwomen, shouted a greeting, and persuaded them to remain. In reply to their questions, the women informed them that the lords of the country, Ludwig and Hartmut, were within the castle, where they kept a garrison of four thousand men ; that long ago some captive maidens were in truth brought from over the seas, and had since then suffered great hardships. Suddenly Herwig, who had been observing Gudrun attentively, said to his companion, "Look, Sir Ortwin! If your sister, Gudrun, still lives, this is surely she. I never saw any one so like her." "Whatever your name may be," Gudrun replied, "you are very like some one I have known, Herwig of Zealand. Were he still alive, he would release us from our captivity." Whereupon they showed each other their betrothal rings and fell into one another's arms. The first impulse of Herwig and Ortwin was to carry off the two women at once ; but honour forbade them to steal back what their foes had taken by force, and they feared the disappearance of Gudrun and Hildeburg might alarm the Normans and result in their failure to release the remaining captives. Assuring the women, therefore, that they would be outside the castle at dawn with eighty thousand warriors, they bade them keep secret their arrival and be of good courage.

When the two men had gone Gudrun scornfully threw her portion of the washing into the sea, and returned home empty-handed. To the "she-wolf" Gerlind's angry questions she calmly replied that finding them too heavy she had left the clothes by the shore, and that whether they were lost or not was of no consequence to her. Thoroughly exasperated, Gerlind was about to inflict the severe punishment of a sound thrashing, when the princess declared that she had at last made up her mind to marry Hartmut, and would certainly avenge any such indignity after becoming his queen. The love-sick prince could at first hardly believe this news, but when a second

messenger confirmed it, he sprang up joyfully to go to his bride, little thinking that he was merely the victim of a woman's wiles. For the present, she tells him, he must refrain from all caresses; it would ill become him to be seen fondling a washerwoman. So he withdraws to a more respectful distance, and asks what can be done for her pleasure or comfort. First, let her maidens be brought to her, she requests, then let them all have the luxury of a bath, and be clad once more in proper raiment. Her orders shall be obeyed, he replies, and leaves her to prepare for the wedding. Gudrun and her companions are quickly surrounded by attendants eager to curry favour, and it is not till night that the princess ventures to explain to the rest the real reason for her apparent change of front.

At dawn the next morning one of the maidens awakened her mistress with the welcome news that the gleam of helmets and shields could be seen from the window, and at the same moment the watchman's alarm sounded from the battlements. In the desperate struggle that ensued no amount of valour on the part of the Normans could counterbalance the numerical superiority of their foes; Ludwig and most of his men were slain, and Hartmut was in imminent danger of meeting a like fate at the hands of Wate, when Ortrun prevailed on Gudrun to intercede for his life. Mindful of Ortrun's kindness in her time of distress, she stepped to the battlements and begged Herwig for her sake to separate the combatants. He gallantly promised to fulfil her behest, but the attempt to interfere with Wate, when once his wild ferocity was aroused, was dangerous; the old warrior deals him a blow that stretches him on the ground, and he has to be helped away by his followers, while Hartmut is taken prisoner.

The rest of the Normans outside the walls were soon accounted for, after which the castle was stormed and pillaged, Wate still showing the greatest ferocity and ruthlessly putting to the sword even women and children.



Ortrun was bidden by Gudrun to hide among her attendants, and the terrified Gerlind did not hesitate to abase herself before the woman she had treated so cruelly (st. 1508-1511, 1519-1522):—

Dô kam ouch dar gegâhet diu übele Gêrlint.  
 diu bôt sich vür eigen vür daz Hilden kint.  
 “nû ner uns, küniginne, vor Waten und sînen mannen.  
 ez enstê an dir al eine, ich wæne ez sî umbe mich ergangen.”

Dô sprach diu Hilden tochter “nû hære ich iuch gern,  
 daz ich iu sî genædic. wie möhte ich iuch gewern?  
 ich bat iuch nie zer werlde des ir mir woltet volgen.  
 ir wâret mir ungnædic: des muoz ich iu von herzen sîn  
 erbolgen.”

Dô wart ir Wate der alte in der zît gewar.  
 mit grisgramenden zenden ze hant huop er sich dar,  
 mit schînenden ougen, mit ellenbreitem barte.  
 alle die dâ wâren, vorhten den helt von den Stürmen harte.

Mit bluote er was berunnen, naz was sîn wât.  
 swie gerne in sæhe Kûdrûn, doch hæte si des rât,  
 daz er sô tobeliche gegen ir iht gienge.  
 jâ wæne ich ir deheiniu vor vorhte in iht minnecliche  
 enphienge.

Wate grimliche gienc hin vür den sal.  
 er sprach “mîn vrou Kûdrûn, gebt mir her ze tal  
 Gêrlint mit ir vriunden, die iuch der wesche nôten,  
 und der selben künne, die uns dâ heime manegen recken  
 tôten.”

Dô sprach diu minnicliche “der ist deheiniu hie.”  
 Wate in sînem zorne dô dar nâher gie.  
 er sprach “welt ir niht balde mir die rechten zeigen,  
 die vremederf zuo den vriunden müezen alle wesen hie die  
 veigen.”

Er zurnte harte sêre: des wurden si gewar.  
 im winkte ein maget schône mit den ougen dar.  
 dâ von er bekante die übelen tiuvelinne.  
 “saget mir, vrou Gêrlint, wellet ir der weschen mâr gewinnen?”

Er viene si bî der hende und zôch si von in dan.  
 Gêrlint diu übele trûren dô began,  
 er sprach in tobeheite "kûniginne hêre,  
 iu sol mîn junevrouwe iuwer kleider waschen nimmer mere."<sup>1</sup>

Outside the room, he seizes her by the hair and strikes off her head.

Messengers were now despatched to inform Hilde of the successful issue of the enterprise, and the victorious army soon followed, bringing home the rescued ladies and the few prisoners whose lives had been spared. Gudrun and Herwig celebrated their long-deferred nuptials, and all the old feuds were ended by the marriage of Hartmut to Hildeburg (still the lovely maiden of three generations earlier), Ortwin to Ortrun, and Siegfried to a sister of Herwig.

Of these three parts, the youngest is clearly the first, the story of Hagen's youth. Quite unnecessary to a proper understanding of what follows, and strongly influenced by oriental and mediæval stories and legends, it must be looked on as a comparatively modern addition without value for the study of the saga proper. The

<sup>1</sup> Then the evil Gerlind, too, came hurrying thither, and at the feet of Hilde's daughter asked to be accepted as a slave. "Save us, princess, from Wate and his men; except you have mercy, I must perish, I ween." Then spoke Hilde's daughter, "I now hear *you* begging *me* to be gracious. How should I grant your request? I never asked anything of you that you did not refuse. You were ungracious to me, and for that I must ever bear you hate." At that moment old Wate noticed them. Gnashing his teeth he approached, with flaming eyes and ell-wide beard. All of them were in terror of the hero from Stürmen. He was streaming with blood, and his garments were wet. However much Gudrun had desired to see him, she by no means wished to meet him in such fury. I ween, in truth, that none of the ladies received him very courteously, such was their terror. Angrily Wate came to the entrance of the room, and said, "My lady Gudrun, hand over to me Gerlind and her friends, who forced you to wash, and the kinsfolk of those who slew so many of our warriors at home yonder." The fair maiden answered, "There are none of them here." In his rage Wate went nearer and said, "Except you quickly show me the fight ones, friends and enemies alike must all die." They saw that he was furious, and one of the lovely maids gave a sign by which he recognised the wicked she-devil. "Tell me, Lady Gerlind," he sneered, "are you in want of more washerwomen?" He seized her by the hand, and dragged her away, and the evil Gerlind's heart misgave her. With fury he cried, "Honoured Queen, my princess shall never more wash clothes for you."

stories of Hilde and Gudrun, on the other hand, are evidently variations of one original story of abduction, but the dependence of the latter on the former points to its later origin, and this assumption is confirmed by comparison with other versions of the saga.

The various versions may be classified (B. Symons, *P.G.*, iii. 709 *ff.*) as Scandinavian and non-Scandinavian. Of the former the most important is Snorri's account in the prose Edda, in which he probably follows ancient songs no longer extant. He tells how Hildir (Hilde), the daughter of Högni (Hagen), is carried off in her father's absence by Heðinn (Hetel),<sup>1</sup> son of Hjarrandi (Horand).<sup>2</sup> Högni pursues the fugitives and overtakes them on the island of Haey, one of the Orkneys. In vain does Heðinn send Hildir to her father with the gift of a necklace; the relentless Högni refuses to be reconciled, for he has already drawn his sword, which must deal a death-blow before being sheathed. The two kings and their men engage in battle till nightfall, when the survivors return to their vessels. But in the night Hildir, versed in magic, wakes the dead, who have turned to stone; the fight of the Hjaðnings (Hetelings)<sup>3</sup> is renewed daily and will go on till the Twilight of the Gods.<sup>4</sup>

Such is, practically, the original Hilde saga, developed from some nature myth, perhaps a reflex of the never-ending struggle of the opposing forces of Nature, as Müllenhoff thought, or possibly a poetic attempt to account for the Aurora Borealis, as Martin suggests.

Of less importance are the versions in the *Sörlaþattr*,

<sup>1</sup> *Heðinn* corresponds to A.S. *Heoden*, M.H.G. *Hetele* (with the diminutive suffix *-el*).

<sup>2</sup> *Cf.* p. 156.

<sup>3</sup> The *Hjaðningar* are in A.S. *Heodeningas*. In M.H.G. the form *Hegelinge* has ousted an older *\*Hetelinge*, *\*Heteninge*. (*Cf.* Note 1, above.)

<sup>4</sup> The fragmentary *Ragnarsdrapa* of Bragi, a few strophes of which are quoted by Snorri, testifies to a form of the saga according to which Hildir of set purpose prevented reconciliation. Delighting in battle she brings about the conflict and wakes the dead that it may be renewed. From this the inference may be drawn that she was originally, like Brünhild, a Valkyrie.

an Icelandic saga of the fourteenth century, in which the fight takes place by night, and in the Danish History of Saxo Grammaticus, who wrote about 1200 A.D., and whose account agrees in the main with Snorri's. Other traces of the saga in Norse, Swedish, and Danish are cited by Symons (*P.G.*, iii. 710), but are not worth noticing here.

Among the non-Scandinavian sources the most important is *Gudrun*, with its two versions.

In the story of Hilde the names of the chief characters are retained, but there are many divergences from the original saga. Especially noteworthy are the introduction of Wate, the presence, but helplessness, of Hagen when Hilde is carried off, the commencement of the battle without preliminary negotiations, and the final reconciliation.

In the Gudrun story we find a further development. The names are necessarily changed; the lover is Hartmut, the heroine Gudrun, the father Hetel. But a feature of the original saga reappears in the abduction of Gudrun during her father's absence, and the *two* battles perhaps point to a faint remembrance of the originally endless fighting. On the other hand, a new departure appears in Gudrun's abduction against her will, and with this must be connected the contamination with the Herwig saga, so called from the name of Gudrun's betrothed. In its simple form, recognisable in the ballad of Hiluge and Hildina from the Shetlands, this is the story of a hero who wins in battle the hand of a king's daughter; before the marriage she is carried off by a rival, whom the hero pursues, overtakes, and slays. In our poem Herwig slays not his rival Hartmut, but his rival's father Ludwig, after accusing *him* (st. 1434, 1435) of stealing his bride; probably Hartmut and Ludwig together represent the original rival, a conjecture which finds support in the substitution of Hartmut for Ludwig in st. 1405.

*Gudrun* was for long looked on as containing the only German version of the Hilde saga, but its existence in Germany at an earlier period, and in a different form, is proved by an important reference in *Lainprecht's*

*Alexanderlied* (written about 1130 A.D.) where Hagen, Hilde's father, is spoken of as slain by Wate. Features of the Hilde saga recur also in the Herborg saga (represented in *Biterolf* as well as in Norse literature), and in the legends of King Rother of Apulia and King Oswald of Northumbria. The few references in Anglo-Saxon literature will be dealt with in Section V.

An attempt has recently been made by F. Panzer in his *Hilde-Gudrun* (Halle, 1901) to derive the Hilde saga, the Herwig saga, and the Herborg saga from a simple story, named by him the *Goldenermärchen* after a Tyrolese variant; that his position is by no means unassailable is shown, however, by Symons in his review (*Literaturblatt für germ. und rom. Phil.*, 1902, 324 ff.).<sup>1</sup> Though these sagas have many features in common, we have not sufficient grounds for referring them to a common origin.

The most important of them, the Hilde saga, was at a very early date the common property of all Germanic peoples living on the shores of the North Sea, but among which of them it first attained epic form is uncertain. The earliest reference to it, in the Anglo-Saxon poem of *Widsið*, shows its existence in England in the seventh century, but its development into the form in which it appears in *Gudrun* must have taken place in the Netherlands, as is shown by the localisation of the great battle on the Wülpenwerder at the mouth of the Scheldt. From internal evidence we can also form some idea of when the saga assumed epic form. The whole atmosphere of the poem is that of the Viking period, and the latter part of the ninth century is pointed to by the wide extent of Hetel's dominions, which included Denmark, Holstein, Friesland, Livonia, Ditmarsen, and Wales (?).

In the story of Hilde as told in *Gudrun* two important divergences from the original saga are seen in the rôle played by Horand and in the introduction of Wate.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. also detailed review by R. Much in *Herrig's Archiv*, cviii., pp. 395-416.

In the Norse account Hjarrandi<sup>1</sup> is simply the father of Heðin; in *Gudrun* Horand is, indeed, Hetel's kinsman, but his importance is due entirely to his skill in song. No doubt his exact relationship was slowly lost sight of when his fame as a singer became his chief characteristic. That this change took place early in the history of the saga is shown by the reference in "Deor's Lament" (*cf.* Section V.), where the relationship of Heorrenda the singer to the former protector of Deor seems to be quite forgotten.

Very early, too, must have been the introduction of Wate. That he is mentioned in *Widsið* immediately after Hagen and Heoden, though unfortunately not enough to prove his connection with the Hilde saga for the seventh century, at least suggests the possibility. The earliest certain reference is in the passage of Lamprecht's *Alexanderlied* mentioned above. Fruote of Denmark was probably introduced at a later period by some wandering minstrel; he was proverbial for his generosity and is mentioned in other M.H.G. poems.

The development of the story of Gudrun as a continuation of that of Hilde apparently took place among the Frisians. Evidence of this is found both in the localisation of the story and in the name of the heroine. Originally \**Gunþrân*, it would become in the Frisian and Saxon dialects \**Gûþrân*, *n* disappearing before a spirant and the preceding vowel being lengthened. On High German soil this became quite regularly \**Kûdrân*, and later in Austria *Chautrun*, *Chaudrun*, the forms found in the MS. The remarkable fact that the *Thidrekssaga* contains no trace of the Gudrun story makes it probable that it developed among the Frisians rather than among the Saxons.

The main divergences of the Gudrun story from that of Hilde are due to its combination with the Herwig saga, as has already been noticed; but new characters and motives have also been introduced. Of the former the

<sup>1</sup> The German form *Hôrant* is not the precise etymological equivalent of *Hjarrandi*, but seems to have ousted a form *Herrant* found in Bavaria as early as the eleventh century.

most important is Siegfried of Moorland, probably the Danish king of the same name slain in battle with the Frisians in 887; as a heathen he is made ruler of the Moors in our poem, just as the heathen Normans appear in mediæval literature as Saracens. Among the new motives Gudrun's long captivity, during which she is forced to perform menial duties by the evil Gerlind, is worthy of notice as a probable variant of the widespread Cinderella story.

The combined stories of Hilde and Gudrun apparently reached Upper Germany as early as the tenth century,<sup>1</sup> after which they underwent further modifications, consisting chiefly in the addition of the story of Hagen's youth, of the reconciliation and quadruple marriage at the close, and of a number of interpolations, until at last the form in which we have the poem was attained.

The many inconsistencies in *Gudrun*, the numerous Nibelungen strophes, and the unsuitability of the beginning and end to the main body of the poem, have led to various attempts to separate out the genuine parts from the rest. K. Müllenhoff followed in the introduction to his edition (*Kudrun, die echten Teile des Gedichts*: Kiel, 1845) the example set by Lachmann's investigation of the *Nibelungenlied*, and rejected as spurious no less than 1290 of the 1705 strophes. The remainder he divided into two parts, "Hilde" and "Kudrun," each further divisible into originally independent lays. The whole of the genuine nucleus was, he considered, the work of one poet, who had not, however, intended to compose a continuous epic. Müllenhoff's views are still held, with a few divergences on minor points, by Martin, in whose edition (Halle, 1872; <sup>2</sup> 1902) the "genuine" strophes are separately numbered.

A quite different theory was brought forward by W. Wilmanns (*Entwicklung der Kudrundichtung*: Halle, 1873) who decided that there were originally at least two

<sup>1</sup> The names Guterun, Chutrun, appear in Upper Germany in the tenth and become more frequent in the following centuries.

versions of *Gudrun* in Gudrun strophes. This theory did not find many adherents, but his division of the contents into the three sagas of Hilde, Herwig, and Gudrun, has been generally accepted.

In 1890 E. Kettner, a moderate partisan of the Müllenhoff-Martin school (opposition to which had been meanwhile becoming stronger) investigated the influence of the *Nibelungenlied* on *Gudrun* (*Z.f.d.Ph.*, xxiii. 145 ff.) and came to the conclusion that most of the "spurious" strophes are the work of one redactor who knew the former poem remarkably well and aimed at producing a uniform epos in a similar style. To this redactor he attributed the story of Hagen's youth and the quadruple marriage, together with other minor changes and additions. Later redactors are held accountable for still further alterations.

The most recent contribution to the controversy is that of F. Panzer in *Hilde-Gudrun*. He shows that the "genuine" strophes cannot be distinguished from the "spurious" in language, style, or characterisation, nor even as regards the influence of the *Nibelungenlied* or other M.H.G. poems, and claims, therefore, that *Gudrun* is the work of a single poet. As for the inconsistencies, they, too, are found in "genuine" as well as in "spurious" strophes and consequently cannot be used as an argument against the theory of single authorship.

The geographical names in *Gudrun*, many of them not yet satisfactorily explained, fall into two classes: those of late introduction, for the most part oriental (e.g. *Indiá*, *Ikarjá*, *Arábé*), and those of countries and towns, as a rule bordering the North Sea, known to have been harried by the Danes and Northmen. The former class may be left out of consideration here, but some of the more interesting of the latter require notice. Hetel's country, the land of the Hegelings, was presumably thought of as somewhere between the mouths of the Scheldt and the Elbe; possibly his capital *Mateláne* was the modern Matlinge in South Holland. Subject to him were *der*



*Holzsæzen lant* (Holstein), *Friesen* (Friesland), *Dietmers* (Ditmarsen), *Niflant* (Livonia), *Tenelant-Tenemark-Tenerîche* (Denmark), *Ortland* (Jutland), and *Wâlëis*. The last-named country was probably identified by the Upper German poet with Wales, but as it is spoken of as many days' sail from Ireland and adjoining the rest of Hetel's dominions, it may have been originally a district taking its name from the Dutch river Waal. *Írlant* is in our poem similarly identified with Ireland though the origin of the name may have been Eijerland, a part of Texel. Hagen's capital *Baljân* at once reminds one of the ubiquitous Irish prefix *Bally-*, and the name Ballyghan is said to be not uncommon in Ireland. The name *Séwen-Sélant* given to Herwig's country is thought by some to indicate his original character as a Viking without fixed territorial possessions; later it would be identified with the Dutch province Zealand. Ludwig's land, *Ormanîe-Normandîe*, was probably also originally meant to represent a district near the mouth of the Scheldt and later identified with Normandy, in which case his capital *Kassîâne* may be the modern Cadzand. Lastly, the *Wûlpenwert-Wûlpensant* was an island in the Scheldt estuary; possibly the old name Hedensee for the western mouth of this river helped the localisation of the saga in that neighbourhood.<sup>1</sup>

The poem of *Gudrun* is extant in one MS. only, copied between 1502 and 1515, along with other texts, by a certain Hans Ried of Bozen, at the order of Maximilian I. This so-called *grosse Ambraser Handschrift* contains in all twenty-three poems, among them the only extant MSS. of *Biterolf*, of Hartmann von Aue's *Erek*, and of Ulrich von Lichtenstein's *Frauendienst*; it was originally preserved in the castle of Ambras, near Innsbruck, but now belongs to the Ambras collection in Vienna. As far as *Gudrun* is concerned, Hans Ried's

<sup>1</sup> We have seen that the form *Hegelinge* is a corruption of \**Hedeninge*. A parallel localisation occurs in the account by Saxo Grammaticus, who mentions Hiddensö, near the island of Rügen, as the scene of the conflict.

original probably dated from the thirteenth century; the copyist changed the Middle High German forms into those of his own dialect and time, but not without also making additions and alterations. His original was not, however, *the* original, which was composed in Bavaria or Austria (Martin thinks Styria) after the *Nibelungenlied*, about the same time as *Biterolf*, yet probably before Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Titirel*,<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* about 1210.

The metrical form of *Gudrun* is only slightly different from that of the *Nibelungenlied* (*cf.* p. 33). Each stanza consists of four lines, of which the first two correspond exactly to the first two of the *Nibelungen* strophe; the last two, however, are bound together by a *feminine* rime, while the final hemistich contains *five* instead of four stresses.<sup>2</sup> The *Gudrun* strophe is thus a sort of imitation, but possibly not a direct development of the *Nibelungen* strophe. It is worth remarking that there are in the whole poem no less than ninety-eight real *Nibelungen* strophes. The rimes are not quite as pure as in the *Nibelungenlied*.

The principal editions of *Gudrun* are those of:—

**K. Bartsch.**—*Kudrun* (Leipzig, 1865, <sup>5</sup>1885), in Pfeiffer's *Deutsche Klassiker des Mittelalters*.

**E. Martin.**—*Kudrun* (Halle, 1872, <sup>2</sup>1902), in Zacher's *Germanistische Handbibliothek*. Small ed., without notes (Halle, 1883), in the *Sammlung germanistischer Hilfsmittel*.

<sup>1</sup> K. Bartsch holds that *Titirel* was written before *Parzival*, and therefore places *Gudrun* before 1200. See the introduction to his fifth edition, 1885.

<sup>2</sup> The full typical strophe may therefore be represented thus (an *Auftakt* of three syllables does not occur):—

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* */ * / * / * / : * / * / * /
* */ * / * / * / : * / * / * /
* */ * / * / * / : * / * / * /
* */ * / * / * / : * / * / * / * / *

```

Any unstressed syllable may be omitted, and the usual form of the first half-line is actually:—

\* \*/ \* / \* / \.

**B. Symons.**—*Kudrun* (Halle, 1883), in Paul's *Altdeutsche Textbibliothek*.

The following works must also be recommended to the student of *Gudrun*, in addition to the great works on *Heldensage*:<sup>1</sup>—

**K. Müllenhoff.**—*Kudrun, die echten Teile des Gedichts*. (Kiel, 1845). The introduction sums up the author's methods and results.

**G. Klee.**—*Zur Hildesage*. (Diss.; Leipzig, 1873).

**W. Wilmanns.**—*Entwicklung der Kudrundichtung*. (Halle, 1873).

**E. Kettner.**—*Der Einfluss des Nibelungenliedes auf die Gudrun*, in the *Z.f.d.Ph.*, xxiii. 145 ff.

**A. Fécamp.**—*Le Poème de Gudrun*. (Paris, 1892). Though the bibliography is carried up to 1891, the book itself was practically completed in 1881.

**F. Panzer.**—*Hilde-Gudrun*. (Halle, 1901).

Of the modern German adaptations of this epic, three deserve special mention: R. Baumbach's *Horand und Hilde* (Leipzig, 1878), L. Schmidt's *Gudrun* (Wittenberg, 1888), and A. Klughardt's opera *Gudrun* (Neustrelitz, 1882), the words to which are by K. Niemann. The earliest attempt at translation was made by Gervinus, who reproduced part of the poem in hexameters (Leipzig, 1836); three years later San Marte brought out a complete translation in varying metre (Berlin, 1839). Adalbert von Keller was the first to retain the *Gudrun* strophe in his *Gudrun, aus dem Mittelhochdeutschen übersetzt* (Stuttgart, 1840). According to K. Bartsch's introduction to his edition in Kürschner's *Deutsche National-Literatur*, the two best translations at that time were K. Simrock's (Stuttgart, 1843; <sup>12</sup> 1881), and G. L. Klee's

<sup>1</sup> Cf. K. Breul's "Handy Bibliographical Guide" (London, 1895). The articles on *Heldensage* and Literature in *P.G.* should also be consulted. Students desirous of following out all the details of research should use Goedeke's *Grundriss zur Geschichte der deutschen Dichtung* and the *Jsb.*, where they will find a complete bibliography.

(Leipzig, 1878). Since then there have appeared those of H. Kamp (Berlin, 1890), H. Löschhorn (Halle, 1891), W. Hübbe (Hamburg, 1892), and G. Legerlotz (Bielefeld, 1893).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A complete list of adaptations and translations is given by *Siegmund Benedict*, in *Die Gudrunssage in der neueren deutschen Literatur*. (Rostock, 1902.)

## II. ENGLISH TRANSLATION

THERE is, strictly speaking, only one translation of *Gudrun* into English, a metrical one by Miss Nichols. Miss Letherbrow's version<sup>1</sup> is expanded to such an extent that it cannot be fairly included under this head, and it will therefore be discussed in the fourth section dealing with detailed accounts, essays, &c. Closer to the original than Miss Letherbrow's is J. Gibb's account of the poem,<sup>2</sup> which is in parts practically a slightly abridged translation. Professor Gibb, however, disclaims the name of translation for his work; moreover, he rearranges the matter of the poem, and condenses portions of it very considerably.

**Mary Pickering Nichols.**—*Gudrun. A Mediæval Epic translated from the Middle High German.*<sup>3</sup> (Boston and New York, 1889.)

As there is no proper introduction to Miss Nichols' book, it will be well to consider first her translation (based on K. Bartsch's edition of 1874); after which the preface, &c., can be briefly dealt with.

The stanzas describing Horand's skill in song (372–374, 383, 384, 389) are thus reproduced:—

372

It came to pass one evening, good luck did so befall,  
That Horant, the knight of Daneland, sang before them all.  
His singing was so wondrous that all who listened near him  
Found his song well-pleasing; the little birds all hushed their  
notes to hear him.

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<sup>1</sup> See p. 173.

<sup>2</sup> See p. 180.

<sup>3</sup> Reviewed by M. D. Learned, *Am.J.Phil.*, xi. 227 ff.

373

King Hagen heard him gladly, and with him all his men :  
 The song of the Danish Horant friends for him did gain.  
 Likewise the queenly mother hearkened with ear befitting,  
 As it sounded thro' the opening where she upon the leaded  
 roof was sitting.

374

Then spake the fair young Hilda : " What is it that I hear ?  
 Just now a song the sweetest was thrilling on my ear,  
 That e'er from any singer I heard until this hour.  
 Would to God in heaven my chamberlain to raise such notes  
 had power ! "

383

Then spake King Hagen's liegemen : " My lord, let him be  
 heard ;  
 There's none so sick is lying but would in truth be cheered,  
 If to the songs he listened which fall from him so sweetly."  
 Said Hagen : " Would to heaven such skill to sing were  
 mine ; 'twould glad me greatly."

384

When the knightly minstrel three songs to the end had sung,  
 No one there who heard him thought they were too long.  
 The turn of a hand, not longer, they had thought it lasted,  
 E'en if they had listened while for a thousand miles a  
 horseman hasted.

389

The wild beasts in the forest let their pasture grow ;  
 The little worms that creeping through grass are wont to go,  
 The fishes, too, that ever amidst the waves were swimming,  
 All now stopped to listen ; the singer's heart with pride was  
 over-brimming.

It will be noticed at once that Miss Nichols has imitated the *Gudrun* strophe as closely as is possible in English, and has not hesitated to make use occasionally of tri-syllabic feet which impart to her stanzas a touch of irregularity corresponding to that of the original. The only point, as far as form is concerned, in which these stanzas do not quite do justice to the Old German poem,

is in that difficult matter—the management of the rimes: *men, gain; heard, cheered; sweetly, greatly; sung, long; lasted, hasted*, are all impure, and *hour, power* is not very definitely feminine. It is true that the rimes of *Gudrun* are not quite as correct as those of the *Nibelungenlied*, but they are at least far more exact than this; in the above passage every rime of the Middle High German is perfectly pure.

Especial difficulty presented itself, of course, in connection with the feminine rimes, and the translator has sometimes been compelled to “pad” in order to supply them. In 372, *near him*, in the next stanza *with ear befitting*, and in 383, *'twould glad me greatly*, are quite unnecessary except for this purpose, and mar the general effect. The last hemistich of 389, again, is not in any way a translation of *jâ kunde er sîner vuoge wol geniezen*, though in this case Miss Nichols' substitution is more artistic.

One slight mistranslation remains to be noticed: the plural *mîne kamerære* is rendered by a singular, and possibly the *si*, referring to *diu wîse* (the melody) was misunderstood; at any rate, *such notes* is rather vague.

The second passage (853–855, 858–861) is rendered as follows:—

## 853

Now saw King Ludwig's sailors, tossing on the wave,  
A ship with sails the richest. To the king they warning  
gave;  
But when 'twas seen by Hartmut, and others with him  
standing,  
That on the sails were crosses, they said these must be  
pilgrims bent on landing.

## 854

On the waters floating three good ships were seen,  
With new and well-made flatboats; they bore across the main  
Those who on their clothing never yet wore crosses,  
Their love to God thus showing. The Normans must from  
them meet heavy losses.

855

As they the shore were nearing, one on the ships might see  
Helmets brightly shining. No more from care were free  
King Ludwig and his kinsmen, and harm their fears fore-  
boded :

“ Look there ! ” then shouted Hartmut ; “ with grimmest foes  
of mine these ships are loaded . ”

858

Ludwig called out loudly to all his trusty men,  
(He thought it child's play only that he before had seen),  
“ Now with worthy foemen must I, at length, be striving !  
He shall be the richer who 'neath my flag his help to me is  
giving . ”

859

Soon was Hartmut's banner raised upon the shore.  
The ships had now come nearer ; with spears the Normans  
bore  
To reach the foe were easy from where they now were  
waiting :  
I ween the aged Wâ-te was ready with his shield, the foeman  
meeting.

860

Ne'er before so grimly did champions guard their land.  
Boldly the Hegeling warriors nearer pressed to the strand ;  
Soon they met the Normans with sword and spear, undaunted ;  
Blows they freely bartered : such bargains cheaply given no  
more they wanted.

861

Everywhere the Hegelings sprang upon the shore.  
After a wind from the hill-tops was never seen before  
Snow so thickly whirling as spears from hands that threw  
them :  
Though they had done it gladly idle it were to shun the  
strokes that slew them.

Here again the same inability to find good rimes is  
observable, as well as a device frequently used by Miss  
Nichols to supply the necessary unstressed syllable in  
the feminine rimes, viz. the use of the continuous tense.  
The result is often unsatisfactory, as in 858.



In connection with this passage it may be remarked that the translator rigidly adheres to the Gudrun strophe even when the original deviates from it. Stanza 854 has cæsural rime, *selten*, *engelten*, a frequent irregularity in *Gudrun*, but never reproduced. Similarly the numerous Nibelungen strophes (*e.g.* 82, 83, 86) are regularly turned into the Gudrun form.

Close as the translation generally is, one or two slight variations must again be noticed. In 853 *der marnære* becomes *King Ludwig's sailors*; in the next stanza *niun kocken rîche* is translated *new and well-made flatboats*, but this is explained by Bartsch's reading *niwen*; *Look there!* is a decidedly weak rendering of *wol ûf* (855); and the last line of 861 fails to reproduce the original. Of more importance, however, is the fact that the simplicity of the poem has been carefully preserved; very few words not of Germanic origin have been used, and the construction is never unduly involved. Some stanzas, indeed, are reproduced with remarkable success, *e.g.* 384, 389, 859, 860 (especially the difficult fourth line).

In the rendering of the last passage (1508–1511, 1519–1522):—

1508

The old and wicked Gerlind ran to Gu-drun in haste;  
As if she were her bondwoman, herself at her feet she cast,  
Saying: "Most high-born lady, thou alone canst save us  
From Wâ-te and his followers; else will his wrath, I ween, of  
life bereave us."

1509

To her said Hilda's daughter: "I hear you asking now  
That I to you be friendly; how should I kindness show?  
Nought that e'er I wished for to grant me were you willing:  
To me you showed but hatred; and now my heart with hate for  
you is swelling."

1510

That Ortrun then was near him Wâ-te became aware:  
He his teeth was gnashing, and straight up-stood he there;  
Now his eyes were flashing; his yard-wide beard was flowing;  
And all were sorely frightened; and feared what the Sturmisch  
lord would next be doing.

1511

Over him blood was streaming, with it his clothes were wet.  
 Tho' Gu-drun was glad to see him, she had liked it better yet  
 If he, in mood less wrathful, had come for her to greet him;  
 Such fear they all were feeling, I ween that no one there was  
 glad to meet him.

1519

Grimly then old Wâ-te stood before the hall,  
 And said: "Gu-drun my lady, send down, with her maidens all,  
 The old and wicked Gerlind, who made you wash by the water;  
 And with her send her kinsmen, who in our land so many  
 knights did slaughter."

1520

The lovely maiden answered: "Not one of them is here."  
 Then Wâ-te, in his anger, went in and to her came near;  
 He said: "Now show me quickly the women I am seeking:  
 Else shall they, with your maidens, all alike in the grave their  
 home be making."

1521

Wâ-te was sorely angry, of this was she aware.  
 A wink of her eye then gave him a lovely maiden there,  
 And he knew the old she-devil, on whom her glance was turning.  
 "Tell me," he said, "Queen Gerlind, for other maids to wash  
 are you still yearning?"

1522

Then by the hand he took her, and dragged her thence away;  
 The while the wicked Gerlind sank down in sore dismay.  
 Said Wâ-te, wild to madness: "Most lofty queen, I warn you,  
 Never again, at your bidding, shall my ladies wash for you; they  
 now can scorn you."

Stanzas 1509, 1520, and 1522 could hardly be improved upon, except, perhaps, in the management of the metre; 1521 deserves equal praise, failing only in that *was she* takes the place of *wurden si*, which makes the next line rather abrupt. But each of the other strophes is open to criticism: *As if she were her bondswoman* (1508), *and straight up-stood he there* (1510), *Though Gu-drun was glad to see him, &c.* (1511), *kinsmen, who in our land, &c.* (1519; Wate would not expect to find any *men* hidden among the women-folk), are all cases

where the sense of the original has been either missed or injudiciously changed. In 1510, too, it is hard to see the reason for introducing Ortrun's name: possibly it is a slip for Gudrun, to whom the *ir* undoubtedly refers.

The passages quoted are quite characteristic of the general level reached by Miss Nichols in this translation. The tone of the mediæval poem is well kept; some of the difficult phrases and characteristic turns have been most skilfully reproduced; and many stanzas deserve the highest praise. The usual mistakes, too, are to a large extent absent, though a few occur, e.g.: *tugende*—"worth and goodness" (1), "things good and worthy" (205); *biderbe*—"brave and upright" (206), "friendly" (227); evidently the translator had acquired some knowledge of Middle High German before commencing her task. Her worst fault is carelessness, shown for example in the varying use of *thou* and *thy* with *you* in 28: "How should it ever be | That you have had such longing me with my knights to see? | I will strive thy will to follow, of this think not so sadly; | Ever to meet thy wishes," &c. Past tenses are translated by presents, as in 350: *Er sprach zer küniginne* "*jâ hete ich selbe lant, | dô gap ich, swem ich wolte, ros und gewant.*"—"Then to the queen he answered: 'I, too, myself, own land; | There give I clothes and horses, at will with open hand.'" The present tense is very strange in the mouth of a man posing as an exile. Singulars are turned into plurals, and the reverse, as in 340: *zuo der meide*—"to the maids," *si hete den wân*—"they thought." Sometimes the translator mistakes the number and case of pronouns, with the result that the real sense is entirely missed, e.g. st. 24: *sît wart ez in vremede* (afterwards it—the child—was lost to them)—"all this he knew no longer"; 285: *Dô kam in daz ze heile, daz . . .* (Then this happened fortunately for them, that . . .)—"this was for his welfare."

Many similar errors could be cited, as well as others where a little consideration of the context, or a use of other annotated editions besides that of Bartsch, would

have improved the translation. In stanza 33, where Hagen is expressing his readiness to be taught fashionable customs, *man müge mich vil lichte edeler vürsten site noch geleren* is rendered: "No man shall find it easy the ways of well-born kings to teach me ever." Again in 227, Hetel, wondering whether Hagen will consent to give him his daughter, says: *und diuht ich in sô biderbe, so wolt ich si minnen*, &c. (and if I should seem to him a good enough match, I would love her, &c.), which becomes "If I deemed he were so friendly, I would seek to win her."

In her preface Miss Nichols deals briefly with the MS., authorship, metrical form, and geography of the poem, relying chiefly on her edition by Bartsch. After a summary of the contents, follow two lists, one of names of persons, the other of names of places. Here again dependence on one of Bartsch's older editions is evident in the explanation of *Niflant* as: "'the land of fogs,' on the lower Rhine, the home of the Nibelungen." Opposite the title-page is a facsimile of a page of the Ambras MS., reproduced from Kœnig's *Deutsche Literaturgeschichte*.

In spite of some inaccuracies and occasional want of smoothness, Miss Nichols' translation is, on the whole, a good one, though not equal to either Lettsom's or Miss Horton's of the *Nibelungenlied*.<sup>1</sup> It has, however, one point in which it is superior to either of these, the retention of the lengthened hemistich in the last line of each stanza. The reader unacquainted with the original may at first find this unpleasant, but its strangeness soon disappears and it prevents the otherwise inevitable monotony.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. M. D. Learned's criticism (*Am. J. Phil.*, xi. 227 ff.) is more favourable. He considers it fit to rank with Longfellow's and Dean Plumptre's *Divina Commedia*, and superior to any English version of the *Nibelungenlied* (Miss Horton's had not then appeared).

### III. REPRINT OF TEXT

THERE is only one work containing a reprint of any considerable portion of *Gudrun*, viz. :—

**F. Max Müller.**—*The German Classics from the Fourth to the Nineteenth Century.* (London, 1858; revised edition, adapted to Scherer's "History of German Literature," by F. Lichtenstein and E. Joseph. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1886.)

In the first edition the extract, accompanied by Simrock's translation, occupies pp. 216-224, and includes st. 372-410, *i.e.* the greater part of the sixth Adventure (Horand's singing). The revised edition (pp. 152-169) contains only st. 372-389, quoted from Martin's edition.

#### IV. ACCOUNTS, ESSAYS, AND MISCELLANEOUS ARTICLES

1. **Anonymous.**—Review of Vilmar's *Vorlesungen über die Geschichte der deutschen National-Literatur* in the *British Quarterly Review*, vii. (1848), 140-144.

2. **Rev. F. Metcalfe.**—*History of German Literature*. (London, 1858.) Pp. 97-104. Based on Vilmar.

3. **Madame L. Davésiés de Pontès.**—*Poets and Poetry of Germany*. (London, 1858.)

The fifth chapter (pp. 112-129) is devoted to an abstract of *Gudrun*. The first two parts, *Hagen* and *Hilde*, are taken together as one and epitomised very briefly and inaccurately. For instance: "After wandering about for a while (after his escape from the griffin), he meets three princesses transported thither by robbers, and perceiving a bow and arrow lying near him, he seizes them and pierces the vulture, who is again hovering above him, to the heart" (p. 113); and again: "Furious at the trick of which he is a victim, the king (Hagen) sets sail with a mighty army to avenge the outrage; but the tears and entreaties of Hilda, who soon pardons the deceit in consideration of the love which had inspired it, succeed in effecting a reconciliation" (p. 114). Horand's singing and the battle between Hagen and the Hegelings are not even alluded to!

The third part is related much more fully and a number of stanzas are reproduced in a tolerable metrical translation, though the *Gudrun* strophe is not retained. The greater fulness of detail does not, however, bring with it accuracy. According to the poem—to mention one mistake only—

Herwig's attack on Hetel's castle promises to be successful; he has just driven back the defenders and is engaged hand to hand with the king, when Gudrun intervenes. In Madame de Pontès' account, on the other hand, "his (Herwig's) troops are dispersed and broken, and he himself is about to perish beneath the sword of the indignant Hetel, when Gudrun, who from the battlements has been spectatress of the fight, raising her voice amid the tumult, implores her father to stay his arm" (p. 116). Apart from such matters of detail, the general outline is satisfactory enough, though some important passages are passed over unnoticed, *e.g.* the appearance of the swan on the sea-shore.

4. **Gustav Solling.**—*A Review of the Literary History of Germany.* (London and Edinburgh, 1859.) Pp. 70-76.

A fairly detailed, but inaccurate account. Gerlind is repeatedly spoken of as *Sigelinda*. (!)

5. **Emma Letherbrow.**—*Gudrun, a Story of the North Sea. From the Mediæval German.* (Edinburgh, 1863; republished by Warne & Co. without author's name, preface, or introduction, but with the addition of extraordinary illustrations, under the title: *King Hetel's Daughter, or The Fair Gudrun. A Tale of the North Sea.* London, 1877).

The version of *Gudrun* given by Miss Letherbrow in this book is spirited and vivid, but unusually free and imaginative; in fact, she definitely disclaims in the preface any idea of having written for antiquarians and scholars. In the first place, the whole of the matter is rearranged in twenty-three chapters, the first four of which carry the Gudrun saga proper as far as the point at which Siegfried of Moorland, after invading Herwig's country, was surrounded and beleaguered by Herwig and Hetel on the coast. To while away the time in the camp of the besiegers, Horand sings the story of Hagen's adventures and the Hilde saga (chapters v.-xi.); the description of Horand's singing is given in an interruption by Frute. In chapter xii.

the news of Gudrun's abduction is brought to the camp, and from there to the end the order of events in the poem is generally adhered to.

The text is quite as freely dealt with as the matter. While the main incidents are kept, details are changed and even added, the authoress showing especial delight in vivid pictures of battle scenes. The commencement of the battle on the Wülpensand is told as follows (corresponding to st. 853-855, 858-861):—

“They had shipped their arms and treasures, and were leading their horses on board, when one who watched upon the cliffs cried out that he saw a sail in the distance. Thereupon the keen-eyed Hartmut swiftly climbed the rocks that he might learn the truth with his own eyes. Anon he shouted—

“‘I see a fleet of many small ships with the holy cross upon their sails.’

“‘It is the pilgrims,’ answered Ludwig, ‘who are journeying to the Holy Shrine.’

“‘They are bearing towards us,’ said Hartmut. ‘The sails grow larger before mine eyes.’

“‘It may be that they will touch upon this island to lay in fresh water,’ answered Ludwig. ‘Now I see of a truth that those are pilgrim ships.’ He spake truly; but those who manned the ships carried no cross save that on the sword's hilt; and they were skilled in hewing red crosses on the bodies of their foes.

“Scarcely had Ludwig spoken when he saw helms and spears blinking from the sides of the ships.

“‘By my troth,’ he cried, ‘those pilgrims like me not! King Hetel is upon us!’ Then he called to his men: ‘Normans, arise and fight with the Danes hand to hand at the landing!’ The Normans swiftly seized their arms and donned their mail, and when the ships neared the shore the Hegelings saw their foes standing like a hedge of steel along the strand.

“Hetel and his men swarmed from the boats, burning



for the fight and heedless of the showers of darts and arrows that fell upon them. The fierce Normans ran breast high into the waves to meet them, and fought them hand to hand.

“The rocks echoed the clash of steel, the whirr of arrows and the cries and groans of the wounded, many of whom perished in the foaming waves and were carried out by the ebb-tide. The wild birds, which dwelt in multitudes on the island, were disturbed\*by the din of the fight; and flew in clouds over-head shrieking and clamouring like human creatures.” (Pp. 99 *f.*)

Similarly, the seven stanzas (646-652) describing Herwig's attack on Hetel's castle are expanded into more than two pages (19-21).

The preface contains a short account of the MS. and of the results of investigation into other questions connected with the poem; want of accuracy is shown in the repetition of such spellings as “Müllenhof” and “Wilmar.”

Of more importance, however, is the Introduction of fifty-four pages (xiii. to lxvi.), the first twenty-six of which are taken up with a description of the primitive German peoples, a broad outline of their history up to the Middle Ages, and passing notice of some of the Old German literary monuments: the *Heliand*, the *Gothic Bible*, the *Hildebrandslied*, the *Beast Epic*, the *Nibelungenlied*, and the poems of the *Heldenbuch*. It was in accordance with the theories of the time at which she wrote for the authoress to place the old home of the European races in Asia, but carelessness again appears in such mistakes as “Reinhardt the Fox,” “Roswirtha,” &c.

Coming now to the *Gudrunlied*, Miss Letherbrow gives stanzas 1288-1305 (omitting 1303) in the original, accompanied by a line for line translation. The specimen is marred by numerous misprints, and the translation by a few of the usual mistakes (*e.g.* *dem snellen Hartmut*—to the swift Hartmut; *ein künig rîche*—a rich king). Then follow a comparison of the tone and characters of the

*Nibelungenlied* and *Gudrun*, a summary of the early attempts to explain the localities mentioned in the latter, a list of references to the tradition in other works, and an account of the chief characteristics displayed by the ancient heroes and heroines.

With all its minor faults, this Introduction testifies to considerable industry and (for so early a date) knowledge of Old German literature, while the information brought is imparted in an interesting manner and with much vigour.

6. **Gustav Solling**.—*Diutiska*. (London, 1863.) Pp. 53-56.

Practically a reprint of the same author's *Review of the Literary History of Germany*.

7. **John Malcolm Ludlow**.—*Popular Epics of the Middle Ages*. (London and Cambridge, 1865.) Vol. i. part ii. chap. viii. pp. 193-239.

Speaking broadly, Ludlow's account of *Gudrun* has the same merits and defects as that of the *Nibelungenlied*. His abstract of the poem is detailed and based on knowledge of the original, but an imperfect acquaintance with mediæval language has led to numerous minor inaccuracies which sometimes sadly misrepresent the old epos. Thus: "Hagen throwing behind him many a noble knight" (p. 203), is evidently a careless rendering of st. 511: *von sîner gêrstange hinder sich gesaz | vil manic ritter edele* (i.e. thrust by his lance, many a noble knight was flung backwards from his charger). On the next page, *si heten in langer zîte dâ vor wol vernomen | daz Wate arzât wære von einem wilden wibe* (they had known well for a long time that Wate was skilled in medicine, taught him by a wild woman), Ludlow translates: "Wate, who was known to have been medicined by a wild woman." On p. 206, again, he represents Herwig as expressing the fear that he may have displeased Gudrun through his lightness; the words of the original (st. 656) are: *daz ich iu versmâhe durch mîn lîhtez künne* (that I may not seem good enough

by reason of the unimportance of my family connections).

However much one may sympathise with the writer's feelings as expressed in the footnote to p. 237,<sup>1</sup> one cannot help wishing that he had so far overcome his repugnance to scientific inquiry as to acquire and reproduce a general view of the best contemporary opinions on *Gudrun*. His own suggestions, though sometimes partly correct, are often decidedly misleading, as when he divides the whole into two parts only, the lays of Hagen (including Hilde) and *Gudrun*, the latter of which he looks upon as the oldest. Some of the poems containing references to the saga are noticed, while the reader is referred for other points to the introduction and preface of Miss Letherbrow's translation. Her version is criticised (p. 193, note) as a complete but not always judicious recasting of the poem.

8. **A. M. Selss.**—*A Critical Outline of the History of German Literature*. (London, 1865; <sup>5</sup>1896.) Pp. 49 f.

9. **E. P. Evans.**—*Outlines of German Literature*. (New York, 1869.)

[Unobtainable.]

10. **C. E. O.**—*Translations, &c., Tanwyn, Gudrun, Petrarch*. (London, 1870.) Pp. 19-23.

In a brief Introduction the author tells how he first came to make the acquaintance of *Gudrun*, and intimates that the accompanying "abridged prose translation" was originally intended for publication in a private family magazine. It would be better described as a very detailed abstract of the poem, each Adventure of which is separately summarised.

The closeness with which the original is followed natur-

<sup>1</sup> He writes: "Although I must confess never to have entered beyond the ankle into the sea of German controversy as to the *Nibelungenlied*, I must say that the mere touch of those learned waters was sufficient to deter me from making acquaintance with the minor Dead Sea of the *Gudrun*-controversy."

ally varies according to the attraction C. E. O. felt for different passages. Sometimes his abstract almost becomes a prose translation, while other passages, not always the least genuine or poetic, are represented by fewer lines than there are stanzas. Adventure xvii. contains thirty-three strophes (of which no less than twelve are marked as "genuine" by Martin), and relates the commencement of the battle on the Wülpensand, yet the author of the abstract compresses the whole Adventure into nine and a half lines. The effect of Horand's singing, again, is passed over very lightly, while, on the other hand, some of the weaker passages are treated in comparative detail, not excepting the tedious conclusion.

Speaking broadly, however, it may be said that the reader would get a good idea of the story of the old poem, for there are but few inaccuracies. As the translation by Simrock is mentioned, and nothing is said about the Old German text, it is not unlikely that the former was the writer's source<sup>1</sup>; he would, in that case, only misconstrue where Simrock had adopted the Old German phraseology, and the freedom of the abstract would tend to remove even that risk of error.

In conclusion a few stanzas from an English translation of the Edda are quoted, and Max Müller's remarks about the Nibelungen story in "Chips from a German Workshop" (ii. 107-111) summarised.

11. **Sir George W. Cox and Eustace Hinton Jones.**—*Popular Romances of the Middle Ages.* (London, 1871; 21880.) Pp. 341-372, "The Gudrun Lay."

As in the case of the *Nibelungentied*, Jones<sup>2</sup> gives here in a vivid, sometimes lurid, style, a popular account of *Gudrun*, dividing it into its three parts: Hagen and the Griffins, Hilda's Wooing, and Gudrun's Lovers. While true to the poem in general, he does not hesitate to give

<sup>1</sup> The name forms: Siegebund, Hettel, Hartmuth, Ortwein, &c., also suggest a modern German source.

<sup>2</sup> As appears in the preface to "Tales of the Teutonic Lands," reprinted from "Popular Romances of the Middle Ages."

rein to his imagination. In describing Horand's singing, for instance, he inserts: "and all the sleepers dreamed of Baldur and his home in Ganzblick in the sky" (p. 348); and Hagen's remarks to his consort that if he had more daughters he would send them to the Hegelingen, is here addressed to Hetel after the reconciliation.

12. **Sir G. W. Cox and E. H. Jones.**—*Tales of the Teutonic Lands.* (London, 1872.) Pp. 167–209.

Reprinted from the above.

13. **J. Gostwick and R. Harrison.**—*Outlines of German Literature.* (London, 1873; <sup>2</sup>1883; a third edition is being prepared by Dr. A. Meissner.) Pp. 22–24.

14. **Joseph Gostwick.**—*German Poets.* (London, 1874.) Pp. 16–17.

15. **Franklin Carter.**—*The Last Work on the Gudrun-dichtung*, in the *New Englander*, xxxiv. 253–273 (New Haven, 1875).

An appreciative criticism of Wilmann's *Entwicklung der Kudrundichtung* (cf. p. 157), with extensive quotations and extracts. Professor Carter accepts the main results, but considers some unproved, and occasionally offers a different exposition of small points.

16. **H. Eckford.**—In the *Penn Monthly*, vii. 93. (Philadelphia, 1876).

[Unobtainable.]

17. **M. F. Reid.**—*A Handy Manual of German Literature.* (Edinburgh and London, 1879.) P. 36.

18. **James Sime.**—*German Literature* in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, vol. x. 524 (<sup>9</sup>1879).

19. **Bayard Taylor.**—*Studies in German Literature* (New York, 1879.) Pp. 130–134.

After a few words of introduction and a short indication of the contents of the poem, half-a-dozen stanzas of the original are quoted (with several misprints) and metrically translated. There are one or two bad mistakes, *e.g.* where

*Dô sprâchen Hagenen helde "herre, lát vernemen.  
nieman lebet sô siecher, im möhte wol gezemen  
hæren sîne stimme*

becomes—

Answered Hagen, the hero; | "My lord let me know your  
mind!

No one unsmote by sickness | could pleasure fail to find  
In the beautiful voice" . . .

It is surprising, too, to find the statement that William Morris used the same subject in his "Lovers of Gudrun," in the "Earthly Paradise." Morris's poem has no connection whatever with the mediæval epic.<sup>1</sup>

20. **James K. Hosmer.**—*A Short History of German Literature.* (London, 1880; <sup>2</sup>1892.) Pp. 78–94.

Professor Hosmer's epitome of *Gudrun* is adapted from Vilmar's, but in spite of this is not altogether free from faults. If he had read the complete poem, for instance, he would not have written that "at her (Hilde's) summons, Hettel and Herwig returned in haste, only to find the land desolate and Gudrun gone." Instead of returning they set off in pursuit of the Normans.

The authorship of the poem, development of the story, &c., are very lightly touched on, all discussion of difficult questions being carefully avoided.

21. **John Gibb.**—*Gudrun and other Stories from the Epics of the Middle Ages.* (London, 1881; <sup>2</sup>1883: *Gudrun, Beowulf, and Roland.*)

<sup>1</sup> Francis Hueffer, in a review of Morris's "Sigurd the Volsung" (*Gentleman's Magazine*, xix., n.s., p. 48) mentions the Laxdæla Saga as the source of the "Lovers of Gudrun." Cf. also Mackail's "Life of William Morris," vol. i. p. 206.

We have in this book, as the author states in his prefatory note, not literal translations, but stories faithfully told in simple language with the special design of interesting young people. The story of *Gudrun* is divided into the usual three parts, which are, however, arranged in the reverse of the usual order. First comes "The Story of Gudrun" (pp. 1-77), next "Hilda" (81-109), and lastly "Wild Hagen" (113-132),

The simple language does much to reproduce the tone of the old poem, which is, moreover, closely followed; indeed, but for the rearrangement of the matter, Professor Gibb's account might almost be termed a condensed translation. The following extract will give an idea of his style and faithful adherence to the original (p. 63 f.):—

"And when Gerlind saw that her friends were defeated, she also went to Gudrun, and kneeling before her, she said—

"'King's daughter, I pray thee be my saviour from Wate and his men!'

"'But Hilda's daughter said, 'Do I hear you asking for grace from me? You never listened to prayer of mine; how should I be gracious to you now?'

"While Gudrun was yet speaking Wate came into the hall. The old hero was covered with blood, and his eyes were as if on fire, and he was grinding his teeth like a wild beast. Those around Gudrun shrank back in terror when they saw him. . . .

"Again Wate returned into the hall, and he was seeking for Gerlind.

"'Lady Gudrun,' he said, 'Give up Gerlind, and those who made you wash.'

"But Gudrun said, 'None of them are here.'

"Wate drew nearer, saying, 'If you do not give me up those I look for, I will kill all these women.'

"When the others heard his voice they were afraid; and one in the hall winked to him with her eyes, and

made known to him Gerlind. Then Wate took Gerlind by the hand and led her to the hall door, and she wept in her terror."

The book contains also a "Concluding Chapter," in which a certain amount of information about the poems from which the stories are taken is given in a popular manner. *Gudrun* is specially dealt with on pp. 274-279, where a brief discussion of the tone and characters is followed by the quotation of two stanzas from the Middle High German and their translation by Simrock. Controversial points are avoided.

22. **George Theodore Dippold.**—*The Great Epics of Mediæval Germany.* (Boston, 1882.) Pp. 158-218.

*Gudrun* is here dealt with in chapters vi. and vii., of which the former is devoted to an outline of the poem, the latter to its history.

Professor Dippold's analysis of the poem is detailed and careful, and varied by numerous metrical translations. In these he retains the alternately masculine and feminine rimes (except in a few cases), but retains in the fourth line the same number of stresses as in the other three. His renderings are free from mistranslations, but, largely owing to the difficulty of finding feminine rimes, not always very artistic. For instance (p. 165):—

Sir Wat replied with anger : " Whoe'er told this to thee,  
If I to day should perish, he would not grieve for me.  
'Tis none but Frut of Denmark who has insinuated  
That I, to win fair Hilde for thee, be delegated."

In the next chapter Professor Dippold discusses the history of the saga, for the most part following G. Klee's *Hildesage* (Leipzig, 1873), describes the metre of the poem, and gives a brief account of its study in Germany. At the end (p. 217) the author refers to the want of an English metrical translation, and mentions "an anonymous prose version, published in Edinburgh in 1860, which is somewhat free in its rendering of the story, but is charmingly



written," presumably Emma Letherbrow's "Gudrun: A Story of the North Sea" (Edinburgh, 1863).<sup>1</sup>

Professor Dippold was apparently quite conversant with the important literature on *Gudrun*, and his account of the poem has still considerable value.

23. **E. Nicholson.**—*Student's Manual of German Literature.* (London, 1882.) Pp. 86–93.

24. **A. Nutt.**—*Mabinogion Studies*, in the *Folklore Record*, v. 1–32. (London, 1882.)

In this article a number of Old German and Norse sagas are epitomised for comparison with the story of Branwen, among them that of *Gudrun* (pp. 23 *f.*). In discussing their relationship, Mr. Nutt points out parallels between the various Teutonic legends and the Welsh story, and concludes that the latter has been strongly influenced by the former.

25. **M. W. MacDowall.**—*Epics and Romances of the Middle Ages.* (London, 1883, <sup>2</sup>1884.)

W. Wäger's account of *Gudrun* in his *Unsere Vorzeit* (Leipzig, <sup>4</sup>1889) forms the basis of this, in which the matter of "The Hegeling Legend" is divided into five sections: 1. Hagen. 2. Hettel the Hegeling and his Heroes. 3. Gudrun. 4. Queen Gerlind. 5. Battle and Victory.

As in the case of the *Nibelungenlied*, details are treated freely.

26. **Mrs. F. C. Conybeare.**—*A History of German Literature by W. Scherer.* (Oxford Clarendon Press, 1886.) Pp. 124–134.

27. **F. H. Hedge.**—*Hours with German Classics.* (Boston, 1886.) Pp. 56–59.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 173.

28. **I. T. Lublin.**—*Primer of German Literature* (London, 1888.) Pp. 27–29. Adapted from H. Kluge's *Geschichte der deutschen National-Litteratur*. (Altenburg, 1869, <sup>28</sup>1897.)

29. **H. J. Wolstenholme.**—School edition of *Die deutschen Heldensagen (Hagen und Hilde, Gudrun) von Gotthold Klee*. (Cambridge, 1894.)

An Introduction (xi. to xx.) provides a short account of *Gudrun* and its development.

30. **J. F. Davis.**—School edition of *G. Klee's: Die deutschen Heldensagen (Hagen und Hilde, Gudrun)*. (London, Paris, and Boston, 1894.)

The editor's introduction (pp. vi. f.) though brief is not free from mistakes; the poem is assigned, for example, to about 1300. (!)

31. **J. A. Joerg.**—*Outlines of German Literature*. (London, 1895.) Pp. 7–8.

32. **A. R. Lechner.**—*Legends of the Heroes of the Middle Ages*. (London, 1895.) J. Schrammen's *Deutsche Heldensagen* adapted as an easy German Reader; a brief introduction to *Gudrun* on p. 47.

33. **Mary E. Phillips.**—*A Handbook of German Literature*. (London, 1895, <sup>2</sup>1900.) Pp. 11–13.

34. **Vivian Phillipps.**—*A Short Sketch of German Literature*. (London, 1895.) Pp. 8 f.

35. **Mrs. M. J. Teusler.**—*Outlines of German Literature*. (Richmond, U.S., 1895.) [Unobtainable.]

36. **Kuno Francke.**—*Social Forces in German Literature*. (New York, 1896, <sup>3</sup>1899.) Pp. 82–84.

Republished as *A History of German Literature as determined by Social Forces*. (London, 1901.)

37. **H. A. Guerber.**—*Legends of the Middle Ages.* (New York, 1896.) [Unobtainable.]

38. **Bertha Palmer.**—*Stories from the Classic Literature of Many Nations.* (New York and London, 1898.)

Eighteen stanzas describing "The Singing of Horant" are reprinted from Miss Nichols' translation of *Gudrun*.

39. **R. W. Moore.**—*History of German Literature.* (Colgate University Press, Hamilton, New York, 1900.) Pp. 36–38.

40. **C. Wenckebach.**—*Ausgewählte Meisterwerke des Mittelalters.* (Boston, 1900. Heath's "Modern Language Series"). Pp. 73–97.

An account of the poem in German, with numerous extracts in modern German verse.

41. **F. Geibler.**—*Deutsche Sagen.* (New York, London and Bombay, 1901.) P. 8.

A short school reading piece in easy German.

42. **J. G. Robertson.**—*A History of German Literature.* (Edinburgh and London, 1902.) Pp. 72–77.

A brief, but thoroughly trustworthy, account of the poem.

43. **M. Bentinck-Smith.**—*Northern Hero Legends,* translated from O. Jiriczek's *Deutsche Heldensage.* (London, 1902. Dent's "Cyclopædic Primers"). Pp. 122–135.

44. **Winifred Faraday.**—*The Edda.* (London, 1902.) Pp. 39–42.

The Hilde saga receives brief treatment under the title: "The Everlasting Battle."

45. **Rev. E. Cobham Brewer.**—*The Reader's Handbook.* (London, 1902.) Pp. 583 f.

46. **C. Wenckebach.**—*Deutsche Literaturgeschichte.* Part ii. (1100–1624). In preparation.

## V. INFLUENCE ON ENGLISH LITERATURE

OUR assumption that the Hilde saga was common to all the Teutonic nations living on the shores of the North Sea depends partly on the fact that the Germanic invaders of Britain were acquainted with it.<sup>1</sup> In **Anglo-Saxon literature**, however, the testimony is not so considerable as might be expected; two poems only contain references to the saga, and in both the references are somewhat unsatisfactory.

In *Widsið* (*cf.* p. 121), there is nothing beyond the mere mention of Hagen, Hetel, and Wate (vv. 20 *f.*):—

Hagena Holmrygum and Heoden Glommum.  
Witta weold Swæfum, Wada Hælsingum.<sup>2</sup>

The Holmrygs are the Ulmerugi of Jordanes, according to B. Symons (*P.G.*, iii. 713), and dwelt about the mouth of the Vistula, while the Glomms and the Hælsings are otherwise unknown. This localisation of Hagen's land suggests that the Anglo-Saxons may have learned the story from the Danes, who told of the great battle as having taken place on the island of Hiddensö, near Rügen. As for the name Wada, it corresponds well enough with the High German Wate, but we have no proof that he was connected with the Hilde saga at so early a date. The gleeman may have introduced his name purely for the sake of alliteration.

The two references in *Deor's Lament* are unfortun-

<sup>1</sup> For the occurrence of names from the Hilde saga in England, *cf.* G. Binz, *Zeugnisse zur germanischen Sage in England*, *P.B.B.*, xx. 192 *ff.*

<sup>2</sup> Quoted from Grein's *Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Poesie*, ed. R. P. Wülker (Kassel, 1883). "Hagena (ruled) over the Holmrygs, Heoden over the Glomms. Witta ruled over the Swæfs, Wada over the Hælsings." For the identity of *Heoden* and *Hetel*, *cf.* p. 153, note.

ately somewhat ambiguous. The singer Deor bemoans his misfortunes, but consoles himself by reflecting on the trials suffered and overcome by various heroes of saga, concluding with a former trouble of his own (vv. 35-41):—

þæt ic bi me sylfum secgan wille,  
 þæt ic hwile wæs Heodeninga scop,  
 dryhtne dyre : me wæs Deor noma.  
 Ahte ic fela wintra folgað tilne,  
 holdne hlaford, oþ þæt Heorrenda nu,  
 leoðcræftig monn londryht geþah,  
 þæt me eorla hleo ær gesealde.  
 þæs ofereode, þisses swa mæg.<sup>1</sup>

The last line is a sort of refrain concluding the account of each hero's troubles, so that the whole poem has an irregular strophic form.

The Heodenings here mentioned are the Hjaðnings of the Edda and the Hegelings of *Gudrun* (cf. p. 153), while Heorrenda is presumably the Horand of the German poem and the Norse Hjarrandi (cf. p. 156).

It has been suggested,<sup>2</sup> however, that we have here a reference to a famous singer originally unconnected with the Hilde saga; but the existence of such a singer is only hypothetical, and Heorrenda's connection with the Heodenings out of all the possible tribes seems to point to at least some, even if a confused, knowledge of the saga among the Anglo-Saxons. Possibly the author of *Deor's Lament* knew a form of the story in which Heorrenda played Horand's rôle without being a relative of his master; at the very least, he must have known some story in which Heorrenda, the singer of the Heodenings (Hegelings), was an important character.

The other passage from this poem is even more am-

<sup>1</sup> From Grein's *Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Poesie*, ed. R. P. Wülcker (Kassel, 1883). "This I will tell about myself, that I for a time was the bard of the Heodenings, beloved of my lord: Deor was my name. For many winters (*i.e.* years) I had a good position and a gracious lord, till now Heorrenda, the song-skilled man, received the right of the land that the warriors' protector (*i.e.* the king) had previously granted to me. I recovered from that: so I may from this."

<sup>2</sup> Cf. W. Meyer, *P.B.B.*, xvi. 523; J. W. Tupper, *M.L.N.*, x. 125.

biguous; in fact it is too full of difficulties to be adduced as evidence of any weight. One of the cases of sufferings surmounted is related thus (vv. 14-17):—

We þæt mæð Hilde monge gefrugnon :  
 wurdon grundlease Geates frige,  
 þæt him seo sorglufu slæp ealle binom.  
 þæs ofereode, pisses swa mæg !

Even if this is the correct reading (R. P. Wülcker's edition of Grein's *Bibliothek der angelsächsischen Poesie*) all that can be quite certainly gathered from the passage is that Hilde was connected in some way with Geat, whose love torments robbed him of sleep. A positively unassailable translation is impossible. For *mæð* does not occur elsewhere; it has been variously rendered *reward*, *fate*, *dishonour*. The word *grundlease* has been taken to mean literally *deprived of territory*, hence *exiled*, *endless*, and *unreasonable*; and *frige* has been understood as *chiefs*, *courtship*, and *freemen*. But in addition to this, the reading is uncertain. Instead of *mæð Hilde* it is possible to read *mæð hilde*, or *Mæðhilde*, either of which immediately disposes of the possibility of any reference to the Hilde saga.

In **Middle English** literature we have no references to the Hilde saga itself, but a character very early connected with that saga, Wade (Wate), is several times mentioned. In England he seems to have been the central figure of an independent tradition, of which, however, we know very little, except that he was originally a sea-giant, and later famous for wonderful exploits in his boat Guingelot. In *Gudrun* a reminiscence of his seafaring fame shines through in the account of the temporary danger of the Hegeling fleet from their nearness to the magnetic mountain (st. 1125 ff.); it is Wate alone who understands the peril and gives the necessary directions.

But although the English story of Wade was probably unconnected with the Hilde saga, and not in any way

influenced by the German *Gudrun*, it was of Germanic rather than Anglo-Saxon origin; and the prominent part played by Wate in *Gudrun* makes it worth while to notice briefly the English references to his adventures.

The earliest poem in which his name occurs is *Sir Bevis of Hamtoun*, a poem which also shows traces of other old sagas (*cf.* p. 125). By way of introducing his hero's combat with a dragon near Cologne, the author compares the exploit of Sir Bevis with similar feats of other renowned dragon-slayers, among whom is Wade (Auchinleck MS., v. 2605; ed., E. Kölbing, *E.E.T.S.*, London, 1885).

Very little later, about the middle of the fourteenth century, is the reference in Huchown's alliterative *Morte Arthure* (ed., G. G. Perry, London, 1865). Arthur, in quest of a certain man-eating giant, comes upon a "woeful widow wringing her hands," who, in answer to his inquiries, warns him that even were he *wyghtere* (quicker) *thane Wade* (v. 964) he would have no chance of overcoming the ogre. This passage is not identical, as G. Binz assumed (*P.B.B.*, xx. 197) with the passage in Malory's *Morte Darthur* (ed., H. O. Sommer, London, 1899), where the scornful damsel calls young Sir Beaumayns a kitchen boy, and adds that were he as *wyghte* as Wade, &c., he would not be able to pass the Pass Perilous (I. 225 *f.*). Malory's work, written about 1470, is more than a hundred years younger than Huchown's, and is entirely different in character and scope. His reference to Wade is, therefore, probably quite independent of the former.

Returning to the fourteenth century, we find two references in Chaucer's writings. The earlier is in "Troilus and Criseyde," iii. 614: *He song; she pleyde; he tolde a tale of Wade*. The other, more interesting, occurs in "The Marchantes Tale," where the merchant, growing elderly and desirous of wedlock, declares strongly against widows (vv. 179-183):—

And eek thise olde widwes, god it woot,  
 They conne so muchel craft on Wades boot,  
 So muchel broken harm, whan that hem leste,  
 That with hem sholde I never live in reste.<sup>1</sup>

In his notes Professor Skeat explains the allusion to *Wades boot* as meaning that old widows "know too much of the craft of Wade's boat; they can fly from place to place in a minute, and, if charged with any misdemeanour, will swear they were a mile away from the place at the time alleged." The phrase *broken harm* he takes as equivalent to "petty annoyances."

Lastly, in the prologue to a translation of Guido delle Colonne's *Historia Trojana* (MS. Laud. K. 76 in the Bodleian Library), Wade's name occurs again, according to Professor Skeat, coupled with Havelok and Horn, in a list of heroes of romance.

In the **Modern English** period the story of Wade still lived on at least to the end of the sixteenth century. Speght, who produced editions of Chaucer's works in 1598 and 1602, mentions in his notes that he knows the story, but refrains from giving it because it is long and fabulous.<sup>2</sup> This, however, seems to be the last echo of Wade's fame in this country. Tyrwhitt's references to Camden's "Britannia"<sup>3</sup> (p. 907) and to Charlton's "History of Whitby"<sup>4</sup> (p. 40), are misleading. The two passages are almost identical and relate only to a certain historic Wada, a nobleman concerned in the murder of King Ethelred of Northumberland.

<sup>1</sup> Rev. W. W. Skeat, "The Complete Works of Geoffrey Chaucer." (Oxford Clarendon Press, 1894.) Vol. iv. p. 432.

<sup>2</sup> Professor Skeat's edition of the "Canterbury Tales," vol. v. p. 356, note.

<sup>3</sup> William Camden's "Britannia" was published in London, 1586. The reference is to Edmund Gibson's revised edition of Philemon Holland's translation from the original Latin (London, 1722).

*Wade* occurs again (p. 1068) as a family name.

<sup>4</sup> Lionel Charlton, "History of Whitby and of Whitby Abbey." (York, 1779.)



## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

THE following is a list of the less common abbreviations used in the preceding pages :—

- |                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <i>Am.J.Phil.</i> | . American Journal of Philology.  |
| <i>A.S.</i>       | . Anglo-Saxon.  |
| <i>Av.</i>        | . Aventure (n).   |
| <i>E.E.T.S.</i>   | . Early English Text Society.   |
| <i>Germ.</i>      | . Germania.   |
| <i>H.G.</i>       | . High German.  |
| <i>Jsb.</i>       | . Jahresbericht über die Erscheinungen auf dem<br>Gebiete der germanischen Philologie.      |
| <i>M.H.G.</i>     | . Middle High German.   |
| <i>M.L.A.A.</i>   | . Publications of the Modern Language Association<br>of America.                            |
| <i>M.L.N.</i>     | . Modern Language Notes.  |
| <i>M.L.Q.</i>     | . Modern Language Quarterly (for some time<br>Modern Quarterly of Language and Literature). |
| <i>P.B.B.</i>     | . Paul und Braune's Beiträge zur Geschichte der<br>deutschen Sprache und Litteratur.        |
| <i>P.G.</i>       | . Paul's Grundriss der germanischen Philologie.   |
| <i>Z.f.d.A.</i>   | . Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum.   |
| <i>Z.f.d.Ph.</i>  | . Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie.  |

## APPENDIX

ALL obtainable publications with such titles as "German Masterpieces Translated," "Poems from the German," "German Poetry," "German Epics," "Specimens of German Romance," "Tales from the German," "Lays and Legends of Germany," "Poems Legendary and Historical," "Tales of the Gods and Heroes," &c. (a complete list would fill some pages), were examined in the hope of finding further material, but, with the exception of those mentioned in the preceding pages, in vain. The following may be specially mentioned as having, in spite of their titles, little or no bearing on Old German literature :—

- P. L. Agnew*, A Run through the Nibelung's Ring. Lond., 1898.  
*Anon.*, Attila, A Tragedy in Verse. Lond., 1832.  
 „ The Lamentation: A Poem. Lond., 1801, <sup>3</sup>1810.  
 „ Kriemhilda: A Tale. In the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine*, xx. 240 ff.  
*J. Berington*, Literary History of the Middle Ages. 1814, <sup>3</sup>1883.  
*H. H. Boyesen*, Essays on German Literature. Lond., 1892.  
*C. A. Feiling*, A Complete Course of German Literature. Lond., 1842.  
*H. A. Guerber*, The Story of Wagner's Operas. 1895.  
*Mrs. H. Hodgson*, Siegfried's Crown. 1885.  
*N. Hopper*, The Volsung Story, in *Atalanta*, xi. 630 ff.  
*G. P. R. James*, Attila. Lond., 1854, <sup>2</sup>1879.  
*A. H. Japp*, German Life and Literature. Lond., 1880.  
*T. Matthey*, German Literature and Reader. Lond., 1866, <sup>2</sup>1877.  
*Major North*, Gudrun, translated from the German, in the *Argosy*, xlii. 58 ff.  
*R. Pocock*, The Dragon Slayer. 1896.  
*W. F. Sheppard*, The Stories of Richard Wagner's Ring des Nibelungen. Lond., 1897.  
*J. Stagg*, The Minstrel of the North (including "Gothic" legends). 1810.

## ADDENDA

To the list of Miscellaneous Articles on the *Nibelungenlied* should be added:—

**J. P. Jackson.**—*Richard Wagner's Ring of the Nibelung.* (London; preface dated 1882.) Pp. 8-11.

A very condensed account with quotations from Lettsom. The few slight inaccuracies (*e.g.* "Hagan of Fronci") are hardly worth mentioning, but the statement that the more one reads the poem, "the greater becomes our surprise that the Germans can see so much beauty in it, since every vestige of symbolic idealism has been obliterated, and we have nothing but a long, rambling narrative, without beauty and without meaning," deserves recording.

**Rev. E. Cobham Brewer.**—*Dictionary of Phrase and Fable.* (Hundredth Thousand; London, 1895.)

Short and very misleading articles under the headings: Etzel (p 275), Hagan of Trony (378), Kriemhild (487), the Nibelungen Hoard (612 *f.*), Siegfried (820). *Cf.* the same author's "Reader's Handbook," mentioned on p. 117.

**Vivian Phillipps.**—*A Short Sketch of German Literature.* (London, no date; acquired by the British Museum 1895.) Pp. 6-8.

**Frances Gerard.**—*Wagner, Bayreuth, and the Festival Plays.* (London, 1901.)

A long chapter on "The Nibelungen Lied," which originally appeared in the *Twentieth Century Review* for March, 1901, occupies about a third of the whole book, and is divided into an Introduction (pp. 84 *ff.*) and two parts:—I. "The Lied as written by Professor Bodmer," pp. 86-130; II. "The Lied as adapted by Richard Wagner," pp. 130-147.

The account of the *Nibelungenlied* is fairly correct in its main outlines, but in every other respect most unsatisfactory. Minor inaccuracies and even examples of gross carelessness and ignorance abound, the style is lamentable, and the authoress has a most irritating tendency to indulge in cheap moralising. A few quotations will serve to exemplify these failings:—

“The songs, or lays, of Kudrun, in which the hero Siegfried first appears, the Rolandslied, and the lay of the Niebelungen were collected in 1140. A more perfect effort followed thirty years later, and in the fourteenth century Pilgrim von Passau gathered into one volume all he could find of these traditions. In these early efforts chronological sequence is not much followed, as in Dietrich von Bern, and King Etzel of Hungary, where historical events which belong to different periods are jumbled together in strange confusion” (p. 86).

“The collection of ballads which are called the lay of the Niebelungen, which, as above stated, were put into poetical form by Professor Bodmer and later translated by Karl Simrock, were taken from the first great circle of traditionary myths. This circle contains four ballads, which are mostly concerned with the lay of the Niebelung, the first being a prologue without which the second and fourth would not be very intelligible, while the third has only the one connecting link of Dietrich of Bern. The first Sagen Kreise opens with Siegfried,” &c. (p. 87).

“Like the dragon in the forest, the sleeping beauty on the rock surrounded with a wall of fire, each one of these has its prototype in our own lives. Our dragons are no less terrible, albeit they are invisible. They are waiting when we are of an age to enter the forest (that is, the world), and unless we slay these monsters, they devour us. Who will deny the presence in our midst of the Walkürie with her earthy nature?” &c., &c. (p. 93).

A number of mistakes occur in the account of the poem, *e.g.* when Siegfried is represented as engaging to wait one year for Kriemhild, meanwhile helping Gunther in all his wars (p. 96), or in the account of Gunther’s bridal night (p. 103). A stanza of Carlyle’s is misquoted on p. 119, and referred in a note to

“Bodmer's Poems”; and incorrect name-forms are not wanting: Rilfheim, Dunkwert, Hagen of Trontje, and even Trontje of Metz (presumably for Hagen, p. 108). The list of authorities consulted (p. 205) is also typical; it begins with *Geschichtse* (!) *Deutschen National Literatur* (Vilmar), and includes *Der Kudrun Niebelungen Hort u Klage*, apparently by the author *Gralsage* (!), and *Vertsaute Briefe von Bayreuth*.

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To the list of Miscellaneous Articles on *Gudrun* should be added:—

**Rev. E. Cobham Brewer.**—*Dictionary of Phrase and Fable*. (Hundredth Thousand; London, 1895.) P. 371.





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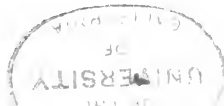
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