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BALLAD AND EPIC
A STUDY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE
NARRATIVE ART

BY

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PREFACE

What will, perhaps, cause most alarm to the cautious or scientifically-minded reader of these pages will be the use of modern ballads to represent something anterior to the epics, and the absence of the usual summary and criticism of the "literature of the subject." I have attempted in my Introduction to justify this use of the ballads, and I venture to hope that it finds justification in the book as a whole. The faint-hearted, moreover, may be encouraged by the knowledge that to ten Brink and Gaston Paris such use of the ballads did not seem unreasonable, unless I misinterpret the passages quoted in my Conclusion. The value of the study, however, does not depend wholly upon a time element and a theory of literary evolution or development: in any case, the comparison of a relatively complex with a relatively simple form of narrative may conceivably lead to results of some value in the appreciation of both.

Although, as I have said, ten Brink and Paris seem to suggest a comparative study of this kind, it has, so far as I know, never been attempted; and though comment on the narrative art of the *Roland*, the *Beowulf*, and the ballads has not been lacking, it has never, so far as I know, covered quite the same ground. Thus, although my evidence is in every case the result of first-hand study of the documents concerned, it is not to be supposed that all my facts are new. Far from it. But my use of the facts is new, and there is, therefore, strictly speaking, no "literature of the subject." The limits of the present volume forbid summary or discussion — even enumeration — of the vast general literature of the *Beowulf* and the *Roland*.

If I owe little to predecessors in the field, I am all the more deeply indebted to friends, masters, and colleagues. To Professor Gummere I owe my introduction, some fifteen years ago, to the study of popular poetry. I have endeavored elsewhere to make due acknowledgment of my indebtedness to his books; of my indebtedness to his lectures, and of the suggestion and inspiration of a long

friendship, I cannot speak adequately. To my friend and colleague Professor Lange I am indebted for methodological suggestions, made, indeed, in other connections, but of direct value for the present study. To the editors of this series I am under special obligations: Professor Sheldon has read in the manuscript the chapter on the *Roland;* Professor Robinson, that on the *Beowulf;* both have also read the proofs of the volume, and have made invaluable comments and suggestions. To Professor Kittredge my debt is of the kind which it is impossible to estimate or adequately to acknowledge. He has read the manuscript of this essay, first as a thesis written in connection with his course on the ballads, again as a doctoral dissertation, and yet again in its present shape. Without his criticism, without his unfailing and generous encouragement, this book could hardly have been undertaken or completed. For the general plan, however, and for the method of treatment, and for all defects and shortcomings, the writer is alone responsible.

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BALLAD AND EPIC

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INTRODUCTION

" The popular ballad," said Professor Child,[1] " is a distinct and very important species of poetry. Its historical and natural place is anterior to the appearance of the poetry of art, to which it has formed a step and by which it has been regularly displaced, and, in some cases, all but extinguished." It is with the nature of this step from popular poetry to the poetry of art that the present essay is concerned. Keeping in view the narrative method, broadly interpreted, it attempts to define, as the point of departure, the Simple Ballad; to trace the various phases of development through Cycle and Gest; and, last of all, to define, as point of arrival, the Epic, the type which stands at the beginning of the poetry of art.

Critics have hitherto contented themselves with statements like Professor Child's in regard to the priority of the ballad; or, like Müllenhoff and ten Brink, they have attempted to show that the epic is made from ballads by end-for-end juxtaposition or by ingenious patchwork. The present essay differs from such attempts as these in that it aims to present evidence, gathered from extant documents, of development — by elaboration and by accretion [2] — of the ballads themselves, and to show that this development, carried far enough, would eventually result in something like the epics which we possess.

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[1] In his article in the *Universal Cyclopædia.*

[2] *Accretion* is used throughout in contrast with *elaboration*, as denoting growth by external addition; as where to the story in hand the balladist adds an independent story not causally connected with the first. By *elaboration* is understood growth from within, as when character or emotion or setting is described at greater length, or the moral abstracted more fully, or the story told in greater detail.

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The chief obstacle in the way of such an attempt occurs to the mind at once: the poetry of art, the Epic, displaces and extinguishes the poetry of the people, the Ballad. Only by the artificial methods of comparatively modern times, by writing and printing, have some few fragments of the vast oral literature of the people been preserved. Our epics are hundreds of years older than our oldest ballads. We shall be compelled then to reverse the actual chronological order, and to set up a higher chronology, tracing a development backward through time. Is this justifiable? Is not the Ballad the lineal descendant, not the ancestor, of the Epic? Is not the art of the Ballad just the art of the Epic, broken down and popularized?

Justification for this disregard of apparent chronology lies, in reality, near at hand. The present method is, indeed, new, in so far as it is applied to the history of a literary form ; but it has long been made use of, and it is still used every day, in studies in the history of the material or content of literature. Professor W. P. Ker's little article on the Dutch *Roman van Walewein*[1] is a compact and typical example of this common practice. Professor Ker shows that this romance is based upon a popular story. In so doing he reduces the *Walewein* to " a quest for one marvellous thing leading to the quest for another and another, till the series is wound up." Then he cites as examples of the same type of story, folk-tales found in Grimm and Campbell, and shows that the differences between folk-tale and romance are modifications made necessary by the introduction of the knight-errant in place of the mere adventurer. These differences could not be explained by the assumption of the opposite process. Professor Ker, that is, makes use of folk-tales, found during the last century in Germany and Scotland, to indicate the nature of the ultimate source of a Dutch romance which " represents a French original of the late twelfth or early thirteenth century." [2] The folk-tales are not themselves the source, but merely modern representatives of it. Evidence of great age is found in the widespread dissemination of the material which the tales contain, and the nature of their plots shows that they represent a form of the story older than the romance.

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[1] *Folk-Lore*, V, 121.

[2] From the note by A[lfred] N[utt], *Folk-Lore*, V, 127. This note concludes with the comment that Professor Ker's remarks " afford another argument in favour of the contention: ' the folk-tale underlies the romance, the romance does not originate the folk-tale.' "

The popular ballad, now, like the popular tale, is a "survival in culture," and, as is the case with any such survival, the date of its discovery has nothing to do with its age. No one supposes that a custom found yesterday in Africa originated at that moment. The *märchen*, we have just seen, though committed to writing only in the last century, ·is older than the thirteenth-century romance. And so it is conceivable that the ballad, though taken down in modern times, represents a literary form[1] older than the epic, — the form from which the epic was developed. Proof of its age is to be found partly in its widespread dissemination ; for the ballad form, the striking peculiarities of the ballad art, are nearly as widespread as is the material of the folk-tale ; wherever one finds it, — whether in England or Scotland, Russia, Greece, Scandinavia, Spain, Italy, or Germany, — the manner of popular poetry is essentially the same. Further proof of its age is to be found in the simple and primitive quality of this manner ; that it is simpler and more primitive than that of the epic it is one purpose of the present essay to show. We have, then, the same right to regard it as an older *manner* that we have to regard the *matter* of the folk-tale as older than the matter of the romance.

The simple ballads, furthermore, deal with the widespread and simple types of story for which no source can be affirmed. These simple ballads may be regarded as representing the true ballad manner. When the ballad, as sometimes happens, goes to literature for its material, it shows a marked tendency to assimilate the form of the story which it finds there to the form of the true ballad. It is even possible to trace the steps of this assimilation from ballads like the *Boy and the Mantle* (29)[2], mere minstrel adaptation of romance, to ballads like *Sir Lionel* (18), or *King Orfeo* (19), which, though probably based on romances, have been completely made over in the popular style. Comparatively modern ballads, also, like *Mary Hamilton* (173), show a manner that does not differ essentially from the manner of the oldest. It is only by way of exception that one can determine by its manner whether a ballad is broken-down literature or pure popular tradition, whether it is new or old. Popular poetry, that is, wherever and whenever we find it, whatever the source of its material, has a distinctive form. It is then

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[1] It may represent older subject matter also; but with this we are not concerned.

[2] The figures in parentheses refer to the numbers attached to the ballads in Child's collection.

a fair inference that lost popular poetry, wherever and whenever it existed, had this same distinctive form.

The present study is confined to Germanic ground, and there is ample evidence to prove " that ballads were made and sung from the earliest historical periods of the Germanic race" [1] Of these early Germanic ballads, now lost, the ballads of the Child and Grundtvig collections are modern representatives; they are to be regarded as preserving in large measure the form of the popular narrative songs which preceded the oldest Germanic epic, the *Beowulf*. Upon the study of such ballads the following chapters are based. They deal (1) with the Simple Ballad, the narrative poem in its briefest, least developed state; (2) with the Border Ballad, representing somewhat greater length and elaboration; (3) with the Robin Hood Ballads, representing the cyclical tendency; (4) with *Adam Bell*, showing notable elaboration of plot; (5) with the *Gest of Robyn Hode*, that " epic in the making," an organic whole resulting from the union of certain ballads of the Cycle; (6) with the special preparation for the Epic, the Heroic Ballad; (7) with the *Beowulf*, showing the individual poet dealing somewhat boldly with a primitive popular art; and, finally (8), with the *Roland*, showing the poet handling in more conservative fashion a more highly developed popular tradition of art. For the first three chapters Professor Child's great collection affords ample material, but for the Heroic Ballads we must go to Grundtvig's *Danmarks Gamle Folkeviser*.

Numerous types of ballad, — Humorous, Scriptural, Chronicle, the Ballad derived from the Romance, the Ballad based on modern historical events, — all these are excluded as throwing little or no light upon the nature of the development. One is under no obligation to deal with all the material. The intention is rather merely to analyze such ballads as seem to show in some degree the tendency to develop in the direction of the epic. There are, of course, other tendencies, — in the direction of lyric, drama, broadside, or street ballad. But to affirm these is not to deny the tendency toward epic. The prevailing tendency in English literature in the early eighteenth century was toward Pseudo-classicism; but there existed, at the same time, a tendency in the direction of Romanticism as well. Of the types of ballad made use of in the discussions the writer is not prepared to

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[1] *Old English Ballads*, p. 298, where Professor Gummere cites some of the evidence.

furnish other definitions than those suggested by the discussions them-
selves, or by the lists of the ballads cited in each discussion.

Whatever theory one may hold as to the origins of ballad or epic,
one will not be disposed to maintain that either type is subject to indi-
vidual control, that either can be thought of as having a fixed or canon-
ical form. It is no part of our purpose to get back in any case to an
"original" version or text. Of the ballads, one version is as authentic
as another. As for the *Beowulf*, the text which we have is the basis for
our conclusions, since it represents one definite stage in the develop-
ment of our epic. But, while no attempt is made to reconstruct the
text by the exclusion of the Christian passages, these are not cited as
evidence of general epic usage. The quotations from the *Roland* are
from Stengel's edition.

So far now as the method of our investigation is concerned, the first
six chapters (the second chapter being divided into three parts) set
forth the characteristics of the narrative method employed in each of
the seven documents or groups of documents concerned. These studies
are made without any *a priori* formula, without any thought as to what the
nature of the development may be. They are thus independent studies,
and where in one reference is made to another, this is done for the
purpose of the exposition merely, not to indicate a relationship. The
seventh, or concluding chapter, deals with the relations of the docu-
ments, and attempts a succinct account, based on the evidence of
the studies, of the nature of the transition from Ballad to Epic.
The first six chapters are thus to be regarded mainly as collections
of material; the seventh as an attempt to set forth the conclusions
drawn therefrom.

In each chapter the subject matter, so far as this can be separated
from the form, is analyzed in the sections which deal with the Phase of
Life and with the Motives. By Phase of Life is understood the *drama-
tis personæ*, extended to include scenery and stage properties. It is
intended under this heading to give, in each case, some idea of the
scope of the documents concerned, of what and of how much of the world
they reproduce, as well as some notion of the extent to which this
world is transformed by balladist or poet, — made over, that is, in accord-
ance with some conception of an existing system of things, or repro-
duced, merely, as an aggregation of scattered and unrelated details.
By Phase of Life is then to be understood a kind of classified list of
the materials made use of in the narrative. By means of such lists it is

possible to trace the transition from the relative isolation of the ballad
hero to the elaborate relations with time and place, with fellow men,
with supernatural forces, of the hero of the epic. Involved in such rela-
tions, or springing from them, are the Motives, the mainsprings of the
action. Thus in the relation of lovers is involved Love; in the rela-
tion of man with his enemies, human or supernatural, is involved Valor.
In this connection are to be considered such matters as the balladist's
interest in these Motives for their own sake, the extent to which they
are abstracted from the action, or left to be inferred merely; the
balladist's conception of them, implied or expressed; their simplicity
or complexity; their adequacy or inadequacy as causes of the action;
the balladist's care in providing sufficient motive for minor action, etc.
By means of the series of studies of Motives it is possible to trace
growth in scope, and in power of abstraction and organization.

The last three sections in each chapter deal with the treatment of
this material, — with *manner*, so far as it is possible to separate it from
matter. The first of them deals with Structure : with such matters as
introductions and conclusions; the treatment of the objective point;
the introduction of episodes; the management of transitions and con-
nections; questions as to whether the plot is simple or complex,
whether it is a single narrative stream or involves synchronous events,
whether it departs from the chronological order or not. These studies
make it possible to trace a growth in the architectural skill of the
balladist, and to note increasing evidence of a sense of power and free-
dom in dealing with the narrative. The second of the sections which
deal with treatment is concerned with the General Characteristics of
the Narrative Method, — with such matters as Movement, and the use of
suspense and of dialogue. Movement is more or less affected by repe-
tition, for which both ballad and epic betray a fondness, — the one
displaying a love of verbal similarity, the other, of verbal variety. Move-
ment is affected by the peculiar omissions of the Simple Ballad, which
come to be replaced more and more by elaboration. [Failure to assign
speeches is a marked phase of ballad omission] and this peculiarity is
replaced by assignments which grow fuller and more elaborate. The
first and second sections, then, are concerned with the treatment
of Plot. The third and last section in each chapter deals with the
remaining elements of narration, with Character, Mental States, Moral
Significance, Setting. In connection with Character are considered
matters like the relative importance of character, its abstraction from

the action, its complexity or simplicity, and the methods of character-description. Mental States, Moral Significance, and Setting are considered in similar manner. The Simple Ballad neglects these elements, but they receive more and more attention, and thus give further evidence of increase of scope and of abstracting power and insight. It will be obvious that the categories mentioned are not mutually exclusive, and a rigid application of them has been avoided rather than sought; as a result, the chapters, like the various forms of evidence which they contain, are not strictly symmetrical. No attempt is made to deal with the details of ballad or of epic style, with the refrain, or with metre.

It is to be noted, finally, that the terms *balladist, composer, poet*, etc., imply no theory of composition or origins; they denote merely the human agency to which we owe ballad or epic. The term *ballads* is to be taken as referring to the Simple Ballads, the ballads of Chapter I, unless the contrary is stated.

CHAPTER I

THE SIMPLE BALLADS

I. The Phase of Life

The action of the ballads does not, as a rule, take place in towns or cities. Young Beichan, indeed, was born in Lovely London (53); and Mary Hamilton rode through Edinburgh streets ne'er to return again (173). But the town is seldom significant as town. The ballad muse was country-bred; she did not, however, always scorn a roof. Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard first met in a church (81). A church was the scene of a murder, the avenging murder, and a suicide in *Lord Thomas and Fair Annet* (73). A castle was often the scene of the action: Sir Hugh met death in the Jew's castle (155). *Hall* is even more common than *castle*. Here Hind Horn returned to his love (17); the hall gates shone with red gold in *Child Waters* (63); the inspired capon spoke in "King Herodes halle" (22). With the narrower sense of *hall* is coupled *bower* in the common phrase "bower and hall." And from ballads like *Glasgerion* (67), *Willie and Lady Maisry* (70), and *Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard* (81), *bower*, the sleeping apartment of the women, comes to have something of an evil connotation. In other ballads, however, it means a separate building, a kind of cottage, apparently, like that which Bessy Bell and Mary Gray "bigget on yon burn-brae," "and theekit oer wi rashes" and with heather (201). "There war Twa Sisters in a bower" (10), moreover, and in *Babylon* (14), "There war three ladies lived in a bower," and the heroine of the *Gay Goshawk* (96) lived in a bower with a shot window, beside whose door grew a bowing birk. The house, as in *Fair Margaret and Sweet William* (74), *The Wife of Usher's Well* (79), etc., the stable in *Child Waters* (63), the well in *Sir Hugh* (155), the cross in *Tam Lin* (39), and the brigs in *Fair Mary of Wallington* (91), etc., complete the list of ballad architecture.

From the house one passes to the green garden in *Clerk Colvill*, (42), thence to Thomas Rymer's "grassy bank" (37), the "field and tree" of *The Three Ravens* (26), and the "dale and glen" where

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Katharine Jaffray lived (221). The wood was to be avoided : — there lived the outlaw (*Babylon* [14]); in the "wild wood" Lord Randal was poisoned (12); in the "silver wood" lived and died Child Maurice (83), and Jellon Grame (90); and "evil was the way" where Janet went to keep her tryst with Tam Lin (39). Bonnie James Campbell (210) rode "high upon Highlands." The balladist seldom ventured out to sea. For Hind Horn (17) the sea meant exile; for the Lass of Roch Royal (76), Edward (13), and Mary Hamilton's "bonny wee babe" (173), it meant death. If there were fey folk in a ship, she would not sail in a storm, and Brown Robyn (57) and Bonnie Annie (24), chosen by lot, were flung overboard to save the crew. It is a true as well as a picturesque bit of detail when to Fair Annie (62) the topmast of her lover's ship shines like burnished gold, becoming visible from lower and lower stories of the castle as the ship approaches. Sea and milldam are confused in the *Twa Sisters* (10), and an anomalous body of water is "Craigie's Sea" in *Kemp Owyne* (34). Upon the banks of streams the balladist was more at home. Often the stream is named :

> Hie upon Hielands,
> and laigh upon Tay

rode Bonnie James Campbell (210). "By the bonnie banks o' Fordie" Babylon (14) slew his sisters. "By yon burn-brae" Bessy Bell and Mary Gray "bigget a bower" (201). "Between a water and a wa'" one met the "Wee Wee Man" (38), and by the "wall o' Stream," Clerk Colvill (42) found his mermaid. There is, perhaps, a suggestion of the same supernatural association in the salt water, flowing from bank to brim, that Child Waters forded while fair Ellen swam, supported by Oure Ladye (63).

This same association clung, of course, about grave or graveyard. From the Unquiet Grave the dead reproved the living for excessive grief (78); from her "green grass grave" came Fair Margaret in her winding sheet (74); and another Margaret followed Sweet William's Ghost to the grave in a green forest (77). In *The Wife of Usher's Well*, the "channerin worm doth chide," though the sons wore hats o' the birk that grows at the gates of paradise (79).

Another supernatural region was close at hand. The Queen of the Fairies caught Tam Lin (39),

> In *yon* green hill to dwell.

For Thomas Rymer it was, however, a forty days' journey, through blood, to a "garden green," whence "yon hill" was visible (37).

In geography the balladist was not learned. Towns and cities have already been noted.[1] Often the action took place vaguely "in the North":—"There were twa brethren in the north" (49); Lady Maisry dwelt "in the north country" (65). More in keeping with the characteristic ballad vagueness is that "strange country" where dwelt the "savage Moor," father of Young Beichan's true-love (53).

Place relations are, then, in general, vague, and not, as a rule, significant. The same is true of time relations. Fair Margaret and Sweet William had talked "a lang summer's day" (74). Tam Lin was transformed on Hallow-e'en (39), for obvious reasons, and Martinmas, "when nights are lang and mirk," was clearly the time for the shipwreck and ghost-seeing in *The Wife of Usher's Well* (79). It was perhaps an historical fact that the Captain Car tragedy occurred at the same season (178). "About Yule" the court festivities began, and then it was natural that the Queen should see Young Waters "cum riding to the town" (94). Of the days of the week, Friday, curiously enough, is not mentioned; Brown Robyn's voyage (57) began, and Sir Patrick Spens was wrecked (in 58, E and G) on "Wednesday." As to the time of day, night was of course necessary for the ghost ballads; and

> Just at the mirk and midnight hour
> The fairy folk will ride

in *Tam Lin* (39). But midday also was an hour for spirits, and it was clearly in broad daylight that Thomas Rymer met the Queen of the Fairies (37), and, apparently, when Clerk Colvill found his "well-fared may" (42).

Far more important than matters of Place and Time are the Human Relations. Of these the narrower group, which one may call "Family" or "Domestic," is most significant; and of this, that of Lovers. No sharp line is drawn between illicit love and love "with honorable intentions." It is obvious that the relation of love must come into conflict with other relations; from the conflict comes the story and the story is usually a tragedy. In *Child Waters*, indeed, there is no such conflict; Fair Ellen survived the cruel test, and bridal and churching were upon one day (63). True love seldom ran smoother than this in the ballads; no cruel brother, false sister, or rival interferes with the lovers,

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[1] Cf. p. 8, above.

though there is indeed threat of a " paramour." The love relation,
that is, does not ordinarily stand alone, and it is best discussed from the
point of view of those which come into conflict with it. First we may
note that of rival suitors : here, indeed, the hero of the ballad is usually
successful, and the end is not tragic, — for him. Hind Horn came
back in time to prevent his true-love's marriage (17). Fair Janet,
however, had to marry the " auld French lord," and died dancing with
her former sweetheart at the wedding (64). More often these rivals
were women, sometimes with tragic results for all concerned, as in *Lord
Thomas and Fair Annet* (73), *Young Hunting* (68), and *Fair Margaret
and Sweet William* (74). In *Young Beichan* (53) and *Fair Annie* (62)
the heroine defeats her rival. The relation of man and wife is seldom
significant in these ballads : most so, perhaps, in *Captain Car* (178),
where wife is declared dearer than lands or life. Often the fact that
the ballad hero had a wife is brought in at the end (as in the modern
newspaper, " deceased leaves a wife and three children "), heightening
the effect of some other, tragic relation, and the ballad concludes : —

> Oh lang will his lady
>   Look o'er the castle Down
> Eer she see the Earl of Murray
>   Come sounding thro the town! (181, A, 6).

This Bonny Earl of Murray " was the queen's love," and so false to
his wife. Other husbands were faithless : " the highest Stewart of a',"
in *Mary Hamilton* (173), and Clerk Colvill (42); and wives too, as in
Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard (81), *The Baron of Brackley* (203),
Child Maurice (83), and *Old Robin of Portingale* (80); notably faith-
ful in *Brown Adam* (98). Directly opposed to the love relation stands,
ordinarily, that of father and daughter, as in *Tam Lin* (39); Willie
dies by the hand of Lady Maisry's father (70); this tragedy is reversed
in *Earl Brand* (7); and Fair Janet's father is directly responsible for
the death of both lovers (64). The relation of father and son is con-
spicuously absent; except in *Edward* (13) and in *The Clerk's Twa
Sons o Owsenford* (72) it does not appear in these ballads. Much is
made of the relation of mother and son. In *The Wife of Usher's Well*
(79) it is a mother's grief that brings her sons back from the grave; in
Child Maurice (83) the mother's death follows the son's. In these two
this relation makes the ballad. In its pathetic phase of mother and
child it appears in *Child Waters* (63), *Captain Car* (178), the later

versions of *Lord Randal* (12), notably R, and *Sir Hugh* (155). In
the last mentioned the fact that the mother is a widow is used to
heighten the effect, as it is in *Willie and Lady Maisry* (70). Lord
Randal (12) comes home to his mother to die; and so does Clerk
Colvill (42) ; mother and wife again stand side by side in *Bonnie James
Campbell* (210). The ballads are not without records of infanticide, as in
Mary Hamilton (173) and *The Cruel Mother* (20); but, otherwise, of
false mothers there is no mention, if we except that one in *Edward*
(13), who was primarily false wife and made her son her tool, and her
who poisoned Prince Robert (87) because he married against her wishes.
And, indeed, as mother-in-law the mother did not always appear in so
favorable a light; she was a witch who hindered the birth of Willie's
Lady's child (6) ; or she impersonated her son, and turned away the
Lass of Roch Royal (76). But she was not always unfriendly : it was
she that sent Child Waters to Fair Ellen, who was making her moan in
the stable (63) ; and to her Sweet Willie brought Fair Janet's child (64),
— though here, indeed, the balladist is concerned with the compla-
cent grandmother, a very different matter. The stepmother played her
conventional part when, as a witch, in *Kemp Owyne* (34), she trans-
formed her daughter. Like that of father and son, the mother and
daughter relation is not significant. There is only one example, that of the
fatalistic mother of Fair Mary of Wallington (91), who calmly acquiesced
in the death of her six daughters in childbirth, and predicted the same
fate for the seventh. Here, as in *Babylon* (14), or in the *Cruel
Brother* (11), the relation of sisters is not important ; in the last men-
tioned the sister-in-law, " Brother John's wife," had some connection
with the tragedy. But the Twa Sisters (10) are rivals in love, and the
end is tragic. To this *The Twa Brothers* (49) is perhaps a companion
piece ; but whether the fatal outcome of that wrestling match was acci-
dent or not does not appear from the ballad. Lord Thomas's brother,
however, was friend and counsellor (73).

To the sister the brother appeared mainly as her enemy or her
lover's : the Cruel Brother killed his sister because his consent was not
asked (11), and Lady Maisry's brother burned her at the stake because
her lover was an Englishman (65). In *Babylon* (14) tragedy results
from ignorance of this relation. Fair Margaret's brothers came into
conflict with Sweet William (74), and brothers with lover in *The Gay
Goshawk* (96). The relation of friendship, finally, is absent. It must
be assumed for Bessy Bell and Mary Gray (201), but it is not significant.

We pass now to the larger social relations. The matter of rank is not very significant. It is emphasized only in ballads of unequal matches. These are not uncommon, especially among the later ballads, "and," says Professor Child,[1] "very naturally, since they are an easy expedient for exciting interest, at least with those who belong to the humbler party. [Beside *Tom Potts* (109)] we have other ballad-examples of disparagement on the female side in 'The Bonnie Foot-Boy' and 'Ritchie Storie' [(232) and *The Knight and Shepherd's Daughter* (110)]; . . . but when the Lady of the Strachy marries the Yeoman of the Wardrobe good taste is shocked. [Cf. also Lady Diamond (269), who married a bonny kitchen boy.] Such events would be celebrated only by fellows of the yeoman or of the foot-boy." For the most part King and Queen even are father and mother, man and wife, merely, and suffer the common vicissitudes of these relations. Any ballad hero or heroine may be a king's son or daughter, and none the worse or better for it. So Glasgerion (67) and his sweetheart, Hind·Horn's true-love (17), and the Twa Sisters (10). Members of the nobility were plentiful, as the ballad titles show : — *Baron of Brackley* (203), *Earl of Murray* (181), *Lord Randal* (12), *Earl Brand* (7), *Lord Thomas* (73), *Lady Barnard* (81). Perhaps an actual count would show a ballad preference for knights. Certainly the title "Sir" is common, and the son of the poor widow became the Sir Hugh (155) of the ballads. . In none of these is there any mark of rank in character or action. The hero or heroine should be wealthy and well-dressed, — no more was required.

But few callings are represented. The professional harper appears only in the *Twa Sisters* (10), but Glasgerion could win ladies by his harping (67). Lamkin (93) was a mason ; Brown Adam (98, A), a smith ; Christopher White (108), a merchant ; Babylon (14), an outlaw. The servant was notably either false or true : — false in *Captain Car* (178) and *Glasgerion* (67) ; while in *Lady Maisry* (65), *Child Maurice* (83), *Lord Ingram and Chiel Wyet* (66), *The Clerk's Twa Sons o Owsenford* (72), etc., he is the faithful messenger ;[2] and in *Young Beichan*, a bribable porter (53). There is a beggar in *Hind Horn* (17). In general, the balladist was not concerned with a man outside of the immediate scene or action of the ballad.

The larger national relations are scarcely present in these ballads. Border rivalry serves only to emphasize deer-stealing or bride-stealing

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[1] II, 441.   [2] Cf. Child, *Index*, s.v. *Commonplaces.*

motives. For the latter, see *Lady Maisry* (65), *Earl Brand* (7), *The Gay Goshawk* (96), and *Katharine Jaffray* (221), or *The Fair Flower of Northumberland*, where occurs the warning —

> All you faire maidens be warned by me,
> Scots were never true, nor never will be,
>   To lord, nor lady, nor faire England (9, A, 35).

But it is "faire Scotland," too, — no doubt conventionally (9, A, 13). Foreigners were vaguely conceived: Fair Janet had to marry "an auld French lord" (64), and Young Beichan had a Moorish sweetheart : —

> He 's changd her name frae Shusy Pye,
>   An he 's cald her his bonny love, Lady Jane (53, A, 23).

No phase of Religion plays an important part in these ballads. Not much is made of the anti-Semitic feeling that inspired the *Sir Hugh* story (155), and in a later version the Jew's daughter readily became a Duke's daughter. In *Captain Car* the fact that the feud was based on Catholic-Protestant enmity has disappeared from the ballad (178). *Brown Robyn's Confession*, says Professor Child,[1] "celebrates a miracle of the Virgin, and is our only example of that extensive class of legends, unless we choose to include *The Jew's Daughter*, and to take Robin Hood's view of the restoration of his loan."[2] "Our Lady's draw-well," in *Sir Hugh* (155), is perhaps a faint echo of her miracle in the similar story as we have it in the *Prioresses Tale*. It is perhaps worth while to note in passing that Thomas Rymer hails the queen of elfland as "Thou mighty Queen of Heaven" (37), and that in *Child Waters*,

> The salt waters bare vp Ellens clothes,
>   Our Ladye bare vpp her chinne (63, A, 16).

Add to these passages the special account of Herod's inspired capon (22), and we have all the testimony there is for the interposition of Providence in human affairs.

For a life beyond death there was evidence in the return of the dead, — Fair Margaret's Sweet William (74) and the three sons of the Wife of Usher's Well (79) ; and from the Unquiet Grave (78) came the protest against excessive grief. Lord Thomas's cry to his dead sweetheart, "Stay for me," is also in point (73). Supernatural beings are to be discussed in connection with the Motives.[3] We may note now the presence of fairies in *Thomas Rymer* (37), *The Wee Wee Man* (38),

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[1] II, 13.   [2] In the *Gest*, sts. 237 f.   [3] See p. 20, below.

Tam Lin (39); of the mermaid in *Clerk Colvill* (42); of the merman in *The Great Silkie of Sule Skerry* (113); of the witch and Billy Blin, in *Willie's Lady* (6); of Old Carl Hood, in *Earl Brand* (7), — though he shows no supernatural qualities in this ballad. In this group should per- haps be mentioned birds with supernatural powers: a bird revealed the secret of Young Hunting's murder (68); her parrot similarly threatened Lady Isabel (4); the Bonny Birdy (82) warned a knight of his wife's inconstancy; and the Gay Goshawk was a .lover's go-between (96). The lover of the Earl of Mar's Daughter (270) came to her always in the form .of a bird. The Three Ravens planned a breakfast upon a knight "down in yonder green field," but

> " His haukes they flie so eagerly,
> There 's no fowle dare him come nie,"

and

> God send euery gentleman,
> Such haukes, such hounds, and such a leman (26, 5 and 10).

Not again in these ballads do hawks or hounds play such an important rôle. Lord Randal's bloodhounds swelled and died when he was poi- soned (12). Edward's horse was a " reid-roan steid, that erst was sae fair and frie O " (13). But white steeds are ordinarily given the preference. Often they were fleeter than the wind, shod with silver and gold. In fairy processions one heard their bridles ring.

II. MOTIVES

Of the relations just enumerated the most common and most impor- tant were, as we have seen, those involving man and man, or man and woman. To state such a relation is to imply, usually, a motive; and such a motive may be regarded, in each case, as the central idea, the " mainspring," of the ballad. The commonest human relation was that of lovers, — the motive, obviously, love, — and love, whether as central or subsidiary motive, is the commonest spring of action in these ballads. It is a central motive in a limited and modified sense. It is, indeed, the mainspring of the action, and, measured by its consequences, it is strong enough. Yet, in itself, it does not interest the balladist; it is lightly touched, hurried over as a necessary explanation. The emphasis is usually on what follows : —on the tragedy ; on the return of the dead ; on the combat of rivals, as combat merely ; or on artifice and its success,

as in *Willie's Lyke-Wake* (25) and *The Gay Goshawk* (96). It is touched so lightly, so conventionally, in *The Cruel Brother* (11) that the hero seems to ask three sisters to marry him (to be his bride, his queen, his heart's delight). Which accepts is not clear; nor does it matter for the action of the ballad. The three are differentiated only in dress, and the heroine is not named. The death of the sister by the brother's hand is the important matter. So in *Fair Mary of Wallington* (91), inevitable death in childbirth is the main point, and the love motive, which must obviously have been a strong one, is hurried over with the periphrasis :

> She pleasd hersel in Levieston,
> Thay wear a comly twa (91, B, 2).

In the course of love the balladist was not interested.) The stuff of the modern novel, — first meeting, gradual dawn of affection, avowed and eager on one side, lagging or concealed on the other, — all this is excluded from the ballad, did not exist in the ballad world. Once, two lovers dreamed, each of the other, before they met,[1] — she had not even seen him, — and the modern reader remembers *The Brushwood Boy;* but "a may's love whiles is easy won,"[2] and when a ballad opens the love-story is ordinarily already well advanced, the mutual recognition has taken place, and each is ".my true-love" to the other. Often matters have gone even further. The relation is illicit; the heroine is with child, and, as in *Lady Maisry*, the ballad traces the consequences (65). In *Mary Hamilton* the ballad opens with the birth of the child (173). Fair Annie has borne seven sons, and is with child again (62); Marie's *Lai du Frêne*, which has the same plot, tells of the birth of the heroine, of the circumstances that led to her concealment, of her bringing up in a convent, and of how she was wooed and won.

When love-making is brought into the ballad at all, it is usually hurried through as a mere uninteresting preliminary.[3] Thus, *Hind Horn* begins, — and the stanzas quoted are consecutive : —

> In Scotland there was a babie born,
> And his name it was called young Hind Horn.
>
> He sent a letter to our king
> That he was in love with his daughter Jean (17, A, 1 and 2).

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[1] In *Willie o Douglas Dale*, 101, B.   [2] Refrain, 9, B.

[3] Cf. the opening stanzas of *Fair Margaret and Sweet William* (74), or of *Lord Thomas and Fair Annet* (73).

This is a characteristic bit of ballad compression. The plot of the romance of *King Horn* (based on older ballads now lost) is essentially a love-story. It is the love motive running through the whole that gives unity to the adventures. Some seven hundred lines correspond to these two opening stanzas of the ballad. In an incursion of the Saracens, King Murri, Horn's father, and many of his subjects are slain, and Horn and his companions sent out to sea without rudder or sail. They drift ashore in Westernesse. King Aylmar receives them well, and his daughter, Rymenhild, falls in love with Horn. She sends her steward for him, but the steward substitutes Athulf, Horn's brother. Athulf, however, tells her who he is, and Horn is brought to her. She solicits his love. He replies that he is not worthy of her; he must first be knighted. This is accomplished; but now he must prove his knight- · hood. After Horn's successful adventure, Fykenhild, his false companion, finds him with Rymenhild. He informs King Aylmar that he has overheard Horn plotting against the King's life, and Aylmar banishes Horn. This brings us to the opening of the ballad; after the close of the ballad similar adventures occur. In the ballad, that is, we have the return of a lover in time to prevent the marriage; in the romance, two lovers kept apart by a series of adventures or misfortunes. In the romance, moreover, the love motive is not developed by the action merely, — it is directly expounded : " Men loved Horn Child, and most of all, Rymenhild loved him, the king's daughter. He was so much in her thoughts, and she so loved him, that she well nigh went mad; for she might speak no word to him, in hall, or at board, among all the knights or in any other place. . . . Of her sorrow and pain she could find no end, and she had woe at her heart until at last she thought how she might send her messenger, Athelbrus." [1] This dwelling upon a state of mind which can find no outlet in action, upon the way in which the emotion piles up and breaks out at last, stands in sharp contrast to the ballad, where the motive is exhibited in the action only.[2]

(In ballads where the love motive is not central the touch, of course, is lighter still. In *The Wife of Usher's Well*,

> And fare ye weel, the bonny lass
> That kindles my mother's fire ! (79, A, 12)

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[1] Vv. 246–266.

[2] But in the ballad of *Will Stewart and John* (107), Will, the lover, can do nothing but leap into care-bed ; it is his brother John who carries on the wooing, and has a way out of every difficulty.

is a characteristic hint. And so are " I met wi my true-love ; mother,"
in *Lord Randal* (1 2 , A); the " fallow doe," in *The Three Ravens* (26);
" And the bonny Earl of Murray, Oh he was the Queen's love " (181,
A, 5). Or, again, the ballad opens with a mere statement of the fact: —

> Oh did ye ever hear o brave Earl Bran ?
> He courted the king's daughter of fair England (7, A, 1);

or with a mere conventional account in some artificial stanzaic group,
as in *The Twa Sisters* (10).

The ballad, however, is not always thus external, perfunctory, or con-
ventional. The Fair Flower of Northumberland (9) is won only in
eight stanzas. In *The False Lover Won Back* there is something like
gradual change of heart. The knight is going to another, and the lady
follows, with the lyrical stanza :

> " But again, dear love, and again, dear love,
>   Will ye never love me again ?
> Alas for loving you sae well,
>   And you nae me again ! " "

Until, at last,

> The next an town that they came till,
>   His heart it grew mair fain,
> And he was as deep in love wi her
>   As she was ower again (218, A, 10 and 13).

The accent is not on the action, but, throughout, on change of mental
state. In *Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard*, too, there is a glimpse
of the hero's mental processes. He stood at the church door and
thought more of the fair women than of the mass. Presently Lady
Barnard appeared, and

> She cast an eye on Little Musgrave,
>   As bright as the summer sun ;
> And then bethought this Little Musgrave,
>   This lady's heart have I woonn.

> Quoth she, I have loved thee, Little Musgrave,
>   Full long and many a day ;
> ' So have I loved you, fair lady,
>   Yet never word durst I say ' (81, A, 4 and 5).

Glasgerion won a king's daughter by his harping :

> There 's neuer a stroke comes ouer thin harpe
>   But it glads my hart within (67, A, 3).

And, as in *Little Musgrave*, declarations follow. Even here, however, action comes immediately. The accent is on consequences, — and consequences physical, and never (as, for instance, in *The Scarlet Letter*) psychological. The love motive gains a different sort of emphasis through the lovers' quarrel in *Lord Thomas and Fair Annet* (73). This modern device is here combined with another, that of prudent financial considerations, — an important matter in *Young Beichan* (53) also, though not in *The Fair Flower of Northumberland* (9), where the situation is similar. That phase of love, however, which seems most to interest the ballad, is constancy. "Grisilde is deed, and eek hir pacience," but both live again in Burd Ellen (*Child Waters* [63]), and in Fair Annie (62). In the latter it receives greater emphasis (though perhaps accidentally) than in the *Lai du Frêne*. In the ballad the unfaithfulness of the lover is wanton, arbitrary; in the romance it is carefully motived. Constancy is, again, the important matter in *Young Beichan* (53), *Hind Horn* (17), and *The Three Ravens* (26), — with which, of course, one must contrast the cynical *Twa Corbies* ("His lady's ta'en another mate").[1] "Maidens loath and mad pursuit" is seldom a picture of ballad love-making. In *Young Beichan* (53), as in *The False Lover Won Back* (218), it is the maiden who does the wooing.

(In general, we may note that the ballad seldom commits itself as to whether love is illicit or not.) In both *Mary Hamilton* (173) and *Fair Annie* (62) there is a conflict between mistress and wife; but the fact that one union is irregular, the other regular, is not emphasized in either ballad. Many a ballad heroine (the Fair Flower of Northumberland [9] and the sisters in *Babylon* [14]) preferred death to dishonor, and the lovely woman who stooped to folly came often to a tragic end; yet often she was married, too (as in *Child Waters* [63]), and the true ballad is always innocent of moral comment on the action. So far, finally, as the love motive is defined in any detail, it is — obviously — not idealized; it is regarded always as the mere passion.

Lovers we found commonly in conflict with other domestic relations; the conflict implies often a second common motive, Valor. Valor is the central motive in many of these ballads; in others it is an important subsidiary motive. It appears, of course, only in the action. The balladist seems not to have been aware of the abstract idea of courage;

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[1] See Child, I, p. 253.

yet, when courage is called for, his characters invariably possess it.
Fear, its opposite, is never a motive in these ballads. Even Brown Robyn
accepts his lot without question, and bids his men throw him over-
board (57). The ballad heroine, also, is fearless. Lady Hamilton (in
Captain Car [178]) prefers death to dishonor; and Lady Maisry is
burned at the stake by her brother, rather than give up her English
lord (65). Fair Janet (in *Tam Lin* [39]) possessed not only the common
courage which preferred lover to family, but the courage to meet and
overcome the terrors of the dark night and eerie way, and of the trans-
formation of her lover, — all as a matter of course.

The balladist is interested in the fight for its own sake; and in the
love ballads, when a combat occurs, nothing is made of the love motive
after it has started the action. In bride-stealing ballads, like *Earl
Brand* (7) and *Katharine Jaffray* (221), the fight is the thing, the
bride is only an incident. In the romance, King Horn, before going
into battle, always thought of Rymenhild and looked at the ring she
had given him. The ballad hero needed no inspiration but the challenge.

Courage was of the unreasoning type. It showed itself often in the
fight against odds, as in *Earl Brand* (7), where the hero was only one
against sixteen. It is to be noted, however, that his foes came on him
one by one; and the ballad hero, even when in the wrong, could always
count on a fair fight, if the foe were fair. Lord Barnard would not
attack Little Musgrave naked and unarmed, and offered him the better
of two swords (81). Willie, on the other hand, was slain in bed by
Lady Maisry's father (" father dear," " auld father " [70, A, 11 and 13]).[1]
Yet the rule seems to be the fair fight and condemnation of one who
takes unfair advantage. In connection with this should be noted the
generous grief for a fallen foe. Striking and unexpected is Lord Bar-
nard's lament for his wife's lover (81), or John Steward's for Child
Maurice, his wife's son (83).

The third important central motive of these ballads is that of the
Supernatural. In his essay *On the Supernatural in Fictitious Compo-
sition*, Scott says that it requires to be managed with considerable deli-
cacy; that it loses its effect by being brought much into view. He
quotes Burke to the effect that obscurity is necessary to make anything
terrible. The first touch, he thinks, is always the most effective.
The supernatural being forfeits all claim to terror and veneration " by

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[1] But Lady Maisry curses her father : " An ill deed may you die !" (st. 14).

condescending to appear too often ; to mingle too much in the events of the story, and above all, to become loquacious, or, as it is familiarly called, chatty."[1] The ballad art is peculiarly, though unconsciously, fitted for the representation of the supernatural. The brevity of the ballad, its tendency to proceed by allusion and suggestion, its omission of essentials, its love of the unmotived and unexplained, combine to give a peculiar charm and effectiveness to ghost or fairy stories. Yet the method of the ballad is quite other than that of the literature of art.

In the Ghost Story,[2] — to begin with this class, — the aim of the modern writer is primarily to produce an effect, — an effect of mystery and terror. With this end in view he makes his story as convincing as possible. He does this mainly by emphasizing accessories : by creating an appropriate and mysterious setting, by laying stress upon the hour of the night or the weather. He makes his characters real human beings ; he increases the effect of verisimilitude by placing them in commonplace surroundings. Then he prepares us gradually for some mysterious or terrible catastrophe. He exhibits the changing states of mind of his characters, the effects upon them of ominous foreshadowing, and, finally, the effect of the event itself. After the event follows, usually, some account of its cause. And this cause (so long as we have to do with a true, not a rationalized, ghost story) explains, yet deepens, the mystery, and gives even greater semblance of truth to the whole.[8] How far does the balladist follow this method? In general, he employs no special art for the treatment of the supernatural. We shall have occasion presently to note the ballad emphasis of action ; it is, then, to be expected that with character, states of mind, setting, the ballad has very little to do. The time, indeed, is night, — "lang and mirk" in *The Wife of Usher's Well* (79); "when all men were asleep," in *Sweet William's Ghost* (77) and *Fair Margaret and Sweet William* (74). In *Young Benjie* (86) the corpse speaks about the middle o' the night. In a later version of *Sweet William's Ghost* (77, F) time and place are made to contribute to the effect :

> And she is up to the hichest tower,
> By the lee licht o the moon (st. 1).

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[1] Scott, *Essays on Chivalry, Romance, and the Drama*, Chandos ed., p. 272. Cf. p. 183, below, on the effective silence of Grendel and his Dam in *Beowulf*.

[2] One may think of *Hamlet*, of *The Fall of the House of Usher*, or of *Who Fell from Aloft?* by George S. Wasson in the *Atlantic Monthly* for February, 1902.

[8] Since the causal relation is our common test of reality.

Except, however, by means of such passages as these the balladist makes
no attempt to produce a special effect or to get his story believed.
The inference seems to be that no special treatment was necessary,
that ghost-seeing was not an uncommon experience for his audience.
Unlike Partridge in *Tom Jones*, they needed not to be convinced by
the effect upon others. Thus the Wife of Usher's Well shows no sur-
prise when her sons return, and treats them as if they were really of
flesh and blood. And if she does not know their true nature until cock-
crow, even then she does not speak (79). Margaret shows no surprise
or fear when she finds that she is talking to Sweet William's ghost;
the dominant emotion is the grief of the separated lovers (74).[1]

Frequently the balladist does not even call the ghost a ghost, and
has it act in every way like a human being. Thus the Cruel Mother
(20) sees two bonny boys playing at the ball, and wishes that they were
hers; they tell her that they are. Sweet William's ghost is not so
called in version B (77). In *The Wife of Usher's Well* the three
sons "came home," simply; it is not explicitly stated that they are
dead (79). When the balladist makes use of the term *ghost*, he is
content with it alone, or with brief descriptions. In 77, F, 2, Lady
Margaret sees a "grieved ghost"; in C, 1, it is a "pale, pale ghost."
In 74, B,

> In glided Margaret's grimly ghost,
> And stood at William's feet (st. 7).

Here the specific verb, *glided*, is more notable as a means for pro-
ducing a special effect than the adjective, *grimly*. In A the verb is

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[1] It may not, however, be a mere coincidence that in both *The Wife of Usher's
Well* (79) and *Fair Margaret and Sweet William* (74) death is suggested by
periphrasis. Word came to the carline wife

> That her three sons were gane (st. 2),
> That her sons she'd never see (st. 3).

The ballad is notably fond of periphrasis:—for "never" (whan the sun and
moon dances on the green [49, D, 20]); for love and marriage (She pleasd hersel
in Levieston [91, B, 2]); for pregnancy; and, finally, for death, as in *The Clerk's
Twa Sons o Owsenford* (72, A, 16):

> "It's I've putten them to a deeper lair,
> An to a higher schule;
> Yere ain twa sons ill no be here
> Till the hallow days o Yule."

came, simply. The use of accessories of any kind is on the whole a
characteristic of the later and poorer versions.[1]

Valuable at this point by way of contrast is *The Suffolk Miracle* (272).
" This piece," says Professor Child, " could not be admitted here on its
own merits. At the first look, it would be classed with the vulgar prod-
igies printed for hawkers to sell and for Mopsa and Dorcas to buy. It
is not even a good specimen of its kind."[2] Its crude and obvious arti-
fice, its anxious verisimilitude, its portentous self-characterization, serve
to emphasize the artless directness of the true ballad. The subtitle is
characteristic : — " A relation of a young man who a month after his
death appeared to his sweetheart and carried her behind him fourty
miles in two hours time and was never seen after but in the grave."
Characteristic also is the opening description of the tale as a " wonder."

The writer takes pains to explain and to supply with motives : the
ghost was careful to provide himself with credentials :

> Her father's horse, which well she knew,
> Her mother's hood and safeguard too,
> He brought with him to testifie
> Her parents' order he came by (st. 11).

His headache — a reminiscence, thinks Professor Child, of a spell cast
upon him in the earlier form of the story — provides for the tying of
her handkerchief about his head. This clinches the argument; for,
when they opened the grave, they found the handkerchief.

Most notable is the prominence given to the psychological effect
upon all those concerned, — to the father's terror upon finding in the
stable no lover, but only the sweating horse ; to the daughter's mortal
grief and terror. Moreover a moral is appended : — *Part not true love*,
— showing perhaps that the whole thing was vaguely conceived, and
so rationalized, as an object lesson conducted by Providence for the
benefit of rich farmers with marriageable daughters. The moral would
be a popular one : but it is not the habit of the true ballad to com-
ment upon the story which it tells.

That these differences are in the direction of art (or artificial) litera-
ture, an examination of a more reputable treatment of the same story
will make clear. Bürger's *Lenore* is confessedly based upon an old

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[1] Cf. 77, A, 15, and Child's comment, II, 226.   The Ossianic cloud of mist is
clearly not in keeping with ballad methods.   [2] V, 58.

ballad,[1] and in many ways it is, in spite of obvious faults, an excellent
imitation of ballad technique. The excellence of the imitation serves,
however, but to point the contrast with the true ballad ; and it is pre-
cisely in the treatment of the Supernatural that this contrast is most
evident. As in *The Suffolk Miracle,* the story, or a part of the story,
is characterized as a wonder: " Huhu ! ein grässlich Wunder ! "
Speed is similarly introduced as evidence of supernatural character.
There is the same effort to convince by means of general explanation
and motivation, — the name of the battle, the relation between Prussia
and Austria, the return of the troops. Clearly, we are here in the actual
complex of real human society ; the true ballad isolation is wanting.
Of the psychological effect of the wonder less is made than in *The
Suffolk Miracle.* In the repeated question and answer :

> " Graut Liebchen auch ? . . . Der Mond scheint hell !
> Hurrah ! die Todten reiten schnell !
> Graut Liebchen auch vor Todten ? " —
> " Ach ! Lass sie ruhn, die Todten ! " —

Bürger made use of a fragment of the original ballad. The repetition
of the refrain in new contexts has the effect so notable in *Edward* (13)
and *Lord Randal* (12).[2] The poet was wise in going no further in the
suggestion of Lenore's emotions. In the earlier part of the poem, how-
ever, — where, indeed, the supernatural element is not directly con-
cerned, — Bürger diverges from ballad methods in the long dialogue
and final exposition of mother's and daughter's mental states.[3] The
heroine, too, dies, not because of contact with the dead, but because
of her rebellion against God. The whole poem is moralized, and the
moral summed up, as the most significant phase of the story, in the
last stanza : —

> Nun tanzten wohl beim Mondenglanz
> Rundum herum im Kreise
> Die Geister einen Kettentanz
> Und heulten diese Weise :
> " Geduld ! Geduld ! Wenn's Herz auch bricht !
> Mit Gott im Himmel hadre nicht !
> Des Leibes bist du ledig ;
> Gott sei der Seele gnädig ! "

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[1] Bürger's *Gedichte,* ed. Berger, p. 409.
[2] See pp. 42 and 45, below.

The stanza is worth quoting as a whole because it shows Bürger's method of dealing with the supernatural as supernatural ; for this moonlight chain-dance of howling spirits is clearly no everyday affair. Setting, too, is emphasized, and the symbols and accessories of terror are not forgotten. Parts of the dialogue, however, and the absence of the explicit statement of the lover's death are more in the manner of the true ballad. But what is really significant in the *Lenore* is its elaborate special method of dealing with the supernatural. The true ballad, — *Sir Hugh* (155), for instance, — has none. Herder, indeed, pronounced *Sir Hugh* " ein grauerlich-schauderhaft Märchen," and " der Mordnachtklang unnachahmlich."[1] But though the ballad has these qualities in solution, it requires some effort of the imagination to develop them from it ; as it stands it seems a mere straightforward account of facts, without atmosphere, essential mystery, or terror. And, in general, this is the ballad method : the balladist presents a naïve and simple account of the facts, incomplete and suggestive in certain particulars, and possessing a merely potential terror and mystery.

This same relative absence of special treatment is notable in the ballads that deal with the relations of mortals and fairies. On the whole, however, it would seem that fairy-seeing was a little less common than ghost-seeing. The ghost ballad inspires terror by the very nature of its plot ; the fairy ballad depends for its effect upon the quality of strangeness, of mystery, and for this some special treatment is necessary. Time and place are therefore connected a little more directly with the habits of supernatural beings. In *Tam Lin* (39, A, 26 and 36) :

> Just at the mirk and midnight hour
>   The fairy folk will ride.

> Gloomy, gloomy was the night,
>   And eerie was the way,
> As fair Jenny in her green mantle
>   To Mile's Cross she did gae.[2]

In *Hind Etin* (41) much is made of the mist; but *Hind Etin* is in other respects not very " original," and it is hardly fair to quote it.[3]

The quiet or commonplace openings of some of these ballads, or passing phases within ballads, have something akin (though the relationship

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[1] *Werke* (1885), XXV, 22.

[2] Cf. also *Thomas Rymer*, Child, IV, p. 455, stanzas 9 and 10.

[3] Child, 41, C, 1, 3; A, 15. In A, 8, Hind Etin builds an invisible tower.

is always distant) to the art of *The Tempest, A Midsummer Night's Dream,* or *As You Like It.*

> Fair Margret sat in her bonny bower,
>   Sewing her silken seam,
> And wished to be in Chaster's wood,
>   Among the leaves so green.
>
> She let her seam fall to her foot,
>   The needle to her toe,
> And she has gone to Chaster's wood,
>   As fast as she could go.[1]

It was a very common-sensible queen who provided loaf and claret wine for Thomas Rymer (37); and the Wee Wee Man did not forget to bait his horse (38). Similar, though more poetic, in effect, is the homely lullaby' in the opening stanzas of *The Queen of Elfan's Nourice* (40):

> I heard a cow low, a bonnie cow low.

Of the effect of these supernatural beings, or of the resulting situations, upon the minds of those who come into contact with them, somewhat more is made in the fairy than in the ghost ballads. Janet's feeling is transferred to the gloomy night and eerie way in *Tam Lin* (39); it was "nae delight," in *Thomas Rymer* (37), and Thomas was a "waefou man."

There is usually something peculiar, finally, in the character or actions of the fairy folk themselves. Janet declares that Tam Lin is an "elfin grey."[2]

> When she cam to Carterhaugh,
>   Tam Lin was at the well,
> And there she fand his steed standing,
>   But away was himsel.[3]

This faculty of being there and yet not there[4] suggests supernatural powers. His sudden appearance (like Hind Etin's [41, A, 3]) upon Janet's plucking the rose, the suggestion that this is

> A' to kill the bonie babe
>   That we gat us between,[5]

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[1] *Tam Lin* (39, D, 2 and 3).

[2] 39, A, 15.

[3] 39, A, 18.

[4] Of being, perhaps, invisible?

[5] 39, A, 20.

the series of transformations and the peculiar conditions under which
he may be saved, the whole history of the capture by the fairy queen
and his life in fairyland,— all this is very clearly foreign to common
human experience. Equally strange are the power of the kiss in *Thomas
Rymer* (37), the fairy queen's faculty of calling up visions when one lays
one's head on her knee, the necessity for silence upon the journey, and,
to the learned in such matters, her jingling bridle-rein. In the ballad
of *The Wee Wee Man* (38) the whole significance is in the character
of this strange creature ; what he does is not in itself interesting.

Too much, however, is not to be made of this contrast between
ghost ballad and fairy ballad. The ghost ballad takes everything for
granted : the fairy ballad takes a little less than everything ; and it is
quite as possible in the one class as in the other to point out cases of
the absence of special treatment, neglected opportunities from the
modern writer's point of view. Janet's confession that her lover is an
elfin grey occasions no surprise (39) ; in fact, there is no reply to her
confession, and thereafter we see her in no company but Tam Lin's.
In one version of *Thomas Rymer*,[1] the fairy queen is merely a lady gay,
not the Queen of Heaven ; it will be seven years before he goes back,
but there is nothing necessarily supernatural in that. In the stanzas of
this version already cited (9 and 10) strangeness and terror are defi-
nitely suggested by the accessories of time, place, and Thomas's fear.
Similarly, the Queen of Elfan's Nourice (40) might be any exiled
mother,[2] were not the Queen named.[3] It does not occur to the
narrator to tell us how he felt during his peculiar experience with
the Wee Wee Man (38).

The Suffolk Miracle (272) is not without parallels among the fairy
ballads, — late or corrupt versions, with the beginnings of a crude
special treatment. One of Scott's versions of *Tam Lin* is a case in
point. Tam Lin's description of the fairy life will be felt at once not
to be in keeping with the spirit of the true ballad :[4]

> " But we that live in Fairy-land
>   No sickness know nor pain ;
>   I quit my body when I will,
>   And take to it again.

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[1] See Child, IV, p. 455.   [2] She mourns, however, for " Christen land," in 7.
[3] In stanza 3. The queen's supernatural power is implied in the stanzas in
regard to prophesying introduced from *Thomas Rymer* (10–12).
[4] 39, I (Child, I, 356).

> " I quit my body when I please,
>   Or unto it repair ;
>   We can inhabit at our ease
>   In either earth or air " (sts. 32–33).

The mere style of stanzas like these condemns them at once ; it is interesting to find combined with this style a method of dealing with the supernatural which takes nothing for granted. This same version makes use of accessories. Moreover, it is moralized ; for it appears that Tam's objection to the fairy world is based on a fear, not of death, but of a life without grave thought or solid sense.

Here again there is opportunity for suggestive contrast with the poetry of art. Keats's poem, *La Belle Dame Sans Merci*, and the ballad of *Clerk Colvill* each tell the same story. In the poem the interest is at once personal, at once, that is, in the knight and his peculiar state of mind. He is " alone and palely loitering," " so haggard and so woe-begone." This state of mind is emphasized by a sympathetic Nature, by the close of the harvest, the withered sedge and silent birds. As he tells his tale he is clearly conscious of the strangeness, of the super-natural character of the lady whom he met in the meads. He knew at once that she was a faery's child. " Her eyes were wild," he says, and she spoke a language strange. She had a strange hypnotic effect upon him, for he saw nothing but her all day long. He starts to tell his dream, but breaks off, only suggests the horror of the tragedy by describing the expressions of those concerned in it. The popular ballad, indeed, takes things for granted, but they are things which the audience might fairly be expected to know, not unguessable horrors like these. Thus there is, in *Clerk Colvill*, no mystery, no vagueness in the sugges-tions. To meet a mermaid washing her silken sark by the stream was evidently common experience ; no special artifice was necessary to get such a story believed. There is thus no attempt to arouse any particu-lar interest in Clerk Colvill himself, or to depict or suggest his emo-tions. The mermaiden is called a mermaiden, indeed, but she exhibits only the ordinary human qualities until (quite as a matter of course) she becomes a fish and springs merrily into the flood. The consequences, moreover, of Clerk Colvill's inconstancy are purely physical ; and mother, brother, and true-love seem to take them as a matter of course. The concluding stanza is a characteristic bit of ballad reticence, and it would be easy to sentimentalize over its implications. But in implica-tions the balladist is content to rest.

It is, as we have seen, the absence of special treatment and of differ-
encing characteristics in ghosts or supernatural beings that marks the
contrast, at this point, between the ballad and the poem of art. In
consequence of this, the supernatural element readily disappears from
the ballads, and versions are to be found which contain details only to
be understood by comparisons with more original forms, whether English
or foreign. Thus the unco' land in *Leesome Brand* (15), where winds
never blew nor cocks ever crew, is a reminiscence of paradise.[1] There
is a remnant of fairy machinery in *The Knight and Shepherd's Daughter*.[2]
Flowers strewed upon the Knight in *The Broomfield Hill* are in three
versions merely a sign that the maid has been there ; in a fourth version
(C) we learn that it is as a sleep-charm that they are intended.[3] These
passages exhibit ballads in the transition state. In *Child Waters* (63)
we have what looks like a case of earthly wife and fairy husband from
which the supernatural element has completely disappeared. It is
pleasanter, certainly, to think of Child Waters as acting not volun-
tarily, but in obedience to the conditions of his being. It has been
pointed out that the name *Waters*[4] suggests something of this kind.
Child Waters and Burd Ellen cross the wan water as one does on the
journey to the other world ; and the hall with its towers and gates of
red gold, and the four-and-twenty ladies, can be roughly paralleled
from the glimpse of the other world in the *Wee Wee Man*,

> Whare the roof was o the beaten gould,
> And the floor was o the cristal a' (38, A, 7).

It is obviously impossible, however, to prove that Child Waters was
originally a fairy prince ; at the same time it is impossible to prove that
he was not. He would have had, in all probability, no differencing
characteristics, and successive singers could easily have forgotten the
true motive for his peculiar actions. It is possible, indeed, that the
story has had its present form as long as it has been a ballad. But,
whatever the facts are, it will serve as an example of the logical result

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[1] Cf. Child, I, 178.

[2] Child, II, 458.

[3] Child, I, 390–391.

[4] This original supernatural element in *Child Waters* is not to be unduly
insisted upon. Professor Child says nothing of it, nor is there any suggestion of
it in the Scandinavian parallels which he cites. The ballad of *Fair Annie* (62)
may be open to the same sort of explanation.

of that absence of special methods in the treatment of the supernatural which we remark in the ballad.[1]

Such are the leading central motives of these ballads, — Love, Valor, and the Supernatural. Grief, a common subsidiary motive, becomes central in four only; and these have a marked lyrical tendency, and may best be considered later, from another point of view.[2] A single matter remains for the present discussion, — the Conflict of Motives. This is ordinarily avoided. In *Fair Mary of Wallington* (91) the material presents such a conflict, — love versus inevitable death in childbirth; the former is slighted, and hurried over with a periphrasis in a single line already quoted. Fear of shipwreck and obedience come into conflict in *Sir Patrick Spens* (58); love and the test of constancy in *Child Waters*. Yet there is no hesitation in either case; one motive has its way at once, and the effect of the other is not felt in the action.

III. STRUCTURE

We pass now from the discussion of these motives — Love, Valor, the Supernatural, and the Conflict of Motives — to the ballad treatment of them. Here two facts are to be kept in mind: first, the brevity[3] of the Ballad; second, the fact that the Ballad was made to be heard, not read. The Ballad is, then, in the first place, to be classed with the Drama and the Short Story; like these it must study the arts of compression and economy, of effective detail. It is to be contrasted with the Epic and the Novel: it must understand unity in a narrower sense; it must forego the novelist's privilege of description and explanation; it must forego the *Behagen*, the leisure, the comfortable elaboration of the Epic. Like the Drama again, the Ballad must hit the mark — produce its effect — at once or not at all. Far shorter than the Drama, however, it can be grasped readily as a whole. It is thus more likely to be consistent; involuntarily it has unity, coherence.

Like Short Story, Novel, Drama, Epic, the Ballad aims to tell a story. Like all these forms, its elements are Plot, Character, Thought,

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[1] A complete account of the supernatural element would include a discussion of the transformations in ballads like *Kemp Owyne* (34), *Allison Gross* (35), and *The Laily Worm and the Machrel of the Sea* (36). These, however, offer nothing new in the method of treatment. Ballads derived from romances are also excluded from the present phase of the discussion.

[2] See p. 33, below.   [3] For the figures see p. 314, below.

Emotion, Setting. Novel, Short Story, Drama, may emphasize any one
of these, or all of them. Like the Epic, however, the Ballad selects plot,
action : an incident, a group of incidents, or a situation, — this is the
stuff of which the Ballad is made. An example will best show this
ballad emphasis of incident rather than of character or emotion. The
ballad of *Sir Hugh* (155) and Chaucer's *Prioresses Tale* tell practically
the same story : a child was murdered by the Jews, and the mother, by
supernatural aid, found the body. For both the ballad and the poem
the original impulse was, of course, the anti-Semitic feeling. Of this
Chaucer makes a good deal, but it has faded from the ballad, so that
in a New York version the Jew's daughter becomes a Duke's daughter
without weakening the plot. Religious feeling, too, has disappeared :
Sir Hugh is no devotee of the Virgin. The fewness of persons, also, is
characteristic of the ballad : there are only Sir Hugh, Lady Maisry, the
Jew's daughter, and the shadowy conventional bonny boys. Chaucer,
on the contrary, fills his stage with people. The little " clergeon," his
schoolmates learning their antiphoner, his " felawe " who taught him
the hymn, the Jews and their hired assassin, the poor widow his mother,
the " Christen folk, that thurh the strete wente," the provost, the great
procession carrying the child to the next abbey, the Abbot and his
" covent," — all these mark a contrast with a certain loneliness of effect,
a dim unpeopled state, that is fairly typical of ballad land. Chaucer,
again, (makes much of character.) He endows his hero with every
pathetic charm and by this sympathetic and affectionate treatment of
the little clergeon confers upon his narrative a certain feminine quality,
so that it is never Chaucer, but always the Prioress, who is telling the
tale. With this quality goes the sympathetic treatment of emotion,
the dramatist's ability to see things from the character's point of view,
— to get into the man and look out of him, in Carlyle's phrase.
Hence, lines like

> The swetnesse hath his herte perced so
> Of Cristes moder ——

and hence the Virgin's

> " Be nat agast, I wol thee nat forsake."

Hence, too, the mother's grief, to be contrasted with the mere poten-
tial pathos of the ballad :

> When every lady gat hame her son
> The Lady Maisry gat nane.

Chaucer's tale is three times as long as the ballad : but it is not a matter of length merely ; it is a matter of dominating interest, of selection. The ballad found in the story nothing but a miracle ; it was interested in it for its own sake, not in the cause, not in the characters concerned, not in the resulting emotions, — simply in incident as incident.

Between incident and group of incidents one can make only an arbitrary distinction. Every incident consists of a series ; and, in a larger sense, no ballad contains more than one incident. Nevertheless, the distinction is a useful one. In ballads like *The Twa Sisters* (10), or *Lord Thomas and Fair Annet* (73), change of scene, passage from one phase of the action to another, involve special problems, which we are presently to consider.

When, finally, the ballad does not select an incident or a series of incidents, its emphasis falls upon a situation. It catches, as by instantaneous photograph, the moment just before, and just after, great action. Edward is shown just after his father's murder, just before his own suicide (13) ; Lord Randal has been poisoned, he is about to die (12) ; in the ballad itself there is no action. Sometimes a series of such situations, like the series of instantaneous pictures in a biograph, produce the effect of action when there is none. Thus Sir Patrick Spens (58), in stanza 6,[1] orders his men to prepare for the voyage ; in 7 a seaman fears a storm ; in 8 the Scots nobles were laith to weet their corkheild schoone, — but worse was in store for them ; in 9 :

> O lang, lang may their ladies sit,
>   Wi thair fans into their hand,
> Or eir they se Sir Patrick Spence
>   Cum sailing to the land.

The balladist, that is, hints that a storm is to come ; next, mentions the matter of shoes, with another hint as to future tragedy ; finally, we have the stanza just quoted. The essential matters of the action, the storm and the wreck, are omitted ; the ballad describes the situation just before and just after. The effect is not unlike that of some pen-and-ink drawings, mere blots and patches which suggest a definite outline. Here, again, we may notice the absence of emotion ; of emphasis on character, or on anything outside of the mere incident.

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[1] Version A. The other versions show the same tendency, though, indeed, in less degree.

The rule, however, is not without exceptions. A small group of
ballads are lyric rather than narrative in purpose, — *The Bonny Earl of
Murray* (181), *Bonnie James Campbell* (210), *Bessy Bell and Mary
Gray* (201). In each the intention is not so much to narrate a tragic
story as to lament a tragic fate. These are all short (6, 6, 4 stanzas),
all peculiarly musical, all have a certain elaboration of form, and all
suggest emotion. But even in these ballads the emotion is dramatically
conceived. *Bonnie James Campbell* is not the lament of a poet for a
lost companion ; it is the lament of a wife and mother ; and in it grief
is described by its external manifestation, or suggested by attendant
circumstances :

> Out cam his mother dear,
>   greeting fu sair,
> And out cam his bonnie bryde,
>   riving her hair (210, C, 3).

> " My meadow lies green,
>   and my corn is unshorn,
> My barn is to build,
>   and. my babe is unborn " (210, D, 2).

With the mother it is easy to contrast the poor widow of the *Prioresses
Tale*, " with modres pitie in her brest enclosed." Again, we feel at
once that this is a primarily typical situation. Many such empty saddles
came home from Otterburn ; but the death of a thousand is not tragic,
and *Bonnie James Campbell* has much of the impersonal effect of the
record of a general calamity.

Though perhaps as a whole rather dramatic than lyric in tendency,
The Queen of Elfan's Nourice (40) must be mentioned here. Ques-
tion and answer make clear the situation : — a woman had been forced
to leave her son four nights old to serve as nurse to the Queen of
Elfan's child. Her cradle song, — the opening stanzas of the ballad, —
is strikingly different in metre, " forces you to chant and will not be
read." [1] In denotation it is not in the least subjective or emotional ;
but in connotation, of sound as well as of sense, it is both :

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

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[1] Child, I, 358.

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

We return now to the treatment of the single incident or group of
incidents. Most of these ballads, we have seen, are tragic, or select a
situation full of emotional significance. It is easy to see, then, what
part of a long story the selected incident will be : clearly, as in Greek
tragedy, the last and most significant of a series, the climax and close
of the story, what would be the fifth act of a romantic drama, the
" moment of last suspense " and the " catastrophe." The rest of the
story the ballad is inclined to omit ; it is " likely to tell its tale without
preliminaries "[1] and plunges at once *in medias res*. No matter how
abrupt the beginning, however, the first problem of the ballad is expo-
sition ;[2] the hearer is to be put in possession of enough facts to enable
him to follow the story intelligently. Often this is done by a bit of
narrative in general terms : as,

> The young lords o the north country
>   Have all awooing gone,
> To win the love of Lady Maisry,
>   But o them she woud hae none (65, A, 1).

Three stanzas follow, repeating the same idea in more specific terms.
In the fifth Lady Maisry says she has given her love to an English lord,
and the action begins with the telltale kitchen-boy. Here, then, are
five or six stanzas devoted to matter purely introductory ; three that
follow are occupied with getting the information to the brother ; on the
whole, a formal and gradual beginning. With it one may contrast : —

> Word 's gane to the kitchen,
>   And word 's gane to the ha,
> That Marie Hamilton gangs wi bairn
>   To the hichest Stewart of a' (173, A, 1),

where the whole matter is summed up in a single stanza. Sometimes,
as in *Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard* (81), instead of narration in
general terms, the introductory matter is presented more dramatically
and concretely in a specific scene which forms part of the story :

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[1] Child, III, 317.

[2] Conclusions are no less abrupt : cf. pp. 46 f. (the omission of the objective
point), and 36 (the suppressed central motive).

As it fell one holy-day,
 As many be in the yeare,
When young men and maids together did goe,
 Their mattins and masse to heare,

Little Musgrave came to the church-dore;
 The preist was at private masse;
But he had more minde of the faire women
 Than he had of our lady's grace.

The one of them was clad in green,
 Another was clad in pall;
And then came in my lord Bernard's wife,
 The fairest amonst them all (A, 1-3).

Somewhat similar, but swifter, less organic in its effect (unless the balladist was thinking of the close of the story, also in a stable), is the concrete and characteristic action of

Childe Watters in his stable stoode,
 And stroaket his milke-white steede;
To him came a ffaire young ladye
 As ere did weare woman's weede (63, A, 1).

Thus merely the characters are introduced : their relation is made clear in the dialogue that follows. More abrupt, and even more dramatic in effect, are the ballads that open with dialogue, especially when, as in *Fair Annie*, the chief characters are speaking :

" It 's narrow, narrow, make your bed,
 And learn to lie your lane;
For I 'm ga'n oer the sea, Fair Annie,
 A braw bride to bring hame.
Wi her I will get gowd and gear;
 Wi you I neer got nane " (62, A, 1).

Less commonly, the ballad opens with a summary of the action. This, in some cases, is almost equivalent to an abstract statement of the moral involved. Thus, in 80 :

God let neuer soe old a man
 Marry soe yonge a wiffe
As did Old Robin of Portingale;
 He may rue all the dayes of his liffe.

In all these cases the hearer is put in possession of the necessary facts at once, by whatever means. Often, however, the incident alone is given, or the incident with its immediate cause, and the hearer is left to infer the central motive, the mainspring of the whole. We never learn why Young Johnstone (88, A) stabbed his sweetheart after she had saved his life, or why the brother did not know the Bonny Hind (50). In *Captain Car* (178), again, the Catholic-Protestant feud has faded from the story. And Professor Gummere is obliged to quote *The Unquiet Grave* (78) to show that in *The Wife of Usher's Well* (79) the central motive was excessive grief.[1] This is a phase of the typical ballad proceeding, — by indirection and allusion; it is typical, too, of the accent on incident, not on the cause of the incident, already noted in the faded motivation of *Sir Hugh*.[2]

In some ballads, where the central motive is not thus excluded or taken for granted, it is withheld until the close. Often the ballad seems perfectly intelligible without it; at the close a significant fact is revealed, and the hearer is compelled to re-interpret the whole story. With Edward's confession that he has killed his father seems to come the climax and proper close of the ballad; what follows, thinks the hearer, will be conventional will-making. Only in the last line of the last stanza is the mother's connection with the affair suggested (13). There is a similar will-making in *The Cruel Brother* (11), and a similar legacy for "brother John's wife." In both these cases the characters are in the secret; the surprise is a narrative device. In *The Baron of Brackley* (203) the same effect is produced by the sudden revelation of the relation of Brackley's wife and her husband's murderer. In *Babylon* (14), on the contrary, the characters are ignorant of their true relation, — hence the tragedy. The shock of surprise is common to characters and to hearer. Ignorance is part of the story; the narrator may or may not take advantage of it in the method of his narration. He does not take advantage of it in *Fair Annie* (62); one should contrast the *Lai du Frêne*, where the reader knows that the intended wife is the mistress's sister. The same contrast appears between the several versions of *Gil Brenton* (5). In A, B, and G we do not learn the heroine's story until after the test has shown her guilty and tragedy is impending. In C, H, E, and F her story comes first, and the reader knows the secret of which hero and heroine are ignorant.

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[1] *Old English Ballads*, p. 346.   [2] See p. 31, above.

Again, in *Child Maurice*, a husband killed one whom he supposed, and whom the audience supposes, to be his wife's lover. He struck off the head, "pricked itt on his swords poynt," and went singing to where his lady was,

> And sayes, " Dost thou know Child Maurice head,
>   If that thou dost itt see ?
> And lapp itt soft, and kisse itt offt,
>   Ffor thou louedst him better than mee."

> But when shee looked on Child Maurice head,
>   Shee neuer spake words but three :
> " I neuer beare no child but one,
>   And you haue slaine him trulye."

> Sayes, " Wicked be my merrymen all,
>   I gaue meate, drinke, and clothe !
> But cold they not haue holden me
>   When I was in all that wrath !

> " Ffor I haue slaine one of the curteousest knights
>   That euer bestrode a steed,
> Soe haue I done one of the fairest ladyes
>   That euer ware womans weede ! " (83, A, 29–32).

Gray's comment is often quoted : " I have got the old Scotch ballad on which Douglas was founded. It is divine. . . . (Aristotle's best rules are observed in it in a manner which shows that the author had never heard of Aristotle. It begins in the fifth act of the play. You may read it two thirds through without guessing what it is about ; and yet, when you come to the end, it is impossible not to understand the whole story." [1] Home's tragedy of *Douglas*, which Gray mentions, gives us another opportunity to contrast the ballad with the literature of art. We have quoted *Child Maurice* as an example of the concealment of the key-fact until the end ; in the tragedy, on the contrary, the audience is let into the secret at once. Lady Randolph, the heroine, is provided with a confidant, Anna, whose sole function in the play is to hear the story of an early marriage against the father's wishes, the tragic death of the young husband, and the birth and concealment of the child. The dramatist introduces, also, a shepherd, the supposed father of Douglas (Child Maurice), who furnishes the biography of the hero.

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[1] Gray, *Works*, ed. Gosse, II, 316.

There is, moreover, a villain, who poisons the mind of Lord Randolph against his wife, and so " motives " the slaying of Douglas. If reticence, suppression, suggestion, fewness of persons, are characteristic of the ballad, the tragedy is garrulous, verbose, definite, relatively crowded with characters. In the ballad it is scarcely more than a suggestion that tells us of the death of John Steward's wife. " Shee neuer spake words but three " ; then John Steward says that he has slain " one of the fairest ladyes, That euer ware womans weede " : — that is all.[1] In the tragedy Anna tells how Lady Randolph ran up the hill, gained the precipice (the landscape is described) and then

> Upon the brink she stood, and cast her eyes
> Down on the deep : then lifting up her head ·
> And her white hands to heaven, seeming to say,
> " Why am I forc'd to this ? " she plung'd herself
> Into the empty air.

We may note, also, the moralization of the tragedy. Lady Randolph's character is carefully whitewashed : Douglas is born in wedlock. The play abounds in moral aphorisms, as

> The truly generous is the truly wise :
> And he who loves not others lives unblest.

(The ballad, of course, is absolutely unmoral.) In the tragedy, finally, the emotions of the characters are expressed at length and on all occasions ; and, wherever possible, these are brought into relation to nature, as in the opening lines (Lady Randolph speaks) :

> Ye woods and wilds, whose melancholy gloom
> Accords with my soul's sadness, and draws forth
> The voice of sorrow from my bursting heart.

Child Maurice's mother, on the contrary, even after the tragedy, spoke no words but three, and died apparently of a broken heart. These are significant differences : the tragedy is sentimental and moral, the ballad, neither. The important matter for the moment, however, is that pointed out by Gray : — " It begins in the fifth act of the play. You may read it two thirds through without guessing what it is about ; and yet, when you come to the end, it is impossible not to understand the whole story."

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[1] In B, C, and D, however, Lady Barnard explains at some length at the close.

Another phase of this artifice has been already mentioned in other connections, — the suppression, namely, of an important character until the end of the ballad. The tragic effect of *The Bonny Earl of Murray* (181) and of *Young Waters* (94) is suddenly heightened in this way ; the hint of the sweetheart, in *The Wife of Usher's Well* (79), and possibly also the reference to " brother John's wife," in *The Cruel Brother* (11), produce the same effect.

Characteristic of the simple ballad plot is the single narrative stream ; synchronistic events are exceptional, and synchronism is never necessary for the working out of the plot. It is only by way of exception, then, that we note, in *Fair Janet* (64), a passage where we have almost the equivalent to an " in the meantime." Janet gave birth to Willie's child; he took his young son in his arms and went to his mother; with her arms long and small she received the baby in, and provided him with three nurses. Then

> Willie he was scarce awa,
> And the lady put to bed,
> Whan in and came her father dear:
> " Make haste, and busk the bride" (A, 16).

The Carl Hood incident in *Earl Brand* (7) is similarly treated, with characteristically abrupt transitions from stream to stream. In the third and last of these exceptions, *Young Andrew* (48), the transition is not taken for granted :

> But let vs leaue talking of this ladye,
> And talke some more of young Andrew (st. 33).

In such passages as these it is clear that no sub-plot is involved, so that to the rule of the single narrative stream they are scarcely to be counted as exceptions at all.

As, now, we pass from incident to incident, in the single stream, changes are involved, sometimes of place, sometimes of time, sometimes of both. In any case there are gaps in the story, and, in the narrative of art, we expect some sort of link between incident and incident. As Poe pointed out,[1] the poetic treatment of these explanatory passages is one of the difficulties in the composition of a long narrative poem. Ordinarily the balladist solves the problem by the

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[1] In a letter to Lowell, quoted by Professor Woodberry in his life of Poe, p. 194.

simple method of avoiding the difficulty altogether.) He moves abruptly from incident to incident, from place to place, without explanation, or any sort of transition whatever. The result, for the modern reader, is lack of temporal perspective, — or of spatial, similar to that found, for instance, in the work of early Italian artists. Figures and events crowd one another upon the canvas. The opening of *Hind Horn*, already cited,[1] is an excellent example of failure to indicate the passage of time. Similarly, Lord Thomas decides to take his mother's counsel and marry out of hand :

> " And I will tak the nut-browne bride,
>   Fair Annet may leive the land."
>
> Up then rose Fair Annet's father,
>   Twa hours or it wer day,
> And he is gane into the bower
>   Wherein Fair Annet lay.
>
> " Rise up, rise up, Fair Annet," he says,
>   " Put on your silken sheene ;
> Let us gae to St. Marie's kirke,
>   To see that rich weddeen " (73, A, 11–13).

The " then " (in stanza 12) seems to imply that the father's action immediately follows Lord Thomas's decision : in reality a considerable time must have elapsed. Numerous examples might be cited of this lack of temporal perspective ; so also, of the lack of spatial perspective. One will suffice : in *The Gay Goshawk* (96), stanza 7, the heroine goes to kirk ; in stanza 8 she abruptly begins to speak, and appears to be at home ; in 9 she turns to the bird and refers to his singing " the streen," perhaps as she went to church in 7 ; 8, then, would be the next day, and she at home.[2]

To this rule there are exceptions. Even in *The Gay Goshawk* the progress of the heroine's funeral from England to Scotland is shown to require nine days ; and passage of time is clearly indicated in *Young Beichan* (53) and *Child Waters* (63), to mention no more. We are to

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[1] P. 16, above.

[2] John Thomson (266) is fighting the Turks " when he is surprised by receiving a visit from his wife, who walks up to him in a rich dress, as if Scotland were just around the corner " (Child, V, 1).

conclude, then, merely that the ballad art was somewhat crude in its treatment of transition and perspective.[1]

IV. GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE NARRATIVE METHOD

The ballad emphasis, we have seen, was on incident (group of incidents), or, more rarely, on situation. The special treatment of situation is mainly a matter of certain ballad conventions and is to be discussed presently. We may pass now to the consideration of some general characteristics of the narrative method.

The examination of Transition has shown us what we have to expect in the matter of Movement. It is only by way of exception that the balladist goes back to pick up a thread. His purpose is ordinarily simple and single; he presses constantly forward toward the goal. Even that repetition, so characteristic of ballad style, is, as Professor Gummere phrases it, an " incremental repetition." It is found occasionally within the stanza; it is more notable, however, as it connects groups of stanzas. These groups contain two or three members, and each member contains one, two, or three stanzas.

An important phase of these stanzaic groups is the conventional will and testament. This, says Professor Child,[2] "is highly characteristic of ballad poetry." It is found in *The Cruel Brother* (11), *Lord Randal* (12), *Edward* (13), and *Lizie Wan* (51). The series of messages sent by the dying man to his relatives, in *The Twa Brothers* (49), is similar in effect. In *The Cruel Brother*, the bride, stabbed to the heart, rides but slowly, looks pale and wan :

> " O lead me gently up yon hill,
> And I 'll there sit down, and make my will."

> " O what will you leave to your father dear ? "
> " The silver-shod steed that brought me here " (11, A, 20–21).

And so on, through mother, sister Anne, sister Grace, to brother John, who is to have " the gallows-tree to hang him on," and to brother

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[1] The incidents of the series were often not bound together by close causal connection. Omitted motives have been already discussed (p. 36, above). When the opportune moment arrived the character appeared; it was not necessary to show why he came at that particular moment (cf. *Hind Horn* [17], *Young Beichan* [53]).

[2] I, 143, where numerous German and Scandinavian parallels are cited.

John's wife, who is to have "the wilderness to end her life." We do not know who is asking the questions, nor do we expect the reference to the brother's wife, who is not elsewhere mentioned in the ballad. Here we have a group of six two-line stanzas (disregarding the refrain), each beginning "What will you leave to . . ." In *Lord Randal* (12) the heirs are father (or mother), sister, brother, true-love. For the last named the bequest is hell and fire in A, tow and halter in B. In C and H the fact of the poisoning, though suggested, is not stated until the end of the testament; she is to have "the highest hill to hang her on."

In *Edward* (13) this conventional will-making is most effective; and we may pause for a moment to look at this ballad not only as typical in this respect, but also as best exemplifying most of the technical characteristics hitherto noted. To say that it is one of the most perfect of ballads is not very enlightening. We are, however, to think of ballads not as having fixed authentic forms, but as plastic, as changing with every recitation. Changes may be supposed to have been for the better or for the worse, and some ballads may have been peculiarly fortunate or unfortunate in this respect. If, then, we may think of a development of the ballad, as of the forms of the literature of art, not toward epic, drama, or lyric, but as ballad, merely; and if we may imagine a climax of such development, a moment when ballad conventions, ballad technique, had just been perfected, but had not yet become artificial, dry, or barren, — then the ballad of *Edward* may be fairly regarded as representing this climax, and as being typical of the moment. "Ein Schottisch Lied," says Herder, "voll Kains-Stirn und Unruh."[1] It is one of those "situations, primitive and powerful, which," says Professor Matthews, in another connection, "recur in all literatures with the inevitable certainty of the fate which dominates them. What is the 'Hamlet' of Shakspere, in its essence, but the 'Orestes' trilogy of Æschylus?"[2] In *Edward* there is also "something of the fateful domestic horror . . . of old Greek tragedy."[3] It is one of the briefest of ballads, — only seven stanzas. It can tell no story, can only select a situation, a moment in the very midst of the catastrophe. The movement of the action is arrested; the movement of the thought goes steadily on; repetition, and pause between stanza and stanza, do no more than give the hearer time to work out the suggestions. "Welch

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[1] *Werke* (1885), XXV, 19.

[2] *Pen and Ink*, p. 31.

[3] Pater, *Appreciations* (1889), p. 109.

ein Gang im Liede!" says Herder, "Zwischenpausen voll Schmerz, Grimm und tiefer verschlossner Noth!" [1] In form, it is all dialogue. It falls naturally into two groups, one of three stanzas, the other of four. Stripped of repetition and refrain, the first three would read: —

> " Why dois your brand sae drap wi bluid,
> And why sae sad gang yee O?"

> " O I hae killed my hauke sae guid,
> And I had nae mair bot hee O."

In the second stanza he has killed his " reid-roan steid."

> " Your steid was auld, and ye hae gat mair,
> Sum other dule ye drie O."

> " O I hae killed my fadir deir
> Alas, and wae is mee O!" [2]

One has only to think of the ballad itself to see how much is gained by mere repetition, — of the first line of the question before the third, of the first line of the answer in the same way, and of the names, Mither, Mither, and Edward, Edward. At the end of this third stanza we reach what appears to be the climax and proper close of the ballad. But the mother goes on monotonously with the " Whatten penance wul ye drie for that?" and the question about the towers and hall; then to the brief will-making, — world's room for wife and bairns; and finally,

> " The curse of hell frae me sall ye beir,
> Mither, mither,
> The curse of hell frae me sall ye beir,
> Sic counseils ye gave to me O."

The curse is wholly unexpected.[3] It is the more effective because the questions are asked by the mother, not, as in *The Cruel Brother* (11), by a person not named. One can get a better idea of the suppression of the main fact until the end by comparing this with the ballad of *Lizie*

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[1] *Werke* (1885), XXV, 19.

[2] A similar series of questions, with the same effect of suspense, is to be found in *The Twa Brothers* (49, D, E, F): " But whaten bluid's that on your sword, Willie?" etc.

[3] It is equally unexpected in *Lord Randal* (12, Q). But it is less effective because, while it is the mother who asks the questions, it is the sweetheart on whom the curse falls.

Wan (51), where the method is otherwise similar. A brother kills his sister and comes to the mother, and then, when we already know whom he has killed, there follows a series of questions and answers like those in *Edward*. Moreover, in *Lizie Wan*, in the will-making that follows, there is no curse; the mother is not in any way implicated. *Edward* is thus more reticent, more suggestive. Why did the hero kill his father? What were those counsels? Edward, again, says:

> " Ile set my feit in yonder boat,
> And Ile fare ovir the sea O."

In Motherwell's version " yonder boat " is a " bottomless ship," and so the mother, evidently, understands it in our version, for she asks at once,

> " And what wul ye doe wi your towirs and your ha ? "

and next

> " And what wul ye leive to your bairns and your wife ? "

Another phase of this reticence is the absence of expressed emotion. "Why sae sad gang yee O?" asks the mother. And Edward exclaims, " Alas, and wae is mee O ! " Beyond this there is nothing. When she learns that Edward has slain his father, the mother expresses neither surprise, grief, nor satisfaction, and with the curse the ballad closes, leaving her in silence. Finally, we must note the concreteness, the vividness of the opening lines:

> " Why dois your brand sae drap wi bluid,
> Edward, Edward,
> Why dois your brand sae drap wi bluid,
> And why sae sad gang yee O ? "

Concreteness, then, suggestiveness, reticence, mystery, and (the matter under present consideration) the effective use of conventional stanza groups, — these are well exemplified in the treatment of the tragic theme of *Edward*.

An important kind of repetition, of repetition running throughout the ballad, is the refrain. The refrain is sometimes intelligible, sometimes not; sometimes a mere set of sonorous words;[1] sometimes an echo

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[1] These are sometimes proper names, as in *The Twa Sisters* (10, B, 1):

> There was twa sisters in a bowr,
>   Edinburgh, Edinburgh
> There was twa sisters in a bowr,
>   Stirling for ay
> There was twa sisters in a bowr,
> There came a knight to be their wooer.
>   Bonny Saint Johnston stands upon Tay.

of the tone or mood or thought of the ballad. Occasionally it consists
in the repetition of part of the ballad itself. In such cases it affects the
narrative method and becomes significant for the present investigation.
Rather than attempt generalization, we may content ourselves with the
examination of a single example, the ballad of *Lord Randal* (12, D).
Stripped of refrain and repetition it would read :

> " Where hae ye been ? " " To the wild wood."
> " Where gat ye your dinner ? " " I din'd wi my true-love."
> " What gat ye to your dinner ? " " I gat eels boild in broo."
> " What became of your bloodhounds ? " " They swelld and they died."
> " I fear ye are poisond." " O yes ! I am poisond."

In these questions the climactic effect is notable, — the steady onward
movement. Not one is asked at random ; each leads to the next, and
from stanza to stanza the mother's fear clearly becomes greater and
more definite. This effect, however, is wholly natural : the lines quoted
sound very much like a realistic prose conversation between mother
and son. So far, now, as tone, mood, poetic effect are matters of treat-
ment merely, they are the result of repetition and refrain. The mother
asks her question twice in each stanza, and adds the refrain " Lord
Randal, my son," and " my handsome young man." To his reply he
adds always the refrain :

> . . . " Mother, make my bed soon,
> For I 'm weary wi hunting, and fain wald lie down."

Thus, of the four lines in each stanza, two and a half are refrain, and
half a line is repetition. The part of the refrain spoken by Lord Randal,
however, seems always a necessary part of his answer to his mother's
question ; and from the new context in each stanza it takes on a new
meaning, and becomes more and more significant. Finally, there is a
sudden break in the monotone to mark the climax and close of the
ballad :

> " O I fear ye are poisond, Lord Randal, my son !
> O I fear ye are poisond, my handsome young man ! "
> " O yes ! I am poisond ; mother, make my bed soon,
> For I 'm sick at the heart, and I fain wald lie down."

Lord Randal exemplifies, also, other ballad characteristics, — the
selection of a telling situation, not action, but the most dramatic
moment before and after action.\ It is a concrete and suggestive dia-
logue, revealing the fact that Lord Randal had been poisoned, and

suggesting pretty definitely that he is about to die. All else is mystery, or is taken for granted. No emotion is expressed, no motive indicated.

Our analysis of *Edward* and *Lord Randal* leaves little to be said in regard to the special treatment of a situation. We may return, then, to the discussion of Movement and kindred matters. Movement, we have just seen, is arrested in these ballads, so far as action is concerned, though the thought marches steadily forward. A similar movement of the action occurs seldom, if ever. Ordinarily the balladist advances by leaps and bounds, omitting not only, as we have seen, formal introductions and transitions, but often more important matters as well. A result, partly, of such daring omissions, partly an end sought — one may guess — for its own sake, is that most striking characteristic of ballad narrative, — allusion or indirection. One phase of this, the emphasis upon a series of situations just before and just after action, has been discussed.[1] Sometimes it is the climax, the objective point of the whole ballad, that is thus omitted and taken for granted. The death of Lady Margaret is clearly the most important thing in the ballad of *Captain Car* (178) : we learn that she is in extremity; some stanzas later, we learn that she died, — what was about to happen, what has happened. The death of Lady Maisry (65) is similarly treated. Her brother burns her at the stake, while her lover rides to her rescue; she hears his wild horse sneeze, his bridle ring at the gate, she speaks to him. If the ballad closed here, one might fairly infer that she had been saved. But in the stanzas that follow, her lover vows vengeance :

> " O I 'll gar burn for you, Maisry,
>   Your father an your mother," etc.,

and we know, of course, that he was too late. The contrast between *Child Maurice* (83) and the *Douglas* is another case in point.[2]

By way of exception we should note, however, in *Glasgerion* (67) :

> And he puld out his bright browne sword,
>   And dryed it on his sleeue,
> And he smote off that lither ladds head,
>   And asked noe man noe leaue.

> He sett the swords poynt till his brest,
>   The pumill till a stone ;
> Thorrow that falsenese of that lither ladd
>   These three liues werne all gone (A, 22–23).

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[1] P. 32, above.   [2] Cf. p. 37, above.

Yet even here, in the second stanza, the action is characteristically incomplete. The balladist passes abruptly from the description of the hero's preparation to kill himself to a summary of the situation after the deed.

In this connection we should note again the brief allusion to something outside the ballad. Examples (the "bonny lass" in *The Wife of Usher's Well* [79]; "Brother John's wife" in *The Cruel Brother* [11]) have been cited. To these we may add one from *Sir Hugh* (155) :

> "For as ye did to my auld father,
> The same ye'll do to me."

And the whole matter of the suppression of the central motive or sudden revelation at the close is an important phase of suggestion.

A phase of suggestion, also, is the special narrative device in *The Three Ravens* (26). They would make their breakfast on the knight that lies in yonder green field, but hounds and hawks protect him. A fallow doe, great with young, carries him off on her back, buries him, and dies herself ere even-song time. This dialogue of the three ravens and the introduction of the fallow doe — whether transformation or mere figure of speech the reader can only guess — are peculiar to this ballad.[1] It is, also, another example of the whole story implied in the final situation. As the term "suggestion" implies, the curiosity is aroused, the mind is set at work; and thus the ballad leaves us, with problems to solve, "with food for thought," as the phrase runs, seldom at rest, seldom satisfied. The effect may be compared to that of a periodic sentence minus its final clause; the meaning is suspended not only to the end, but beyond it, and we must finish the sentence for ourselves.

If the ballad as a whole often leaves the reader in suspense, details often produce the same effect, though in such cases, as a rule, curiosity is satisfied. Here may be noted cases where the ominous is explained as something else, where characters may be supposed to share with the audience the doubt or foreboding. Thus in *Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard* (81, A, 15, 16) :

> "Methinks I hear the thresel-cock,
> Methinks I hear the jaye;
> Methinks I hear my lord Barnard,
> And I would I were away."

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[1] Cf., of course, *The Twa Corbies* (Child, I, 253).

And Lady Barnard answers :

> " 'T is nothing but a shephard's boy,
>   A driving his sheep to the fold." [1]

Thus, also, in *Willie and Lady Maisry* (70), heart's blood is supposed sweat ; and in *Earl Brand* (7, A, 28) :

> " O Earl Bran, I see your heart's blood ! "
> " 'T is but the gleat o my scarlet hood."

As a phase of suspense, also, may be regarded the unheeded warning in *Clerk Colvill* (42, A, 2) :

> " O gang nae neer the well-fared may."

Finally, the tragic contrast of expectation and fulfilment is to be noted. Thus we have the commonplace of the hero's pleasure at receiving a letter from the king and his sorrow when he has read it. Lady Margaret (178, A, 6),

> She thought he had ben her wed lord,
>   As he comd riding home ;
> Then it was traitur Captaine Care
>   The lord of Ester-towne.

In *Bonnie Annie* (24, A, 4–5) :

> " Ye 'll steal your father's gowd, and your mother's money,
>   And I 'll mak ye a lady in Ireland bonnie."

> She 's stown her father's gowd, and her mother's money,
>   But she was never a lady in Ireland bonnie.

Without suspense, also, this tragic contrast is common, as in *Mary Hamilton* (173, A, 17) :

> " Last night I washd the queen's feet,
>   And gently laid her down ;
> And a' the thanks I 've gotten the nicht
>   To be hangd in Edinbro town ! "

Thus Bessie Bell and Mary Gray thought to lie in Methven churchyard (201). And in *Young Waters* (94, 12) :

> Aft have I ridden thro Stirling town
>   In the wind bot and the rain ;
> Bot I neir rade thro Stirling town
>   Neir to return again.

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[1] It was the nightingale and not the lark
That pierced the fearful hollow of thine ear.

In *Lamkin* (93, C, 23–24) tragic contrast combines with irony :

> He sent for the false nurse,
>   to give her her fee ;
> All the fee that he gave her
>   was to hang her on a tree.
>
> He sent for Lamerlinkin,
>   to give him his hire ;
> All the hire that he gave him
>   was to burn him in the fire.[1]

In *The Bonny Hind* (50) is to be found irony of another type, — tragic irony, perhaps, though not quite in the technical sense. After his sister's shame and death the hero comes home, singing :

> " Sing O and O for my bonny hind,
>   Beneath yon hollin tree ! " (st. 12).

The father tries to comfort him, never understanding what is meant by the " bonny hind," and says at last :

> " O were ye at your sister's bower,
>   Your sister fair to see,
> Ye 'll think na mair o your bonny hyn
>   Beneath the hollin tree " (st. 17).

Broken movement, allusive method, suspense are, then, three important characteristics of ballad narration. To these we must add a fourth, the use of dialogue.[2] In the ballads where riddles are asked and answered dialogue becomes of first importance. Readiness might win a husband, as in *Riddles Wisely Expounded* (1, A). Proud Lady Margaret (47, A) asks riddles of her lover, and he replies with more difficult ones. Similarly, in *The Elfin Knight* (2), all depends upon quickness in setting a harder task, and Captain Wedderburn's Courtship (46, A) is successful because the captain is always ready with an easy solution of the tasks proposed by the Laird of Bristoll's daughter. The same ready wit was necessary in *The Fause Knight upon the Road* (3), where one triumphed by having the last word :

> " I wiss ye were in yon sie : "
> " And a gude bottom under me. "
> " And the bottom for to break : "
> " And ye to be drowned " (sts. 8–9).

So the ballad concludes.

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[1] Cf. *The Battle of Maldon*, vv. 46 f., and the *Jew of Malta*, ii, 2.
[2] For the amount of dialogue in the ballads, see p. 314, below.

This phase of the dramatic instinct, this delight in ready wit, in quick give and take, is by no means uncommon, and dialogue of some sort at least is found throughout the ballads. Its use for dramatic, abrupt, and concrete introduction has been already mentioned.[1] The conventional stanzaic groups, noted as a phase of iteration, are often the result of a common ballad trick, the repetition of the question in the answer. Usually the same idea is repeated, in the same words. Sometimes there is a change in words and idea, which may or may not be significant. In *Katharine Jaffray*, for instance (221, A, 7–8):

> " O are you come for sport, young man?
>   Or are you come for play?
>   Or are you come for a sight o our bride,
>   Just on her wedding day?"

> " I 'm nouther come for sport," he says,
>   " Nor am I come for play;
>   But if I had one sight o your bride,
>   I 'll mount and ride away."

Here the difference is not very significant. In *The Baron of Brackley*, however, parallelism serves to emphasize contrast (203, A, 37–39):

> " Cam ye bi the castell, and was ye in there?
>   Saw ye pretty Peggy tearing her hair?"

> " Yes, I cam by Braikley, and I gaed in there,
>   And there saw his ladie braiding her hair.

> " She was rantin, and dancin, and singin for joy,
>   And vowin that nicht she woud feest Inverey."

Similar to this repetition of question in answer is the repetition of a message by a messenger, word for word as it was given to him except for the necessary change of person, etc. So the messenger may recite, word for word, part of the preceding narrative; or the narrative may carry out the directions given by one of the characters.

The use of the first person is uncommon. In *The Wee Wee Man* (38) and *Allison Gross* (35) the whole story is told by the principal characters, perhaps as a means of convincing hearers of the reality of certain supernatural experiences. In *Lady Isabel and the Elf-Knight* (4, E), in *The Fair Flower of Northumberland* (9, C), and in *Young*

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[1] P. 35, above.

Andrew (48) the heroine begins the story; but in each case the bal-
ladist changes to the third person in the second stanza. In *Christopher
White* (108) the first person is maintained for four stanzas. The
advantages and disadvantages of this method are well known, and the
balladist clearly gains the one and avoids the other by using it for in-
troduction merely, and so making a special plea for the reader's atten-
tion. Tragic ballads, obviously, could not begin in this way, and, in
general, the device seldom occurs.

In no case is there any definite personality behind the first person,
other than the dramatic personality of a character in the ballad. Ordi-
narily it is a third person that speaks, and the little technical difficulty,
the thing that bothered Tennyson in the composition of one of the
Idylls of the King, the introducing of the dialogue and avoidance of the
monotonous "he said," "she said," seems to have presented itself to
the balladist also. Commonly, of course, speeches are properly assigned,
in the ordinary manner. Occasionally the "said" is to be found
alone, and the subject must be inferred from the context. Again, the
verb is omitted and the subject expressed, as in *Willie and Lady
Maisry* (70, A, 2):

> Lady Margerie was the first lady
>   That drank to him the wine,
> And aye as the healths gade round and round,
>   " Laddy, your love is mine."

Again, both verb and subject are omitted: the speech is unassigned,
but the context, or the nature of the speech, makes it clear who is speak-
ing, as in the opening of *Fair Annie* (62):

> It 's narrow, narrow, make your bed,
>   And learn to lie your lane;
> For I 'm ga'n oer the sea, Fair Annie,
>   A braw bride to bring hame.

In some cases, however, even the presence of a speaker is not mentioned,
and the speech comes as a voice out of the darkness that surrounds all
ballads. The passage from *The Baron of Brackley* (203) where un-
named outsiders meet and, like a chorus, discuss events and characters,
is a case in point. Similarly, the Lass of Roch Royal (76, E) asks at
the beginning of the ballad who will shoe her foot, glove her hand, comb
her yellow hair, etc., and some one answers; who it is we never learn.
These unassigned speeches are exceedingly common in ballads, and the

reader or hearer soon becomes accustomed to them, and unconsciously fathers them upon the nearest or most probable bystander. In the ballad just mentioned, *The Lass of Roch Royal*, this fact is made use of, and becomes a motive in the plot. Fair Annie took her young son in her arms and went to the door of her lover's castle; she knocked and begged him to take her in. Then came the reply:

> " Awa, awa, ye ill woman,
>> You 'r nae come here for good;
> You 'r but some witch, or wile warlock,
>> Or mer-maid of the flood " (st. 10).

Fair Annie believed that Love Gregor was speaking, and she went away to die. Later it appeared that it was not Love Gregor, but his cruel mother, who spoke from the castle.

This whole matter of the unassigned dialogue is in keeping with the regular ballad method of suggestion and mystery. In keeping with the light touch upon character is the lack of flexibility in the dialogue. Style does not vary with the speaker; and in doubtful cases it is always by means of context and matter that one assigns the speech, never by manner. To this rule there are few exceptions. One is, perhaps, the usually snappish nature of Janet's replies, in *Tam Lin* (39). A similar lack — though not so much of flexibility as of scope — appears in the expression of emotion. When, as is often the case, it is not omitted altogether, such expression is likely to confine itself to some conventional phrase, like Edward's " Alas and wae is mee O ! " (13), or to enumeration of attendant circumstances, or known causes, as in *Bonnie James Campbell* (210).

Indirect discourse — paraphrase — and soliloquy are uncommon. Instead of soliloquy, conversations with unnamed interlocutors sometimes furnish the necessary information as to phase of life, character, or state of mind. The passage just cited from the opening of *The Lass of Roch Royal* (76), where Annie wonders, in a series of concrete questions and answers, what is to become of her, now that Love Gregor is gone, has an effect somewhat akin to that of the Browning dramatic monologues.

V. Undeveloped Elements of Narration

We have completed our discussion of narration in the narrower sense, and may now pass to a brief consideration of matters not emphasized by the balladist, — Character, States of Mind, Moral Significance, Setting. To what has already been said, incidentally, on each of these points, we need add but little. We have noted again and again, for instance, the light touch on Character. Comparisons with the poetry of art emphasize this fact, and we may contrast Sir Hugh (155) — dismissed with mere epithet ("sweet" or "bonny") — with Chaucer's little clergeon. Also in connection with *Sir Hugh* (as with *Child Maurice* [83]) we have noted the fewness of characters in the ballads. Only those necessary for the action are brought on the stage. The balladist is never under the dramatist's necessity of introducing persons for the purposes of explanation and motivation. His view is not broad ; he is not interested in society at large, in the causes and effects there of the action, but in his narrow circle, in the action itself and the principal actors, isolated, for his purposes, as completely as Robinson Crusoe and his Man Friday. " We now laud our poet or playwright," says Professor Gummere, " for the fine individuality of his folk, and flout those masterless tales, songs, ballads, where even the hero is a mere type, or, worse, a mere doer of deeds. " [1] Mere doer of deeds he is in the ballads, nothing more. Not only within individual ballads might characters change places, but heroes might pass from ballad to ballad without affecting the action.[2] Many characters are not even named. Usually, indeed, the ballad takes its title from hero or heroine, or from both ; but *The Three Ravens* (26) and *The Gay Goshawk* (96) can show no

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[1] *Beginnings of Poetry*, p. 146.

[2] Characterization by epithet occurs, of course, as in 81, C, 5. But the epithets mean nothing : they are mere conventional formulæ, immediately contradicted (for we can hardly credit the balladist here with intended irony) by the action :

> Then Lady Barnet most meeke and mild
> Saluted this Little Mousgrove,
> Who did repay her kinde courtesie
> With favour and gentle love (st. 5).

> You need not feare my suspicious lord
> For he from home is gone ! (st. 7).

This poor version of an excellent ballad is exceptional in other respects also. Cf. p. 59, below.

names at all. Bits of description of personal appearance are not
uncommon. In *The Broom of Cowdenknows* (217, A) the hero is
distinguished by picturesque detail, suggestive of character, which
recurs in a manner that recalls Carlyle's method:

> " There was a tod came to your flock,
>   The like I neer did see ;
> When he spake, he lifted his hat,
>   He had a bonny twinkling eee."

> When fifteen weeks were past and gane,
>   Full fifteen weeks and three,
> Then she began to think it lang
>   For the man wi the twinkling eee (sts. 11–12).

In *Willie o Winsbury* (100, A) personal appearance affects the action.
Willie was to be hanged because of an affair with the king's daughter ;

> But when he cam the king before,
>   He was clad o the red silk ;
> His hair was like to threeds o gold,
>   And his skin was as white as milk.

> " It is nae wonder," said the king,
>   " That my daughter's love ye did win ;
> Had I been a woman, as I am a man,
>   My bedfellow ye should hae been " (sts. 9–10) —

and he is married to Janet. With this may perhaps be contrasted
Kempy Kay (33), a ballad entirely without plot. The purpose here is
merely to describe a filthy woman and her bridegroom, equally filthy
in most versions. But such emphasis on appearance is exceptional :
ordinarily details are few, conventional, and not chosen with reference
to any special effect; they do not individualize. Milk-white hands,
fingers long and small, arms long and small, feet as white as sleet, yel-
low hair, — such glimpses as these offer an obvious contrast to the bits
of description in Chaucer's *Prologue;* the Squire's curled locks, the
Yeoman's brown visage, the Miller's wart and broad nostrils, are all
appropriate and suggestive of character. The ballad, again, has a good
deal to say of dress; yet here also the comparison with the Canterbury
pilgrims is instructive. Grass-green is a common color (Fair Ellen, in
Child Waters [63]; Janet, in *Tam Lin* [39]); white, usually as con-
trasted with two other colors (brown or black), seems to be the favorite

for festive occasions, and seems often to connote a kind of proud defiance as in Mary Hamilton's

> " I winna put on my robes o black,
>   Nor yet my robes o brown;
> But I 'll put on my robes o white,
>   To shine through Edinbro town,"

where the " shine through " contrasts with " to see fair Edinbro town " in the preceding stanza (173, A, 7). In the same way Fair Annet outshines the nut-brown bride (73, A, 20):

> And whan she cam into the kirk,
>   She shimmerd like the sun;
> The belt that was about her waist
>   Was a' wi pearles bedone.

Young Waters's state, too, is not without suggestions of character (94, 3):

> His footmen they did rin before,
>   His horsemen rade behind;
> Ane mantel of the burning gowd
>   Did keip him frae the wind.

In general, the balladist has much more to say about dress than about personal appearance in the narrower sense. But he hardly goes further than these vague suggestions, which possess neither the scope nor the definiteness of Chaucer's

> Of fustian he wered a gipoun
> Al bismotered with his habergeoun;
> For he was late y-come from his viage,
> And wente for to doon his pilgrimage (vv. 75 ff.).

> Ful semely hir wimpel pinched was (v. 151).

In such passages every detail has a definite significance, every word, — as, for instance, " semely," — tells. Of Contrast of Character the balladist makes little use. Even the hero's enemies are not always condemned; even distinctions of good and bad are not emphasized. We have already noted the noncommittal attitude in the matter of illicit love,[1] and how John Steward's wife, neither good nor bad in *Child Maurice* (83), becomes in Home's *Douglas* a highly moral person. In

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[1] See p. 19, above.

The Baron of Brackley (203) the blending of two historical events results in an apparent Contradiction in Character, — the virtuous wife urging her husband to go out and fight, and the unfaithful wife rejoicing in her husband's death and welcoming his murderer. In general, however, the ballad person is a mere doer of deeds, and from these his character may be abstracted by the modern reader.[1]

If the balladist did not abstract character from his concrete incident or situation, no more did he abstract Emotion. We have already noted the light or hurried treatment of the love motive, the emphasis on action, on consequences;[2] the absence of all expression of surprise or fear in the ghost ballads,[3] and the contrast between *Clerk Colvill* and *La Belle Dame Sans Merci;*[4] the absence of grief in *Sir Hugh*, as contrasted with the *Prioresses Tale;*[5] and the lack of verbal expression of emotion, in general. We have noted, too, the method of the lyrical ballads, with their emphasis on external matters, known causes of emotion, or mere accompanying circumstances.[6] But one is not, of course, to think of the ballads as unemotional. It is not only that incident and situation are charged with potential pathos, — emotion, and mainly grief, finds direct and vigorous expression, but expression mainly in action. *The Bonny Hind* (50) is fairly typical of ballad method. in this regard. When hero and heroine discover that they are brother and sister, neither speaks, but

> She 's putten her hand down by her spare,
>   And out she 's taen a knife,
> And she has putn 't in her heart's bluid,
>   And taen away her life.
>
> And he 's taen up his bonny sister,
>   With the big tear in his een,
> And he has buried his bonny sister
>   Amang the hollins green (sts. 10–11).

In *The King's Dochter Lady Jean* (52) the situation is the same; but there is a pause between climax and catastrophe, in which the brother tells his story, and adds an emotional comment, in a kind of refrain, to each stanza.

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[1] The service which Professor Beers amusingly performs for the characters 'A' and ' B ' in "Analytical Algebra," *The Ways of Yale*, p. 169.

[2] Pp. 15 ff., above.   [4] P. 28, above.   [6] P. 33, above.

[3] P. 22, above.   [5] P. 31, above.

Grief finds expression in tears also. In *Fair Annie* (62, A, 16),

> She hang ae napkin at the door,
>   Another in the ha,
> And a' to wipe the trickling tears,
>   Sae fast as they did fa.[1]

Emotion is made effective by contrast in the commonplace most familiar in *Sir Patrick Spens*[2] (58, A, 4) :

> The first line that Sir Patrick red,
>   A loud lauch lauched he ;
> The next line that Sir Patrick red,
>   The teir blinded his ee.

In cases where the action had less value for its own sake, where it served for little else but the suggestion of emotion, the balladist was glad to take refuge in well-tried conventions. The bereaved wife or mother or sweetheart expressed her grief by vowing certain austerities.[3] Lord Livingston (262) was killed in a duel, and his lady "will now do for his sake what other ladies would not be equal to " : she will go barefoot and uncombed, and live without fire or candle-light.

In surprise, or sudden grief or joy, one kicked the table over (*Fair Mary of Wallington* [91, A, 22]). Lady Maisry is abruptly accused by her brother (65, A, 11–12) :

> " O wha is aught that bairn," he says,
>   " That ye sae big are wi ? " etc.

> She turnd her right an roun about,
>   An the kem fell frae her han ;
> A trembling seizd her fair body,
>   An her rosy cheek grew wan.

Here is a whole stanza devoted to the description of the fourfold expression of emotion ; such a passage is exceptional. It is character-

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[1] Cf. *Gil Brenton* (5, A), *John of Hazelgreen* (293), etc.

[2] Professor Child (V, 474 b) cites numerous examples.

[3] Cf. *Clerk Saunders* (69), where Professor Child cites numerous examples of "austerities."

istic, however, that the emotion is not named, that it is to be inferred from the action.[1]

Finally, the balladist seems to delight in a semi-conventional yet always effective method of indicating grief, a concrete periphrasis, where some characteristic action is represented as long continued. Thus, *The Bonny Earl of Murray* concludes (181, A, 6) :

> Oh lang will his lady
>   Look oer the castle Down,
> Eer she see the Earl of Murray
>   Come sounding thro the town !

And the Queen of Elfan's Nourice (40) laments, —

> Lang, lang will my young son greet
>   Or his mither bid him come ben.

The purpose of such stanzas is, clearly, not primarily narrative, but emotional. Among Professor Child's " commonplaces "[2] are to be noted conventional passages expressive of emotion : — of violent grief ; as,

> The knight he knacked his white fingers,
>   The lady tore her hair ;

or of shame ; as,

> Johnny Barbary used to be the first,
>   But now the last. came he.

In general, then, the ballad is diametrically opposed to sentimentalism. It emphasizes action ; in dealing with emotion it is reticent, suggestive, concrete, or tends to take refuge in a convention.

Mr. Lang[3] speaks of the " didactic drivel " of English, as opposed to Scottish ballads. The fewness of ballad characters, however, the social isolation of ballad action, the lack of interest in anything beyond that action, in social causes or results, — all this suggests that the point of view is not likely to be that of ethics. And this it turns out, is actually the case. Mr. Lang's dictum is hardly exemplified in Professor Child's collection, whether the ballads be English or Scottish.

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[1] But this is not the invariable rule : " Sweet William he dy'd for sorrow " (74) ; " Why sae sad gang ye, O ? " asked Edward's mother (13) ; and Margaret gave back Sweet William's troth " with many a sad sigh and heavy groan " (77).

[2] V, 475.   [3] Ward, *English Poets*, I, 206.

The noncommittal attitude toward character, the contrast between *Child Maurice* (83) and Home's *Douglas* in the matter of moralizing, have been discussed.[1] The moral interpretation of the play may indeed be paralleled in the ballads. Thus in *Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard* (81, C, 34):

> This sad mischance by lust was wrought;
>   Then let us call for grace,
> That we may shun this wicked vice,
>   And mend our lives apace.

But such a stanza as this occurs only in a cheap version,[2] — it is the version, not the ballad, that is poor. And, after all, it is only a moral tag, stamp of the last and least skilful individual through whose hands the ballad has passed. It by no means implies that the whole impulse, the central motive of the ballad, was didactic.

Of the few examples of didactic ballads, *The Unquiet Grave* (78) is notable. It is didactic in the sense that its purpose is to enforce an idea. This it does dramatically, concretely; nevertheless, it is clear that the impulse came from the idea, and that it is the idea that determines the course of the conversation between living and dead. The concluding stanzas are:

> " 'T is down in yonder garden green,
>   Love, where we used to walk,
> The finest flower that ere was seen
>   Is withered to a stalk.
>
> " The stalk is withered dry, my love,
>   So will our hearts decay;
> So make yourself content, my love,
>   Till God calls you away."

Professor Gummere prints this in his notes[3] as a gloss to *The Wife of Usher's Well*, where, as he points out, "*It is not said* . . . that the sons have come back to protest against their mother's excessive grief." The contrast is obvious. *The Unquiet Grave* has not the method of the ordinary ballad. It has rather the characteristics which spell failure for Bürger's *Wild Huntsman*, an imitated ballad, — the expository or persuasive purpose, the form determined by the underlying idea.

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[1] P. 38, above.   [2] Cf. p. 53, note 2, above.
[3] *Old English Ballads*, p. 346.

As we pass now to the last of the elements of narrative left unemphasized by the balladist, — to Setting, — we may note a farther contrast between *The Unquiet Grave* and other ballads. In the stanza just quoted, setting is consciously used for a definite purpose. The garden is mentioned for the sake of old associations ; and the matter of the withered flower, the symbolic significance, the deliberate and elaborate simile, requiring two stanzas for description and interpretation, — all this savors of the poetry of art. Not symbolic, certainly, yet becoming, apparently, significant in the action, is the setting described in the opening stanza of *The King's Dochter Lady Jean* (52) :

> The King's young dochter was sitting in her window,
>   Sewing at her silken seam ;
> She lookt out o the bow-window,
>   And she saw the leaves growing green, my luve,
>   And she saw the leaves growing green.
>
> She stuck her needle into her sleeve,
>   Her seam down by her tae,
> And she is awa to the merrie green-wood,
>   To pu the nit and slae.

Setting does not ordinarily receive more than the lightest sort of touch, incidental, passing, and seldom with deliberate purpose.

CHAPTER II

THE BORDER AND OUTLAW BALLADS

It is not the purpose of the present chapter to attempt a complete analysis of the narrative method of the ballads which it discusses. It is to attempt, rather, to indicate points of divergence from the type of ballad with which the first chapter was concerned, — which, for want of a better term, may be called the Simple Ballad, — and to show how far these divergences are in the direction of the *Gest*. It will be convenient to deal with the Border Ballads, then with the ballads of the Robin Hood Cycle, and finally with *Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough, and William of Cloudesly*.

A. THE BORDER BALLADS

I. THE PHASE OF LIFE

In contrast at once to the vague localization of the Simple Ballads is to be noted the richness of the present group in geographical detail. In *Otterburn* (161), for instance, the Earl of Fyffe " bound him over Solway "; over Hoppertope hill he rode, and so down by Radcliffe Crag. He harried Northumberland, and " all Bamborowe schyre," and besieged Newe Castell. In *Dick o the Cow* (185) the Armstrongs rode from Liddisdale into England, to Hutton Hall, into Cumberland. Dick's head was to hang on Hairibie, and he should ne'er cross Carlele sands again. He went to Puddingburn, to Mangertoun, the Armstrong stronghold ; he fought with Johnie on Cannobie Lee. After his adventure he could no longer live in Cumberland, " and Burgh under Stanemuir there dwels Dickie." Almost any one of these ballads would furnish a similar list of names. That the geography may not always be accurate does not signify. Like Stevenson's map of Treasure Island, this insistence upon place relations has a definite realistic effect, very different from the detachment of the Simple Ballad.

There is evidence that these names were not introduced for the purpose of localization merely : the balladist seems now and again to

anticipate Scott in his sense of their concrete, suggestive, and mouth-filling effect. Thus in *Hobie Noble* (189):

> " Gar warn the bows of Hartlie-burn,
>   See they shaft their arrows on the wa !
> Warn Willeva and Spear Edom,
>   And see the morn they meet me a'.

> " Gar meet me on the Rodrie-haugh,
>   And see it be by break o day ;
> And we will on to Conscowthart Green,
>   For there, I think, we 'll get our prey " (sts. 16–17).

More obvious, but less effective, because more consciously artful, are the stanzas in *Lord Maxwell's Last Goodnight* (195, A, 5–6) :

> " Adue, Dumfriese, that proper place !
> Fair well, Carlaurike faire !
> Adue the castle of the Trive,
>   And all my buildings there !

> " Adue, Lochmaben gaits so faire,
>   And the Langhm shank, where birks bobs bony ! "

These ballads show a tendency to indicate the Time of the action. Johnie Cock's adventure (114) occurred on a May morning. In *Sir Andrew Barton* (167) the action began about midsummer and lasted until New Year's Day. Otterburn was fought at " Lamasse tyde, whan husbondes wynnes ther haye " (161). Jamie Telfer's adventure (190, 1) fell " about the Martinmas tyde." In no case is the time particularly significant for the action. Like the localization, however, these indications of temporal relations enhance the realistic effect.

In the Human Relations, again, these ballads differ from the Simple Ballads. We have to do no longer with an isolated group of two or three individuals, but now usually with one family or clan, as it appears in conflict with another or with the representatives of justice. The relation of chieftain and followers becomes significant, though nothing is made of rank. Kings, although more authentic than in the Simple Ballad, are usually outside the action, like the " Jamie " and " Harry " of the *Cheviot* (162), and the Henry VIII of *Sir Andrew Barton* (167). The king who betrayed Johnie Armstrong (169) was, however, responsible for the events of the ballad. Characteristic of the balladist's limited view is the fact that he does not see in the border raids which he recounts parts of an international struggle. Only Otterburn (161)

seems part of a general war ; *Chevy Chase* (162) has national signifi-
cance only because of the kings' comments at the close.

The Supernatural is absent, and Providence is not supposed to guide
the affairs of men, except perhaps in *Otterburn*, where

> Jhesu Cryste in hevyn on hyght
> Dyd helpe hym well that daye (st. 34).

II. MOTIVES

The central motive of these ballads is always some phase of Valor.
It manifests itself sometimes in mere daring, — as in the rescue ballads
like *Kinmont Willy* (186), where the opposing parties do not actually
come to blows, — sometimes in battle of some sort, where both sides
are active. This battle is most commonly single combat ; occasionally,
as in *Otterburn* (161) and *Cheviot* (162), masses of men are engaged
in it, or small groups, as in *Johnie Armstrong* (169) or in *Jamie Telfer*
(190). But even in *Otterburn* and *Cheviot* the general conflict shows
a tendency to break up into individual encounters. Not much is made of
the skilful ordering of the battle (in *Cheviot*, " The Dogglas partyd his
ost in thre " [st. 27]) : it is rather the actual conflict, the great blows
given and received, the valor in action of the men, that the balladist
dwells upon. He is interested, moreover, in the fight for its own
sake. Patriotism or desire for glory may conceivably be involved in the
struggle ; but these are kept in the background. In *Otterburn*, for
instance, there seems to be a general war in progress ; large move-
ments are described in the opening stanzas, and the fight may have
a kind of purpose ; yet the balladist comments : " The grete wolde
ever to-gether ryde " (st. 2). In *Otterburn*, also, the command was,
" Euery man thynke on hys trewe-love, And marke hym to the Trenite "
(st. 44). This is going far. In *Cheviot* there is no such command ;
the general war, too, has disappeared, and the immediate cause of the
struggle is Percy's " avowe to God, that he wold hunte in the mown-
tayns off Chyviat." The hunting in the enemy's country and killing the
fattest harts is a sure means of bringing on the battle, rather than an
end in itself. The real end is to drink delight of battle ; it is not even
a " famous victory," since both Percy and Douglas are slain. It is to
be noted that this valor might be inspired by loyalty to leader or to
comrade. In the *Cheviot* Percy and Douglas wish to settle their dispute
by single combat and spare the lives of their men : but Wytharyngton

(and here one recalls the Comitatus ideal) will never see his captain fight and stand and look on. This, and that sort shown in the rescue ballads, approach as near as the ballad ever does to the ideal of disinterested and unselfish courage.

This courage is, in general, of the unyielding, dogged type. Two stanzas, often quoted, illustrate this quality. One is from the *Cheviot* (162) :

> For Wetharryngton my harte was wo,
>   that euer he slayne shulde be;
> For when both his leggis wear hewyne in to,
>   yet he knyled and fought on hys kny (st. 54).

The other, from *Johnie Armstrong* (169, B, 18), is repeated in *Sir Andrew Barton* (167, A, 65):

> Said John, Fight on, my merry men all,
>   I am a little hurt, but I am not slain;
> I will lay me down for to bleed a while,
>   Then I'le rise and fight with you again.

This same sort of courage shows itself in the fight against odds. Both *Cheviot* and *Otterburn* mention the superior numbers of the Scotch. When Johnie Armstrong utters the words just quoted, he, with eight score men, has been fighting all Edinburgh. Johnie Cock (114) goes alone to Braidscaur hill, " to ding the dun deer down," although, as his mother warns him, there are seven foresters watching for him at Pickeram Side. Yet the balladist loved a fair fight. In *Otterburn* Percy had sworn to fight with Douglas at given time and place, and would not wait for his father and reinforcements. It was a *treacherous* king that betrayed Johnie Armstrong (169), and a *false* Scot that ran him through from behind. In this connection should be noted the generous grief for a fallen foe, — present also in the Simple Ballad; Percy's lament for Douglas, in the *Cheviot*, is a famous instance (162, A, 38).

The motivation is on the whole more careful than in the Simple Ballads; the balladist is now more likely to explain, less likely to assume or suggest. It is characteristic that Hobie Noble (189) should take the trouble to explain just why he dare not into England ride : the landsergeant had him at feud because of his brother's death :

> " And Anton Shiel, he loves not me,
>   For I gat twa drifts of his sheep;
> The great Earl of Whitfield loves me not,
>   For nae gear frae me he eer coud keep " (st. 10).

We learn, too, just how Dick o the Cow (185) got possession of the key and so was able to make off with the Armstrongs' horses: those who did not come at the first call got no meat; late comers were hungry and voracious and flung the key carelessly over the door head.

III. STRUCTURE

It is perhaps at this point that the Border Ballad differs most notably from the Simple Ballad. It is longer than the Simple Ballad [1]; but it does not tell a longer story, does not deal, that is, with a series of independent incidents. The greater length must, then, be due to elaboration. This elaboration, however, does not take the form of description of character, of mental states, or of setting; nor is it in any case the result of a didactic tendency. It is concerned with the plot alone: it adds preliminary and concluding incidents, and introduces minor incidents into the course of the narrative; it lays great stress upon the connecting links.

In keeping with the more careful motivation is the tendency to prefix to the ballad a preliminary incident, which is the " exciting cause " of what follows. It is thus the hunting of the Cheviot that leads to the fight (162). The Captain of Bewcastle raids Fair Dodhead and takes Jamie Telfer's cattle (190), and Jamie retaliates. Johnie and Willy Armstrong find nothing to steal at Hutton Hall and therefore they take the three good kine from Dick o the Cow (185): Dick's revenge makes the ballad. Even the brief ballad of *The Death of Parcy Reed* (193, A, eighteen stanzas) opens with an account in general terms of the preliminary incident, — Reed's taking of Whinton Crosier and delivering him to the law, — which leads to the tragedy. Similarly, the merchants' complaint of Sir Andrew Barton (167) is preliminary to the sea-fight.

The balladist is not content with the cause, he must also give the effect of the action. After the Hunting of the Cheviot (162, A, 63, 64) the king, as result, " did the battle of Hombyll-down." Dick o the Cow sells his horses to advantage and moves further south, after his adventure with the Armstrongs (185). Horsley is knighted, Lord Howard made Earl of Nottingham, and the men are all rewarded for gallantry in the engagement with Sir Andrew Barton (167).

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[1] The average length is about 1400 words.

The main incident itself is usually elaborated by being broken up into minor incidents. After the raid, Jamie Telfer (190) sets out to get help: (1) Gibby Elliot refuses it; (2) Jock Grieve, whose wife and Jamie's are sisters, gives him a black horse, on which he goes to (3) William's Wat, who with his two sons goes with him to (4) Buccleuch, who tells him whom to warn. (5) They carry out Buccleuch's directions. (6) They ride in pursuit; Willy sees the kye, and the fight takes place. (7) The Captain's bride comments on the affair. Then come (8) the raid on the Captain's house and (9) the return to Dodhead. Occasionally a subsidiary incident is developed for its own sake, delaying the ordinarily rapid onward movement. The most marked examples are to be found in *Otterburn*, which in this respect offers a contrast to *Chevy Chase*. The comparative richness in geographical detail has been pointed out; also noteworthy is the way in which the beginning of the battle is delayed. The announcement of the arrival of Percy requires six stanzas (20–25), not paralleled in the *Cheviot*. The order of the battle is arranged with greater detail. The action is delayed at the same point by the arrival of a messenger from Percy's father, and by the resulting dialogue, — a matter of seven stanzas (36–42), also not found in the *Cheviot*. In both ballads action is delayed by the usual dialogue preliminaries to the fight. All this, of course, is part of the story; nowhere is found anything like the fully elaborated episode, dear to the epic.

The motives peculiar to the Border Ballads — raid and rescue — imply rapid movement from place to place, movement significant as part of the action. It is natural, then, that journeys should not be omitted as they are in the Simple Ballad, but that they should be described in some detail. Examples, in addition to those illustrative of the richness in geographical detail, are not necessary. They may be found also in *Jock o the Side* (187), *Kinmont Willy* (186), *Hobie Noble* (189), and, especially, in *Jamie Telfer* (190). Much is made of the choice of road, of the method of crossing swollen rivers, and of tricks to elude pursuers.

It will now be evident that the greater length and elaboration of these ballads does not affect their unity. This is a matter which no longer takes care of itself; but the balladist's interest in the story in hand continues to save him from digressions. There is still no sub-plot; synchronism is not yet significant for the action. The Border Ballad is, then, simple and organic in structure; part is causally related

to part, incident is related to incident by action or reaction. It may be thought of as developed from the Simple Ballad by means of elaboration of plot, and it shows only this tendency in the direction of *Gest* or Epic. It does not, as we have seen, show tendency to elaborate Character, Mental States, Setting, Moral Significance; nor does it show any tendency to grow by accretion, to group a cluster of independent incidents about the name of a single hero. The appearance of the same character in different ballads has, however, prepared the way for accretion. There is, for instance, the suggestion of a Hobie Noble Cycle. Hobie is the hero of the ballad bearing his name (189), and it is he who rescues Jock o the Side (187) and is the real hero of that ballad, — a clearly defined central figure about whom might have clustered a group of ballads like the Robin Hood Cycle, which later would have provided material for a *Gest*. But these ballads themselves show no tendency to combine such a series of independent incidents.

IV. General Characteristics of the Narrative Method

Our discussion of structure will have made it clear that the Border Ballad does not proceed by leaps and bounds, but by a continuous forward movement. It remains only to note the extraordinary vigor and rapidity of the rescue ballads, of *Kinmont Willy* (186), *Hobie Noble* (189), *Jock o the Side* (187). It is not only that the minor incidents crowd fast the one upon the other, — the dash of the rescue comes to be echoed in the speed and the swing of the verse.

Repetition is less common than in the Simple Ballad, and what there is does not take the form of elaborate stanzaic groups, but consists, ordinarily, in the binding together of stanza and stanza by repeating, usually with a change in the rhyme word, the last two lines of the first in the first two of the second.[1] It is repetition with a difference, incremental repetition, and serves to make the movement continuous rather than to retard it. The Simple Ballad characteristic is thus modified to conform to the requirements of a more rapid and more continuous movement. The loss of the Refrain — it is preserved only in *Dick o*

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[1] As in *Dick o the Cow* (185, 8 and 9, 22 and 23, 26 and 27, 43 and 44). In *Jamie Telfer* (190) the same formula, with slight variations, recurs wherever Jamie asks for help (8, 9, 14, 22, 23). In *Hughie Grame* (191), when Lord Boles and Lady Ward try to buy off Hugh and are refused, the question and answer are the same in each case (191, A, 14 and 15 are repeated by 16 and 17 respectively).

the Cow (185) and *Hobie Noble* (189) — is perhaps to be regarded as part of the same development.

The Border Ballad commonly tells an exciting story. The raid or rescue is not inevitably successful, and now and again the end is tragic. The issue, therefore, is doubtful, and the very nature of the subject matter involves Suspense. The balladist does not spoil this effect by telling the end of his story before he has begun ; but he does little or nothing to create or emphasize suspense by literary artifice. Tragic contrast, when it occurs, is included within the bounds of a single stanza, so that hopes are raised and dashed at once. There is no time for suspense in *Hobie Noble* (189, 21), for instance :

> Now Hobie thought the gates were clear,
> But, ever alas ! it was not sae ;
> They were beset wi cruel men and keen,
> That away brave Noble could not gae.

Similar in effect is the familiar commonplace where the hero is delighted to receive a letter from the king or from his true-love, but is not pleased with the contents. There is a modification of this in *Johnie Armstrong,* where there is sufficient interval between expectation and tragic fulfilment to create suspense.[1]

Motivation and Structure have, as we have seen, a completeness seldom found in the Simple Ballad. Yet the Border Ballad shows enough of the old tendency to omit and suggest to connect it closely with the simpler type. It is not said, in *Dick o the Cow* (185), that the key flung over the door was the stable key; nor do we learn how or when Dick slipped away from the Armstrongs. When he saw the key he apparently went at once to the stable ; but by that time he may have been sleeping in the peat-house, where, perhaps, it was that the key was kept. In *Jamie Telfer* (190), it is implied only that Jamie and his friends gathered and went in pursuit of the stolen cattle.[2]

In *Hughie Grame* (191) the key-fact of the connection of Peggie and the Bishop is suppressed until the end. Hughie, condemned to die, gives his sword to Johnie Armstrong, and the ballad closes with the suggestive lines :

> " And when thou comst to the border-side,
> Remember the death of Sir Hugh of the Grime " (A, 23).[3]

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[1] 169, A, 5–11, 14.   [2] One may note the abrupt transition from st. 28 to st. 29.

[3] This recalls the suggestion of Brynild to Hagen in *Sivard og Brynild* (Grundtvig, 3). Cf. p. 143, below.

Very similar again to the manner of the Simple Ballad is the close of *The Death of Parcy Reed* (193, A). The dialogue reveals how his treacherous companions desert him one by one, and leave him with empty powder-horn and gun-barrel filled with water, at the mercy of his approaching enemies; here the ballad ends. The ballad of *Johnie Cock* (114), too, slips past the objective point: he kills the seven foresters, all but one, and we are not told that he is mortally wounded. But presently he is sending a boy to his mother to ask her to fetch him away, and the ballad concludes:

> And many ae was the well-wight man
> At the fetching o Johny away (A, 21).

No doubt this phrase was understood to mean " carrying home the body," as in " Ther makes they fette awaye " in *Otterburn* (161, A, 67); yet the balladist is notably shy of saying that Johnie was mortally wounded and died; he prefers to imply it merely. But these, after all, are exceptional cases; they but serve to connect Border Ballad and Simple Ballad; the rule for the former remains completeness, explanation, full elaboration of the action at the objective point.

√About one half the stanzas of the Border Ballads contain dialogue. None of the ballads consist wholly of dialogue; in none is it wholly absent. In general there is little divergence from the usage of the Simple Ballad. Question is repeated in answer. Speeches, however, are commonly assigned, or, at least, it is always clear who is speaking. There are a few cases of indirect discourse, — in *Jamie Telfer* (190, 5), or in the opening of *Chevy Chase*, where indirect presently becomes direct. There is the same introductory device of the use of the first person, which presently changes to the third, in *Archie o Cawfield* (188). In the rescue ballads — *Kinmont Willy, Hobie Noble, Jamie Telfer* (186, 189, 190) — the balladist frequently uses the first person plural, thus identifying himself with the rescue party, and adding yet more to the realistic effect already noted as characteristic of these ballads.

V. The Undeveloped Elements of Narration

So far as Mental States and Moral Significance are concerned, the neglect continues. In spite of the array of geographical names, Setting, in the sense of visualized landscape, or of nature brought into relation with man, suffers the same fate. Character, on the other hand, gains

new emphasis. (The hero of the Border Ballad is a definite person; he has a local habitation and ·a name.\ One need only compare the titles, — *Edward* (13) and *Jamie Telfer of the Fair Dodhead* (190), — to get the effect of the reality of this Border hero. This is not unaccommodated man, but — one feels, whatever the fact may be — a real person, who lived and moved and had his being, lost his gear to the Captain of Bewcastle, and ran ten miles afoot over the new-fallen snow, between moon-set and sunrise, from Dodhead to Stobs's Ha. As this bit of paraphrase suggests, however, this new reality of the persons is not due to a new skill in character-drawing. It is rather the result of the more complicated phase of life. It is easy enough to believe in the existence of a man who lived in a definite place, and did many definite things at a stated time, in company with a large number of fellow mortals. If *Edward*, in spite of the isolation of the hero, is " convincing," it is because of its elemental, universally human quality; if *Jamie Telfer* is realistic, it is due to the complicated relations of the hero with time, place, and the men about him. The importance of the men about him needs emphasis at this point. The action of *Sir Hugh* (155) took place, we saw, in uninhabited country. The bells of Lincoln were rung without men's hands, the books read without men's tongues, because, one is tempted to believe, Lincoln possessed no citizens to ring or read. The ballad census shows only Lady Maisry, the Jew's Daughter, the dead Sir Hugh, and his shadowy playmates. Chaucer, we saw, crowded his stage with persons. Now the Border Ballad approaches Chaucer, diverges from the Simple Ballad in the direction of the narrative of art. In *Jamie Telfer* — to cite again this typical example — no less than twenty characters, most of them named, are concerned in the action.

The reality of the persons is due, then, entirely to their environment, not to complexity of character. They are, however, a little more than mere doers of deeds; they rise to the dignity of a type, embody popular ideals. (Generosity, dash and daring, loyalty to the ties of family and clan, — these are the simple traits of the Border Hero\ So far as rank and importance are concerned, one might trace his rise from the mere isolated outlaw, Johnie Cock (114), to the Percy and the Douglas (161, 162), where the outlaw character is lost. But indeed the fact that the hero is an outlaw is seldom insisted upon ; often he seems to come into conflict, not with the representatives of the law, but with others of his own class. And in a case like Johnie Armstrong (169),

sympathy is with the ballad hero, not with the king. He is not the embodiment of ideals arising from class feeling; he is rather the product of a homogeneous community, which recognizes the existence of none other but itself, — a community in which his was the normal way of life. " 'In the list of Border thieves made in the year 1552, William Patrick, the priest, and John Nelson, the curate of Bewcastle, are both included.' . . . This shows that the society was homogeneous." [1]

In spite, however, of this greater though adventitious reality, the Border Hero is seldom the definite centre of the ballad. The event is the main thing, and the ballad deals impartially with all those concerned in it, with the group rather than with the individual. *Johnie Cock* (114) and *Johnie Armstrong* (169) are thus exceptional; *Otterburn* (161) and *Cheviot* (162) are not tales of Percy and Douglas merely; Kinmont Willy (186) and Jock o the Side (187) are the mere passing objects of daring rescues. After he has gathered his friends, Jamie Telfer (190) loses himself in their ranks, and minor characters, in succession, enter and disappear. The unity of the Border Ballads is the unity of a single action, not the epic unity of events grouped about a single character.[2] And we have already seen how slight the cyclical tendency of these ballads is.

B. THE BALLADS OF THE ROBIN HOOD CYCLE

Roughly speaking, these ballads combine with the subject matter of the *Gest* a method of treatment similar to that of the Border Ballads, yet modified to suit the material. They are of great importance as a connecting link in any scheme of development; and as isolated documents they are, in their way, unsurpassed. For the present study, however, their significance lies not so much in form or matter or intrinsic worth, as in the fact that they constitute a cycle, tell each an independent story of a hero common to them all. The character of this hero is not very different from that of the hero of the Border Ballads, and the question why i. is that here we have a well-developed cycle, there only the slight beginning of one, lies near at hand. An answer to this question our discussion of the group is to attempt to suggest.

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[1] Child, note on *Jamie Telfer*, V, 300.
[2] By way of exception we must note *Dick o the Cow* (185).

I. The Phase of Life

The Border Ballads, we have just seen, were the products of a homogeneous community, whose view was limited to its own boundaries. The Robin Hood ballads are the product of a similar community, become conscious of the world outside, and setting itself in direct opposition to that world. | It was poor, peasant, rural, subject, contrasted with rich, aristocratic, urban, governing. It is through opposition that class, community, nation, comes to have common feeling ; through banding together against a common enemy, that it gains unity. Thus the class or community or national feeling is in the first instance a feeling of opposition to something else. It will, then, in its literature most eagerly seize upon what expresses this opposition ; it will, as a whole, particularly rejoice in tales of successful opposition. It will naturally seize upon such a figure as that of Robin Hood. He is the representative of the class, the popular hero, and all that he does expresses distinctively popular ideals. He happens to be an outlaw because he and his class stood in opposition to the established government ; if they had stood in opposition to Trojans, Grendels, dragons, he would be a hero.

This class feeling puts new emphasis on place relations, results in the idealization of a distinct way of life. All the ballads, indeed, lay the scene in the country, since, no doubt, country life was the only one their authors knew. The city was the king's residence merely, and of somewhat evil connotation. The Robin Hood ballads emphasize explicitly what the Simple Ballad only implies. Ordinarily the ballads of the cycle begin with a stanza or two in praise of the merry greenwood. The most notable of these introductions is that of *Robin Hood and the Monk* (119). It is perhaps mediæval convention, yet there is real feeling behind it and it is interesting not only as a bit of description and idealization : it is interesting because of what follows :

> " This is a mery mornyng," seid Litull John,
>   " Be hym that dyed on tre ;
> A more mery man then I am one
>   Lyves not in Cristiantë " (st. 4)

— a confession of a certain emotional effect produced by the setting. It is a simple and obvious matter : he is " mery " merely ; but he himself is so far introspective as to name the feeling and mention the cause. Robin, however, is grieved because he may not on any solemn day go

to mass or matins. Perhaps here also the same cause is at work;
"spring winds will sow disquietude." We seem to have here a long
step in the direction of art : of how much of it all the balladist was con-
scious is another matter. It is an extreme case, yet in so far as it
shows interest in the setting for its own sake, and as it attempts to bring
the setting into relation with the characters, it is thoroughly typical. It
is not the greenwood, but the *merry* greenwood, and this phrase is con-
stantly recurring.[1]

The human relations — those of leader and followers, and the op-
position to the aristocracy or rich religious orders — are practically
those of the *Gest*, and may be best discussed in that connection.[2] Be
it noted, however, that here in the cycle it is only some one of the
peasant class — butcher, tanner, potter, curtal friar — who is allowed
to be a match for Robin. Once admitted, however, this equality opens
the door to the deterioration of the central character in the later Robin
Hood ballads, with which we are not concerned.

The religious relations are not to be forgotten. It is Robin's piety
that nearly costs his life in *Robin Hood and the Monk* (119) ; and when
Robin is wounded and hard-pressed by Guy of Gisborne (118) he thinks
on "Our Lady dere."

II. MOTIVES

In the Border Ballads the action was still the main thing : in this
action groups of persons were concerned; only exceptionally did the
emphasis fall upon the individual character. In the Robin Hood Cycle
this is reversed. Character has become the centre of the whole matter,
a touchstone by which new material should be accepted or rejected, the
mainspring of the action. The Central Motive is thus to be defined in
terms of the hero's character. This hero is now idealized in accordance
with the best popular conception. To the loyalty, generosity, and dar-
ing of the Border outlaw are added piety, courtesy, the special loyalty
to the king, and hostility to the rich monastic orders. Such a character,
though a combination of simple qualities, is yet comparatively complex
and human. He is real, not by reason of his surroundings, but in his
own right. Singer and audience were no doubt unconscious of the
complexity, and perhaps incapable of any abstraction of qualities. Yet

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[1] The use of place names is similar to that in the *Gest* (cf. p. 89, below).

[2] Cf. p. 89, below.

the definite conception was there; and, until it was modified, a new tale not in keeping with it would have been promptly rejected, just as we refuse to believe this or that of a friend, though we could give no formal account of his character.

The subsidiary motives of the cycle are practically identical with those of the *Gest*, and discussion of them may be postponed. As in the Border Ballad, they are developed in some detail, and there is evidence of a careful motivation. Robin's plot to get the Sheriff into the wood is typical (121, 31–82). Disguised as a potter, he goes to Nottingham, sells all but five of his pots, and gives these to the Sheriff's wife; she invites him to dinner, and he hears of a shooting-match in which he would like to take part. He exhibits his skill, wins the admiration of the Sheriff. He tells the Sheriff that he has a bow which was given to him by Robin Hood. The Sheriff at once desires to see Robin, and on the morrow they set out. Thus each step in the narrative leads to the next; there are no leaps and bounds. The Sheriff may seem unduly credulous; but it is to be remembered that there was a new Sheriff in each ballad: this one had only heard of Robin Hood, and the supposed potter was his good friend who had just dined at his house, made a present of pots to his wife, and shown his skill with the bow.

III. Structure

The ballads of the Robin Hood Cycle are still longer than the Border Ballads.[1] Though earlier in date, they represent a later stage of development; they owe their greater length in part to a further elaboration of the main story by preliminary, concluding, and minor incidents. They owe it also, though in less degree, to the descriptive introductions, and to the elaboration of character. Of all this *Robin Hood and the Monk* (119) is an excellent example. The story is simple enough; but the main incident is swelled by the preliminary quarrel of Robin and Little John, by minor matters like Robin's fight at the church door, the killing of the monk, Little John's trip to London, his return to Nottingham and rescue of Robin, and by the king's comment at the close. This ballad has also a more elaborate characterization, and the notable descriptive introduction discussed above.[2] It is the longest ballad,[3] and the most highly developed single incident of the cycle.

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[1] The average is nearly 1600 words.   [2] P. 72.   [3] About 2700 words.

Rather more significant for the transition to the *Gest* is the fourth cause of the greater length of the Cycle ballads. This is the tendency to combine within the limits of a single ballad events really independent of one another, — the accretive tendency. This seems to be due to the development for its own sake of a mere preliminary incident. In *Robin Hood and the Potter* (121) the balladist clearly has two stories to tell, stories which really exist independently in other ballads or in the *Gest*. One is the fight with the potter, in whom Robin meets his match ; the other is the outwitting of the Sheriff. The first is treated in some detail ; it does not necessarily lead to the second, is not the " exciting cause " of what follows, as the true preliminary incident is, — like the quarrel of Robin and Little John in *Robin Hood and the Monk* (119), in *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne* (118).[1] The second is treated at much greater length ; it might well stand alone and dispense with the first altogether. Now it is worthy of note that the balladist is not content with the mere end-for-end juxtaposition of these two independent incidents ; by the familiar device of the disguise he makes the first lead up to the second, and after the conclusion of the second, in which the Sheriff returns to his wife with the report of his misadventure, the balladist goes back to the first, and concludes this with Robin's liberal payment of the potter. This relatively skilful union of independent incidents prepares the way for the structure of the *Gest*.

For the rest, the Structure of these ballads closely resembles that of the Border Ballads. The Journeys, while they do not display such geographical erudition, still properly connect scene and scene. In general they resemble those of the *Gest*, and separate discussion is unnecessary. Synchronism is present in the rescue ballads (*Robin Hood and the Monk* [119] and *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne* [118]): while Robin is prisoner in Nottingham, Little John gets the king's pardon for him ; and it is necessary to suppose that while Little John and Robin quarrel the band is scattered by the Sheriff, and while Robin fights with Guy, the Sheriff captures Little John and binds him to a tree. With the liberation of Little John the two streams unite. This relatively skilful handling of simultaneous events, evident in spite of the fragmentary condition of the text, marks a notable advance. There is, indeed, nothing of the kind in the *Gest* or the *Beowulf*.

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[1] This ballad consists of two independent incidents, which, in the present fragmentary version, are not united at all.

IV. General Characteristics of the Narrative Method

Here there is no notable divergence from the Border Ballads. As there, the movement is comparatively smooth and steady, but somewhat less rapid. Repetition is less common, and, when it occurs, involves whole stanzas, with slight variations. There is little Suspense, and this is always involved in the story itself, not introduced by the art of the narrator. About one half of the stanzas contain dialogue, — the usual ballad average. The character of the speeches does not differ materially from that in the Border Ballads. The assignment of them is even more careful: in *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne*, at the expense of an extra half line (118, 20). Soliloquy occurs in this same ballad (14, 52); and the Apostrophes have the same effect, — Little John's to his bow (16) and Robin's to the dead Sir Guy (43).

V. The Undeveloped Elements of Narration

The new emphasis upon character and its new complexity do not imply great advance in characterization. It is possible, nevertheless, to trace the beginnings of methods which are to be carried much further in the *Gest;* the difference is mainly a difference in quantity. The ballads of the Cycle show a tendency to place a bit of character description somewhere near the beginning. Thus in *Robin Hood and the Potter* (121, 3):

> Roben Hood was the yeman's name,
>   That was boyt corteys and ffre;
> Ffor the loffe of owre ladey,
>   All wemen werschepyd he.

Robin Hood and the Tanner (126) dispenses with the conventional setting and opens with a two-stanza description of Arthur a Bland. There occurs also the formal introduction of a character who appears later in the story. In *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne* (118, 6 and 7):

> There were the ware of a wight yeoman,
>   His body leaned to a tree.
>
> A sword and a dagger he wore by his side,
>   Had beene many a mans bane,
> And he was clad in his capull-hyde,
>   Topp, and tayle, and mayne.

These passages will sufficiently illustrate the various methods of char-
acterization, — epithet, history, habitual action, etc. The last-named
method is to be carried much further in the *Gest*. The Cycle offers no
notable contrast of character.

The description of States of Mind is still an "undeveloped element."
The relative importance of Setting has already been pointed out.[1] A
certain growth of the didactic tendency is involved in the success of
Robin in his adventures with Monk or Sheriff. In *Robin Hood and
Guy of Gisborne* (118, 18) this sense of right on the side of the out-
law is explicitly stated :

> It had beene better for William a Trent
>   To hange vpon a gallowe
> Then for to lye in the greenwoode,
>   There slaine with an arrowe.

William was one of the Sheriff's men, and the implication is that it is
better to die an outlaw than in the Sheriff's service. In this same ballad
there is a tendency also toward proverbial comment on the action :

> But often words they breeden bale,
>   That parted Robin and Iohn.
>
> And it is sayd, when men be mett,
>   Six can doe more then three (sts. 11, 19).

And the accent on Robin's piety and courtesy and generosity to the
poor springs from the same impulse, — the tendency to think of the
action as "conduct." But it is a very slight tendency, after all, and it
is a long way from didactic purpose.

C. ADAM BELL, CLIM OF THE CLOUGH, AND WILLIAM OF CLOUDESLY[2]

Although not actually related to the Robin Hood Cycle or *Gest*, its
similarity to them in matter and form demands the treatment of this
ballad at this point in our discussion. It may be regarded as represent-
ing a single moment in an analogous cycle-gest development ; the ballads
of the cycle have been lost and this document, longer and more elabo-
rate in structure than any other ballad, yet a good deal shorter and
simpler than the *Gest*, is all that is left. It is thus valuable as in some

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[1] P. 72, above.   [2] No. 116.

measure indicative of what, at an earlier stage, the *Gest of Robin Hood* may have been. It is notable also as retaining characteristics of the Simple Ballads, the Border Ballads, and the Robin Hood Cycle, and thus serves as a point of convergence for a few of the various lines of epic development.

I. THE PHASE OF LIFE

The opening stanzas reveal at once the typical place relations of the Robin Hood group :

> Mery it was in grene forest,
>   Amonge the leues grene,
> Where that men walke both east and west,
>   Wyth bowes and arrowes kene,

> To ryse the dere out of theyr denne ;
>   Suche sightes as hath ofte bene sene,
> As by thre yemen of the north countrey,
>   By them it is as I meane.

This grene forest was Englysshe-wood (st. 4) or Inglyswode (st. 95), near Carelel (sts. 6, 8, 10, etc.), and in it was the usual trysty-tre, with store of bows and arrows (st. 95).

There is the usual loyalty to the king, combined with an antipathy to his representatives in the neighboring town. Yet there is very little evidence of class feeling. No unpleasant epithets are applied to justice or sheriff, nor are their actions characterized as false or base in any way. There may be some thought of condemning the justice for wearing a coat of mail (sts. 26, 27), and in st. 93, after the escape, Adam flung back the keys of the town,

> And bad them evyll to thryue,
> And all that letteth ony good yoman
>   To come and comforte his wyue.

Yet class feeling is not necessarily involved here. This absence of emphasized class conflict, like the absence of a single hero, brings us back to the manner of the Border Ballad.

The reverence for Our Lady, combined with antipathy to the religious orders, is also absent. The ballad, however, is not without evidence of piety of the conventional type. "Muche people prayed for Cloudesle" (st. 161); the outlaws "thanked God of theyr fortune"

(st. 107); the yeomen, finally, went to Rome and were assoyled of all their sins, "and dyed good men all thre."

The relation of leader and followers is not present, and that of brotherhood-in-arms takes its place (st. 4). This relation of sworn brothers, which we are to find later as an important characteristic of the Heroic. Ballads, is significant for the present action, and is explicitly emphasized by the balladist. Adam and Clim determined to rescue William, "though we bye it full dere" (st. 50). When the three stood side by side in Carlisle (st. 82):

> Wyllyam sayd to his bretheren two,
> Thys daye let vs togyder lyue and deye;
> If euer you haue nede as I haue nowe,
> The same shall ye fynde by me,

and thereupon "they fought togyder as bretheren true" (st. 84). Arrived safely under the trysty-tree, William bade his wife thank his brethren two for their great service. Adam's reply was typically English (st. 104):

> "Here of to speke," sayd Adam Bell,
> " I-wys it is no bote ;
> The meat that we must supp withall,
> It runneth yet fast on fote."

Still as part of the preliminary explanation, we learn that two of these yeomen were single, and one had a wedded fere,

> Wyllyam was the wedded man,
> Muche more then was hys care (st. 6).

It was William's desire to see his wife, like Robin's reverence for Our Lady (in *Robin Hood and the Monk* [119]), that led to all the trouble that followed. Of this domestic relation the balladist has a very definite ideal.[1] Little, on the other hand, is made of the father's relation to his sons. The oldest of the three is provided as a lay figure from whose head William is to shoot the apple in the last fit.

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[1] See sts. 14, 25, 32, 106.

II. MOTIVES

Our ballad does not show the idealization of a definite person, and the Central Motive is hence not to be defined in terms of character. The interest is, rather, primarily in action, and action notably valorous. The defense of the burning house, that typical Germanic situation, though motived by William's desire to see his wife, and the fight in the town, though motived by the desire of Clim and Adam to rescue their sworn brother, yet come close to the delight in the conflict for its own sake, characteristic of Simple or Border Ballad. Cunning is a negligible quantity; the familiar trick of Adam and Clim to get into Carlisle is the only instance of it. What is more notable in their action is their daring, the quality required in all the rescue ballads, whether of the Border or of the Robin Hood Cycle. It is a valor that takes the offensive, insists on action, that wilfully runs into danger, like that involved in William's visit to Carlisle, in his sortie in the heroic manner from the burning house, and in his visit to the king. It is the obstinate, unyielding valor of the Border hero :

> Wyllyam shot so wonderous well,
>   Tyll hys arrowes were all go,
> And the fyre so fast vpon hym fell,
>   That hys bowstryng brent in two (st. 33).[1]

An important part of the elaboration of the present ballad is the wealth of subsidiary motives. Much is made throughout of the yeomen's skill with bow and arrow, and this becomes central in the last fit. Like Robin Hood these outlaws dined well in greenwood ; it is not one of them but the king, however, who suggests washing before meat (st. 131). But mere enumeration will not convey an impression of the importance of these minor motives ; examination of the first fit shows that by their use the action is wrought into one continuous chain from the account of the phase of life at the beginning to the arrival of the yeomen before Carlisle in the last stanza. The yeomen were outlaws, and sworn brothers ; William was married and therefore ran into danger to see his wife. The old woman's malignity seems at first unmotived, but is presently explained by the reward. The balladist is at pains to show that Alice was a loyal wife and that therefore she stood by her husband

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[1] See also sts. 34–35.

in time of need. After the taking of William comes the swineherd inci-
dent, a notable piece of motivation. In the Simple Ballad he would
have run to William's comrades, merely, with the commonplace about
winning meat and fee, and about the journey. But here he saw the
gallows erected, and learned that it was for Cloudesly. Now this
little boy was the town swineherd, and kept Alice's swine. He had
occasion, therefore, to go into the wood, and he had often seen William
there, and given him many a dinner; it is clear, then, that he liked
him, and that he would know where to find Adam and Clim. A crevice
in the wall is provided for his egress, — since the gates were closed and
guarded ; through this he went, and so to the wood, and there met the
two yeomen and told them the news. Now since they were William's
sworn brothers, they determined to rescue him ; they rewarded the
boy and proceeded at once to Carlisle. Contrast this account with
that of the carrying of any message in the Simple Ballads, keep in
mind the well-known " epic detail," and one of the many means
by which the long epic may be developed from the short ballad is at
once evident.

It is not without some slight reservation, however, that one may
declare careful motivation a characteristic of this ballad. As Professor
Child points out, comparing this incident with parallels which have not
the defect, William offers of his own free will to shoot the apple from
his son's head, while the king rather illogically threatens death as the
penalty for failure. The weakness at this point would seem to be due
to the fact that the balladist was here using a well-known motive, and
failed to unite it properly with the rest of the story. It is a defect
reminiscent of the Simple Ballad.

Upon Conflict of Motives the touch is here as light as in the Simple
Ballad, and offers the same contrast to the (in this respect) somewhat
more developed heroic *Bewick and Graham* and *Sivard og Brynild.*[1]
William's love for his wife must be weighed against the danger involved
in a visit to Carlisle. In sts. 7 and 8 Adam advises William not to go.
William's reply is characteristic of him and of the ballad type :

> " If that I come not to morowe, brother,
> By pryme to you agayne,
> Truste not els but that I am take,
> Or else that I am slayne."

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[1] Cf. pp. 131 f., below.

William, that is, completely disregards Adam's protest, and like Fair Mary of Wallington, Spens, or Child Waters, he brushes aside the conflict without a thought.[1]

III. Structure

Our ballad is a good deal longer[2] than the longest of the Robin Hood Cycle. This greater length is due not only to the elaboration of the action just noted, but also to the additions to the story, to accretion. Accretion, however, is by far the less important factor. The first and second fits may be properly taken together as dealing with a single incident, — the Rescue of William of Cloudesley. It is analogous to the rescue of Kinmont Willy (186). The most obvious way to elaborate such an incident as that is to prefix an incident as exciting cause, to give an account of the Capture. This is done in *Robin Hood and the Monk*. In *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne* is prefixed not only a brief account of the capture of Little John, but also a more elaborate account of that combat of Robin and Guy which makes the rescue possible. This, as it happens, becomes more important than the rescue, which comes to look like a mere afterthought. Now it is to just this kind of development of preliminary incident that *Adam Bell* owes nearly a third of its length, — owes, that is, the first fit. This account of the Capture, however, with all its elaboration, does not overshadow the account of the Rescue, in the second fit. The first fit contains the " action," and leads up to the climax ; the second represents the " reaction," and leads down to the dènouement. Thus far we have merely logical development of the single incident, and the story is complete in itself.

Merely, then, as external addition are affixed the incidents of the third fit, — the incidents of the King's Pardon and the incident of the Apple. It is thus to accretion that this ballad owes its third and longest fit, seventy-three of the one hundred and seventy stanzas.

In spite of the division into the three fits, the action is continuous. The close of each fit is marked by a formal conclusion, but the following fit, in each case, carries on the story without introduction. The fits are united — the third, as well as the first and second, with the others — by events which look forward or back ; or, what is just as significant, widely separate parts of the same fit are thus united. When Adam and

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[1] Cf. p. 30, above.   [2] About 5100 words.

Clim come into Carlisle, they wring the porter's neck and take the keys (sts. 52 f.); they use the keys to get out with (st. 91). A new gallows is put up in the market-place (st. 42); Clim and Adam go there to see it (sts. 68–69). Alice disappears in the first fit (st. 31) and reappears in the third (st. 99). William's eldest son is to go to the King with him (st. 110); William shoots the apple from his head (sts. 152 f.). There is an account — a summary, in general terms — in the third fit (sts. 138 f.) of the rescue which took place in the first (st. 78, etc.). There is, then, evidence that the balladist, in the course of his narrative, provided for what was to come and did not lose sight of what had passed.

Of the introduction to the ballad as a whole enough has been said in connection with the Phase of Life.[1] The conclusion possesses a similar formality. The balladist knew, in the first place, when to close his story. The outlaws, instead of being hanged, were pardoned, made gentlemen, appointed to various offices, absolved by the Pope; and they lived and died with the King, good men all three. This transformation is hardly in keeping with the vaunted ideals of the outlaw life, but it makes a better close than any that could come after a return to the forest, like Robin Hood's in the *Gest*. After the close of the story comes the formal conclusion, a prayer for all yeomen as last word.

Like every rescue ballad, *Adam Bell* requires frequent and rapid changes of place. The descriptions of Journeys, however, while not omitted, have not the geographical fulness of the Border Ballads; the manner is rather that of the Cycle. A single example shows the type:

> He toke hys leaue of hys brethen two,
> And to Carlel he is gone;
> There he knocked at hys owne wyndowe,
> Shortlye and anone (st. 10).

The phrase of the last line, repeated in stanza 45, shows the balladist's eagerness to have done with such interruptions of the action proper. The "Thus be these good yomen gone to the wode" (st. 94), repeated in stanza 111 where the manner of their going has not been described, shows the same tendency. The scene changes between the first fit and the second, as between the acts of a play: "To Caerlel went these good yemen" begins the last stanza of the first fit; "and when they came to mery Caerlell" begins the first stanza of the second.

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[1] P. 78, above.

Synchronism is more or less significant. During the Capture and Rescue, Alice finds her way to the trysty-tree, and there, after their return, the yeomen hear her weeping. While the yeomen are asking the King's pardon, the survivors at Carlisle are sending him a report of the rescue; the outlaws owe their lives to the fact that they out-travel the letter.

IV. General Characteristics of the Narrative Method

The coherence of the Structure implies steady Movement; it is practically that of the Cycle, without leaps or bounds. The action is notably rapid during the Rescue. The care in motivation, also, implies continuity; the Swineherd incident is a case in point.[1] Equally notable is the motivation of the transition from the Pardon to the Apple incident (sts. 142–143).

> When the kynge this letter had red,
>   In hys harte he syghed sore;
> " Take vp the table," anone he bad,
>   " For I may eate no more."
>
> The kyng called hys best archars,
>   To the buttes with hym to go:
> " I wyll se these felowes shote," he sayd,
>   " That in the north haue wrought this wo."

So far as the story as a whole is concerned there is no suspense; the hearer can conceive no desirable end other than the happy outcome of each incident. This end, however, is in each case delayed sufficiently to rouse and hold the attention. The capture of William, the rescue and fight afterward, the King's pardon, the apple-shooting,— in every case the issue is kept doubtful until the close. One may note how the apple incident is approached by the less trying feat of cleaving the wand, and is itself drawn out to the length of some stanzas. In cases, also, where there is no suspense for the audience, there *is* for the characters concerned. By a happy modification of tragic irony, Fair Alice laments her fate and her husband's death, and supposes his brethren ignorant of his capture; while William hears a woman weeping and does not know who it is. The contrast of expectation and fulfilment is effectively suggested in the justice's promise of William's clothes to the boy who measures him for his grave, and William's comment to the effect that he who digs

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[1] See p. 81, above.

the grave may lie in it. Such hints as to the nature of the action to come are not uncommon.

In the quantity of Dialogue, there is a slight advance in the direction of the *Gest;* the proportion is a little more than one half. The same dramatic tendency is evident in the shortness of the speeches and in the rapid interchange of question and answer.[1] Still more notable is the way in which the action is carried on in the speeches, in which dialogue does duty for narrative. Characters tell where they are, as if to explain to an audience : " Nowe we are in ... but ... how come oute ? " (st. 63). They tell what they are going to do, and then they are said to do it :

> " Now wyll we oure bowës bende,
> Into the towne wyll we go."

" Then they bent theyr good yew bowes," etc. (sts. 67–68). This sort of thing, while it is an obvious modification of the regular ballad repetition of dialogue by narrative, suggests also the influence of ·a crude dramatic method, which does not trust the story to the action of the players, but must have them continually explaining what they are about. The narration itself is omitted when the inhabitants of Carlisle cry (st. 90) : " Kepe we the gates fast, That these traytours theroute not go," and we are to suppose that they attempted to carry out this purpose. Similarly, William declares that Alice shall go to a nunnery while he and his brethren sue for the King's pardon ; then we hear no more of her.

The speeches are commonly assigned, though briefly, unless the context makes such assignment unnecessary, as when an action of the speaker immediately precedes the speech, or where the speech is the answer of a person addressed.

With all this concreteness, indirect discourse is rather more common than it has been found hitherto. Some seven brief passages have been noted.[2] A single example will show how by this means the balladist effects compression and rapidity for a minor incident :

> The iustyce called to hym a ladde ;
> Clowdysles clothes sholde he haue,
> To take the mesure of that good yoman,
> And therafter to make his graue (st. 71).

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[1] Cf. sts. 134, 135, 136, 147, 149, 150, 151, etc.
[2] Cf. sts. 6, 7, 60, 71, 93, 113, 143.

V. THE UNDEVELOPED ELEMENTS OF NARRATION

Adam Bell carries a little further the tendency of the ballads of the Border and Cycle, as contrasted with the Simple Ballads, to fill the stage with characters. There are the three outlaws, Alice and the three children, the mayor, sheriff, justice, porter, and citizens of Carlisle, the old woman and the swineherd, the lad who measured William for his grave, the King and Queen, their porter, usher, bowmen, the messengers from Carlisle, the "much people" who watched William's great shot, and the Pope of Rome. Although by no means all of these persons are characterized, the ballad is notable for the new emphasis upon minor characters. The loyal and courageous Alice (who may be contrasted with the Knight's wife in the *Gest*), the ungrateful crone (contrasted with the faithful swineherd), even the Queen, — all these are perspicuous types. The yeomen themselves are not more than this.

Characterization is mainly by action, — wholly so in the case of crone and swineherd, with the effect heightened by contrast. In other cases the usual conventional epithets — *good, fayre, wight,* etc. — are used. Alice, as "true wedded wife" (st. 14) and "lover true" (st. 25), fares a little better, perhaps. There are no formal descriptions of character; unlike the introductions of many of the ballads of the Cycle, and of the *Gest*, the opening stanzas deal with phase of life merely. This absence of a dominating and relatively complex central figure is an important difference between this ballad and the Robin Hood material.

The balladist is usually conscious of the emotions that accompany the action, and he makes them known by words or actions of the persons concerned, or by direct description. Examples are for the most part obvious and need not be cited. Notable, however, is the way in which the effect of suspense is produced by description of emotion in st. 161 :

> Muche people prayed for Cloudesle,
> That hys lyfe saued myght be,
> And whan he made hym redy to shote,
> There was many a wepynge eye.

The dramatic method again : the situation is made impressive by showing its effect upon the bystanders. Emotion is made real by showing its physical effect in an interesting anticipation of the *Gest :*

> When the kynge this letter had red,
> In hys harte he syghed sore ;
> "Take vp the table," anone he bad,
> "For I may eate no more " (st. 142).

Beside which it is fair to place the unconscious contrast (st. 107) :

> Than they wente to theyr souper,
> Wyth suche mete as they had,
> And thanked God of theyr fortune ;
> They were bothe mery and glad.

There is a good deal of evidence of the visualization or localization of the action. Thus in the first fit, William knocked at his own window (st. 10) ; the old woman lay "a lytle besyde the fyre" (st. 15) ; she went to the justice hall (st. 17). The crowd gathered about William's house (st. 20) and Alice looked out of a shot-window and saw them (st. 22) and told William to go into her chamber (st. 23). He took his bow and arrow and the children, and went into his strongest chamber (st. 24). When the house had been fired, he opened his back window and let down his wife and children in sheets (st. 31). They cast him in a deep dungeon (st. 38), and he was to be hanged on a new gallows beside the pillory in the market-place (st. 42) ; meantime the gates of the town were to be shut. This is notable not alone as a piece of localization, but also as a large body of information in regard to a town : the greenwood, in further contrast to the Robin Hood material, is touched more lightly and conventionally.

Such passages are evidence, too, of the love of detail for its own sake, and to them should be added passages like the burning of the bowstring or like that of st. 68 :

> Then they bent theyr good yew bowes,
> And loked theyr stringes were round.

CHAPTER III

THE GEST OF ROBIN HOOD[1]

With the exception of the epics, the *Gest* is the longest and most elaborate document with which we shall have to deal. While, therefore, it carries us a step further than *Adam Bell* in the direction of the Epic, its matter is identical in nature with that of the Cycle; and its manner is partly that of the Cycle, partly that of *Adam Bell*, with such modifications as greater length and complexity of plot demand.

I. THE PHASE OF LIFE

The *Gest* emphasizes even more explicitly than do the ballads of the Cycle the charms of the merry greenwood. After his sojourn in the King's court Robin returned to the wood in a merry morning and heard the birds singing (st. 445). He slew a hart and called his men together with a blast of his horn, in the accustomed manner. The delight in the wood and the hunt and in the loyalty of his men were irresistible, and he never returned to the court.

While less is made of the psychological effect, rather more is made of the physical, and the way of life in the wood is brought into close relation with class feeling. The discomfort of the Sheriff, mere creature of the town, under the greenwood tree, is significant (sts. 196 and 198):

> All nyght lay the proudë sherif
> In his brèche and in his schert;
> No wonder it was, in grene wode,
> Though his sydës gan to smerte.

> "This is harder order," sayde the sherief,
> "Than any ankir or frere;
> For all the golde in mery Englonde
> I wolde nat longe dwell her."

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[1] No. 117.

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Geographical names [1] are not wanting. Robin Hood's haunt was in Barnsdale; he sent his men to the Saylis and so to Watlinge Street in search of victims. The Knight, like the Monk, had intended to dine at Blith or Dancastere; he was a knight of Lancashire; his lands were pledged to the Abbot of St. Mary's Abbey at York (st. 84), "here beside," and if he lost them he would go over the salt sea,

> "And se where Criste was quyke and dede,
> On the mount of Caluerë (st. 57).

He was at home in Verysdale (st. 126); on his way back to Robin Hood he stopped at Wentbrydge. Robin's enemy was the Sheriff of Nottingham; to him Little John said that he was born in Holderness. The Sheriff went to London to complain of Robin. The King came to Nottingham through Lancashire and through Plomton Park. At Kyrkesly Robin met his death. It is clear that to the compiler of the *Gest* these are mere names; he has no topographical scheme in his head, no idea of relative positions or of distances.[2] Yet, as in the Border Ballads,[3] these place names have the realistic effect always produced by localization.

Time relations are even less significant than in the Simple or Border Ballads. When the time of year is mentioned, it is spring or summer, and most of the action would necessarily take place in these seasons. The time of day, when mentioned, is usually morning, when the birds are singing. Time is thus significant not for the action but as a means of reflecting the mood of the poet.

Coming now to the human relations, those of the family, so important in the ballads, play little or no part in the *Gest;* we have to do now only with the larger groups. Men (there are no women, except the Prioress and the Knight's lady) are divided into two groups, the poor and outlawed, and the rich and powerful. In the one are Robin and his band, representing the relation of leader and followers, and the Knight; in the other, the Sheriff and the Monks. In the *Gest* we find a fairly authentic king, exercising royal functions, taking part in the action, indeed, yet above and beyond the struggle. He seems in the end to declare Robin in the right.

The religious relations are simple, naïve, amusing to the modern reader. They seem to be regarded as a phase of everyday life, and real

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[1] Cf. Child, III, 50.   [2] Cf. Child, l. c.   [3] Cf. p. 61, above.

irreverence is no more involved in them than in the Salvation Army
songs, for the singers, or in the German "lieber Gott!" The details
are familiar. To Christ there are few references. Robin's habitual masses
are in honor of the Father, Spirit, and Our Lady. Yet we should note :

> For God is holde a ryghtwys man,
> And so is his dame (st. 240), —

complete anthropomorphism. "God," of course, is for Christ, as in
"God that died on tre" (st. 62, etc.). It is Robin's relation to the
Virgin that is most significant, however, and this has its effect upon
the action. She becomes surety for the Knight when Robin makes the
loan that leads to much that follows. The whole matter is completely
and humorously rationalized in the treatment of the Monk as her
messenger. Throughout, apparently, we have the result of eminently
popular modifications of religious instruction.

II. Motives

As in the Cycle, the Central Motive is to be defined in terms of
character. Directly or indirectly nearly all the action in the *Gest*
springs from the qualities of the hero. "Robin Hood," says Professor
Child,[1] "is a yeomen, outlawed for reasons not given but easily sur-
mised, 'courteous and free,' religious in sentiment, and above all rev-
erent of the Virgin, for the love of whom he is respectful to all women.
He lives by the king's deer (though he loves no man in the world so
much as his king), and by levies on the superfluity of the higher orders,
secular and spiritual, bishops and archbishops, abbots, bold barons, and
knights, but harms no husbandman or yeoman, and is friendly to poor
men generally, imparting to them of what he takes from the rich.
Courtesy, good temper, liberality, and manliness are his chief merits ;
for courtesy and good temper he is a popular Gawain. Yeoman as he
is, he has a kind of royal dignity, a princely grace, and a gentleman-like
refinement of humor." Practically all of these qualities are involved as
motives in the incident of the Knight, in the first fit, and this directly
or indirectly, by action or reaction, leads to all that follows.

To these motives should be added, as important subsidiaries, the
devotion among the band, leading to incidents like the defense of Robin
at Nottingham, or Robin saving Little John's life ; the Knight's gratitude,

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[1] III, 42.

leading to the King's and the Sheriff's hatred of the Knight and of Robin
— obvious reactions ; and the greed of the Abbot, necessary to bring
the Knight into the story. A phase of the central motive, as we have
seen, is the love of the greenwood, and motives connected with this
become significant. Love for the woodland life leads Robin back to it
from the court ; and characteristic of the life is the delight in hunting,
robbery, fighting, " pluck-buffet," eating and drinking, — even, appar-
ently, in washing and in the insistence upon courtesy. Less closely
connected is the illicit love of the Prioress and Syr Roger of Donkestere,
combining, however, church and aristocracy against their common enemy,
and leading to Robin's death.

The love motive does not appear elsewhere, nor does the supernatural
appear at all. The motive of manly prowess or valor, however, offers a
point of contact and an opportunity for comparison with the Border
Ballads. It manifests itself in the *Gest* also in general conflicts and in
single combats. The contrast lies in the fact that it is here only a
subsidiary motive, that it has behind it class feeling (leading to con-
flicts with Sheriff and Monks) or devotion among the band (leading to
the rescues). There is still the old delight in battle ; but it is battle
with a purpose, and the purpose is the main thing, however accomplished.
When the Abbot is prevented by the payment of the debt from getting
possession of the Knight's lands, the end is just as satisfactory as if it
had been gained by bloodshed. So the motive of shrewdness comes to
play an important part and divides the honors with valor.

The minor motivation shows the same care as in the Cycle. No
examples are necessary. With Robin's plot to get the Sheriff into the
wood (in *Robin Hood and the Potter* [121]) may be compared the par-
allel trick of Little John in the *Gest*. The greater elaboration of the *Gest*
is noteworthy. Little John takes service with the Sheriff, is left at home
when his master goes hunting, and misses his dinner. He fights with
the butler and with the cook, in the latter of whom he meets his match.
The cook agrees to join the band and to make off with the Sheriff's plate.
Later Little John finds the Sheriff in the wood and by a trick betrays him
into Robin's hands.

III. STRUCTURE

Such, then, is the subject matter of the *Gest*. When we say, how-
ever, that a character is the central motive, we do not mean that charac-
ter is emphasized at the expense of the other elements of narration. We

have to do, — if we except the opening stanzas and a phrase here and there, — we have to do always with character-in-action. The *Gest* is by no means a character-study. The accent, as in the ballads, is on plot, on action.

The *Gest* is much longer than the ballads[1]: it is not, therefore, to be grasped so readily as a whole. It is less likely to be consistent, and what unity and coherence it has must be due to the singer or singers who combined the ballads, or the ballad plots, of the Cycle. It consists of a series of incidents; there is here no question, as there was in the Simple Ballads, as to whether it is a series or a single incident. In the *Gest* the members of the series are not closely connected; they are clearly distinct and independent.

The *Gest* closes, indeed, with Robin's death, yet it is an arbitrary close. It is not the result of the action that precedes it. A new motive is necessary to account for it; characters not before introduced are responsible for it. These characters, as we have seen, represent Robin's old enemies, the aristocracy and religious orders, and in this fact lies their sole claim to the rôle they play. It follows that the incidents of the *Gest*, taken together, do not constitute, except by chance, the last of a series, the climax or inevitable close of a life. Each incident has an independent value; each, except the last, ends well. So, if we recur to our comparison, we have in the *Gest* something similar to the romantic drama as a whole; in the Simple Ballads, something akin to the fifth act, or "moment of last suspense" and "catastrophe" of such a drama, that is, to Greek tragedy.

It is, however, not safe to think of the *Gest* as wholly inorganic; as being, in each incident, unconscious of all others; as trusting — as the epic is said to do — wholly to its chief character for unification. Evidence that the story was grasped as a whole, that things late in the narrative were foreseen, and things early in the narrative worked out to their conclusions, is not lacking.

An outline of the story as a whole presents no contradictions in plot or in character; and this impression is borne out by the *Gest* itself. It contains, moreover, positive evidence, as well, and examination of the text shows stanzas widely separated in the poem to be closely connected in meaning. In iii, 202–204, for instance, the Sheriff swears never to injure Robin:

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[1] About 13,700 words.

" And if thou fynde any of my men
  By nyght or by day,
Vpon thyn othë thou shalt swere
  · To helpe them that thou may."

Now hathe the sherif sworne his othe, etc.

In v, 287 Robin says :

" Buske you, my mery yonge men,
  Ye shall go with me ;
And I wyll wete the shryuës fayth,
  Trewe and yf he be."

In st. 296 the Sheriff breaks his oath, and Robin exclaims :

" Other wyse thou behotë me
  . In yonder wylde forest.

" But had I the in grenë wode
  Under my trystell-tre,
Thou sholdest leue me a better wedde
  Than thy trewe lewtë." [1]

Again, the attitude of the fat-headed Monk, the " hy selerer " toward
the Knight in ii, 93, prepares us to enjoy the Monk's discomfiture in iv,
213 ff. In st. 233 he confesses that he is " hyë selerer " of St. Mary's.

Finally, the most striking bit of evidence is the contrast of the
incident of the Knight with that of the Monk.[2] A comparison of the

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[1] Cf. also sts. 10, 206, 235; 67, 121, 270 ; 131, 275; 310, 312, 77.

[2] The marked symmetry here can be shown by parallel columns :

17. " Take thy gode bowe in thy honde,"
      sayde Robyn ;
    " Late Much wende with the;
    And so shal Willyam Scarlok,
    And no man abyde with me.

18. " And walke vp to the Saylis,
      And so to Watlinge Strete,
    And wayte after some vnkuth gest,
    Vp chaunce ye may them mete.

19. " Be he erle, or ani baron,
      Abbot, or ani knyght,
    Bringhe hym to lodge to me;
    His dyner shall be dight."

208. " Take thy bowe in thy hande," sayde
       Robyn,
     " Late Much wende with the,
       An so shal Wyllyam Scarlok,
       And no man abyde with me.

209. " And walke up under the Sayles,
       And to Watlynge-strete,
       And wayte after some vnketh gest ;
       Vp-chaunce ye may them mete.

210. " Whether he be messengere,
       Or man that myrthës can,
       Of my good he shall haue some,
       Yf he be a porë man."

earlier and later passages shows close parallelism throughout. This makes the contrasts in character and situation all the more striking, and many details show that of these contrasts the poet never lost sight. Thus in st. 19 Robin expects earl, baron, abbot, or knight (wealth or rank), and the poor Knight comes; in st. 210 he expects a poor man, and the Monk comes. In st. 21 the Knight comes riding by a dernë strete, while in st. 213 the black monks come along the hyë waye. The state of Knight and of monks, and Little John's manner to each

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20. They wente vp to the Saylis,
    These yeman all thre;
    They loked est, they loked weest,
    They myght no man see.

21. But as they loked in to Bernysdale,
    Bi a dernë strete,
    Than came a knyght ridinghe;
    Full sone they gan hym mete.

22. All dreri was his semblaunce,
    And lytell was his pryde;
    His one fote in the styrop stode,
    That othere wavyd beside.

23. His hode hanged in his iyn two;
    He rode in symple aray;
    A soriar man than he was one
    Rode neuer in somer day.

24. Litell Johnn was full curteyes,
    And sette hym on his kne:
    "Welcom be ye, gentyll knyght,
    Welcom ar ye to me.

25. "Welcom be thou to grenë wode,
    Hendë knyght and fre;
    My maister hath abiden you fastinge,
    Syr, al these oures thre."

26. "Who is thy maister?" sayde the knyght;
    Johnn sayde, Robyn Hode;
    "He is a gode yoman," sayde the knyght,
    Of hym I haue herde moche gode.

27. "I graunte," he sayde, "with you to wende,
    My bretherne, all in fere;
    My purpos was to haue dyned to day
    At Blith or Dancastere."

212. They went vp to the Sayles,
     These yemen all thre;
     They loked est, they loked west,
     They myght no man se.

213. But as they loked in Bernysdale,
     By the hyë waye,
     Than were they ware of two blacke monkes,
     Eche on a good palferay.

216. "The monke hath two and fifty men,
     And seuen somers full stronge;
     There rydeth no bysshop in this londe
     So ryally, I vnderstond."

219. "Abyde, chorle monke," sayd Lytell Johan,
     "No ferther that thou gone;
     Yf thou doost, by dere worthy God,
     Thy deth is in my honde.

220. "And euyll thryfte on thy hede," sayd Lytell Johan,
     "Ryght under thy hattes bonde;
     For thou hast made our mayster wroth,
     He is fastynge so longe."

221. "Who is your mayster?" sayd the monke;
     Lytell Johan sayd, Robyn Hode;
     "He is a stronge thefe," sayd the monke,
     "Of hym herd I neuer good."

259. "Nay, for God," than sayd the monke,
     "Me rewith I cam so nere;
     For better chepe I myght haue dyned
     In Blythe or in Dankestere."

are contrasted (sts. 25 and 220). In st. 26 the Knight calls Robin a good yeoman; in st. 221 the Monk calls him a strong thief. In st. 27 the Knight goes gladly with Little John, cheerfully giving up dinner at Blith or Doncaster; in st. 225 the Monk goes under protest and (st. 259) regrets the other dinner. Robin, in st. 29, doffs hood and kneels to the Knight; in st. 226 he only doffs hood to the Monk, who is not so

29. They brought him to the lodgë-dore;
　　Whan Robyn gan hym see,
　Full curtesly dyd of his hode
　　And sette hym on his knee.

225. They brought the monke to the lodgë-
　　　dore,
　　Whether he were loth or lefe,
　For to speke with Robyn Hode,
　　Maugre in theyr tethe.

226. Robyn dyde adowne his hode,
　　The monke whan that he se;
　　The monke was not so curtëyse,
　　His hode then let he be.

32. They wasshed togeder and wyped bothe,
　　And sette to theyr dynere;
　Brede and wyne they had right ynoughe,
　　And noumbles of the dere.

231. They made the monke to wasshe and
　　　wype,
　　And syt at his denere,
　Robyn Hode and Lytell Johan
　　They serued him bothe in-fere.

34. "Do gladly, sir knight," sayde Robyn;
　　"Gramarcy, sir," sayde he;

232. "Do gladly, monke," sayd Robyn.
　　"Gramercy, syr," sayd he.

39. "Tel me truth," than saide Robyn,
　　"So God haue parte of the":
　"I haue no more but ten shelynges,"
　　　sayde the knyght,
　"So God haue parte of me."

243. "What is in your cofers?" sayd Robyn,
　　"Trewe than tell thou me:"
　"Syr," he sayd, "twenty marke,
　　Al so mote I the."

40. "If thou hast no more," sayde Robyn,
　　"I woll nat one peny;
　And yf thou have nede of any more,
　　More shall I lend the.

244. "Yf there be no more," sayd Robyn,
　　"I wyll not one peny;
　Yf thou hast myster of ony more,
　　Syr, more I shall lende to the."

41. "Go nowe furth, Littell Johnn,
　　The truth tell thou me;
　If there be no more but ten shelinges,
　　No peny that I se."

246. "Go nowe forthe, Lytell Johan,
　　And the trouth tell thou me;
　If there be no more but twenty marke,
　　No peny that I se."

42. Lyttell Johnn sprede downe hys mantell
　　Full fayre vpon the grounde,
　And there he fonde in the knyghtës cofer
　　But euen halfe a pounde.

247. Lytell Johan spred his mantell downe,
　　As he had done before,
　And he told out of the monkës male
　　Eyght hondred pounde and more.

43. Littell Johnn let it lye full styll,
　　And went to hys maysteer full lowe;
　"What tidyngës, Johnn?" sayde Robyn;
　　"Sir, the knyght is true inowe."

248. Lytell Johan let it lye full styll,
　　And went to his mayster in hast;
　"Syr," he sayd, "the monke is trewe
　　　ynowe,
　　Our Lady hath doubled your cast."

courteous. In st. 32 the Knight and Robin wash and wipe together; in st. 231, "*they made* the monk to wash and wipe." In sts. 39–43 the Knight tells the truth; in sts. 243–248 the Monk lies. St. 247, 2 refers to the earlier incident, giving evidence of conscious contrast.

The evidence, however, does not all point in one direction, and Fricke mentions several discrepancies. The geographical confusion has been noted. In the passage just quoted the number of monks suddenly dwindles from two to one ("two monks," st. 213; "The monke hath two and fifty men," st. 216). In sts. 325 and 326 the King promises to take Robin and the Knight, and commands the Sheriff to gather archers throughout the country. "After this command it is remarkable," says Fricke, "that the Sheriff nevertheless takes the Knight prisoner before the King comes."[1] (This may, of course, be explained easily enough.) Again, the story of the Knight becomes diffuse toward the end: after the King sets a price on his head he does not again speak or act. Finally, Fricke thinks that Robin's hatred of the Sheriff (in fit vi) is not properly motived. This, he thinks, is to be accounted for by the fact that we have here the result of a combination of two ballads, in one of which the Sheriff had offered a reward for Robin's head.[2] This seems likely enough. But is it necessary to motive Robin's hatred? Says Robin, in st. 15, before the action has begun at all:

> "These bisshoppes and these archebishoppes,
> Ye shall them bete and bynde;
> The hyë sherif of Notyingham,
> Hym holde ye in your mynde."

Robin's hatred of the clergy, thinks Fricke, can have no personal ground. Robin was the representative of the whole people, who hate the clergy (*Geistlichkeit*).[3] There seems to be no reason why the author of the *Gest* should have felt lack of motive in one case more than in the other.

On the whole, taking the evidence all together, we seem to have pretty good reason to believe that some one (or ones) made a careful and conscientious effort to work over into a consistent whole the diverse materials that went to make the *Gest*. The problems presented were such as the balladist never had to solve, and where he approached anything like them, as in the connecting narrative that joined incident and incident in the longer ballad, we saw that he was not always successful.[4]

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[1] *Die Robin Hood Balladen*, p. 31.　　　[3] P. 20.

[2] Id., p. 20.　　　[4] P. 40, above.

We may turn now to this simpler matter of transitions and connections in the *Gest*. The balladist sometimes made use of a Fortunatus hat, as improved by Teufelsdröckh, — wishing himself anywhere, straightway he was there, and any when, straightway he was then. Does the *Gest* follow this, or a more pedestrian method? An analysis of the plot — disregarding for the moment Professor Child's three-ply web — shows that the action of the *Gest* is conceived as a series of scenes, and that the writer is rather interested in these than in the drift of the story as a whole. Thus no great stress is laid on connective matter. Nevertheless, the desire for coherence is at work here as else-where, and no two consecutive scenes are not, in some way, connected. Changes cf scene involve, of course, changes of place : the character or characters must go a journey. To describe the journey is to connect scene and scene. A considerable time may elapse between scene and scene : to tell in general terms what happened during this time is a second method of connecting them. A third method combines the two. Of these, the second, least in keeping with ballad concreteness, involving necessarily general terms, is less common than the first. An analysis shows three examples, — the King's dwelling in Nottingham half a year and more, unable to take Robin (sts. 365–366) ; Robin's dwelling at court (sts. 433–434) ; and Robin's later life :

> Robyn dwelled in grenë wode
>   Twenty yere and two ;
> For all drede of Edwarde our kynge,
>   Agayne wolde he not goo (st. 450).

Least common of the three is the mixed method. For example (st. 281) :

> Now hath the knyght his leue i-take,
>   And wente hym on his way ;
> . Robyn Hode and his mery men
>   Dwelled styll full many a day.

From st. 327 to st. 339 there is a mixture of concrete narrative, narrative in general terms, and journeys. The method of connection by journeys is then most common. This means that ordinarily the time is consecutive, or that the passage of time is of no significance. Movement from place to place is more important ; and these so-called journeys occur not only as a means of connecting scenes, but within the scene, where the movement is not from one place to another, but

within a single place, as where one goes through the forest. Most elaborate of the journeys is the account of the progress of the King and Robin from the forest to Nottingham, during which they "shote plucke-buffet . . . by the way," and so gave some indication of "duration of time and extent of space." In general, these journeys, though common, are described in the briefest possible terms; nothing is said of scenery, little of thoughts by the way. Such journeys are obviously transitional merely. The author is mainly interested in the action, and these serve but to interrupt the action. They are a necessary evil, put in under protest, for coherence. Art has not yet gone so far as to love detail, and to elaborate it, for its own sake. To do so would require a temperament something akin to that which can hold the action in check at a crisis, and calmly elaborate a simile, perfecting it to the last detail. Such was not the temperament of the author of the *Gest.*

If action was to be delayed, it was delayed by more action, and we have one example of something very like episode. At the end of the first fit Little John becomes the Knight's man: we do not hear of him again in the Knight's company, and he does not appear in the action of the second fit. He appears at the beginning of the third: this is to be a tale "of Little John, who was the Knight's man." To this extent, then, it is connected with what has gone before. It is not until the close of the episode that we discover a possible connection with what follows, — the Sheriff's adventure with Robin in the wood, and his oath. Thus, as it involves characters that commonly appear elsewhere, and as, in a sense, it carries on the story, it is not, properly speaking, an episode; it is only an incident less closely connected than others with the main story. If this incident is thus peculiar in its relation to the plot, — it opens with no regular transitional stanza, thus offering the only exception to the rule of connected scene and scene, — it is peculiar also within its own limits. In st. 145 John fetched his bow and said that he would shoot with the young men. Contrary to the usual method, no journey is described. Straightway he was *there,* — wherever it was. In st. 146 he shot about and alway cleft the wand. Suddenly the Sheriff of Nottingham was standing by the marks. Little John was the best archer the Sheriff had ever seen; and after the Sheriff had asked leave of the Knight he became his man, — another connection with preceding narrative. "Nowe is Litell John the sherifes man" (st. 153); and in st. 155 he lies in his bed at home. Here, then, was another change of scene, not accounted for. From this

point on, however, the episode shows nothing peculiar. It is notable, then, in that it is no real episode, and in that its opening stanzas show unusual weakness in transition, — a return for the moment to ballad methods. As a whole, the episode helps to fill in the year which is ·supposed to elapse between the Knight's borrowing and his payment of the four hundred pounds.

This episode, it will be remembered, is followed in the fourth fit by the incident of the Monk, already discussed as parallel with the first fit.[1] It occurs on the day when the money was due. At its close :

> Now lete we that monke be styll,
>   And speke we of that knyght:
> Yet he came to holde his day,
>   Whyle that it was lyght (st. 261).

This is the only example that we have of this sort of transition in the *Gest*, — by the comment of some one telling the story. It suggests that we have to do here with synchronous events. But at most it was only the knight's coming that was synchronous with the monk's going, and we have no real parallel stream. As in the ballads, synchronism is never significant, if, indeed, it exists at all in the *Gest*.

The purpose of the Monk incident (so far as it may be thought to have a purpose aside from that of an entertaining story) seems to be twofold : first, to contrast Monk and Knight, to the advantage of the latter, and, second, to delay — just as the Little John episode delays — the Knight's return with the money. For, from the beginning, we look forward to the results of Robin's loan. The *Gest*, indeed, might have closed satisfactorily — as the parallel story in Pauli's *Schimpf und Ernst*[2] closes — with the payment of the money by the Virgin's emissary ; or, it might close with the payment by the Knight ; or with the Knight's hospitality to Robin at time of need. This is as much as to say that it has no objective point, no definite single result of Robin's loan ; and that it has no definite close. As we have seen, it peters out in general narrative and summary, and Robin's death is brought about by new motives, not the result of anything that has gone before. It has, then, no objective point, no crisis, no proper close. Of the introduction

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[1] Pp. 93 ff., above.
[2] Professor Child translates (III, 53) the whole story. It is too short to offer a valuable contrast to the *Gest*.

better things are to be said. The opening descriptions of character and way of life are to be discussed.[1] In st. 3,

> Robyn stode in Bernesdale,
> And lenyd him to a tre, etc.,

the concrete, picturesque, and characteristic though not significant action recalls the method of the *Child Waters* (63) introduction :

> Childe Watters in his stable stoode
> And stroaket his milke-white steede.

After the introduction the action of the *Gest* begins promptly. There is no summary of Robin's past life, no chapter on Parentage and Youth. In this respect we have contrasted the openings of ballads with those of such romances as *King Horn* and the *Lai du Frêne*. The method of the *Gest* is that of the ballads.

IV. General Characteristics of the Narrative Method

What we have to note here is, once more, the loss of the peculiar characteristics of the Simple Ballads. The movement of these ballads was, we saw, usually simple, single, pressing onward by leaps and bounds, or completely arrested action, while thought moved steadily forward. In the *Gest* the movement is still simple and single ; as our study of transitions has shown, it is more regular and continuous than in the Simple Ballads. Incident is connected with incident, and the action is never arrested for the sake of thought. The incremental repetition, the effective stanzaic groups, the refrain, important characteristics of the Simple Ballads, do not appear in the Cycle or in the *Gest.*

This steadier movement means also that omissions are not found in the *Gest*. Motives are not suppressed, key-facts are not suspended until the close ; action itself is described, not the moment before and after. Thus the *Gest* deals directly with its material, not by indirection and suggestion.

Nor does it deal in Suspense, in the sense in which the Simple Ballad makes use of it. The trick of explaining the ominous as something else, the tragic contrast between expectation and fulfilment, these are not found in it. Something possibly akin to suspense has been noted, in the way in which the return of the Knight is delayed by episode and

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[1] P. 102, below.

incident.[1] And within the bounds of a scene the Knight, come to pay
the Abbot, pretends that he is still penniless, and so plays with him,
somewhat as Portia plays with Shylock, though here the audience is in
the secret. Whether we care to connect this with suspense or not, it is
at least an effective working up to a climax, and many scenes have this
virtue, notably that of Robin and the King.

In the matter of Dialogue, finally, the *Gest* shows, so far as quantity
is concerned, an advance beyond the Simple Ballads. In these the
average was about one half; in the *Gest* almost two thirds of the
stanzas contain dialogue (287 out of 456). The style, however, shows
the same lack of flexibility. All the characters speak the same dialect;
all swear the same full great oaths, to express any and all emotions.
Little John, a possible exception, shows often irony and humor. As in
the ballads, there is little or no indirect discourse or paraphrase, and
soliloquy is uncommon. Motives, however, are twice thus expounded :

> " I [Little John] shall be the worst seruaunt to hym
>   That euer yet had he " (st. 154),

And in st. 391 the King says :

> " Here is a wonder semely syght ;
>   Me thynketh, by Goddës pyne,
> His men are more at his byddynge
>   Then my men be at myn."

The special ballad substitute for soliloquy, the mere voice asking
questions which are answered by the character concerned, does not
occur in the *Gest*. The *Gest* differs also in the careful assignment of
speeches. We always know who is speaking, often to whom the speech
is addressed. Sometimes we learn also the character of the speech
before it is uttered, as in the conventional

> Than answered the gentyll knight,
>   With wordës fayre and fre (st. 31).

Sometimes the speech is preceded by a bit of concrete narration, by
way of stage direction ; or the appearance or action of the character is
described, to show his emotion while speaking. Sometimes the name
of the speaker is accompanied by a bit of description ; or his thoughts
are told ; or the cause of his speech. All this means not only more

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[1] P. 99, above.

careful work, in this respect, than is to be found in the ballads; it means, also, that as compared with the balladist, the composer of the *Gest* was in little hurry. He was interested in dialogue as a phase of action, and when characters were not actually speaking he delighted in such little elaborations as those just noted. Throughout the dialogue, however, movement must go steadily on; the *Gest* does not repeat question in answer, nor are dialogue directions carried out by the narrative, or *vice versa*, as in the ballads.

V. THE UNDEVELOPED ELEMENTS OF NARRATION

The character of the hero[1] is, as we have seen, the Central Motive of the *Gest*. He is something more than the doer of deeds, and by virtue of his complexity he achieves a greater dignity than that of the mere type. For the writer, too, he is something more than touchstone for the unconscious testing of material; he is interesting for his own sake, an object of special treatment in the economy of the narrative. Thus the *Gest* appropriately opens :

> Lythe and listin, gentilmen,
>   That be of frebore blode;
> I shall you tel of a gode yeman,
>   His name was Robyn Hode.
>
> Robyn was a prude outlaw,
>   Whyles he walked on grounde;
> So curteyse an outlawe as he was one
>   Was never non founde.

Here, then, is character-description, conscious and direct. The "good yeoman," coming first, is possibly a conscious appeal to an audience. He was, moreover, a "prude outlaw," whatever that may mean; and he was courteous. These are general epithets, yet, taken together, they mean something more definite than a ballad opening like (7, A, 1)

> O did ye ever hear o brave Earl Bran?

pressing on in the next line to a narrative summary :

> He courted the King's daughter of fair England.

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[1] Cf. Professor Child's analysis (p. 90, above).
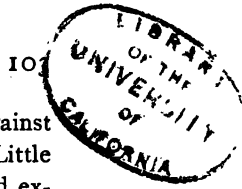
The *Gest*, however, is in no hurry. Robin is shown leaning against a tree in Bernesdale. Other characters are described briefly, — Little John, Much, Scarlok. Little John suggests dinner, and answer and explanation tell us something more of Robin's character and way of life:

> A gode maner than had Robyn;
> In londe where that he were,
> Euery day or he wold dyne
> Thre messis wolde he here (st. 8).

Robin, then, was pious, — and here the method is especially interesting. Character is described by habitual action, and these generalizing or abstracting *would's* imply action no longer specific and concrete, but become for the moment subordinate to character. Later, when we find them in Irving, for instance, we come to think of these *would's* as a defect, a survival of the eighteenth century, vague and general in effect. In the following stanzas, Robin's piety is connected with chivalry, and the same method is used:

> Robyn loued Oure derë Lady;
> For dout of dydly synne,
> Wolde he neuer do compani harme
> That any woman was in (st. 10).

Little John now asks Robin for instructions, and Robin's answer (sts. 13–15) reveals character, sympathies, way of life: his men are to harm no husbandman or yeoman, nor any knight or squire that will be a good fellow, but

> "These bisshoppes and these archebisshoppes,
> Ye shall them bete and bynde;
> The hyë sherif of Notyingham,
> Hym holde ye in your mynde."

This is the key to Robin's character, and the *Gest* concludes:

> For he was a good outlawe,
> And dyde pore men moch god.

Robin now gives more specific instructions, and in st. 20 the action begins. Here, then, we have nineteen stanzas where the accent is not on action or situation, but on character and way of life.

In addition to this introductory characterization by means of direct description and mention of habitual actions, we may now note other

methods without regard to their position in the *Gest*. Most common is
that involved usually in direct description, — the use of epithet. The
term "outlaw" seems to have no evil connotation. "So curteyse an
outlawe" (st. 2) was high praise; "a strong thief" (st. 221), an insult.
The adjective "good" was commonly connected with Robin. It occurs
fifteen times, twelve of them after st. 226. Its meaning is obviously vague
and colorless. It was applied to Robin by an enemy, the old knight
who advises the King (st. 370), and to Gylbert, Scathelock, Reynolde,
and Little John. The Knight was always "gentle" (nine times) and
"true" (twice). The Sheriff was commonly "proud" (eleven times);
Robin also was proud (st. 2). Robin's young men were "wight," the
King, "comely," the Knight's Lady, "fair and free," the cook, "bold,"
"stout," "hardy"; Much was "little." Except Gilbert's white hands
(twice) and the "fat-headed monk," these epithets are all general:
they name some general trait of character or some aspect of personal
appearance. Not so definite as "crafty Ulysses," "swift-footed Achilles,"
"well-greaved Achæans," are "good Robin," "comely King," "wight
young men."

These epithets are usually applied by the singer, but not infrequently
by one character to another.

> "He is a gode yoman," sayde the knyght,
> "Of hym I haue herde moche gode" (st. 26).

Sometimes a character describes himself. Thus the Knight lost his
fortune,

> "For my greatë foly," he sayde,
> "And for my kyndënesse" (st. 51).

He is not, he says, a false knight, and,

> "In ioustës and in tournement
> Full ferre than haue I be,
> And put myself as ferre in prees
> As ony that euer I se" (st. 116).

Character, by habitual actions, again.

Again character is revealed in dialogue and soliloquy. Thus, Little
John's ironical humor:

> "Well the gretith the proudë sheryf,
> And sendeth the here by me
> His coke and his siluer vessell,
> And thre hundred pounde and thre" (st. 179).[1]

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[1] Cf. sts. 153–154.

Little John's actions throughout are characterized by the same humorous shrewdness. And, in general, specific actions are emphasized in such a way as to exhibit character. Thus Robin kneels to the Knight and doffs his hood (st. 29). The Knight tells the truth about his money; the monk lies. And Little John and the cook —

> They thought no thynge for to fle,
> But stifly for to stande (st. 167).

Again, the quality of character is enforced by contrast. Thus in the second fit (st. 88) the good Prior seems to be introduced merely as a foil to the Abbot. He does not appear elsewhere. Their discussion in regard to the Knight's property serves to emphasize the greed of the Abbot as contrasted with the Prior's sympathy and generosity. In the same way the Monk's manners are contrasted with Robin's: when they meet Robin doffs his hood; the churl Monk does not doff his. Behavior of Knight and Monk, in the parallel incidents in which they are concerned, shows the same contrast.[1]

Thus it would seem that the singer consciously compared the good and evil characters. And in general he saw to it that their actions were in keeping. Occasionally he forgot himself, and what was right for one side was not always right for the other. Little John betrayed the Sheriff into Robin's hands; but the Sheriff might not break his oath with Robin without becoming censurable. This perhaps involves a moral sense too delicate for an audience that saw no contradictions in Robin's attitude toward the King or toward Our Lady.

Characterization by personal appearance and dress shows (if we except the fat-headed monk already mentioned) nothing beyond the ballads.

In keeping with the greater length of the *Gest* and with its looser method of treatment is the longer list of *dramatis personæ*. There are Robin, Little John, Much, Scarlok, and Gilbert, and the seven score wight young men; the Knight and his wife, the Prior, Abbot, high cellarer, monks and their men, Sheriff, the Prioress and Syr Roger of Donkestere, the King and his men, the forester who stood at the King's knee, the Abbot's porter, the Sheriff's butler and cook, his men, and the inhabitants of Nottingham. Here is no sense of isolation.

The contrast between Simple Ballad and *Gest* is almost as great in the matter of States of Mind as in that of Character. Not that the *Gest*

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[1] See pp. 93 ff., above.

is more emotional : on the contrary the tragic situations, the great emo-
tional possibilities of the ballad, have vanished. Yet if the singer has
not actually more insight and sympathy, he seems to have more. He
displays, certainly, greater curiosity as to the workings of the human
mind, greater ability to see things from the character's point of view.
And certainly he makes deliberate and fairly elaborate attempts to
describe feeling directly, or to show its expression in word or action.
This interest in state of mind, as well as the method involved, can be
best shown in a specific passage. When the Knight is introduced the
writer is clearly thinking of nothing but the mental state :

> All dreri was his semblaunce,
>   And lytell was his pryde;
> His one fote in the styrop stode,
>   That othere wauyd beside.

> His hode hanged in his iyn two ;
>   He rode in symple aray ;
> A soriar man than he was one
>   Rode neuer in somer day (sts. 22–23).

He rode

> With a carefull chere ;
> The teris oute of his iyen ran,
>   And fell downe by his lere (st. 28).

Here we have concrete detail, action, dress, and manner of wearing it,
direct manifestation of emotion (tears), and, throughout, description by
epithet ("a soriar man," etc.), — a series of symbols that spell *dejection ;*
not one is present for any other purpose.

An examination of the various methods of describing emotion shows
direct description by epithet to be commonest. This is an obvious
matter ; yet a few examples will show the relative variety and nicety of
application of the terms found in the *Gest.* In each of the following
passages Robin has outwitted the Sheriff :

> A sory man was he (st. 189).

> The sherif dwelled in Notingham ;
>   He was fayne he was agone (st. 205)

(i.e. that he had escaped from Robin). Robin escaped to the forest :

> The proudë shyref of Notyngham
>   Thereof he had grete tene (st. 329).

> He had leuer than an hundred pound
>   That he had Robyn Hode (st. 333).

Similarly, the King missed the deer :

> The kynge was wonder wroth withall,
> And swore by the Trynytë (st. 359).

And again, in the forest,

> Up they sterte all in hast,
> Theyr bowës were smartly bent;
> Our kynge was neuer so sore agast,
> He wende to haue be shente (st. 396).

And all through this scene (sts. 396 ff.), where the King soliloquizes and admires the discipline of the outlaws, the author remembers his state of mind.

Emotion was expressed also by action, including facial expression : —

> The abbot lothely on hym gan loke (st. 113).

> The abbot sat styll, and ete no more,
> For all his ryall fare;
> He cast his hede on his shulder,
> And fast began to stare (st. 122).

> For sorowe he myght nat ete (st. 191).

> Still stode the proudë sherief,
> A sory man was he (st. 189).

> The monke swore a full grete othe,
> With a sory chere (st. 239).

All these passages, it will be noted, describe the effect of the actions of Robin or the Knight, emphasize the discomfiture of the defeated party, and thus the triumph of the right. When Robin heard that the proud Sheriff had made the Knight prisoner, he did not stand still or look sorry, but,

> Vp than sterte gode Robyn,
> As man that had ben wode:
> "Buske you, my mery men,
> For hym that dyed on rode " (st. 340).

Again, when Robin and the King met in the forest, and the King knocked Robin down,

> Robyn behelde our comly kynge
> Wystly in the face,
> So dyde Syr Rycharde at the Le,
> And kneled downe in that place.

> And so dyde all the wylde outlawes,
> Whan they se them knele (sts. 410–411).

And there is no other expression or description of surprise or fear, or of whatever emotion may have been involved.

From these passages it is evident that the author takes the trouble to ascribe to his good characters such emotions, or such expression of them, as do them credit; while he sees to it that those of the other side shall take their medicine with all possible ill grace.[1]

In one phase of the expression of strong feeling the author made no distinction between good and evil forces. Strong feeling on either side, of any kind — wrath, fear, admiration — was frequently expressed by an oath. Thus the Sheriff expressed his admiration of Little John's shooting :

> The sherif swore a full greate othe :
> "By hym that dyede on a tre," etc. (st. 147).

But he swore the same oath when Robin escaped him (st. 333).

As in the ballads, a feeling is suggested by a known cause. Thus Robin,

> Whan he came to grenë wode,
> In a mery mornynge,
> There he herde the notës small
> Of byrdës mery syngynge (st. 445).

As, finally, in the matter of Character, so here also it is to be kept in mind that though the *Gest* shows in its treatment of States of Mind an advance beyond Simple Ballad methods, it is not, after all, a very great advance. The *Gest* has not the scope of the ballads ; love and tragic grief play no part in it. As in the ballads, many moments which a modern writer would elaborate by an emphasis on the mental state slip by untouched. That we should not learn how the Knight felt as he saw Verysdale again, just restored to him by Robin Hood (st. 126), is in keeping with ballad avoidance of sentimentalizing. That Robin and his men kneel only, when they recognize the King (st. 411), is in keeping with that love of the concrete, the external, already noted. It is, perhaps, not so clear why the Monk, when he is "held up," says merely, "Who is your master?" (st. 221).

In the matter of morality, also, there is a slight contrast between ballads and *Gest*. The ballads were unmoral. This is true for the *Gest* also, except that class feeling, ranging representatives of the law and of rich religious orders on one side, outlaws and yeomen on the other, necessarily emphasizes a contrast between bad and good. Where the

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[1] Cf. sts. 427–430.

two forces come into conflict, good wins, of course, and so poetic justice is done. Of this justice Robin is commonly the means. Thus Robin helps the Knight to disappoint the Abbot, — but indeed the close of each adventure brings discomfiture for Monk or Sheriff. Robin's piety is to be borne in mind also, and it was felt, no doubt, that his success was due in part at least to his reverence for Our Lady.

To touch now upon the last of the elements neglected in the ballads, upon Setting. We find here also a slight advance. In the *Gest* it is an important matter : the whole poem is partly a celebration of the woodland life. Forest and life are idealized by significant or picturesque details, — the green leaves, the rose garlands under the lindens, the excellent dinners, the birds singing " in a mery mornynge " ; and it is always the " grene wode," " the mery grene wode." Its charms prove irresistible to Robin at court.

CHAPTER IV

THE HEROIC BALLADS

As the road from the Simple Ballad to the *Gest* lay through the Border and Outlaw Ballads, so the road from the Simple Ballad to the Epic lies through the Heroic Ballads. It is necessary, that is, to look for ballads which deal with epic material, with a phase of life and with motives similar to those of the Epic, but which, while modifying the manner to suit the theme, yet retain, in its essentials, the manner of the ballad. With three or four exceptions, — *King Estmere* (60), *Sir Aldingar* (59), and perhaps *Sir Cawline* (61) and *Bewick and Graham* (211), — such ballads are not to be found in English. Nor are they to be found in German or in Dutch.[1] They are, however, well represented in Danish : the first volume of Grundtvig's *Danmarks Gamle Folkeviser* contains all that is necessary for the present purpose. These Heroic Ballads are, for the most part, connected in some way with the Icelandic stories. Some of them may be survivals of the ballads upon which these stories were based ; some may be derived from such stories. With their provenience we are not concerned. To justify their use at this point it is necessary only that they should treat the matter of the epic in the manner of the ballad. That they do fulfil this condition it is one purpose of the following analysis to show.

I. The Phase of Life

As in the *Beowulf*, so in the Heroic Ballads, we seldom lose sight of the sea. Locke flies over the salt water to fetch Thor's hammer (1),[2] and many a hero makes a sea-journey in a boat. In *Ungen Ranild* (28) :

> Och de thill stranden udbarre
> baade ancker och aarer smaa :
> saa glad vare alle di kongens mend,
> der snecken thager thil adt gaa (st. 8).

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[1] So far as one may make a negative generalization — always dangerous — from Uhland, Herder, the *Wunderhorn*, and Hoffmann von Fallersleben's *Niederländische Volkslieder*.   [2] The numbers refer to Grundtvig.

This " snecke," in which the men were glad to put to sea, was provided with shrouds (*linnern*, st. 27), a " for-gyldene snecke " (st. 28). In st. 10 Ranild spoke " thill styrres-mand." When Svend Felding and his men set out to fetch Dronning Jutte (32, B),

> Vunde de op deris forgylte seyl
> op i forgyldene raa :
> saa seylede de ind til Tyskland
> vel minde end maanet tho (st. 7).

Oars, anchor, and sail are frequently mentioned : to cast anchor upon the white sand is a commonplace for landing (32, B, 8, etc.). The best evidence of delight in the boat, in the sense of careless power in the struggle with the storm, is found in *Grimilds Hævn* (5, A) :

> Her Gynter oc her Gierlo
> de styrede skib fra land ;
> der de komme der mit paa sund,
> daa reiste veier til haan.
>
> Sønder gick de orer
> i Falquor Spilmands haand;
> Helle Hagen met sin forgylte skiold
> styrde selff det skib til land.
>
> Da kaste de deris ancker
> paa det huide sand (sts. 18–20),

— the difficulty was soon overcome, evidently.

Of landscape we learn rather less in the Heroic Ballad than in the Simple Ballad ; of the castle, and of customs connected with it, we learn much more. Sivard (2, A) rode until

> hand kom for saa høyt it hus,
> som mandt kaller Berner-qualle (st. 11).

The watchman,

> der voger offuer murre-thinde (st. 16),

as, at Grimild's castle, they walk " paa de tynd " (5, A, 21); or, more vaguely, Kong Diderik stood " paa byergen " (7, B, 1). Apparently before the castle, and enclosed by a wall, was the castle yard. Into this Sivard Snarensvend (2, A) made his great leap on Skimling's back ; here it was customary to change one's dress before going into the royal presence (1, A) :

> Mit udi den gaard
> ther axler hand sin skinnd (sts. 4, 10).

Of the rooms in the interior of the castle much is to be learned from *Hagbard og Signe* (20, A) : Hagbard went to Denmark, changed his dress in the *borge-gard*, found Signe and her maidens sewing in the *fruer-stue ;* he slept in her *soffue-stuffue* (st. 28) or *bur* (st. 53), which was lighted with *voxlius* (st. 28). She went to her father in *høffuid-lofft*, — no doubt the same as the *høffue-lofft* where Helmer Kamp sat (26, A, 6), or the *høyelofft* (" presence chamber ") where Svend Feld-ing found the German King (32, B, 9). The *hyffue-lofft* to which the jealous Brynild retires (3, A, 7) seems to be a tower room. But, in the same ballad, the *hyffue-lofft* where Hagen kills Sivard may well be the presence chamber again. Sigurd (22, A) —

> Saa ganger hand i højeloft
> For Riddere og Hofmænd ind (st. 2).

Ravengaard (13, A) —

> hand gaar i lofftt forr droningen ind (sts. 7, 10).

Stoffue evidently has the same meaning in 1, A :

> saa gick hand i stoffuen
> alt for then thosse-greffue ind (st. 4).

The king if not to be found in this presence chamber was commonly in hall, where the warriors sat drinking. Guner, when she must look for a champion (13, A) —

> Hun gick seeg till heelde,
> som kieemper dy drak sneelde (st. 18).

And it was in King Adland's hall that Estmere (Child, 60) stabled his steed, and won the king's daughter. One greeted the king as he sat at his broad table in the hall.[1] This hall was provided with doors (13, A):

> Harttugenn innd aff dørrenn threend (sts. 13, 19).

One, at least, of the castles was provided with a dungeon (30, A) :

> saa gaar hun till fange-thornn,
> som alle dy fanger luo (st. 19).

With this castle certain ceremonies are connected. Two of these appear continually in commonplace phrases throughout these ballads.

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[1] Cf. 11, A, 3 and 32, B, 10, 11.

On entering hall or chamber it was apparently customary not to take off but to put on some head-covering. For example (3, A):

> Tthett wor Hellitt Haffuen,
> suøber seg hoffuit y skieend:
> saa gaar hand y hyffue-lofft
> for Syffuert ind (st. 17).

Thus proud Sennelille went in to her lord (4, B, 6), King Sigurd to knights and courtiers (22, A, 2), and Liden Grimmer to the heathen king (26, A, 6). In a later stanza (25) of this same ballad, for the line " hand suøber seg hoffuet y skiend " is substituted " hand axller skarlagen-skiend," and this line, which seems to imply the putting on of a ceremonial scarlet cloak, is also of frequent occurrence. Thus, in this same ballad again, the king puts on the scarlet cloak before bestowing his daughter on Liden Grimmer (26, A, 28). In *Ravengaard og Memering* (13, A, 7) —

> Raffuenngaard axller skaarlagenn-skieend,
> hand gaar i lofftt forr droningen ind.

The same thing is said of Hertug Henddrik (13, A, 12). Locke, before he goes into the presence of the *thosse-greffue*, or into the presence of Thor, " axler sin skinnd " (1, A, 4, 10).[1] There is a suggestion also of the formal character of these occasions in the phrasing of the line that usually follows: one went in *before* (into the presence of) the king or queen. When the king entered, the queen stood up to receive him (13, A):

> Harttugenn[2] innd aff dørrenn threend,
> droningenn stuod hanom op igenn:
> " Weell-komenn, eddellig haare myn," etc. (st. 13).

And when the queen entered the hall the warriors rose:

> Droninggenn ind aff dørrenn thrennd,
> alle stuod kieemper hynd op igenn (st. 19).

One addressed the king in the ceremonial commonplace (11, A):

> " Herr sider y, danner-kongen,
> allt offuer eders brede bord " (st. 3);

or (32, B):

> " Hel sider i, Tysklands koning,
> offuer eders brede bord."

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[1] There is a variation of this convention in *Holger Danske og Burmand* (30, A, 19), when Gloriant goes to the dungeon to look for Holger.

[2] So he is called, though his wife, Guner, is usually *droning*.

To this the German king replies:

> " Tager i nu molling oc handkle,
>   i sætte de herrer til bord " (sts. 10–11).

This ballad (*Svend. Felding og Dronning Jutte*) is especially notable in
its insistence upon ceremony. When the Danish king asks Felding to
fetch home the bride, he replies that he must go in state, in fur-
trimmed cloak, and with a hundred mail-clad knights (st. 6).

With all this state and ceremony is to be contrasted the treatment
of Queen Jutte.[1] It was customary, apparently, for the queen to serve
at the pouring out of the wine: thus in *Frændehævn* (4, B) :

> Lenno skenckthe hun denn klarre vin,
>   och sødt melck for siu brødre sin (st. 14).

An interesting glimpse of manners, finally, is given in the ballad of
Kong Diderik i Birtingsland (8). The three heroes arrive at the castle
of the giant, King Isaac, kill and cut to pieces the porter, and enter
the hall. The cup-bearer grasps his spear to drive them out, but Huet-
ing seizes him by the beard and beats his head against the wall until
the brains are scattered, then tosses the body upon the table, and
exclaims, " Her, plocke mig thenne steg! " (st. 38). Diderik, meantime,
attacks King Isaac, and thrusts him through the navel. The fight with
Isaac's old mother follows. The balladist's evident delight in such a
scene as this may be contrasted with the poet's delight in Beowulf's
reception at Heorot. Behind this scene, as behind the rude reception
of Queen Jutte, there was no doubt a kind of national feeling, similar
to the class feeling which inspired the bold entry of Adam Bell, Clim
of the Clough, and William of Cloudesly (Child, 116) into the King's
court. The standards of the time or of the class to which the balladist
belonged were not those of the epic poet.

With the relations of time the heroic balladist is little concerned.
We learn that Sivard rescued Brynild *om liusen dag* (3, A, 1); that Sam-
son was to return to his castle at Yule (6, A, 6); that Svend Felding's
journey to Germany required two months (32, B, 7), and the return
only two weeks (st. 19). And in *Frændehævn* the afternoon wears
on until it is time for the evening meal, and from then until bedtime
(4, B, 12, 18). Time, that is, is never really significant.

So far as the Human Relations are concerned, the Heroic Ballad
reproduces the domestic relations of the Simple Ballad. There are

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[1] Cf. " Flyting," p. 144, below.

some striking resemblances, and effective illustrations of what was said in that connection. It will be necessary, however, to note nothing more than certain important additions made by the Heroic Ballad. The relation of father and son becomes significant. Ulv van Jærn and Orm Ungersvend (10 and 11) avenge fathers' deaths. Widerick (7, B, and elsewhere) is always described as Werlandt's son. It is Thor's old father who impersonates the bride in *Tord af Havsgaard* (1). Most significant is the rôle of the father in *Angelfyr og Helmer Kamp* (19, B). These brothers are rivals for the hand of the daughter of the king of Opsal. In their combat one kills the other with a poisoned sword ; the father promptly puts an end to the survivor. There is no dilemma like Hrethel's ;[1] his duty is clear. It is the fathers, finally, who are responsible for the fight and consequent death of the brothers-in-arms, in *Bewick and Graham* (Child, 211). These sworn brothers (the relationship is peculiar to the Heroic Ballad) solve the problem of conflicting duties by fighting, in obedience to parental command ; but they agree that the survivor shall kill himself. Similarly, Hagen, in *Sivard og Brynild* (3), slays his *stalbroder*, Sivard, in obedience to the command of Brynild, his betrothed, but immediately, as avenger of his brother-in-arms, kills Brynild, and then takes his own life. The same relation is implied in *Holger Danske og Burmand* (30, A), where Holger, although he has lain in her father's dungeon for a year, becomes the heroine's champion and saves her from being carried off by Burmand, because her true-love is his friend : —" Kong Karuell er mynn wenn saa guod," he says (st. 29). As in the Simple Ballad, the names of brothers are not here significant. Yet there occur now and then stanzas which imply a delight in the names of characters, partly because of the sound, partly because of the connotation. Thus in *Kong Diderik og Holger Danske* (17, B) :

> Saa heder kong Olgers kiemper gode :
> Ulffuer Iern och her Suend Felding
> och Hellod Harogen och Viderick Verlandssøn,
> Iffuer Blaa och Kollen hin graa (st. 14).

In *Kong Diderik og hans Kæmper* (7, F, 33 ff.) there is a long passage (twelve stanzas), naming twelve heroes and describing their shields. The names are given in full, and in many cases they alliterate : Siguord Snarensuend, Widerick Werlanssen, Helede Hagenn, Humerlumber her Holm-bo Iernssens sønn, Detleff Danske, etc. In *Kong Diderik i*

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[1] P. 161, below.

Birtingsland (8, 14–23) there is a similar list of names, and again in *Greve Genselin* (16, A, 16, 17, 18).

Turning now to the larger social relations, we find that although no more is made of the rank of what may be called the members of the nobility, the king has a more important part to play. The titles of the ballads are again significant: *King Estmere, Kong Diderik og hans Kæmper, Kong Diderik i Birtingsland, Kong Diderik og Løven, Kong Diderik og Holger Danske.* And even when his name does not appear in the title, a king plays some part in almost every one of these ballads. Moreover, he is no longer a mere commoner with a title; he usually gives evidence of kingly authority; he has the royal manner. Thus King Estmere, like the Anglo-Saxon *sinces brytta*, pulled out a ring of gold and laid it on the porter's arm (Child, 60, 47). Memering's description of Guner's father, too, suggests the epic ideal of the king's generosity (13, A):

> Some daa gaff hand giøbbind guld,
> och suome daa gaff hand skoller fuld (st. 22).

Kings were notable for valor, also; for example, Kong Seifrid, in *Grimilds Hævn* (5, A), and Kong Diderik in the ballads which bear his name. Hagbard, too, in the stirring ballad of love and heroism, *Hagbard og Signe* (20, A), unarmed and single-handed, kills a hundred and forty-seven of those who try to take him, and can be bound only with a hair from Signe's head. Kings, moreover, are very evidently lords of castles, rulers of peoples, leaders of expeditions. The ceremonies of the castle show royal state. Kings are not conceived as common men.

There are suggestions of the *comitatus*. Memering accuses Raven-gaard of being first at the gift-giving, yet also first to betray his master's daughter (13, A), — much as Wiglaf accuses the recreant thanes,[1] and Hagen (in *Grimilds Hævn*, 5, A, 35) calls upon the men to whom he has given bread to aid him in the fight. Signe, like Wealhtheow,[2] has a following of women, and Hagbard finds her surrounded by *skønne iomfruer* all busy with their embroidery (20, A, 17).

So far as the Phase of Life is concerned, the Heroic Ballad, however, makes its most significant advance toward the Epic in its emphasis on national consciousness or feeling. It offers at this point a marked contrast to the small isolated groups of the persons of the Simple Ballad. *Kong Diderik og Holger Danske* (17, B) celebrates the victory of the Danish hero. Svend Felding (31, A) can do nothing unless mounted on

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[1] *Beowulf*, vv. 2631 ff.   [2] *Beowulf*, v. 924.

a Danish horse,[1] and the insults which he and the Danner-koning offer to Dronning Jutte are justified, apparently, by anti-German feeling (32, B). *Longobarderne* (21, A) is notable as a treatment of a national movement. Once there was a great famine in Denmark, and King Snede proposed to relieve the distress by putting to death every third man. An old woman, however, advised emigration, and a great company put to sea. There they won fame and honor. They sailed at last for " Lumerdi, som liger i Vallanndt inde" ; there they landed, slew all the men, and took possession of the women. Even where specifically Danish feeling is not involved, the same epic leanings are involved in the larger geography of the Heroic Ballads. Guner lived in Spire, and Heenddrick, who ruled over Bronsuig and Slesuig, left her to go on a military expedition over sea (13, A) ; and Hagen, his mother, and the mermaid all conceive of Grimild's land as a foreign country, *den heden-ske land*, somewhere beyond the sea (5, A).

Supernatural beings, or beings possessed of supernatural qualities, play a part in many of these ballads : the mermaid gifted with pro-phetic powers, in *Grimilds Hævn* (5, A); the prophetess (*spaaquinnde*) who interpreted Hagbard's dream (20, A), and numerous trolls, vari-ously " rationalized " as giants or heathen kings. These last are to be discussed in connection with the motive of the Supernatural. These ballads are distinctly pre-Christian, and Christianization is merely external ; it never gets at the heart of the ballad or affects the action. The nearest approach to anything of the kind is in *Ravengaard og Memering* (13, A, 32), where Memering maintained that the soul of the forsworn Ravengaard was lost. Hagbard (20, A, 3) dreamed that he was in heaven (" der uar saa faurenn by "), but this signified merely success in love. In *Karl og Kragelil* (23, A, 26) the prayer is a mere form of speech :

" Wille Gud-fader y Himmerig
giffue mig der-thill effne :
da skall ieg inndenn monitzdag
dig offuer dy bønnder heffne."

Most strikingly incongruous is the exclamation of Fredensborgh, sister of Locke and Thor, when Locke brings the *thosse-greffue's* demand for her hand (1, A, 12) :

" Giffuer mig helder en christen mand,
end delig en trold saa led."

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1 " Daa well wy oss, wy danske thuo,
och stryde imod walske thry " (st. 17).

Den skallede Munk (15), who became abbot by killing half of his fellows, offers amusing evidence of the popular conception of monastery life. These ballads are not concerned with the world to come, and, if we except Seffred, handing from his barrow his sword Berting to his son Orm (11, A, 20) to avenge his death, no traveler returns.

Reflecting an age of chivalry and of equestrian combats, Heroic, like Simple Ballads, attach great importance to the horse. Famous horses were named : Sivard's Skimling Gram (2) both bit and kicked, and fire flew from his bit; with Sivard on his back he was able to leap over a castle wall. Hummer-lumber offered pledges of great value for Widerick's Skeming (7, A, 66). There is evidence of close observation in the miller's description of his Danish horse, — " hyffuen hoff och breden bringg " (31, A, 18), — beyond the Simple Ballad convention of the shoes of gold and silver and the bell at mane or bridle-rein. Like Sivard Snarensvend, Svend Felding drew the gloves from his white hands and girded his own horse ; he would trust no swain (2, A, and 31, A). As Prior[1] points out, quoting Grimm, horses were endowed with human understanding, and we find the heroes talking to them (2, 7, 31).

Of the arms and armor, burnie, helmet and shield, sword, spear, and a nondescript *stall-stang* are all frequently mentioned. The burnie is described as " brynnie blaa " in *Samson* (6, A, 2). In *Kong Diderik og hans Kæmper* (7, B, 15–18), Widerick, asked who he was, named father, mother, shield (Skrepping), helm (Bierthing), sword (Menning), horse, and then gave his own name. In this same ballad (F, 33–44) is the long list of heroes with the blazoning of their shields, already mentioned. In version B Widerick boasts of his sword :

> " The smede-suene haffuer mit suar saa smedt,
>   thett bider saa well staall som klede " (st. 6).

Orm, as we have just seen, obtained Berting from his father's barrow ; Ungen Ranild (28) found a sword in a cave ; and Diderik, like Beowulf, saved his life by such a chance find (9). Upon the possession of the sword Adelring depends the result of the combat for Guner's honor (13, A). Most significant in this connection is, as the title suggests, the ballad of *Hævnersværdet* (25). With this avenging sword a knight kills the king, — his father's murderer, — eight champions, wives and maidens, and even the child in cradle who had vowed vengeance. This

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[1] *Ancient Danish Ballads*, I, 307.

sword, like to those of Anglo-Saxon warriors, is a *gūðwine gumena*, for the owner says to it :

" Ieg haffuer icke broder y liffue vdenn thieg " (sts. 18, 22).

It has a personality and a will of its own ; after the slaughter the knight addresses it :

" Stelld deg nu, suerddit hind brune,
  du stielle deg vdj wor herres naffuenn."

Tthett melltte suerditt buode thrett och muod :
" Nu løstett meg efter ditt eggett blod " (sts. 33, 34).

From this list ought not to be omitted Sivard's sword Adelring : no other sword in the world would wound him ; it had a bloody tear in the hilt, which, if it ran down on the finger of the one who held it, would kill him (3, A, 13, 22).

II. MOTIVES

Concerned as they are for the most part with the mighty deeds of kings and heroes, these ballads have commonly for their central motive, Valor. Many of them, in the opening stanzas, discover the hero boasting of his prowess, — as (7, A) :

Konninng Dyderick sider paa Berne,
hannd thaller dy ordt saa fri:
hannd syger, den er icki y verdenn thill,
som thør mod hanom striide (st. 2), —

or deliberately setting out to look for a fight, as (11, A, 2) :

Och ditt wor høgen Bermmeriis,
hand binder sig suerd wid side :
saa will hand at kongens gord,
som kiemper monne slaa och stryde (st. 2).

If the hero learned of the existence of a champion whom he had not yet overcome, this was motive enough for him to set out to find him. Once in the presence of his foe, he acted with a gay recklessness indicating such confidence in his own power, such delight in arousing the impotent wrath of his antagonist, that in many cases (like that, for instance, of Widerick's fight with the giant [7, B]) the combat resembles a bear-baiting rather than the conflict of equal forces where the issue is in doubt. Yet Hagen goes to Grimild's castle in spite of many warnings, and he and his men perish, undaunted, in a fight against odds. It

is in this fight that Falquor Spilmand's good sword breaks; he seizes a
steel bar from the door and with it kills *siu-hundre rask hoffmend*
(5, A) :

> " In nomine domini," sagde Helle Hagen,
> "nu gaar min fedel vel :
> mig tyckis, det min hielper
> de nu slagen er " (st. 33).

This delight in pure valor for its own sake is, however, unusual.
Typical at least of the Danish heroic ballads is rather a delight in a
valor combined with cunning, in manifestation of power, of over-
whelming superiority, in the results of the battle. Thor obtains his
hammer by cunning, and then kills the *thosse-greffue;* there is no
struggle. Widerick persuades Langbien to go first into the cave, and,
as he does so, cuts off his head (7, B). The contest between husband
and wife in *Frændehævn* (4, B) is a contest of cunning. Proud Sinne-
lille's brothers come to kill Lenno, her husband. She gives him wine to
drink; but to them, sweet milk. Lenno, however, pours the wine under
the table. When she makes their beds she places her brothers' swords
under them. As soon as she is asleep Lenno slips from her arms, kills
the seven brothers, and brings her their blood to drink.

> " Konn gaar y seng, herre min,
> ieg skytter saa lidit om min brødres dødt" (st. 24).

Curiously enough, he believes her and goes to sleep. She slips from his
arms, and out of the castle, kills his brothers five and sisters three, and
brings him their blood to drink. " I should be very thirsty," he says,
" to have so bloody a thirst " ; but he adds :

> " Kun gack thil seng, Sinnelille fin,
> ieg skytter saa lidit om syskenn min " (st. 32).

She draws his knife and kills him, and then kills the child in cradle
who has vowed revenge, — delight in cunning, delight in slaughter,
no suggestion of a fight. The ballad is saved by the courageous self-
control of Sinnelille and her relentless execution of vengeance. In
many of these ballads the plot turns upon the possession of a certain
sword; with this in his hand the hero is invincible; there is no
question as to the outcome, and combat becomes mere slaughter.
Thus Orm Ungersvend gets Berting from his father's barrow. Bermer-
Rise will not begin the combat until Orm has sworn that Berting is

still in his father's tomb (11, A, 24–25). Ravengaard and Memering
try to outwit one another in the same way, but Memering is careful
to word his oath so that he is not forsworn (13, A, 25). This feature
is not present in the English parallel, *Sir Aldingar* (Child, 59). English
and Danish offer similar contrast in *Bewick and Graham* (Child, 211)
and *Sivard og Brynild* (3, A). In each the hero has to kill his sworn
brother. Hagen asks Sivard's sword as a favor and kills him with it in
cold blood. Graham, however, will take no unfair advantage of Bewick,
and flings off jack and cap because his bully has none. Hagen, when
he asks for the sword, addresses Sivard as " kerr stalbroder mynn," as
Brynild calls Sieneld " kerre søster myn." Since the issue is already
decided when the hero gets possession of the all-conquering sword, the
combat receives rather perfunctory treatment. A stanza or two usually
suffice, and these are often commonplace in form. In set phrase the
balladist tells how a circle is drawn on the ground, then follows some-
thing like this (15):

> Det første slag, den trold hand slog,
> hand slog den munck til plade.
>
> Det første slag, den munck hand slog,
> hand slog den trold til iorde (sts. 13–14).

Or the commonplace may be something like this (11, A):

> Dy fecktthis y dage, dy fecktis i tho,
> den tridie lige-saa (st. 36).

In contrast with this tendency to conventionalize the combat itself,
is the balladist's ascription of the proper battle indignation to his
heroes. Widerick Werlandsøn is enraged at the mere thought of battle
(7, B, 6). The three warriors who rode into Birtingsland to demand
tribute of an unoffending giant — " the vaar i huen saa vred " (8, 29).
When a knight tells Memering that he is too small to act as his
squire (14, A, 11):

> Mimmering vredis vid de ord,
> hand slog den ridder fraa hest oc til iord.

At the second shock Svend Felding and his antagonist " war buode
wrede" (31, A, 29), and when Sinnelille kills Lenno's brothers five and
sisters three, the balladist naïvely explains (4, B, 28): " Det giorde
hun, for hun vaar vredt."

In his efforts to get the better of his foe, whether by force of arms or by cunning, the hero of these ballads usually, though not invariably, has some other motive than mere delight in the struggle. He may be inspired by patriotism, like Holger Danske and his men (17, B); or by loyalty and chivalry, like Memering fighting in defense of his lady's honor (14); or, more commonly, by desire for revenge, like Ulv van Jærn (10, A), Sinnelille (4, B), the owner of Hævnersværdet (25), or Orm Unger-svend (11). In *Frændehævn* (4, B), as in *Hævnersværdet* (25), a child in cradle vows vengeance on the avenger, but is killed for his pains. The hero may be inspired by desire for glory, also, — as when King Diderik looks about for new worlds to conquer, boasts that no man liv-ing dare fight with him, or sets out to find a champion till now over-looked. And gold as well as glory strengthened Widerick's arm in the battle with the giant.

In some of these ballads Valor is inspired by Love. In cases of the *Brautfahrt*, indeed, the passion is but lightly touched, as in *Samson* (6), *Liden Grimmer* (26), and *Orm Ungersvend* (11). In *King Estmere* (Child, 60), the English parallel to the last-named Danish ballad, is to be found an excellent example of this slighted love-motive. Percy, feeling perhaps that the story was not quite intelligible at this point, inter-polated stanzas 63–66. Two of these, 63 and 65, run as follows (the King of Spain has come to claim King Adland's daughter, and Estmere returns disguised as a harper):

> Hee playede agayne both loud and shrille,
>   And Adler he did syng,
> " O ladye, this is thy owne true love,
>   Noe harper, but a kyng."
>
> The ladye looked, the ladye blushte,
>   And blushte and lookt agayne,
> While Adler he hath drawne his brande,
>   And hath the sowdan slayne.

Percy must have known his Dryden, and this is clearly an echo of

> Sighed and looked, sighed and looked,
> Sighed and looked, and sighed again,[1]

and it is clearly not in keeping with the method of the Heroic Ballad of this type, as it is, indeed, not in keeping with the method of the love

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[1] Dryden, *Alexander's Feast*, vv. 112–113.

ballad pure and simple.[1] Percy's stanzas are unnecessary ; the balladist is all for the game, not for the candle. The daring and effrontery of Estmere and Adler Young, in that unsurpassed scene in King Adland's hall, are thoroughly typical of the Heroic Ballad :

> Kyng Estmere he stabled his steede
> Soe fayre att the hall-bord ;
> The froth that came from his brydle bitte
> Light in Kyng Bremors beard.
>
> Saies, Stable thy steed, thou proud harper,
> Saies, Stable him in the stalle ;
> It doth not beseeme a proud harper
> To stable his steed in a kyngs halle.
>
> " My ladde he is so lither," he said,
> " He will doe nought that 's meete ;
> And is there any man in this hall
> Were able him to beate ? " (sts. 49–51).

Here also, as in the Danish heroic ballads, there can be no doubt about the outcome. By " gramarye " the hero is made invulnerable and his sword irresistible. He slays the sowdan with a single blow, and easily disposes of the " kempes many a one."

This slighting of the love motive, however, is not without exception ; in some of these Heroic Ballads it receives greater emphasis and elaboration than in the Love Ballads themselves. Not, indeed, greater relative elaboration ; the advance in the treatment of the love motive is but part of that general advance which the Heroic Ballads represent. When Burmand tells Gloriant that her love has forsworn God (30, A),

> Tthett suaritt iumfru Gloriantt,
> och hynder rand thaar paa kind :
> " Rett aldrig giffuer ieg mitt mynde der-till
> att for-lade kerre harre mynn " (st. 8).

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[1] But, like the heroine of the love ballad, Adland's daughter meets Estmere more than half way. It is Estmere's brother who advises matrimony and approaches King Adland. Estmere, passive and silent, she receives with:

> And, if you love me, as you saye,
> Soe well and hartilee,
> All that ever you are comen about
> Soone sped now itt shal bee (st. 19).

This echo of Aucassin implies, however, only the old strength of passion.[1] The heroic balladist goes further, and there are even cases of something which approaches romantic love-making. Rigen Rambolt's wooing of Dadellrun (27, A, 31–45) is really a matter of fifteen stanzas. The king's men laughed at Rigen Rambolt's clothes, even after he had slain Aller the strong. He sent some coarse cloth (*hampe-wøff*) to Dadellrun, the king's daughter, and asked that she would make clothes for him.[2] When she saw the cloth she smiled quietly and said, "It is not fitting that he should wear this cloth. Spread, rather, silk and cendal under his feet, and let him wear the scarlet red." Presently Rambolt came in through the doors and the wise maid rose to meet him :

> " Her seedder y, iumfru Dadellrun,
>   ieg well eder bede for erre :
>   om y well gyffue meg eders thro
>   och blyffue myn hiarttens-kierre."

> " Hør y thett, rige her Rambbolt,
>   saa gierne gyffuer ieg eder myn thro :
>   om y well gaa y hyffuelofftt
>   och spørge min faader til rad " (sts. 38–39).

So Rambolt went to the 'king and asked him for his daughter, and the king said :

> " Ieg well deg gierne myn datter giffue,
>   om hun well deg selliff haffue."

> Tthett thaa suaritt thend stalltt iumfru,
> hun sagde : " Thett wor for øød :
> att wy skuld buode huer-anddre thro-loffue,
> førind hannd bleff nogen thid føddt " (sts. 42–43).

It is to be kept in mind that this simple, yet rather modern, love-making is entirely subsidiary to the hero's conflicts with the dragon and with Aller the Strong, and occupies but a third of the ballad. The love

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[1] It appears in another Heroic Ballad, *Sir Cawline* (Child, 61), in which the hero comes near dying of love-sickness; and there is something like the damming and bursting out of passion, contrasted with the true ballad, and characteristic of the narrative of art as exemplified in the romance of *King Horn*. Cf. p. 17, above.

[2] As Prior, I, 287, points out, a king's daughter makes clothes for the troopers in the *Nibelungenlied*, 357–362 (Bartsch). The incident recalls Sienild and Brynild washing their silks by the strand (3, A, 3), and Nausicaa by the river.

motive is more nearly central in *Gralver Kongesøn* (29, A), although, so far as space is concerned, it receives no great emphasis. But the little incident is all the more effective for that, and it is notable for the typical ballad reticence and suggestion, and for the use of the varying refrain. This Gralver set out for Syllessborrig to visit Sinild. On the way he met and slew a dragon, and brought the head to Sinild. " Since you have slain the dragon," she said, " you shall be master of Sylless-borrig, of all my gold so red, and sleep in my arms." Gralver, however, demanded that she should first become a Christian, and this she refused to do. Gralver, moreover, had a true-love "i øster-kongens rige."

> " Offerett haffuer ieg guld och sølff
> och ter-till ridder och suenne :
> och farer i thill øster-kongenns lanndt,
> y henter eders throe igienn."
> I kommer igiennn, Graffuell kongens sonn, op
>   under lidenn ! [1]

> Ted war Graffuell kongenns sønn,
> hannd kaste sinn hest omkrinng :
> " I haffuer god natt, staldt Sinild-lille,
> ieg kommer her aldrig igienn."
> [Ded suarett hannd Graffuell kongens sønn, op
>   under lidenn.]

> Ted war Graffuell kongens sønn,
> hans hest hannd gick y sprinng :
> ude staar stalttenn Sinild,
> och hinde rannd taare paa hinnde.
> Aldt for denn veniste Graffuell kongenns sønn
>   op under lidenn (sts. 18–20).

He had more adventures on the way home, and married the fair Blide-lille : we hear no more of the forsaken Sinild. Without this suggestive quality, more heroic and less romantic in character, is the ballad of *Hag-bard og Signe* (20, A). Here love and valor are more closely associated, and the passion itself, as well as the whole situation, more vigorously

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[1] This line of the refrain leaves the whole matter doubtful. Is it to be taken as the suggestion of the chorus as to what really happened after the close of the ballad ? Or as Sinild's speech, — to which, indeed, Gralver seems to reply in the next stanza ? Or is it her thought, at variance with what she says ? The other versions throw no light on the matter.

imagined. The prophetess interpreted Hagbard's dream to the effect that he should win Signe, but that he must die for her. He replied :

> " Er dett mig till løcke lagt,
> ad ieg kannd winde denn møe :
> saa lidet ieg det wurde vill,
> at ieg skall for hinde døe " (st. 7).

Disguised as a woman he went to her father's castle, where he found Signe at her embroidery, surrounded by her maidens. He asked her to teach him the art, and she got her father's consent to do so. The maidens were surprised to see him more skilful with the knife than with the needle, — for he carved on the tables hart and hind just as they ran in the forest. A treacherous serving-maid noticed his valor with the tankard. Signe had never seen him before, and did not suspect his disguise. When he told her that he had been accustomed to wear the scarlet red and sleep with the children of kings, she consented that he should eat and sleep, not with her maidens, but with her. Accordingly the tapers were lighted, and these two maidens were conducted to Signe's sleeping-room.

> Hun lagde hand paa Hagbords bryst,
> denn skinner aff guld saa rød :
> " Hui er icke brøstenn voxen paa eder
> alt som paa anndenn møe ? "
>
> " Det er saa sed paa min faders land,
> at iomfruer de rider till thinnge :
> fordi er icke brystenn voxenn paa mig :
> udaff de brønie-ringe.
>
> I sige mig, stalltenn Signill,
> men wi ere enne tho :
> oc er der naagenn i verdenn till,
> der eders huff liger paa ? "
>
> " Der er ingenn i verdenn till,
> der min huff liger paa :
> for-udenn Hagbord kongenn søn,
> oc ham maa ieg icke faa.
>
> For-udenn Hagbord kongen sønn,
> ieg alldrig med øgenn saae :
> udenn ieg hørde hanns forgylte liud,
> hannd rider till tingit oc fra."

" Er det Hagbord kongenns sønn,
i haffuer udi hiertet kier :
y wennder eder om, thager hannem udi arm,
hand soffuer eder alt saa ner " (sts. 29–34).

She asked him why he would so shame her, why he did not ride up to
her father's castle with hawk on wrist ; Hagbard told her that as often
as her father heard his name he swore to have him hanged. Signe
thought then of the danger that they were in ; but Hagbard told her
that he had sword and burnie under his pillow and did not fear a hun-
dred men, even if they came upon him all at once. The cursed serving-
maid heard what he said and stole away his good sword and burnie blue.
She took them to Siguord the king, and told him where Hagbard was.
Siguord said that if she lied, she should die on the morrow, then called
to his men to arm and follow him. Signe lay awake and listened. She
heard her father's call and woke Hagbard. He felt under his pillow :
gone were his burnie and his good sword. The king's men beat upon
the door with sword and spear :

" Du stat op, Hagbord konngenn sønn,
du gack i gardenn udt " (st. 51).

Hagbard rushed through the doors. Some he slew with his hands, some
with his feet, until seven and seven times twenty of the king's men lay
dead before Signe's bower. They tried to bind him, but he burst the
bonds as if they were straw. The false serving-maid told them to take
a hair from Signe's head, — rather would he break his heart than break
that in sunder. So they took him and laid him in irons, while Signe
tried to intercede for him. Here version A ends. In the other versions
Signe had promised not to survive him ; when she saw him hang she
was to set fire to her bower and· so die with him. Hagbard had the
hangman draw up his cloak to see how he would look. Signe saw it from
her window, and soon smoke and flame rose from her bower. Now
Hagbard was ready to die. In B the king, when he saw how great was
their love, tried to save both, but it was too late. If he had known, he
said, he would not have done this deed for all Denmark.

This ballad is notable for the fullness of its treatment of the love
motive, for the gradual, steady movement and increasing interest with
which it approaches the inevitable catastrophe foreshadowed in the dream
of the opening stanzas. At the same time it is a true ballad. The
stanzas quoted, — rich in dialogue, full of " incremental repetition,"

concrete, suggestive, — show that in detail it has the true ballad manner. It makes use of ballad conventions, — the treacherous servant, the king's threat of the informer, the king's remorse.

The English ballad *Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard* (Child, 81) tells much the same story, yet the effect is entirely different. To what is this difference due? These ballads are fairly typical — though not completely so, for no ballad is that — of the classes to which they belong. To answer this question is, then, to show in this specific case the difference between the Heroic and the Simple Ballad. The difference in effect is due, in the first place, to the difference in the phase of life. In the Danish ballad the lovers are of royal blood. Lord Barnard is indeed Lord Barnard, but there is no external evidence of his nobility except his handful of troopers, and, perhaps, his three silver keys. Contrast with this the state of Siguord and Signe. He is king and lord of that castle, with its court or yard, its audience chamber, its *fruer-stue* (where Signe sits at her embroidery, surrounded by her women), its *bur* or *soffue-stue* (whither Hagbard and Signe are led in state, the wax tapers burning before them). Hagbard is always *Kong* or *Kongenns søn;* between him and Little Musgrave is a great gulf fixed. The difference in effect is due also to the difference in central motives. In each case it is illicit love; but in the English ballad it is deliberate adultery, while in the Danish love is illicit from necessity only, as in *The Blot in the Scutcheon*,[1] and, morality aside, the hearer's sympathy is with the lovers. For here the difference in character becomes significant. Little Musgrave is a person of no consequence or dignity, fearful at first, regretful of his deed when its consequences are upon him, slain at last miserably in single combat. Contrast with him Hagbard going open-eyed to his fate, with no word of regret, bursting unarmed through the doors and selling his life dear, a match for all King Siguord's men. This readiness to take the offensive, dashing out to meet one's enemies, is typical also, and is to be contrasted with the relative passivity of Little Musgrave. To find him Lord Barnard must lift both coverlet and sheet. To be contrasted, too, is the bold wooing of Lady Barnard with Signe's shame and hesitation after she has been tricked into whispering her love into her lover's ears. It is not an unhistorical application of modern standards which finds greater

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[1] Necessity only fancied, of course, in Browning's poem; yet in the Danish fancied also, if one may take the remorseful king at his word.

dignity in a woman sought and reluctant than in one seeking and eager. This greater dignity of the heroic lovers is reflected in the dialogue. One may contrast the stanzas quoted with Lady Barnard's

> " Lye still, lye still, thou Little Musgrave,
>   And huggell me from the cold ;
>   'T is nothing but a shephard's boy,
>   A driving his sheep to the fold " (st. 16),

or with Little Musgrave's

> " I would gladly give three hundred pounds
>   That I were on yonder plaine " (st. 20). ·

The greater length of the Danish ballad — sixty stanzas in the incomplete version A, as compared with twenty-nine in the English A — is to be noted. The Danish ballad does not tell a longer story, but it has a more elaborate method. It has a greater number of characters : the queen (Hagbard's mother), the wise woman, the maiden *comitatus* of Signe, the hangman (not, indeed, in A), have no counterparts in the English ballad. The Danish adds the preliminary incident of the dream. It combines the sense of inevitable tragedy with interest sustained to the climax, places the happiness of the moment against the dark background of what is to come, maintains the moment of last suspense down to the catastrophe. The difference is due then to the greater dignity, in rank and character, of the persons concerned, — a dignity which modifies the story itself and is reflected in the style and manner of the whole treatment.[1]

This approach to modern methods in the treatment of the Love Motive is not paralleled in the treatment of the Supernatural. Like the Simple Ballad the Heroic Ballad employs no special method. Heroes overcome trolds, giants, dragons, and serpents, but there is little to indicate that there was a clear or definite conception of these creatures. The giants and trolds had superhuman strength, but were outwitted ; they sometimes ate human flesh (8 and 31), and they had come to be thought of as accursed beings, enemies of God. King Isaac came from the bottom of Hell (8, A, 7), and Fredensborgh preferred a Christian man to an ugly trold. The English counterpart of the Bermer

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[1] This is not a comparison of a typical Danish with a typical English ballad, and the discussion is of the love motive, not in Danish Love Ballads, but in the Heroic Ballads.

giant, Bremor (Child, 60), is "a heathen hound." The dragons and
serpents fare no better; and, in general, the balladist is content to
name the supernatural being. Its peculiar quality, moreover, is not
emphasized by the psychological effect upon those who come in contact
with it, nor by the accessories of time and place. It is, indeed, night
when Orm Ungersvend goes to his father's barrow to demand the sword
Berting, but he shows no fear, obtains the sword, finally, by threats of
tearing down the barrow and wrenching the sword from Seffred's hand
(11, A, 19). For a real exception we must turn to the English ballad,
Sir Cawline (Child, 61, 18):

> Vnto midnight [that] the moone did rise,
>   He walked vp and downe,
> And a lightsome bugle then heard he blow,
>   Ouer the bents soe browne ;
> Saies hee, And if cryance come vntill my hart,
>   I am ffarr ffrom any good towne.[1]

The supernatural plays a more important part for heroes than against
them. We have already seen how they are aided by wise women and mer-
maids and protected by "gramarye," and how they make use of swords
that will bite steel as if it were cloth, and of impenetrable burnies.

Finally, it is to be noted that the Ludicrous, combined with Valor,
becomes the central motive in the heroic farce of *Tord af Havsgaard*
(1, A). The incongruity lies obviously in the contrast of the old man
and the young bride whom he impersonates, in his enormous powers of
eating and drinking and their effect on the *thosse-greffue*. Locke com-
bines the incongruous elements in his comment (peculiar to the ballad)
in the final stanza:

> Thet vor liden Locke,
> monne sig saa vell om tencke :
> "Nu vill wi fare hiem till vor egne land,
> skone vor fader en enncke."
>   Saa vinder mand suerchen.

As a subsidiary motive, grim humor is often present in the hero's treat-
ment of his enemies, as in the treatment of King Isaac's cup-bearer (8),
and still more notably in Widerick's practical joke with the corpse of
the giant Langbien.

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[1] It is possible that *Sir Cawline* is a romance broken down.

Character, as we shall see presently, has become more significant in these ballads, and once at least — in the case of the Skallede Munk (15) — it must be regarded as the central motive. It comes near being the mainspring of action in the Svend Felding ballads (31 and 32).

Of the Conflict of Motives enough has been said in connection with the discussion of the Phase of Life. Both in *Angelfyr og Helmer Kamp* (19, B) and *Sivard og Brynild* (3) one of the two motives has its way at once. By way of contrast, however, we should place beside them the English *Bewick and Graham* (Child, 211). Here the conflict of duties holds the action in check, first in the argument of father and son, then in the son's hesitation. Old Graham ordered his son to fight young Bewick. Young Graham protested; his father was inexorable:

> "If thou do not end this quarrel soon,
>   Here is my glove thou shalt fight me."
>
> Christy stoopd low unto the ground,
>
> .   .   .   .
>
> "O father, put on your glove again,
>   The wind hath blown it from your hand."

And still his father insisted:

> "If thou do not end this quarrel soon,
>   Here is my hand thou shalt fight me."
>
> Christy Grahame is to his chamber gone,
>   And for to study, as well might be,
> Whether to fight with his father dear,
>   Or with his bully Bewick he (sts. 15–18).

Then follow two stanzas of what seems soliloquy:

> "If it be my fortune my bully to kill,
>
> .   .   .   .
>
> In every town that I ride through,
>   They'll say, There rides a brotherless man!
>
> "Nay, for to kill my bully dear,
>   I think it will be a deadly sin;
> And for to kill my father dear,
>   The blessing of heaven I neer shall win" (sts. 19, 20).

In the next stanza he has reached his decision :

> " O give me your blessing, father," he said,
>   " And pray well for me to thrive ;
> If it be my fortune my bully to kill,
>   I swear I 'll neer come home alive."

Here ends the conflict, stuff for a whole tragedy of Hamlet. Little more than the fact of the conflict, of the hesitation, is stated, and the hearer is left to work out for himself the effect of the telling situation.

It remains only to note that the motivation of the Heroic Ballads is, on the whole, more careful than that of the Simple Ballads. Often, as we shall see presently, preliminary incidents are introduced for the purpose of setting the action in motion. In *Sir Aldingar* (Child, 59, A), for instance, — and a single example will suffice, — it is explained in general terms, or (version B) in dialogue, why he desired to have the queen burned (the Potiphar's-wife motive, reversed) ; by plotting, Aldingar contrives to provide a motive for the king's resentment ; the resulting peril of the queen and her rescue form the main action of the ballad. But it is not only by way of introduction that this more careful motivation is found ; in these ballads the balladist has come to reflect a more organic world, where things proceed largely from cause to effect.

III. Structure

The Heroic is somewhat longer than the Simple Ballad ;[1] it is not governed to the same degree by the necessity for compression and economy. Made to be heard, not read, it is under the same necessity of producing an immediate effect. It has the same emphasis on action ; it is less likely to deal with a situation ; its greater length gives it somewhat greater opportunity to deal with Character, Thought, Emotion, Setting. How far it makes use of this opportunity we shall see. It is never lyrical, and shows no lyrical tendency. It deals ordinarily with a group of incidents rather than with a single incident. With a few very notable exceptions, like *Bewick and Graham* (Child, 211), *Hagbard og Signe* (20), *Sivard og Brynild* (3), *Angelfyr og Helmer Kamp* (19), it is not tragic. It does not select, then, such a group of incidents as

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[1] Average length, about 1200 words. Longest, *King Estmere*, about 2070 words (Child, 60) ; *Kong Diderik og hans Kæmper*, about 2050 words (7). Shortest, *Raadengaard og Ørnen*, about 300 words (12).

might form the close of a Greek tragedy. It selects rather — and thus differs from the Simple Ballad — some successful adventure of the hero. It is thus capable of forming part of an epic, which may contain innu-, merable adventures but only one catastrophe.

What is remarkable, however, in the structure of the Heroic Ballad is its tendency to combine within its own limits, as the epic combines, two or three incidents of equal value. Orm Ungersvend overcomes the Bermer-Rise; then he goes to Iceland and avenges his father's death (11). Den skallede Munk (15) slays the twelve champions who are killing the cattle and attempting to burn the cloister; slays a trold, and brings his silver and gold to the cloister; slays thirty monks, beats the abbot, and becomes abbot himself. Rigen Rambolt (27) overcomes Aller the Strong, then overcomes the dragon, then wooes and wins Dadellrun. In *Gralver Kongesøn* (29) there is the fight with the dragon, the little love-incident with Sinild, the fight with the monster; and the marriage with Blide-lille, although designed as a mere conclusion, is really independent of what has gone before. Characteristic, then, of this group of the Heroic Ballads is the series of independent incidents, any one of which might well stand alone as material for a ballad.[1] It is not inconceivable that they did originally stand alone; in the first volume of Grundtvig there is more than one instance of a group of ballads dealing with the same hero, which the next singer might easily have united. *Sivard Snarensvend* (2) might thus have become part of *Sivard og Brynild* (3), — as, indeed, reference is made in the latter ballad to the story contained in the former;[2] and each of these ballads alludes to other stories connected with the hero. *Svend Felding* (31) and *Svend Felding og Dronning Jutte* (32) offer the same opportunity for combination. The various Kong Diderik ballads also (7, 8, 9, and 17), dealing not only with the adventures of the king himself but also with those of the heroes associated with him, suggest the possibility of combination less unified and compact, of an epic more in the manner of the *Iliad* or the *Roland* than of the *Beowulf* or the *Odyssey*. We find, then, in the Heroic Ballads evidence of epic tendency, first, in the beginnings of cycles dealing with the same hero, and, second, in the beginnings of the combination of such cycles in single ballads.

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[1] On the recurrence of minor characters and heroes in various ballads, see Grundtvig's account of the characters in *Kong Diderik og hans Kæmper* (I, 65 ff.).

[2] Syffuertt hand haffuer en fuolle,
den er saa spaag (A, 1).

Still from the point of view of Structure, a third epic tendency is to be noted. When the Heroic Ballad deals with a single incident it exhibits often a tendency to elaborate this by breaking it up into a series of minor incidents, each playing a subordinate part in the advancement of the narrative as a whole. *Hagbard og Signe* (20) offers striking illustration. After the preliminary incident of the dream, Hagbard, disguised as a woman, goes to the castle of Siguord, his enemy. All that is necessary is that his disguise should be discovered and he killed. Purely by way of elaboration are introduced[1] his request that Signe teach him embroidery; her asking her father's permission and the father's warning; Hagbard's carving; his drinking; his conversation with the maid; the discussion as to his sleeping-place; the incident of his cloak; and Signe's death. The contrast of this ballad with *Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard* is evident at this point also. Only in the incident of the informer is the English elaboration parallel with the Danish.

What may be regarded as a fourth epic tendency in heroic-ballad structure is the use and elaboration of independent preliminary incident. The Simple Ballad employs preliminary incident, indeed, but it is more purely introductory, more closely connected with the main incident; it has less significance of its own. Little Musgrave's first meeting with Lady Barnard is really the beginning of the main action : Hagbard's dream is distinct from the main action; it throws light on character, on emotion; it furnishes tragic background and increases the feeling of suspense. In *Kong Diderik i Birtingsland* (8), Hueting asks the king's permission to accompany him on the expedition. Diderik reminds him that he lost his horse the last time he was in Birtingsland. Hueting answers that he will go on foot, and runs along with the troop until his anger gets the better of him. He strikes a warrior from his horse and mounts. Diderik now says that Hueting must demand the tribute in Birtingsland. This incident is indeed causally connected with what follows; but for the main story it is clearly unnecessary for us to know why Hueting was appointed to collect the tribute. Even in the brief ballad of *Sivard Snarensvend* (2, A; 16 stanzas), the balladist finds space to elaborate the interview between mother and son, although

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[1] Are introduced, — are included, that is, in the material selected by the balladist from what he may be supposed to have had at his command. In the Simple Ballad such incidents for elaboration are excluded, even when they existed in the "source" of the ballad. Cf. *Sir Hugh, Hind Horn*, etc.

Skimling's great leap is entirely intelligible without it. The same sort of preliminary matter is to be found in *Ravengaard og Memering* (13, A), and to even greater degree in the English parallel, *Sir Aldingar* (Child, 59). These are the most striking cases; but almost every Heroic Ballad will be found to have some sort of preliminary incident, more or less closely connected with the main plot; while the Simple Ballad, or, indeed, the ballad in general, is, as Professor Child pointed out, " likely to tell its tale without preliminaries." [1]

Regarding the Introduction in the narrower sense, the opening lines which put the hearer in possession of the necessary information, it is difficult to generalize. Like the Simple Ballad, the Heroic Ballad furnishes excellent examples of the abrupt and concrete introduction, of the introduction in general terms, as well as of the more formal and gradual advance from the general to the specific. It sketches character, also, and phase of life, but, in this respect, never goes so far as the *Gest*. What is peculiar to the Heroic Ballad is, then, the introductory reference to matter completely foreign to it, seeming to connect it with another story or group of stories, and so with the world. The most striking example is the opening lines of *Sivard Snarensvend* (2, A, 1) :

> Syffuertt hand slogh sin stiffader ihiell,
> det giorde handt for sin moders beste :
> och løster Siffuert thil hoffue att ride.

Sivard og Brynild (3, B) opens in similar fashion. The second of these lines is also typical of the Heroic Ballad in its tendency to explain, to assign a motive, although the explanation does not often take this obvious form. The Heroic Ballad does not omit or suspend the central motive ; it does not proceed by indirection and allusion, like the Simple Ballad, but tells a tale complete in its outlines, at least.

In keeping with this tendency to complete the narrative as far as it goes, to leave less and less to the hearer's imagination, is the relative care exhibited in the matter of transitions and connections. In *Samson* (6, A), indeed, the king's men bribe the hero's mother to tell in what castle he is hiding (sts. 5–9) ; in stanza 10 they are there, attacking the doors ; just as the Bermer-Rise (11, A) wishes in stanza 2 to be at the king's court, and in stanza 3 is there ; but such instances are exceedingly rare. Ordinarily the change of scene that accompanies the passage from incident to incident is carefully indicated, if only by a line or

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[1] Child, III, 317.

two. These " journeys " are so similar to those in the Simple Ballad or
in the *Gest* that no examples are needed. Only two or three special
elaborations are to be noted. The first of these has been pointed out,
in connection with the ceremonies of castle or hall, — the covering of
one's head, as one went into hall, or from room to room.[1] Similar in
effect is the commonplace exemplified in the second line of this stanza
(11, A, 21):

> Dytt wor Worm hinn unger suend,
> hand binder sig suerit ved side:
> och saa gaar hand i borrestouenn ind,
> som kiemper ville slaa och stryde.

Partly by means of the commonplace of casting the anchor upon the
white sand, the journeys by sea are treated with especial elaboration.
They are elaborated by means of incident also, as, in the longest and
most important of them, that in *Grimilds Hævn* (5, A, 6–25), Hagen
and his friends go from their own land to the " heathen " land of
Grimild. They ride afar, and the streams run swift. They meet a
mermaid, who foretells Hagen's death if he ventures into the heathen
land, and he kills her as a prophetess of evil ; he kills the ferryman who
will not carry them across the sound. Gynter and Gierlo steer the ship
from the land. In the middle of the sound a storm comes up ; the
oars break in Falquor's hands, and Hagen with his shield steers the ship
to land. They cast out the anchor upon the white sand, and Hagen is
the first to go ashore ; Falquor is next. The watchman on the battle-
ments announces their coming ; they are clad in iron, he says, and their
horses come on at a gallop. One has a hawk on his shield, and another
a fiddle, — he is a duke's son. Grimild declares that they are all three
a duke's fair sons, and welcomes all but Hagen. It will be noticed that,
with the exception of the twice-mentioned swiftness of the rivers, and
of the commonplaces about the landing and the warriors on the battle-
ments, the account of the journey is given not in terms of successive land-
scapes or tableaux, but in terms of action. What picturesque element
it has is due to the watchman's report of the iron-clad warriors, and their
emblazoned shields and galloping horses, — a matter of action again.

Elaborate as it is, this description omits the time element altogether ;
it is, however, present in *Svend Felding og Dronning Jutte* (32, B, 7
and 19), where, as we have seen, Svend Felding's journey to Germany
requires two months, the return, but as many weeks. It is present also

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[1] P. 113, above.

in *Sivard Snarensvend* (2, A, 11), where the hero's journey to Berner-
qualle requires three nights and three days. The Heroic Ballad, then,
goes no further than the Simple Ballad in its indications of the dura-
tion of time ; yet it is never, as the Simple Ballad so often is, neglect-
ful of temporal perspective. Events crowd one another, indeed, but the
hearer always knows where he is ; he never supposes it is to-day when
it is really to-morrow, or finds that years have passed without his knowl-
edge. As in the Simple Ballad, synchronism is rare, and, since the plot
is uniformly single, never significant for the action. Hagbard and Signe
(20, A) must be supposed to be asleep while the treacherous serving-
maid steals burnie and sword and carries them to the king ; but this
implies nothing like a sub-plot. Bonny Bewick may be supposed to be
at his books while Christy Graham talks with his father ; but here again
there is no sub-plot, and the balladist's transitional stanza (Child, 211,
A, 24) is unnecessary. Yet it is interesting as showing care in such mat-
ters, even though the same thing was to be found in the Simple Ballad.
Clearly, there is here no exception to the rule of the single narrative stream
for Simple Ballad and Heroic Ballad alike. This single narrative stream
exhibits a rather remarkable temporal unity. Even including the pre-
liminary incidents the time is continuous ; there are no great gaps
between scene and scene. There is no need, then, for general narrative
to fill them.

It would seem, therefore, that, except for the introductions, the
Heroic Ballad should escape altogether this bane of the narrative art.
But it appears where it is least to be expected. A characteristic usage
of the Simple Ballad was to take for granted the objective point, to
slip past the climax. Almost, now, as if a later hand were at work upon
the older ballads, these omissions are frequently supplied by bits of
narrative in general or conventional terms. So Percy in *King Estmere*
seems actually to have supplied a description of the killing of the king
of Spain. We have already seen how the heroic-balladist in describing a
combat is prone to take refuge in a commonplace. Equally conven-
tional is the account of Samson's battle with the king's men (6, A) :

> Før st waag hannd fire, saa waag hannd fem,
> saa wog hannd alle de konngenns mennd (st. 16).

If not conventional, yet purely general is (26, A)

> Thett taa war ham Hielmer Kamp,
> thj huogg hanom y støcker smaa (st. 21),

which practically repeats stanza 20, and completes the account of the fight. Even in *Grimilds Hævn* the great battle in the hall is described, partly at least, in general terms (5, A) :

> Ud da sprang de suerde,
> saa fast der de sprong :
> alle da lid dennem ilde,
> den elder saa vel som den unge (st. 30).

But this is, of course, not the whole story. In this very ballad we learn how Falquor's sword broke, how he caught a steel bar from the door and slew many of his enemies. There is, relatively, a good deal of detail in Widerick's fight with the giant Langbien (7, B), and in Gralver Kongesøn's with the dragon (29, A, 7–9). The elaboration of the objective point in *Hagbard og Signe* (20, A) has had sufficient comment. Yet one should add that it is especially notable for the suggestion of the thoughts of the characters. The hearer alone knows the whole truth, — that this is Hagbard, that he is to die, and to die at once. The interest thus centres not in the plot but in the thoughts and emotions of the characters. Analogous to this suggestion of mental states is the direct description of the intention of the warrior before a combat. Thus Orm Ungersvend (11, A, 21) goes into the hall,

> som kiemper ville slaa och stryde.

The intention of the combatant destined to suffer defeat is given, as Grendel's is given in *Beowulf*, in

> Burrmand kaam der ridenn y gaard,
> hand agthett denn iunfrw hiemførre :
> Holger Danske red hanom vd igenn,
> hand fiek hanom anditt att giøre (30, A, 33).

They fought for three hours, sat down and rested and talked, fought again — they were two mighty warriors — until their helms fell to pieces, and their swords flew into the field ; then Burmand fell dead at Holger's feet. There is nothing more of mental states or intentions, and the fight itself is only a matter of two or three stanzas.

The Heroic Ballad is not tragic ; it records ordinarily a successful adventure of king or hero. Where success in the combat implies the winning of a bride, the story itself has a natural conclusion, as in *Samson* (6, A, 28), where the king gives his sister to the hero :

> Dett waar stor lyst oc end megit mere gammen:
> op stod dan-kongen oc gaff dem begge thil-sammenn.[1]

With such a natural close the balladist is not always content; frequently he makes use of a commonplace, equivalent to our "lived happily ever after" (11, A, 42):

> Nu haffuer Worem hind unge suend
> for-vundenn bode angist och harm:
> [hand] soffuer [nu] saa gladelig
> opaa synn feste-møø hindis armm.[2]

Where there is no bride to be won, and no catastrophe, the story itself contains no definite conclusion. In such cases the balladist may leave things hanging in the air, as in *Ungen Ranild* (28), or in *Kong Diderik og hans Kæmper* (7, B), where the last stanza is rather the close of a supplementary incident than of the main story. In general, however, a stanza at least is added for the purpose of conclusion. This is often a summary of the story just told, as in *Kong Diderik og Holger Danske* (17, B, 22) or in *Frændehævn* (4, B); or it is a summary of results, as in *Kong Diderik i Birtingsland* (8). Most notable is the parallelism of introduction and conclusion in *Ulv van Jærn* (10, A, 1 and 24), suggesting the "envelope figure" of the Psalms:

> Det vor ungen Ulff van Iern,
> hand ganger for kongen at stande:
> "Herre, i laner mig aff eders mend,
> min faders dødt at heffne."
>
> .   .   .   .   .   .
>
> Nu ligger kongen aff Blide-vinder,
> oc blodet rinder ham saa rødt:
> oc hiem sider unger Ulff van Iern,
> haffuer høffnit sin faders dødt.

But in spite of these little evidences of conscious art, the Heroic Ballad still has examples of the inconclusive conclusion of the Simple Ballad. In keeping with the light touch upon the objective point, with the fact that the balladist is loath to elaborate where the outcome is certain, is the loss of the conclusion in the A version of *Hagbard og Signe* (20),

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[1] 12, A, 13, is a similar conclusion: so also 27, B, 28; 26, A, 28.

[2] Practically in the same form in 22, A, 18; 24, 19; 27, A, 44 and 45; 29, A, 28.

where the ballad ends with the binding of Hagbard in Signe's hair. Similarly, *Grimilds Hævn* is left unfinished (5, A). And *Memering* (14) closes with suggestion of matters not before introduced. Memering slew a knight and took his armor, then met and fought with Viderick Verlandsøn, "for skiøne iomffruer." They fought for two days, but neither could gain the mastery.

> Saa suore de dem udi stoldbrøder-lag,
> at dett skulle vare till dome-dag.
>
> Huore skulle dett vare en tiid saa lang:
> dett kunde icke vare, til afften kam (sts. 18, 19),

" and that same night renew'd their strife," as Prior translates; and the hearer is left to imagine why this was a matter of course. This ballad, however, is the only instance of the purely suggestive close in Grundtvig's first volume.

So far, then, as structure is concerned, the Heroic Ballad seems to make an advance toward the Epic in its cyclical and in its accretive tendencies, in its elaboration of the single incident, in the care which it bestows on transitions, in its attempt to explain and to supply with motives, and in its tendency to treat the objective point in general terms rather than to omit it altogether. Its introductions and conclusions, however, do not differ materially from those of the Simple Ballad, and like the Simple Ballad it has no sub-plot. With greater elaboration it tells a longer story, and unites independent incidents; but it has no great architectural power; it never approaches the structural excellence of the Simple Ballad of the dramatic type, like *Edward* (Child, 13) or *Lord Randal* (Child, 12).

IV. General Characteristics of the Narrative Method

The greater care in the matter of transitions and connections, and the continuous time of the Heroic Ballads, lead one to expect a steady movement. And, as compared with that of the Simple Ballad, the movement is steady. Yet it has not the smoothness of good modern narrative; although the connection between incident and incident is properly made, the transition often has something like the old abruptness.

Repetition, — "incremental," as in the Simple Ballad, — is present. It does not commonly, — as it does in the Simple Ballad, and in the

Danish *Samson*,[1] — take the form of elaborate stanzaic groups, but consists merely in binding one stanza with another by using the last two lines of the first as the first two lines of the second. Usually one of the assonance-words is changed, and occasionally other slight alterations are made to fit the sense of the repeated lines to their new surroundings.[2] Very similar to this, but more artificial in effect, is a curious sort of repetition exemplified in *Frændehævn* (4, C) and *Memering* (14). Unlike any form of repetition thus far noted, it runs throughout the ballad, and consists in beginning each new stanza with the last line and a half of the old. The repeated portion is unaltered, and is cut off and introduced into the new connection regardless of the sense, thus (4, C):

> I Vuggen laa,
> Det talde aldrig førend daa:
> " Det er icke for det gode:
> Min Fader leer at min Moder.
>
> For det gode:
> Min Fader leer ad min Moder."
> Hand støtte paa Vuggen med sin Fod,
> Da opgaff Barnet sit Hierte Blod (sts. 14, 15).

It will be observed that 15, 1, by the loss of the negative reverses the sense of 14, 3. Such violations of sense are not, of course, inevitable, but they do frequently occur. Clearly the repetition is here for the sound merely. It does not occur in other versions of this ballad. It is confined, of course, to ballads in couplets.

It is to be noted, further, that this ballad is provided with a refrain, which would intervene between the repeated lines, thus further retarding the movement and adding to the impressiveness of the effect. The study of the Refrain does not come within the scope of the present essay, yet it must not be forgotten that this important hall-mark of the popular ballad occurs in almost every one of the Danish Heroic Ballads, and is thus more common than in the Simple English Ballad itself. It is never used, however, with such effectiveness, never so woven into the structure of the ballad, as it is in the English *Lord Randal* (Child, 12, A). The Danish ballad moves on steadily without its refrain, while the peculiar method of *Lord Randal* is only possible in a ballad which is all situation and suggestion.

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[1] 6, A : four groups of two stanzas each, — 7 and 8, 11 and 12, 19 and 20, 26 and 27.

[2] Excellent examples are to be found in Grundtvig, 2, 3, 5. A.

As in the Simple Ballad and the *Gest*, another form of repetition, that of parallel or symmetrical incidents, occurs with some frequency. Thus in *Grimilds Hævn* (5, A), the slaying of the mermaid and of the ferryman is treated in this way. Stanzas 6 and 12, and 11 and 16, are alike, and the others concerned are similar. A more striking instance is that in *Frændehævn* (2, B). As soon as Sinnelille is asleep Lenno slips from her arms, kills her brothers, brings her their blood to drink; she says that she is indifferent to their death. Then Lenno sleeps, and the rôles are exactly reversed.[1] That Lenno, who is represented as an exceedingly crafty person, should sleep, must have seemed improbable even to a ballad audience; but the balladist was evidently willing to sacrifice verisimilitude for the sake of symmetrical repetition. An actual count would probably show that repetition, of whatever kind, is a good deal less common in Heroic than in Simple Ballads. Yet there is enough, taken in addition to the Refrain, to connect the former closely with the latter, while, on the other hand, the decrease of repetition in the Heroic Ballads results in a somewhat freer movement, and marks an advance in the direction of the poetry of art, with its preference of variety to similarity. It is interesting to see that Prior, in translating the Danish ballads, suppressed most of the refrains, and disguised the repetition, except in the case of *Frændehævn*, where he reproduced it as a curiosity.

So far as Omission and Suggestion are concerned, the Heroic Ballad may be said to have advanced in the direction of the *Gest* or epic. What has been said in regard to the relative completeness and intelligibility of these ballads must not be construed to imply a complete departure from the methods of the Simple Ballad. An examination of the method of a single typical Heroic Ballad will show that this is not the case. *Sivard og Brynild* (3, A) relates that while Sienild and Brynild were washing their silks by the river, Brynild asked Sienild where she got her rings. From Sivard, her betrothed, answered Sienild. (The balladist does not explain that these were the rings which Brynild had given Sivard.) Brynild thereupon took to her bed; Hagen, her betrothed, asked her if anything in the world would make her happy. Nothing, unless she might hold Sivard's head in her hands, she said. (We do not learn from the ballad why she should desire Sivard's death.)

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[1] Thus, $\left.\begin{array}{r}19 \\ 21 \\ 23 \\ 24\end{array}\right\} = \left\{\begin{array}{l}26 \text{ with slight variations.} \\ 29 \\ 30 \\ 32\end{array}\right.$

Hagen expressed no surprise, and Brynild told him how to get from Sivard his sword, by which alone he could be slain.

> " Første hand fanger eder thett gode suerdt
>   aff hand fraa seg:
>   ieg beder [eder] for den wolde Gud,
>   y glemer icke meg " (st. 16).

(The Heroic Ballad has not lost the art of suggestion !) Hagen returned with Sivard's head and Brynild plighted him her troth, but he rejected her. He killed Brynild and himself. (Was this because he had been doing a duty against his will, or because he had been carried away by love of Brynild and repented too late?) This is a striking example of the unexplained ; many others just as striking, and many only a little less so, might be cited.[1]   Nevertheless, the Heroic Ballad is, on the whole, somewhat less inclined than is the Simple Ballad to take motives for granted, or to proceed by allusion and suggestion. And it never startles the hearer with a key-fact suppressed until the close, as did *Edward* (Child, 13) or *Child Maurice* (Child, 83).

Of the art of Suspense the Heroic Ballad makes comparatively little use. There is, indeed, little opportunity for it in a story of a successful adventure, where the issue is never really in doubt. Its use is almost wholly confined to the tragic, and therefore exceptional, Heroic Ballads, where it takes the form not of concealing the issue, but of hinting at the very beginning of tragedy to come.[2] *Hagbard og Signe* (20, A) opens with a prospective summary telling how Hagbard and Siguord fought to the death for Signe, fairest of women. Hagbard's dream follows, and shows immediately and concretely that he is to win her but to die for her. *Grimilds Hævn* (5, A) tells how Grimild called her retainers together for war, and adds :

> der vaar saa mangen helt,
> der skulde fordoie sit unge liff (st. 2).

Hagen has warning in his mother's dream (sts. 4, 5), in the mermaid's warning (sts. 8, 9), in the refusal of the ferryman, perhaps even in the storm and the breaking of the oars.

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[1] E.g. Nos. 3, 4, 5, 7, 11, 15, — to mention no others.

[2] These two opposite methods of dealing with a story seem to have very much the same effect in holding the interest of an audience. Is it because one hopes that the hero may escape, after all?

About one half of the stanzas in the Heroic Ballads contain Dialogue. The proportion is thus about the same as in the Simple Ballads. In general, the Dialogue has the same characteristics. Repetition, of question in answer, or of narrative in dialogue, is less common. Indirect discourse occurs more frequently,[1] showing a tendency to depart from the concrete. Two cases of soliloquy are to be noted, — in *Kong Diderik og Løven* (9, A, 2) and in *Bewick and Graham* (Child, 211, 19, 20), both expressive of the state of mind of the hero facing a difficulty. The use of the first person as a means of telling the story occurs only once, in *Ormekampen* (24), where it is changed, after the first stanza, to the third. The phrase "det vill ieg for sandingen sige"[2] is mere story-teller's formula, with no person of the ballad or real individual behind it. Also noteworthy is the "flyting" of Svend Felding and Queen Jutte (32, B). It occupies twenty-one of the thirty-seven stanzas of this ballad. He accuses her of not washing her eyes; she replies that he is of low birth, and so on. Here, as also in the long preliminary parley in *Ulv van Jærn* (10, A), the dialogue does not dramatically carry on the action, but delays it. This, in general, is a characteristic of the dialogue in the Heroic Ballads. The use of ceremonial formula has been noted in the discussion of the Hall.[3] The speeches are always assigned in the Heroic Ballads,[4] though more commonly by describing the action of the speaker than by a "he said" or its equivalent. The answer of the person addressed is not assigned, but it is always clear who is speaking. Sometimes the assignment characterizes speech and speaker, as in

> Dett svarit koning aff Blideuinder,
> hand suarede som en mand (10, A, 15).

Or it indicates the accompanying state of mind, as in "suarith . . . met wrede" (7, B, 6), or in

> Suarede liden Locke,
> smiler under skarlagen-skind (1, A, 19).

In this connection the contrast between speech and mental state, in *Frændehævn* (4, B), is noteworthy. Noteworthy, also, in this same ballad, is the chorus-like comment on the action of the child in the cradle (4, B, 10, 34).

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[1] Cf. 7, A, 3, 4; 13, A, 16; 17, B, 10, 11; 30, A, etc.

[2] Cf. 1, A, 14, 20, 21; 2, A, 10, 15, etc.   [3] P. 113, above.

[4] Very few exceptions have been noted, and these have no special effect. Cf. 5, A, 7, 11, 35.

V. The Undeveloped Elements of Narration

Two of these are neglected more completely than in the Simple Ballad : the Heroic Ballad shows no Didactic Tendency whatever, and it does not describe Setting. On the other hand, it lays more stress on Character and on Mental States.

The persons of the Heroic Ballad are still primarily mere doers of deeds ; yet, now and then, their peculiar qualities become significant for the action. We have seen how character may be regarded as central motive in *Den skallede Munk* (15), in *Svend Felding* (31), and *Svend Felding og Dronning Jutte* (32). The cyclical tendency exemplified in two of these, as well as in the Sivard ballads, involves, as we have seen in the discussion of the Robin Hood Ballads and the *Gest*,[1] more or less emphasis of character. It is partly, moreover, through the prominence given to certain qualities of the heroes that these ballads are to be distinguished from the "simple" ones. The hero of the Heroic Ballad is active, not passive ; he takes the initiative ; he does not wait for the adventure to come to him, but sets out to seek it and carries it to a successful close. If he is destined to defeat by force of numbers, he does not wait for his enemies, but, like Hagbard, rushes out among them and makes them pay dear for his death, or, like Hagen, attacks them, for sheer daring, in their own stronghold. He is of great strength and great courage, as deed and epithet show. As we have seen in the discussion of Motives,[2] he has cunning, and he is not without grim humor. He is a skilful horseman and sometimes an accomplished glutton. In one case, at least, he is the embodiment of popular national ideals or prejudices. Svend Felding, "the John Bull of his country," is conceived as downright, honest, rude, as aggressively patriotic, a shirt-sleeves diplomat. Sometimes the hero is small, or weak in appearance, and his great deeds are as unexpected as were the achievements of the epic hero to those who knew his weak and unpromising youth.

The heroine of the Heroic Ballad also possesses special qualities, although the action of the ballad does not always bring them into play. We have already seen evidence of the cunning and grim courage and determination of Sinnelille, in *Frændehævn* (4), and of the modesty, constancy, and courage of Signe ; and something of the simple charm of Dadellrun should have appeared from the sketch of the treatment of the

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[1] Pp. 72 and 90, above. [2] P. 120, above.

love motive in *Rigen Rambolt og Aller hin stærke* (27, A). She is the most highly individualized of these heroines. The ballad opens with an account of her character:

> Hun ber priss, for hun er wyss,
> den edlig rosens-lylly:
> der lader saa mangee for hynder sytt lyff,
> thett er ike med hyndis wilige (st. 2).

The wisdom and powers of prophecy or insight, which appear in the ballad in her knowledge of the high destiny in store for Rambolt, are indeed merely typical. She shares them with the king's daughter in *Ungen Ranild* (28). But her regret that men should die for her is an individual quality. The balladist seems to distinguish a certain individuality also in the heroine of *Liden Grimmer og Hjelmer Kamp* (26, A, 3), whom he describes as "saa høffsk enn iumfru," — so discreet a maid, — an epithet which has not been noted elsewhere.

These characters, then, are complicated somewhat beyond those of the Simple Ballads, and they have a good deal more dignity. In the methods of characterization, however, there is little to note. The heroine last mentioned "war saa wenn enn møø," and this conventional epithet, or its equivalent, is all but inevitable. Similarly, Hagen is "knect saa baald," "raske hellet" (5, A, 8, 3). Other characters are *sterck, modig, stalt, god,* and so on. Sometimes character is suggested by history, as in the case of Hellebrand, who "haffde werit saa vide" (7, B, 2). Or the character is learned from another's description, or by the description of the balladist. Descriptions of personal appearance show no great power of observation or sense of beauty. Sivard Snarensvend (2) and Svend Felding (31, A) had white hands, from which they drew small gloves when they girded their steeds. Samson's throat, like Hagen's, was white (6, A, 4, and 5, A, 34). In *Ravengaard og Memering* (13, A):

> Herr Heennddrick klaper hynder weed huiden kinnd (st. 35).

A little less conventional is

> Tthett suaritt iunfru Gloriantt,
> hun stuod small som en wand (30, A, 15).

The most detailed description of appearance and dress is found in two ballads which can hardly be classed as heroic, which are, however, in

Grundtvig's first volume, and which approach the type sufficiently to jus-
tify the quotation. Kragelil (22, A, 8) is thus described by " en liden
smaadreng " :

> Hendis kjortel er af kidskind,
> Hendis kappe af vadmel graa :
> Hendes haar det skinner som spunden guld,
> Imellem hendes hærder laa.

In the parallel ballad of *Karl og Kragelil* this stanza is repeated, and
to it is added (23, A, 12) :

> Hinndis hals war huid som hermelinn,
> hinndis kinnder vor rosenns-røde :
> dett under alle de dannske hoffmennd,
> dett hunn skulde lide nødt.

This is still conventional, it will be observed ; and the description is
demanded by the action, for she is a princess in disguise, whose rank
must shine through her rags. Elsewhere, in his descriptions of dress, the
balladist does not venture beyond the conventional scarlet cloak and
head covering associated with the ceremony of the hall, and the descrip-
tion of arms and emblazoned shields, already cited.

Finally, the tendency to generalize, to abstract character from action,
is only exceptionally present. But one instance has been noted
(11, A, 1) :

> Ditt war høgenn Bermeriis,
> hand vor høff och megit uhyer :
> hand vor gaaell och aldrig wiis,
> och ingenn mand kund hanem styer.

Parallel with this slight advance beyond the methods of the Simple
Ballad in the delineation of Character is a similar, although perhaps
slighter, advance in the description of Mental States. So far as emotion
is concerned, there is still evidence, however, of the old potential qual-
ity. Or rather, the repression of emotion seems, in some cases, to be
regarded as a virtue, associated with that cunning which we found to be
a motive of some importance.[1] When Brynild learned that Sienild got
her rings from Sivard, she said nothing, but took to her bed. When she
demanded of Hagen his comrade's head, he expressed no surprise or
horror, said only that no sword would bite Sivard, and when she had
shown him how to borrow Sivard's own sword, he set about it at once,

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[1] P. 120, above.

without reply (3, A). Sinnelille and Lenno carry out their purposes only by concealing from one another their grief and wrath. It is not difficult to find other instances where emotion is necessarily present but is not expressed. Yet there are instances of expression, also. We have already seen instances of the balladist's direct description of battle-wrath. One reads scorn in the king's gesture in *Orm Ungersvend og Bermer-Rise* (11, A, 9):

> Dytt wor dantsker kongen,
> hand sig offuer axell saa:
> "Och huem daa er denn møsselling
> ther taler saa store ord?"

and one is reminded of the *Gest*. One recalls the tears of the forsaken Sinild in *Gralver Kongensøn* (29, A, 20), and Gloriant weeps when Burmand tells her that her love, Karuell, has forsworn God (30, A, 8). Lenno's self-control is broken by "heroic" laughter when Sinnelille tells him of her brothers' coming (4, B, 8):

> Lenno hand begyenthe att lee:
> denn haarde mur hand reffnet der-vedt.

Change of color expresses anger in *Greve Genselin* (16, A, 6):

> Thett wor grøffue her Gentzelinn,
> hand bleff y kienderen rød.

Thought delays action when, after Aller's escape (27, A, 26),

> Lenge stuod vnge herr Rambbollt,
> ham tøgtte thett werre fuld ilde:

or when Ungen Ranild asks Dadellrun to cut clothes for him (28, 6):

> Lenge sad den wiise iomfru,
> och thencktte hun weed sigh:
> "Du weest icke, ungen Ranild,
> huad skaberen haffuer skabt thill digh."

Finally, and most notable, is the introspection of the heroes themselves. Hagen, when he brought Sivard's head to Brynild, at last broke silence (3):

> "for dyn skyld haffuer ieg wieett myn guode stalbroder
>   thett anger meg nu" (st. 25);

> "for dyn skyld haffuer ieg wieeit min guode stalbroder,
>   thett giør meg stor wiee" (st. 27).

This, of course, is a natural expression of feeling and requires no great introspective power. More remarkable is the address of the knight to his own heart in *Hævnersværdet* (25, 14, 15), when the king tells him that he is his father's murderer :

> Herr Peder hand sluoff seg for sin brøst :
> " Du leeg quer, hierthte, du werre well tøss.

> " Du leeg quer, hiarthte, wer icke forbrad,
> alt skall ieg høffuene thett snarist ieg maa."

This is going far ; even such expression of feeling as Hagen's is unusual.

CHAPTER V

THE BEOWULF

I. The Phase of Life

The *Gest* was an inland poem; except in the Heroic Ballads, the ballad hero was seldom a sailor; but in the *Beowulf* (in the first part, at least) the sea is always present, vivid, authentic, suggestive of mood. Scyld's ship-funeral shows at once the proximity of the sea, and its wonder, sorrow, and mystery, — the sorrowing heroes placed their king in a ship and gave him to the sea; no one knew who received that freight (v. 48). Mystery and terror are in the sea-pool where Grendel dwelt. In the episode of the swimming-match, the mood suggested is that of grim delight in battle with the elements (v. 544), and the sea is revealed in storm and calm, at night and at dawn, with landward views of nesses and windy walls. Elsewhere we learn how in winter wind fought with wave and the sea raged with the storm, or winter bound the waters in bonds of ice (v. 1130).

The numerous kennings for the sea in *Beowulf* are often cited.[1] And Journeys [2] — treated more elaborately than in the *Gest*, not omitted as in the ballads — are twice voyages, one describing Beowulf's passage to Heorot, the other his return. In these, as in the funeral of Scyld, much is made of the ship in the way both of realistic detail and poetic appreciation. The latter is exemplified in the description of the funeral ship prepared for Scyld:

> þær æt hýðe stōd   hringed-stefna,
> īsig ond ūt-fūs,   æþelinges fær (vv. 32–33), ·

or in the description of the ship that brought Beowulf to Heorot as "flota fāmi-heals fugle gelīcost" (v. 218). The numerous names for the ship are notable,[3] as well as the kennings.[4]

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[1] As by ten Brink, *History of English Literature*, I, 19, or Gummere, *Poetics*, p. 87.   [2] See p. 186, below.

[3] Stefn (v. 212), bāt (v. 211), flota (v. 210, etc.), "brontne cēol" (v. 238), "nīw-tyrwydne nacan on sande" (v. 295), "sīd-fæðmed scip" (v. 302).

[4] Ȳð-lida (v. 198), sund-wudu (v. 208), "wudu bundenne" (v. 216), wunden-stefna (v. 220), sǣ-genga (v. 1908), wēg-flota (v. 1907), etc., etc.

It is then clear that the sea and ships played a large part in the poetic consciousness that produced the *Beowulf*. The action, furthermore, never moves far inland ; the landscape is that of a wild and rocky coast, seen now and again from the sea. Thus Beowulf and his companions sail so far on their return voyage

> þæt hīe Gēata clifu ongitan meahton
> cūþe næssas (vv. 1911–1912),

among them, no doubt, the Hrones-næs, where Beowulf's barrow was to be built. We have made reference to the passage where Beowulf, after the swimming-match, saw the *sǣ-næssas, windige weallas* (vv. 571– 572). There was some low ground at the home of the Geats, however, for after beaching the ship Beowulf went across the sand, over the sea-plain, along the wide shores (v. 1964). Near Heorot, on the other hand, the coast was rocky, the paths steep and narrow (v. 320). In the pursuit of Grendel's mother there is more than a glimpse :

> Oferēode þā æþelinga bearn
> stēap stān-hliðo, stīge nearwe,
> enge ān-paðas, uncūð gelād,
> nēowle næssas, nicor-hūsa fela;
> hē fēara sum beforan gengde
> wīsra monna. wong scēawian,
> oþ þæt hē fǣringa fyrgen-bēamas
> ofer hārne stān hleonian funde,
> wyn-lēasne wudu; wæter under stōd
> drēorig ond gedrēfed (vv. 1408 ff.).

One must contrast this *wyn-lēasne wudu* with the " merry greenwood " of the *Gest*, or with the " silver wood," home of romance and mysterious charm, of the ballads. These represent a reaction, the escape of a group of men from civilization. The *Beowulf* is of the earlier time when there was but one group, banded together, between the sea with its misty nesses and the joyless wood and moor ; and from the moor came Grendel, stalking under the misty hills, the famed march-stepper who held fen and fastness (vv. 710, 103).

In the *Beowulf* there is no suggestion of cities or of walled towns; and, if we except the brief references [1] to the hall of Beowulf, the tale of epic architecture begins and ends with the Hall Heorot. We are not concerned with questions as to what the hall really was; for us the

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[1] Vv. 1925, 1975, 1984.

questions are, rather, what part does it play in the economy of the plot?
just what was the poet's conception of it? how much does he tell us in
regard to it? how much do we learn from the poem alone? Its great
importance as a motive in the action is at once apparent. It was
regarded as the crowning achievement of a great nation, as the centre
of national life; in size and splendor it was unparalleled; its joys and
its gift-giving had never been equaled. No wonder, then, that it aroused
the envy and hatred of the outcast Grendel, provoked his nightly attacks.
It was for the cleansing of Heorot that Beowulf came to the Danes;
and Heorot is thus the centre of the first part of the poem, the thing
fought for, the exciting cause of all the action.

The poet, in the first place, gives us an idea of its size and splendor
(v. 307). It was far-famed, and many men were concerned in its build-
ing (v. 67). Hall and bower seem to have been separate, for after
Grendel's raids it was easy to find those who sought beds in the bowers
(v. 138). Hrothgar's separate residence is spoken of as *hof* in v. 1236
(he " gewāt tō hofe sīnum "); in v. 312 *hof* seems to refer to Heorot
itself. We know that Hrothgar saw the " stēapne hrōf *golde fāhne*," as
he " stōd on stapole " (v. 926). Outside the building, too, were
benches where sat the sea-weary warriors, waiting permission to enter
(v. 327). As for the hall itself, it was strengthened within and without
with iron bands (vv. 774, 998). And we know that it was provided with
a door (v. 721), which swung on hinges (v. 999). Through some other
entrance than this door came, apparently, the horses that Hrothgar gave
Beowulf; they came " in under the barriers " (v. 1037), — as King Est-
mere, in the ballad, stabled his steed at the hall-board. The floor was
variegated (v. 725), and to it gold-adorned benches were made fast.
Upon these the men sat down to eat (v. 1013). But all were not made
fast, for, when night came, some were cleared away and room was made
for beds and pillows (v. 1239). The table, which appears only in *bēod-
genēat* (board-companion), and the gift-stool (v. 168), which stood
apparently on the *hēoðe* or dais (v. 404), complete the list of the hall
furnishings.

As regards the decorations of the hall, Hrothgar, we have just noted,
saw the *stēapne hrōf, golde fāhne* (v. 926); perhaps because of this (if
the reference is to the exterior of the roof), its light shone over many
lands (v. 311). And from the giving of gifts there, or from this gold-
adorned roof, it was called *gold-sele*. And Grendel, we know, dwelt in
the *sinc-fāge sel* (v. 167). The hall was *hēah ond horn-gēap* (v. 82),

horn-reced (v. 704), *betlīc ond bān-fāg* (v. 780), and it was called Heorot.
Just what and where the horns were the poet does not tell us; no
doubt they were fastened to the gable-ends. The day after Beowulf's
struggle with Grendel the hall was adorned within, and gold-embroid-
ered tapestries shone upon the walls (v. 991). In the descriptions of
the decorations of Heorot, especially of these occasional decorations, as
well as in the descriptions of arms and armor, there is a suggestion of
that richness of effect so characteristic of the Old French epics and
romances. It is a suggestion only, valuable for the sake of contrast.

· It is now obvious that we have no systematic description of the hall,
no clear idea of size, shape, or arrangement. The significant fact is the
presence of a mass of vague epithets and disconnected details. These
teach us more than we know of any ballad building; and they reflect the
popular interest in the hall, show that it was the centre of the narrow
national life. It was thought of as the meeting-place of the people,
the *folc-stede* (v. 76), the place of entertainment, *gest-sele* (v. 994);
and *geselda* (v. 1984), hall-fellow, and *heorð-genēat* (v. 261), hearth-
fellow — the only implication of fire-place — were words for "comrade."
It was the place of gifts, the *gif-heall* (v. 838), where stood the *gif-stōl*
(v. 168) or throne. More commonly, however, it was spoken of as the
wine or mead hall, *wīn-ærn* (v. 654), *medo-ærn micel*[1] (v. 69); its joy
was the *medu-drēam* (v. 2016); the path that led to it was the *medo-
stīg* (v. 924); the plain on which it stood, the *meodo-wong* (v. 1643).
Within it stood *medu-benc monig* (vv. 776, 1067, 1902). These joys —
comradeship, mead-drinking, gift-giving — came to be almost synony-
mous with life, and the survivor of his race lamented his dead comrades
because they *gesāwon sele-drēam*,[2] "they had seen their hall-joy"
(v. 2252).

Connected with the hall were certain customs, forms, and ceremonies.
The method of Beowulf's reception at Heorot is noteworthy. It is
mainly a matter of dialogue. He and his men walked up from the
coast (v. 320) and seated themselves on the benches outside the hall.
Wulfgar, who described himself as Hrothgar's *ār ond ombiht* (v. 336),
asked them whence they came and why. Beowulf told him his name;

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[1] Cf. *wīn-reced*, vv. 714, 993; *wīn-sele*, vv. 695, 771; *medo-heall*, vv. 484, 638;
medu-seld, v. 3065; *bēor-sele*, v. 492.

[2] If we choose to translate with Wyatt, "*saw* the hall-joy," making hall-joy
mean the joy of Heaven or of the other world, the phrase is all the more signifi-
cant.

he wished to tell Hrothgar his errand; Wulfgar said that he would ask, and bring word again.

> Hwearf þā hrædlice, þær Hrōðgār sæt
> eald ond únhār mid his eórla gedriht;
> ēode ellen-rōf, þæt hē for eaxlum gestōd
> Deniga frēan; cūþe hē duguðe þēaw (vv. 356 ff.).

(One is struck with the almost theatrical formality of the " mid his eorla gedriht," as if a king were to be found always sitting crowned upon his throne, surrounded by his nobles. The " cūþe hē duguðe þēaw " recalls " Robyn coud his courtesy."[1]) Wulfgar gave the king Beowulf's message, with additions of his own. Hrothgar, in his reply, told all that he knew about Beowulf, and bade Wulfgar say that he and his men were free to enter at will. Wulfgar went out through the door of the hall and told them what Hrothgar had said. Then he bade them leave shields and spears without, to await the settlement by words (v. 397). Then the warriors rose; some remained to guard the arms; the others, guided by Wulfgar, entered the hall. Beowulf advanced and stood before the dais :

> Bēowulf maðelode (on him byrne scān,
> searo-net sēowed smiþes or-þancum):
> " Wæs þū, Hrōðgār, hāl!" (vv. 405 ff.).

(Here again is the theatrical suggestion, apparent anxiety for effective stage-picture, delight in the visualization of the scene : — " on him byrne scān.") Beowulf spoke at length — fifty lines — and Hrothgar replied in forty more, concluding with an invitation to sit at the banquet (v. 489), and the formal reception was over. Room was made for the guests on the benches, the adorned ale cup was filled with the clear mead (v. 495); the scop sang, and there was joy of heroes, Danes and Weders.

The poem has been paraphrased at this length in order to show the amount of space given to the account of the ceremonial, to the detailed description of the movements of all concerned. It is a remarkable bit of realism, suggesting inevitably the eyewitness, familiar with courtly procedure. There is nothing like it, in matter or manner, in the English or Scottish ballads; contrasted with what ceremonial these reproduce, it reveals, perhaps better than any other short passage, the " royal "

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[1] *Gest*, 385.

and national character of the epic, the single homogeneous group, as contrasted with the conflicting groups in the *Gest.* Here for the first time we seem to have first-hand knowledge of an authentic king.

As the names of the hall show clearly enough,[1] it was thought of mainly in connection with beer, or mead, or wine. The banquet (*symbel*), often mentioned, seems to have been a matter of drinking rather than eating. Here again, formal ceremonies and customs were observed. The ale cup was carried about (v. 495), sometimes by a thane, sometimes by the queen herself, by Wealhtheow, " cynna gemyndig " (v. 613). She went to Hrothgar first (v. 615), to Beowulf last of all (v. 623), then back to sit by her lord. At the banquet the warriors boasted or made vows of deeds to be done on the morrow (vv. 480, 632). The king dealt out treasure (v. 80). After the death of Grendel, Hrothgar gave Beowulf, at the banquet, helm and burnie, sword, banner, cup, and horses (vv. 1020 ff.) ; Wealhtheow gave him *bēag* and *hrægl* (vv. 1216–1217). At the banquet sang the scop,[2] and afterward king and queen withdrew to the *būr.* All the men arose ; Hrothgar greeted Beowulf and gave him possession of Heorot; then " mid his hæleþa gedryht " he left the hall (v. 662).

It was customary for the men to sleep in the hall. Grendel, coming for the first time to Heorot, found the men sleeping there after the banquet (v. 118). And we are told how, after Beowulf's encounter with Grendel, the countless earls who guarded the hall lay down to sleep with their shields at their heads, their helms and burnies beside them (v. 1237).

As to the Place Relations in general, we may conclude that in our epic, as contrasted with ballad and *Gest,* they are close and significant. Human beings are thought of as continually affected by the world about them, — by sea, shore, and hall; and in these they are thought to see the reflection of their own emotions, or the realization of their own ideas. The greater scope of the epic manifests itself here. And it not only sees more, but sees it in a different way. For the epic, man stands no longer isolated, but closely associated with the surrounding world. This surrounding world is treated — still only so far as it relates itself to man — with realism and richness in detail.

In simple narrative it makes very little difference when actions take place, how long they are continued, or how much time elapses between

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[1] See p. 153, above.   [2] Cf. vv. 496, 867, 1159.

them. The balladist and the poet of the *Gest* gave, we saw, but little attention to such considerations:[1] the greater attention given to them in the *Beowulf* is due not so much to the exigencies of the narrative as to the general epic tendency toward realism, elaboration, detail.

We noted that the action of the *Gest* took place in spring and summer. In the *Beowulf,* Winter is the only season named : it was the time of the swimming-match (vv. 515–516), and it was clearly thought of as an important factor in the struggle (vv. 546 ff.). It was the winter season, again, that prevented Hengest from leaving Finn (vv. 1127 ff.). In this passage the poet passes on from the mention of the time necessary for the action into an elaboration of the characteristics of winter for its own sake, from this to an indication of the passage of time, and so to what looks like spring. It is notable that this part of the passage is briefer, more vague, more general, than the account of winter ; and the suggestion of pleasantness and beauty (in " wuldor-torhtan weder," " fæger foldan bearm ") is exceedingly unusual. Spring is elsewhere described as the breaking up of winter (v. 1609). In general, however, the seasons are by no means so significant as in the modern threadbare convention of " clear, cold winter mornings," and " languorous June nights." The passages just cited deal, in fact, with minor incidents only, and it is impossible to say in what season the main action of *Beowulf* takes place.

It is possible, however, to name roughly the time of day. Words and phrases having this purpose are indeed so common as almost to justify the assertion that the poet kept this matter continually in mind. It was in the morning, — for with the morning we may naturally begin, — that the Danes could not bury the body of Æschere (v. 2124); that Beowulf was rewarded (v. 2103) ; that many a warrior came to Heorot to see Grendel's head (v. 837) ; that the monsters that Beowulf slew lay on the shore (v. 565). Morning is made vivid by picturesque (descriptive) touches, as in the passage where the raven joyfully announced the day (v. 1801), and

> ðā cōm beorht scacan
> sunne ofer grundas (v. 1802),[2]

— a bit of observation of a natural phenomenon parallel to that which suggested to the modern poet :

> The long light *shakes*
> Across the lakes.

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[1] Pp. 10, 62, 89, 114, above.   [2] Cf. also v. 604.

Peculiar effects of compression and suggestiveness are produced by certain compounds : thus, " micel morgen-swēg " was raised after Grendel's feast (v. 129), and the spears after the hero's death were to be *morgen-ceald* (v. 3022).[1] So far as day is mentioned, — at least in the indications of " time when," — it is with reference to the earliest hours.[2]

Still more common, however, than the mention of day or morning is the mention of evening or night. When evening came Hrothgar went to rest (v. 1235) ; Grendel was *æfen-grom* (v. 2074), and because of him Heorot stood empty after the *æfen-lēoht* faded from the sky (v. 413). Grendel and his mother appropriately made their visitations at night; and the dragon flew about only at night[3] (vv. 3044, 2273, 2833), — he seems to die *middel-nihtum* (v. 2782). The fire on the flood was seen *nihta*, — o'nights ; the swimming-match continued during the night (v. 547) ; and at night (*nihtes*, v. 422) Beowulf slew the nickers. The coming of night is described in picturesque and suggestive terms :

> . . . nīpende   niht ofer ealle,
> scadu-helma gesceapu   scrīðan cwōman,
> wan under wolcnum (vv. 649 ff.).

Compounds with *niht* occur.[4] Specific times are mentioned : Beowulf's thanes waited until after *nōn dæges* (v. 1600) ; and nickers troubled ships at *undern-mæl* (v. 1428).

We may now turn to the passages indicative of the duration of time, dealing with them, for the moment, merely as isolated passages; the temporal relations of the narrative as a whole, the matter of temporal perspective, is to be considered in connection with Movement, Structure, and the like.[5] Beowulf ruled " fīftig wintra " (v. 2208); and Grendel's visitations went on for twelve years (v. 147), for many half-years (v. 153). The swimming-match lasted " fīf nihta fyrst " (v. 545). Beowulf's barrow was built " on tȳn dagum " (v. 3159). After his first attack on Heorot Grendel returned "ymb āne niht" (v. 135). Beowulf's voyage to Heorot lasted " oð þæt ymb an-tīd ōþres dōgores (v. 219). Beowulf will find grim battle if he dare — thinks Unferth — await Grendel " niht-longne fyrst " (v. 528). Less definite is the time during which Beowulf's thanes wait for him, — " morgen-longne dæg "

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[1] Cf. also v. 484.   [2] Cf. vv. 126, 1311, 2942.
[3] See the treatment of the Supernatural, pp. 182 f., below.
[4] E.g. *niht-helm* (v. 1789), *niht-weorc* (v. 827), *niht-bealu* (v. 193).
[5] Cf. pp. 186 f., 196 f., below.

(v. 2894), — or the " hwīl dæges "[1] of Beowulf's descent to the sea-cave (v. 1495).

Passages indicating a conception of long-continued and indefinite time are exceedingly common. The phrase " on þæm dæge þysses līfes " occurs frequently (vv. 197, 790, 806) ; " oð dōmes dæg " (v. 3069) shows, obviously, Christian influence, as do phrases indicating all time, like *tō aldre* (v. 2005), *āwa tō aldre* (v. 955). Similarly, Grendel " sin-nihte[2] hēold mistige mōras " (vv. 161–162). Beowulf thought of his life as an extent of time (v. 2726), and Grendel knew that the tale of his days — " dōgera dæg-rīm " (v. 823) — was at an end. Life is measured by days, again, in the compounds *ealder-dagas* (vv. 718, 757), *līf-dagas* (vv. 793, 1622). Time was thought of, also, as passing merely, without regard to any measure (v. 2269). For Grendel, as for the last sur-vivor, suffering was increased because long drawn out[3] (vv. 86 ff.).

The poet, it will now be clear, was continually at pains to indicate the time when action occurred, and the time of its duration. This con-sciousness of the passage of time becomes for us important in a third way, as it implies, that is, a regret for the Past, and a glorification of it. In the very beginning of the poem we learn something of the mys-terious ancestor of Danish kings and of the golden age of the Danes; and the phrase " in gēar-dagum " seems to have had for the poet much the same sort of charm that the phrase " in days of yore " had for us, before it was worn threadbare and had associated itself with the false sentiment of comic opera or melodrama. The excellence of ancient manners and morals seems to be suggested in Hrothgar's praise of his people, who, he said, were blameless, " ealde wīsan " (v. 1865). Great age seems to be usually a virtue : the Creator is *eald Metod* (v. 945), " der von Alters her regierende Gott."[4] The king's thane knew many legends of the ancient time (v. 869). It is especially arms, jewels, tankards, the work of the smith, that the poet delights to trace to a dim, mysterious Past, where magic had full play. Perhaps the most notable passage[5] in

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[1] " Ein ganzer Tag," according to Heyne ; " not necessarily a whole day's time," thinks Professor Robinson ; " the designation of time must be loose, for it appears from l. 1601 that Beowulf had finished his combat before *nōn dæges* (about 3 P.M.)."

[2] " Ewige Nacht hindurch," or " Night by night."

[3] Cf. also the vague phrases *dōgra gehwylce*, v. 1090; *ufaran dōgrum*, vv. 2200, 2392.

[4] But the dragon is *eald ūhtfloga* (v. 2760).

[5] See discussion of arms and armor for further passages, pp. 176 ff., below.

this connection is the description of the sword-hilt brought from Grendel's cave (v. 1679). Last, and most impressive, is the whole matter of the dragon's cave and the treasure concealed there. The note throughout is that of regret for the Past; it prevails in the prince's lament for the dead heroes (vv. 2247 ff.) and the rusting away of their useless arms. The Past is thought of as more distant, as mysterious and unknown, in the description of the treasure in the cave (vv. 2231 ff.); here one must note again the "yore-days"; one must note the effect of mystery in the "gumena nāt-hwylc," the suggestion of past splendor in "æþelan cynnes," of pafhos in "dēore māðmas."

This attitude toward the Past is a thing not to be paralleled from ballad or *Gest*. It means that the epic has greater scope, more atmosphere, more emotional coloring, — that the poet of the *Beowulf* approaches a phase of the Romantic Movement.

Aside from this new Romantic attitude, what is significant in regard to these time relations is the evidence they give of a practically new element in narration, of a tendency to arrange things chronologically,[1] to make estimates of great deeds according to their duration. Significant also is the new evidence of power in the breadth of the poet's view, who, coming to regard the time of his poem as part of eternity, seems to look backward to the beginning and forward to the end.

Nowhere is the greater power and scope of the writer of the *Beowulf* more evident than in the Human Relations. He combines, in a sense, those of the Simple, with those of the Heroic Ballad, and emphasizes the significance of the larger, national groups. In the *Beowulf*, Ancestors come to their own : the poem opens with a genealogy; nations are known by the names of their founders, — as Scylfings, Scyldings, Hrethlings; and Grendel is of Cain's kin (v. 107). The relations involved in the action are of the slightest and simplest, — friendship, the king and his subjects, common cause against a supernatural enemy, — but the poet is not content with these. Partly, no doubt, by way of mere elaboration for its own sake, — wishing to tell all that he knows, — partly because these matters must have been generally accepted facts, partly to satisfy the universal curiosity in regard to relationship,— a curiosity that still persists, even in modern America,— the poet gives us much more than the meagre necessary information. It becomes thus possible to construct remarkably complete genealogical tables, not only

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[1] Though not the events in the poem itself.

for the principal characters, but also for those distantly connected with the action.

The narrower group of "domestic" relations is, then, well represented, although, as has just been stated, these never become significant for the main action of the poem. Of the husbands and wives, we know less of the relation of Ecgtheow and Beowulf's mother than of any others ; the mother is not named : she was merely daughter of Hrethel, sister of Hygelac. Ongentheow's queen was stolen by Hæthcyn, whom Ongentheow pursued and slew, to be, in turn, slain by Eofor. Husband and wife is a relation significant enough when the *Brautfahrt* is involved, as here ; it occurs again in the case of Finn and Hildeburh. It is a widespread epic motive, and not uncommon, as we have seen, in the ballads. Peaceful marriages, with political motives, were those of Eofor and Hygelac's daughter, — she was given him as a reward for the slaying of Ongentheow, — and of Ingeld and Freawaru, — she was given him by her father, Hrothgar, to terminate the feud between the Heathobards and Danes. The case of Offa and Thrytho is interesting as an early example of the taming of a shrew. Hygd seems to have been Hygelac's second wife ; she was young, and, as we shall see, could be contrasted with Thrytho ; she was all that a wife should be. Most important of the women of the poem is Wealhtheow, Hrothgar's queen :

> Ēode Wealhþēow forð,
>
> cwēn Hrōðgāres, cynna gemyndig,
> grētte gold-hroden guman on healle ;
> ond þā frēolic wīf ful gesealde (vv. 612 ff.).

She is described as "bēag-hroden cwēn" (v. 623), "gold-hroden frēolicu folc-cwēn," (v. 640), "ides Helminga" (v. 620). She was present at the banquet, addressed the company, gave Beowulf the collar and burnie, with appropriate words. She "medo-stīg gemæt mægða hōse" (v. 924), as if she had a sort of female *comitatus* to attest her dignity. Both Hygd and Wealhtheow and, for that matter, Thrytho, also, are thus thought of as queens, rather than as wives, and in general, there is very little interest in the husband-wife relation itself. The relation of lovers does not appear at all, nor can one easily imagine it in this society. The epic is here at one with the *Gest*, rather than with the ballads. Yet the ballads show the same tendency : love in them exists only for the action that follows, and what romantic leanings they have are due to the accident of their late printing. Love for its own sake, love in the modern sense, has no place in ballad, *Gest*, or epic.

Almost wholly as an interesting fact for its own sake is introduced the relation of father and son. We know very little about Ecgtheow, yet Beowulf introduces himself to the coast-guard as son of Ecgtheow (v. 263), and Hrothgar, when he hears of his arrival, says at once: "Wæs his eald fæder Ecgþēo hāten" (v. 373). It was, perhaps, to return Hrothgar's kindness to his father that Beowulf came to Heorot. His speeches, moreover, are continually introduced by "Bēowulf maðelode, bearn Ecgðēowes,"[1] the purpose here, being, however, not so much to convey information as to enhance the dignity and formality of the dialogue, and to add to its sonorous effect by giving each time the speaker's whole name. The name of Breca's father is conveyed in a casual circumlocution, which obviously stands for the man's own name.[2] The relationship itself is of no significance, nor is it in the remaining fifteen or more cases in the poem. It is worth noting, however, that Hnæf and Hengest undertake the duty of avenging their father's death; and the tragic dilemma of Hrethel is significant. "Herebeald," says Professor Gummere, "is killed by a purely accidental shot from the bow of the second son, Hæthcyn. The old king pines away, not in our modern grief, but because of the relentless misery of irreconcilable relations with the second son, — the duty, as avenger, of killing him, and the paternal duty of protecting one's own offspring."[3] After the death of Hygelac, Beowulf acted as the guardian of Heardred, his son. This relation does not occur in the ballad or the *Gest*. Beowulf was sister's son to Hygelac, and, after Heardred's death, succeeded him. When he returned from Heorot with presents he gave them to Hygelac, telling him that he was his only near kinsman, and thus emphasizing the relation (v. 2150). Beowulf, moreover, was known always as a Geat, never, in spite of the emphasis of "bearn Ecgðēowes," as a Scylfing. Fitela was Sigemund's son by his sister Signy.

The relation of mother and son is less important than in the ballads. It signifies nothing in the case of Thrytho and Eomær, or of Hygd and Heardred. As for Wealhtheow, "her motherhood," as Mr. Brooke points out, "is foremost in her heart. When she sees Beowulf sitting

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[1] See under Dialogue, p. 198, below.

[2] "Sunu Bēanstānes" (v. 524). And Beowulf speaks of Hrothgar as "sunu Healfdenes" (v. 344).

[3] *Germanic Origins*, p. 177. The Danish ballad *Angelfyr og Helmer Kamp* (Grundtvig, 19) seems to show that the father's duty was vengeance. Here Herebald's death was due to an accident; hence the dilemma (cf. p. 115, above).

between her boys, she gives him a jewelled collar, and begs his friendly counsel for them." She "claims the kindness of Hrothulf for her sons." [1] It must not be forgotten that it was Grendel's mother who avenged his death. Nephews, not sister's sons, were Eanmund and Eadgils ; they rebelled against their uncle, Onela, and were exiled ; Eadgils, at last, slew Onela.

Of the daughters and fathers, only the relation of Hildeburh and Hoc is significant in action. He was slain, — like many a ballad father, — in the attempt to prevent Finn's *Brautfahrt.* Here should be recalled the daughters given in marriage for political purposes. The relation of mother and daughter is never significant. We have just noted Wealhtheow's solicitude for her sons ; we never hear of her in connection with her daughter Freawaru.

In the case of brothers, casual mention is to be noted again, in the case of Æschere, — "Dēad is Æschere," cries Hrothgar, "Yrmenlāfes yldra brōðor " (v. 1324). The tragedy of the accidental death of Herebeald by the hand of Hæthcyn has been noted. Hengist, furthermore, tries to avenge the death of Hnæf, and Eofor aids Wulf in the fight with Ongentheow. Other cases are interesting only as showing the influence of alliterative verse upon names often joined, — Eadgils and Eanmund; Halga, Hrothgar, and Heorogar ; Hrethric and Hrothmund ; Herebeald, Hæthcyn, and Hygelac ; Onela and Ohthere ; Yrmenlaf and Æschere. Alliteration united father and son, also,[2] and these alliterating name-pairs may be regarded as one of the characteristics of the epic. They do not occur in the ballads,[3] which may be contrasted with the epic in that, in general, they attach much less importance to names, while the epic seems to delight in them for their own sake, or for the sonorous effect which they certainly have in lines like :

> Bēowulf maðelode   bearn Ecgðēowes,

or :

> Hrōðgār maðelode,   helm Scyldinga :
> " Ne frīn þū æfter sǣlum ;   sorh is genīwod
> Denigea lēodum.   Dēad is Æschere,
> Yrmenlāfes   yldra brōþor " (vv. 1321 ff.).

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[1] *Early English Literature*, p. 67.

[2] As may be seen from the genealogical tables ; e.g. Wyatt's *Beowulf*, p. 140.

[3] Except in the few instances in the Danish Heroic Ballads, p. 115, above. Cf. also the sonorous or connotative names in ballad refrains (p. 44 n.), and the evident delight in geographical names in the Border Ballads (p. 62, above).

The very name of the younger brother is a wail for the dead. There is
a suggestion here of the kind of thing that Milton does. It is, indeed,
a faint suggestion, but when one allows for the better medium which
the modern poet had ready at hand, the difference in method, after all,
is not so great:

> In Vallombrosa, where the Etrurian shades
> High over-arched embower; or scattered sedge
> Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion armed
> Hath vexed the Red-Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew
> Busiris and his Memphian chivalry.[1]

This delight of the Anglo-Saxon poet in sonorous names may in part
account for the remarkable extent of our information in regard to rela-
tionships which are of no moment in the action.[2]

Of the personal, equal friendship of man and man the poem offers no
instance. The only possible exception is to be found in the relation of
Hrothgar and Æschere, which appears only after Æschere's death, and
leads to no action. It is said that Æschere was the dearest of all
Hrothgar's companions (v. 1296); but even in this instance Æschere
was, as Hrothgar says in his lament,

> "mīn rūn-wita   ond mīn rǣd-bora,
> eaxl-gestealla,   ðonne wē on orlege
> hafelan weredon,   þonne hniton fēþan,
> eoferas cnysedan" (vv. 1325 ff.).

Grief, that is, for the loss of the *eaxl-gestealla* was mingled with that for
the councillor, that of a man for his tried companion, with that of the king
for his chief adviser. Hrothgar, again, addressed Beowulf as "wine mīn
Bēowulf" (vv. 457, 1704) and said that when Beowulf came to him he
"sōhte holdne wine" (v. 376), yet little is made of this friendship, — a
mere matter of gratitude on Hrothgar's part, and not the cause of Beo-
wulf's journey, since they had not met before. The word itself had no
sacredness, for so Beowulf addressed Unferth (perhaps indeed ironically,
as Owen Wister's Virginian addresses Balaam), in the midst of the flyting
(v. 530), and so the old warrior addressed the young, though his words

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[1] *Paradise Lost*, i, 303 ff.

[2] Place names are not thus used, except as they happen to combine with the
names of persons:

> Scyldes eafera   Scede-landum in (v. 19).
> Hæðcen Hrēþling   wið Hrefna-wudu (v. 2925).

were far from friendly (v. 2046). The devotion of a single follower to his leader may, since it seems to indicate a close personal relation, be mentioned here. Beowulf is thus Wiglaf's "wine-dryhten," and Hrothgar, Wulfgar's (v. 360). The relation of blood-brotherhood does not occur in the poem.

If personal friendship is uncommon, what may be called communal friendship is mentioned often enough. It is represented in the grief of the other thanes for Æschere (vv. 1417 ff.). Beowulf is spoken of as a "winia bealdor" (v. 2567); other rulers as "frēa-wine folca," [1] or "gold-wine gumena" (or "Gēata," etc.), or as "wine-drihten" [2] (vv. 1171, 1476, 1602, 2419, 2584). If the ruler was thus regarded as the friend of his people, his people were, similarly, spoken of as his friends. Hrothgar's followers were *wine-magas* (v. 65); and it was Scyld's "swǣse gesīþas" who bore him ·to the shore (v. 29). It is significant that this word (*gesīþas*) occurs only in the plural; it most commonly refers to Beowulf's followers (vv. 1313, 2518, 2632). Finally, we must note the plight of the last survivor, —

<div style="text-align:center">

sē ðǣr lengest hwearf,
wearð wine-gēomor (v. 2238).

</div>

This marked type of friendship, between a leader on the one side and a group of followers on the other, is based upon a definite institution, upon that of the *comitatus*.[3] The relations of the prince and the body of young men who committed themselves to his personal service were exceedingly close. These retainers were not inferiors, but *ōret-mecgas*, "pledged comrades" (vv. 332, 363, 481); [4] *bēod-genēatas*, "table companions" (v. 343); *heorð-genēatas*, "hearth companions" (v. 261). Beowulf himself was, as we learn from the first mention of him, "Higelāces þegn" (v. 194), yet himself leader of a band. Sometimes, apparently, a foreigner joined the *comitatus:* Ecgtheow, a Scylfing, after slaying Heatholaf, took refuge with Hrothgar, and, Hrothgar says, "hē mē āþas swōr" (v. 472).

Into the conceptions of the relations of leader and followers Wiglaf's speech just before the fight with the Dragon gives most insight

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[1] Hygelac, v. 2357; Hrethel, v. 2429; Hrothgar, v. 430.

[2] Hrothgar, v. 862; Beowulf, vv. 1604, 3175 (Lord in general, with especial reference to B.).

[3] Cf. Tacitus, *Germania*, 12–14.

[4] Beowulf's in vv. 332, 363; Hrothgar's in v. 481.

(vv. 2631 ff.). From it we learn something of the duties of the prince toward his thanes. To him they were indebted for the mead, the gift of rings and armor, helmets, swords, and jewels ; he was to have killed the Dragon single-handed for them, he the people's shepherd, who of all men had done most of desperate deeds. " Generosity and the foremost place in valor are the duty of the prince; absolute fidelity and devotion mark the clansman." [1] Wiglaf recalls the promise of Beowulf's men to help their lord at need. It is not fitting that they should return without protecting his life, slaying the foe ; Wiglaf would rather die with his lord. When after the battle the coward thanes come from the wood, Wiglaf again reminds them of the gifts, and tells them that helmet and burnie were thrown away. In a formal condemnation he deprives them of citizenship (vv. 2884 ff.), and it is thus evident that isolation from clan or *comitatus* was regarded as the severest punishment, just as loss of friends and relatives was regarded as the greatest misfortune, that a man might suffer. Similarly, from the point of view of a leader, the " thane-sorrow " was the greatest grief he might endure (v. 131). This might be assuaged by a money payment ; or it was the leader's duty to demand *wergeld* for a fallen follower. In recognition of this custom Hrothgar voluntarily paid for Hondscio, the warrior whom Grendel slew (v. 1053). And it is said that Grendel refused to compound his feud in this manner (v. 156). Beside that in Wiglaf's speech, there is other evidence of the conception of the relation of leader and follower, where Beowulf tells how he earned by fighting the jewels, the swords, and the lands which Hygelac gave him (vv. 2490 ff.). The thanes that went with Beowulf to Heorot were made of better stuff than the cowards that deserted him in the last battle ; for they tried to help him in the fight with Grendel, though their swords were useless (v. 795). Their fidelity and devotion were exhibited as they waited on the shore while Beowulf fought with Grendel's mother ; the Danes returned to Heorot, but they remained and stared at the sea, hoping against hope (vv. 1600 ff.).

The *comitatus* was of two kinds, — for a specified time (an enlistment " for the war ") or for life. Beowulf's was of the former sort; he had chosen, it is said, the bravest that he could find (v. 205). His later band was also of this type; Hrothgar's, apparently, of the other.

Grief at the loss of the *comitatus* has been noted ; the leader was proud, on the other hand, of the increase in its numbers (v. 22); and

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[1] Gummere, *Germanic Origins*, p. 265.

Hrothgar's power is described as based upon his authority over youths growing up in his service.

The King as King (to take up now the matter of rank), it will be remembered, did not appear in the ballad. In the *Gest* there was an authentic King; but he played only a small part in the action, and he was not brought into it at all except by the essentially popular motive of the disguise and consequent rough treatment. This motive emphasizes class-distinction; it shows how, in order to introduce the king at all, it was necessary to reduce him to the popular level, to disguise him as monk, or later, as outlaw. In the same spirit the poet of *Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough, and William of Cloudesly* (Child, 116) found it expedient to emphasize the absence of ceremony with which these good yeomen entered the royal palace. With this it is easy to contrast at once the ceremony of Beowulf's reception at Heorot. In the epic the actors are usually kings,[1] or of the royal blood; the poet stands beside them, sees things from their point of view, seems to be one of them. They know no higher human authority. *Beowulf* is essentially a Royal Epic. It is not, however, that we now have to do with a higher class as opposed to a lower. We have to do with the nation or tribe, which looks like a homogeneous whole; the king is scarcely more exalted above his subjects than Robin Hood above the members of his band. The king in *Beowulf* is primarily a warrior among warriors; he is a leader of warriors, conceived also specifically as king, as ruler of land, as possessor of wealth, as guardian and generous distributor of treasure, ·

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[1] Twenty-one kings are mentioned. For the queens and the conception of the queen, see the discussion of the husband and wife. Wealhtheow was a *folc-cwēn*, "queen of a warlike band" (v. 641). The leader of the *comitatus* is always the king or prince. He is a *wīg-fruma* (vv. 664, 2261); *beorn-cyning* (v. 2148); *frum-gār* (v. 2856); *wæl-rēow wiga* (v. 629). He is essentially a leader of warriors, — *folc-cyning* (passim); *þeod-cyning, gūð-cyning, lēod-fruma, folc-āgend, folc-toga*. He is conceived more specifically as king, yet only vaguely as exercising kingly functions, in terms like *brego, cyning, bealdor, dryhten* (used also of God), *ealdor* (used also of nobles), *frēa, frēa-dryhten, hlāford, man-dryhten, rǣswa, strengel, þēoden*. He is conceived as ruler of land in phrases like *eorð-cyning, land-fruma*. He is thought of as possessing wealth, *sinca bealdor*; as guardian of treasure *hord-weard* (used also of the dragon), *beah-horda weard*; as the generous distributor of treasure, *bēaga brytta, sinces brytta*, etc., *gold-gifa, gold-wine gumena, sinc-gifa*; his throne is the *gif-stōl*. He is conceived as the friend and protector of his people, *winia bealdor, lēod-gebyrgea, rīces weard, folces weard, ēðel-weard, helm* (cf. the recurring "Hrōðgār maðelode, helm Scyldinga"), *folces hyrde, eodor* (*Scyldinga, Ingwina*).

as friend and protector of his people. These qualities appear in the action of the poem : Hrothgar had always fought in the van (v. 1041) ; he gave worthy gifts to Beowulf ; and if Beowulf fell, these were to be sent to Hygelac as evidence of Hrothgar's generosity (v. 1486). After the building of Heorot Hrothgar did not fail to keep his vow, ·but dealt out treasure at the banquet (v. 80). Beowulf in the end sacrificed his life for his people.

That there was a fairly definite conception of a typically excellent king there is evidence in the contrast of Beowulf and Heremod.[1] Moreover, many of the moralizing passages, of which Professor Earle makes so much, set forth the conduct proper for a king. In this strain is the description of Scyld, early in the poem (vv. 12 ff.).

The term *æþeling* is pretty generally applied to the characters in the poem, — to kings, courtiers, warriors, Beowulf's followers, and to the highborn in general. There are other such apparently vague terms for courtiers and nobles. Æschere was an *aldor-þegn* (v. 1308), and the young noble who played the part of a " kind of bride's best man " was a *dryht-bearn*. The term *eorl*, like *æþeling*, is applied to those of noble blood, including the king. *Ealdor*, we have already seen, is similarly used. The term *þegn* has a use similar to that of *vassal* in the *Roland*. It is applied to Beowulf himself (v. 1871). It indicates, if vaguely, a somewhat lower group than the other terms cited. This loose use of words denoting rank seems to indicate that no nice distinctions were made in this matter, that there was no inclination to insist upon the difference between king and nobles.

Some of these nobles seem to have had, however, more or less definite functions. Hrothgar, as we have seen, lamented Æschere as adviser (v. 1325), and he was doubtless one of those who sat in council and tried to devise a defence against Grendel (v. 172). Less definitely conceived as councillors are those wise men, " snotere ceorlas " (v. 202, etc.), who praise Beowulf's purpose and encourage him to undertake the cleansing of Heorot. Those who with Hrothgar await Beowulf's reappearance from the sea-cave are described in this phrase (v. 1591); and the term *ceorl* is likewise applied to King Ongentheow (v. 2972), and to King Hrethel (v. 2444). The functions of Wulfgar, and those of the *scop*, have been already noted in the account of Heorot.[2] Unferth seems to have a definite office as *þyle*, or spokesman, whose duty it was

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[1] Cf. p. 212, below.　　　　[2] P. 154, above.

to welcome guests. But here we anticipate the subject which is next to claim our attention, — that of Callings.

The one universal Calling was clearly that of the warrior ; whatever else the normal man might be, he was primarily this. The words denoting warrior are well-nigh innumerable.[1]

Beside warrior, and warrior-seaman, only the smith is mentioned, always with admiration for his skill. Beowulf's burnie was linked " smiþes or-þancum " ; he wore armor wrought in former days, " Welandes geweorc." The ancient giant's sword was " wundor-smiþa geweorc.". The art of the smith seems to have been associated with magic, and with the mysterious processes of bygone days.[2]

The Servant, who plays such an important part in the ballads, scarcely appears in the epic : and it may be that only warrior is meant by *sele-þegn* (chamberlain), *scealc* (Beowulf is spoken of as *scealc*, v. 939), *ombiht-þegn*.

In further contrast to ballad and *Gest* we note the importance attached in the epic to nations. If *Beowulf* is a Royal Epic, it is a National Epic as well. The relations·of these nations are as complicated as those of the individuals that compose them. Eighteen nations are mentioned, — many of them, however, in allusion or episode merely, and only two are significant in the action. The first part of the poem is written from the point of view of the Danes : it opens with

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[1] He is most often mentioned as bearing arms or armor: he is *æsc-wiga, bord hæbbend, byrn-wiga, gār-wiga, gār-wigend, helm-berend, lind-gestealla, lind-hæbbend, lind-wiga, rand-hæbbend, rand-wiga, scild-freca, scild-wiga, searo-hæbbend, sweord-freca.* Less picturesque terms are not wanting: *duguð* (" waffenfähige Mannschaft," contrasted with *geoguð*), *folc-beorn* (one of a band), *beado-rinc, cempa* (*æðele cempa, rēðe cempa, gyrded cempa*), *dryht-guma* (noble warrior), *fēða* (foot soldier), *fēðe-cempa, gūð-beorn* (the coast-guard), *gūð-freca* (the dragon), *gūð-fremmend, gūð-rinc, gūð-wiga, hæleð, here-rinc, heaðo-rinc, hilde-freca, hilde-mecg, hilde-rinc, mago-rinc, rinc, wig-freca.* Denoting leaders : *hilde-wīsa, hild-fruma, ord-fruma, wīsa.* Some special functions of the warrior are to be noted : he was guardian of the Hall, *heal-ðegn, rēn-weard* (Grendel and Beowulf, fighting for Heorot, are *rēn-weardas*), *sele-rǣdend, sele-weard.* He acted as guard in general, as sentry or outpost : *ende-sæta, hȳð-weard* (the coast-guard), *weard* (spoken of also as *ombiht* and *land-weard*). Incidentally, the warrior served as messenger : Wulfgar was "ār ond ombiht " (v. 336), and " ār wæs on ofoste " (v. 2783), who bore the news of Beowulf's death. And he was often a seafarer, a *lid-man, mere-liðend, sǣ-liðend, sǣ-man, sǣ-rinc, wǣg-liðend.* As seaman he served sometimes as *bāt-weard*, or *brim-wīsa.* Beowulf himself was a mighty swimmer, *mere-fara* and *lidmanna helm.*   [2] Cf. under Arms and Armor, pp. 176 f., below.

a glorification of their deeds in the past and a genealogy of their kings down to Hrothgar, who built Heorot, thus arousing Grendel's resentment, and making Beowulf's presence necessary. Beowulf, however, the hero of the poem, was, curiously enough, not a Dane but a Geat, and the scene of the second part is laid in his country.[1] The Geats seem at first to have paid tribute to the Danes, or perhaps only to have exchanged presents with them. After Beowulf's deeds in Heorot, however, Hrothgar says to him that he has brought about friendship between them (v. 1855). And Beowulf promises to bring a thousand thanes to Hrothgar's aid, if ever he have need (v. 1829). The relations of the other nations are, as has been said, not significant for the action; they have been sufficiently discussed in connection with the narrower human relations.[2] But it is well to note that the poet was mindful of these things. For it is here that, in one way, the epic differs significantly from the ballad. The ballad contented itself with a single narrow human relation, or with the conflict of two such relations. The lovers and the cruel father were isolated from the rest of the world. In the epic no such isolation takes place. A man is nothing if not part of nation, of *comitatus*, if not surrounded by relatives and comrades. It is the modern conception, — the man to society as the word to the sentence,[3] neither explicable or intelligible without the other. Beowulf was no romantic hero. Phrases like *wine-lēas, wine-gēomor, ealdor-lēas, hlāford-lēas, þēoden-lēas* are significant. No wretchedness is greater than that of the exile, or of the " friend-sad " last survivor, mourning the loss of his friends. So in poetic justice Heremod wrought his own punishment, — slew his companions until he wandered alone, far from the joys of men (v. 1713). If common foes make a national feeling, the strength of that feeling is easy to infer from the little band of men, huddled together, on their narrow strip of land, with the wild moors behind them and the mysterious sea before; with enemies, human and superhuman, with hostile nature on every hand.

The main action of the poem is the conflict of human with supernatural forces; it is the conflict not only of Beowulf with Grendel, Grendel's

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[1] Professor Earle's suggestion (*The Deeds of Beowulf*, pp. lxxx ff.), that Beowulf was in an earlier form of the poem a Dane, named for his ancestor Beowulf Scylding, and that all the action took place originally in Denmark, is tempting, but lacks probability. [2] P. 160, above.

[3] Cf. Henry Jones, *Browning as a Philosophical and Religious Teacher*, p. 58.

mother, and the Dragon, but of all the characters with the mysterious, superhuman, and immaterial. It is important, then, that at the outset, we should attempt some definition of the first element in this conflict, before we pass on to a discussion of its relation to the second.

Our analysis of the States of Mind, and the poet's frequent use of words like *brēost, heorte, mōd, gemynd, wit, sefa,* will show that the idea of an inner, spiritual part of man was continually in the poet's mind.[1] The word, and the conception, *sāwol* are more significant. They occur not only in the external Christian comments, where the soul is described as going to hell (vv. 852, 183) or to heaven (v. 2819[2]), but they seem, once or twice, to be wrought into the stuff of the poem itself. Grendel's mother carried off Æschere, *sāwol-lēasne* (v. 1406); Beowulf's thanes did not know that swords would not wound Grendel,

> . ond on healfa gehwone   hēawan þōhton,
> sāwle sēcan (vv. 800–801),

where soul seems to mean life, seat of life, vital principle, something, perhaps, not quite distinct from the body.[3] The division into spiritual and physical elements is, however, clearly brought out in another passage, near the close of Beowulf's life, where Fate was to

> sēcean sāwle hord,   sundur gedǣlan
> līf wið līce;   nō þon lange wæs
> feorh æþelinges   flǣsce bewunden (vv. 2422 ff.).

Is the implication that life, separated from the body, goes on? or that the body is simply lifeless? What is the " sāwle hord "? Is it life's hoard, the vital part? Or is it the soul's life, the soul being supposed to exist after it has been deprived of its hoard? Phrases like this and " sāwele hyrde " suggest two spiritual elements, — an *ego*, controlling or controlled by a *soul*. Professor Gummere notes other evidence of this conception. " Very old expressions of our language," he says,

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[1] See pp. 215 ff., below.

[2] Beowulf's death:
> him of hreðre gewāt
> sāwol sēcean   sōð-fæstra dōm.

Cf. also the curious phrase in the long moralizing passage:
> þonne se weard swefeð,
> *sāwele hyrde* (v. 1742).

[3] Is this the more primitive meaning of the word? Heyne's definition, " der unsterbliche Teil des Menschen im Gegensatz zu *līf*," will not hold in these passages.

"show this notion of a spirit not under our absolute control — its precise relation to the ego was hardly matter of Germanic speculation — abiding within us and moving us without our wish or will. ' It ran into his mind' is our 'occur'; but what was the 'it'? . . . When a man begins to talk, he ' unlocks the word-hoard '; when he will be silent, he bolts and bars his breast. Instead of ' he spake,' the poet of *Beowulf* says : ' the point of the word brake through the breast-hoard '; and in another place, ' he let the word fare out.' " [1]

The conception of the spiritual element, or elements, in man is obviously vague enough. The important matter is the recognition of such element or elements. How far, now, is it the spiritual that is related to the supernatural ? How far is the supernatural itself conceived as spiritual, how far as material? In the case of the most important element in this category, — that of Grendel and his dam, and of the Dragon, — the question is easily answered. Here the conception is purely physical : they are terrible from physical causes, — from superior strength, invulnerability, effect of hot blood or fiery breath upon sword or shield.[2]

The answer to the next phase of the question is less obvious. As to the existence of another world, of a life after death, the evidence in the poem is clear. But as to whether this is an abode of spirits the evidence is contradictory. This evidence we must now examine. We may note first certain passages where the other world is taken for granted. Beowulf Scylfing ruled, for

> fæder ellor hwearf,
> aldor of earde (vv. 55–56).

Beowulf's father

> gebād wintra worn,   ǣr hē on weg hwurfe
> gamol of geardum (vv. 264–265).

The nature of the other world is suggested in " gum-drēam ofgeaf, Godes lēoht gecēas " (v. 2469).[3]

An examination of the three funerals of the poem shows only conflicting evidence. Scyld seemed to return whence he came, to a world where body and spirit were not sundered; life after death was of a

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[1] *Germanic Origins*, pp. 362–363.

[2] A full discussion of the conception of these beings will be attempted under Motives (pp. 181 ff., below).

[3] Cf. the discussion of the Christian Element, p. 174, below.

piece with life before it. Though he went "on Frēan wǣre," he went
provided with

> hilde-wǣpnum   ond heaðo-wǣdum
> billum ond byrnum (vv. 39–40),

with jewels and gifts not less than the ones placed in the ship by those

> þe hine æt frum-sceafte   forð onsendon
> ǣnne ofer ȳðe   umbor-wesende (vv. 45–46).

He went, that is, as if prepared for a physical Otherworld; and it was
the body that went. It is not inconceivable, even, that this was origi-
nally not a funeral at all, but a return to that Otherworld over-sea whence
he had come as a boy; it is notable that the mystery does not exist
for the modern reader only. One notes the vagueness of the phrase in
"þe hine æt frum-sceafte," and mystery is definitely expressed in the
closing lines:

> Men ne cunnon
> secgan tō sōðe,   sele-rǣdende,
> hæleð under heofenum,   hwā þǣm hlǣste onfēng (vv. 50–52).

The account of Hnæf's funeral pyre is brief. Only the burning of
the body is mentioned; of the departure of the spirit, or as to whether
there was a spirit, the poet says nothing. Neither here nor elsewhere
is grief assuaged by the thought of meeting in another world.

The third funeral is that of the hero himself; it is a burning like
Hnæf's, and after the burning is the burial in a mound,

> þǣr hē longe sceal
> on ðæs Waldendes   wǣre geþolian (vv. 3108–3109).

Yet he and his body are distinct: — it is fitting, says the poet, that a
man praise his lord,

> þonne hē forð scile
> of līc-haman   [lǣne] weorðan (vv. 3176–3177).

The pyre was hung about with helmets, shields, and burnies, and in the
barrow they placed all the jewels and trappings from the Dragon's hoard
(vv. 3163 ff.). Here, then, there is no hint of another world. The
spirit, apparently, dwelt in the barrow where the ashes were deposited,
and where, also, in pursuance of an ancient custom not understood by
the poet,[1] were placed rings and jewels, and all such accoutrements.

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[1] "Out of respect toward the chief, some of his rings and jewels were buried
with him." Jusserand, *A Literary History of England*, p. 54.

From the slight and more or less conflicting evidence of these funerals we learn but little of the nature of the other world.

We have seen that there is no suggestion of comrades meeting after death, no cry like Lord Thomas's " stay for me " (Child, 73), no

> Wait for me there ; I shall not fail
> To meet thee in that hollow vale,[1]

and the line already quoted, " gum-dréam ofgeaf, Godes léoht gecéas " (v. 2469), implies no eager or voluntary choice. Nor does that other periphrasis for dying : — " swefeþ æfter symle " (v. 1008), nor

> nū se here-wīsa   hleahtor ālegde
> gamen ond glēo-drēam (vv. 3020–3021).

Yet phrases are to be noted which, perhaps under Christian influence, affect to despise this present life, as *win-dagas* or *lǽn-dagas*. On the whole, however, life after death would seem no more attractive for the poet of *Beowulf* than for Bede in the famous passage about the sparrow in the hall.[2]

It was always against his will, then, that a man departed this life : Beowulf

> sceolde [ofer][3] willan   wīc eardian
> elles hwergen,   swā sceal ǽghwylc mon
> ālǽtan lǽn-dagas (vv. 2589–2591).

Every man, that is, was powerless to withstand Fate : Scyld departed at the fated hour (v. 26) ; Weird swept away Hrothgar's retainers into Grendel's terror (v. 477), swept away all Beowulf's kinsmen (v. 2164) ; the hoard is dear bought, says Wiglaf :

> wæs þæt gifeðe tō swīð,
> þe ðone [þēod-cyning]   þyder ontyhte (vv. 3085–3086),

— as though Fate were a malicious demon that enticed the hero to his death. Fate did not that day assign him glory in the battle (v. 2574). Men did not die before the fated hour (v. 734) ; and, in general, it was

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[1] Quoted by Poe, *Works*, I, 258, from " Henry King, Bishop of Chichester, *The Exequy*."

[2] Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, ii, 13.

[3] If we accept Rieger's conjecture.

not easy to escape Fate (v. 1002), for "gǣð ā wyrd swā hīo scel" (v. 455). Yet there are exceptions. Fate is not always inexorable, for

<div align="center">

Wyrd oft nereð
unfǣgne eorl   þonne his ellen dēah (vv. 572-573).

</div>

The Christian God, moreover, and a man's own courage might avert Fate (v. 1056); or, again, God seems to be identified with Fate (v. 2526).

What may be regarded as special manifestations of this Fate, — war, battle, death by disease or by spear, — these, half personified, appear throughout the poem: "Wīg ealle fornam" (v. 1080); "gif mec hild nime" (vv. 452, 1481); "gif mec dēað nimeð" (v. 447); and Beowulf will achieve glory with Hrunting, "oþðe mec dēað nimeð" (v. 1491), — as one nowadays adds a pious "D. V." to one's statement of intention.[1] Sometimes "battle" works through a human agent, as when Beowulf says that it has carried off the sea monster[2] *"þurh mīne hand"* (v. 558).

Such passages as these, — allusions to Fate, or to these special manifestations of it, — occurring as they do continually, from Scyld's "gescæp-hwīl" (v. 26) to the "þonne hē forð scile" (v. 3176), betray the melancholy of the individual poet, make dark background for the triumphant action of the poem.

To the Christian influences we may now turn our attention, — merely, however, to note their presence. They manifest themselves in passages that may be easily identified, like the account of the Creation (v. 92) or the genealogy of Grendel; sometimes in questionable passages, like that of "choosing God's light," where the phrase was mainly pre-Christian. The whole matter of the soul is doubtful, and so is the phrase *lǣn-dagas*, — the characterization of life as loaned, transitory; or as *win-dagas*, a time of struggle, contrasted with heavenly rest. We have seen God reversing the decrees of Fate; or, like Fate, he decides the issue of a combat (v. 685); — though, as a matter of fact, it is Beowulf's hand-grip that wins the battle. Again, in the struggle with Grendel's mother, Beowulf would have been slain, had not his burnie saved him, — and holy God (v. 1550), — trust in God, that is, and keep your powder dry. God's help was an afterthought, clearly, and neither here

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[1] Cf. vv. 2536, 2249; see also the enumerations of the ways of dying, vv. 1587, 1846, 2265.

[2] "It was granted me" (" *mē gyfeþe wearð* "), he says, evidently not regarding the issue as in his own hands (v. 555).

nor elsewhere is there any real interposition of Providence in human affairs, nothing like the part played by Our Lady in *Brown Robin's Confession* (Child, 57), or in the *Gest*, if we accept Robin Hood's view of the repayment of the loan. And, after all, there is nothing specifically Christian, even in the most obviously Christian of these passages, nothing of Hope, Faith, or Love, no definite suggestion of Immortal Life. This God is the God of the Old Testament, with Anglo-Saxon modifications. He is conceived as an all-powerful human being. He is *Al-walda, se Ælmihtiga, Sōþ-cyning, Wuldur-cyning, Līf-frēa, līfes brytta*. The poet mentions his wisdom and goodness; but he glories in his power; he thinks of him as Avenger (v. 107); and he sees no reason to change that dictum of Beowulf's, that it is better that a man avenge his friend than that he grieve much, a dictum that sums up in a sense the theme of the poem. These Christian elements are, then, mere external comments; they do not affect the action, and they are more modified by the spirit of the poem than is the spirit of the poem by them.

Horses are mentioned twice; as so often in the ballads, they are white (v. 856) or "fallow" (vv. 865, 2165); as part of his reward, Beowulf was given eight horses; that the saddle of one of them is described as the battle seat of the king shows that horses were used in battle, by the leader, at least (v. 1039). They were held in high esteem, too, and coupled with "jewels" in the phrase "mēarum ond mādmum" (vv. 1048, 1898, 2166). We do not find horses used in the important action of the poem, however, and none is individualized like Edward's " reid roan steid "; and none is thought of as a friend in time of need, as in *Fair Mary of Wallington*.

That the stag was known, and hunted with dogs, appears from a single line in the famous description of the haunt of Grendel and his dam (v. 1368); and a certain veneration for the hart is to be inferred from the naming of the hall, — that the horns, at least, were prized as trophies and thought worthy of decorating Heorot. Dogs are not elsewhere mentioned. The image of the boar's head adorned the helmets. Early in the poem is a list of monsters descended from Cain (v. 112).[1]

Just before Beowulf's descent into the sea-cave there is a lively description of the monsters thereabouts, and of the slaying of one of the nickers (vv. 1425 ff.).

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[1] For other mention of monsters, cf. vv. 420, 575, 883, 1425, 1500.

The delight in the hunt of these sea monsters must be reckoned an important motive in the *Beowulf*, as the delight to ding the dun deer down was in ballad and *Gest*. Here, as it happens, it is less significant for the action, except in so far as the hero's training in such matters may be regarded as necessary preparation for the deeds which he has to perform.

Of the birds, the hawk, the raven, and the eagle are mentioned merely, and they have none of the supernatural powers of the ballad birds. Once the raven is the messenger of day. Elsewhere, however, he is mentioned only as hovering about the battlefield or gallows, in accordance with the convention (vv. 2447, 3021). In this connection is the only mention of eagle and wolf (v. 3026). These conventional birds and beasts of the battlefield appear frequently in the Christian epics, and in these the effect is much less suggestive, much more brutal. In the *Genesis* (vv. 2159 ff.) the birds sit blood-bedropt, crammed and glutted with the corpse-flesh of the host.[1] More, however, as in the *Beowulf* passage, the grey sea-mew hovers, the waiting fish plays about the ship in the *Andreas*.[2] The birds in the *Seafarer* effectively suggest this same convention.

We may turn now finally to man's attitude toward his own creations. Of the Hall enough has been said; the Ship has been mentioned in connection with the sea,[3] and further discussion will be necessary in connection with Journeys.[4] We have left, then, only the work of the Smith.[5] Of this many forms are mentioned, and much is made of them. The sword is most important. We know that it had a *fetel-hilt* (chain or belted hilt) (v. 1563), that it was jeweled (vv. 672, 1023), that it was gold-adorned (vv. 1677, 1900). It was marked with runes (v. 1695); it was made " with twisted hilt and snake-adorned " (v. 1698). The file was used in shaping blade or hilt, for swords are *fela lāfe*, " leavings of the files " (v. 1032). Swords were individualized (v. 1145); they were named : Unferth loaned Beowulf the sword called Hrunting (v. 1457), which never before failed in battle ; with the sword Nægling Beowulf encountered the Dragon. As applied to the sword the phrase *gūð-wine* is significant (v. 1810). It is sometimes used with little thought of its literal meaning, as synonym for sword or weapon

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[1] Cf. Brooke, *Early English Literature*, pp. 130 f.
[2] Vv. 370–372. [3] P. 150, above. [4] P. 186, below.
[5] The Smith, see p. 168, above.

merely, showing that the metaphor has become faded through much use (v. 2735). This same personification of the sword (and again with faded metaphor or kenning) occurs in the passage where Beowulf is fighting with Grendel's mother, when it is said that the battle-gleam refused to bite (v. 1523). The sword was thus thought of as a living individual with a history. It was often spoken of as an heirloom also;[1] carried back a little further, age came to mean mysterious origin, and the sword was regarded as the work of giants. So the great old sword that Beowulf saw on the wall of the sea-cave was *eald sweord eotenisc* (v. 1558), *gīganta geweorc* (v. 1562), *enta ǣr-geweorc* (v. 1679), *wun-dor-smiþa geweorc* (v. 1681); and when Hrothgar looked at the hilt, he found written there accounts of ancient battles, — "origin of the primæval quarrel" (v. 1687).

No other weapon is so significant as the sword. Grendel's mother (v. 1545) and Beowulf (v. 2703), in the fight with the Dragon, used the *seax;* this short knife is not mentioned elsewhere.

After the sword, spears are most often mentioned. Yet we never see them in action; it is only with their swords that Beowulf's thanes attempt to aid him in the encounter at close quarters with Grendel. Spears must have been in common *use*, however; that they should be *morgen-ceald* was one of the typical woes to follow Beowulf's death (v. 3022); and the word *gār* occurs continually in compounds.[2] A special sort of spears was used against the sea monster: he was attacked "with boar-spears, savagely barbed" (v. 1438). In this same passage the *gūð-horn* is mentioned, as well as the bow and arrow (v. 1432).

Description of personal appearance was almost wholly a description of armor.[3] The attitude of the poet toward helm and burnie is best shown in the narrative passage which recounts the arming of Beowulf (vv. 1441 ff.). From this we learn that the helmet was white, adorned with treasure, with a noble chain, and with likeness of the boar;[4] it was the work of a weapon-smith in ancient days, so that no sword could bite it.[5] Of the four gifts of Hrothgar to Beowulf one was a helmet;

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[1] Cf. vv. 2611, 1053, 795, etc.

[2] *Gār-cēne, -cwealm, -wiga, -wigena.*

[3] Pp. 213 f., below.

[4] Cf. vv. 1111, 304, 1328, where, however, Heyne makes *eofer* = "bildlich, kühner Held, . . . (altn. iöfur)."

[5] Provided with a visor also (v. 334).

this also was sword-proof (v. 1032). Beowulf wore a burnie also, *hon-dum gebrōden* (v. 1443), and this, as the event proved, saved his life. This same burnie was all that he wished to have sent to Hygelac, if he lost his life; he described it as best of burnies, Hrethel's legacy, the work of Weland (v. 453). Burnie, then, like sword, had individuality and history: Weland was thought of, no doubt, as the chief of the "wonder-smiths" of whom there is mention elsewhere in the poem (v. 1681). The Weders' battle-sarks rattled as they stepped ashore (v. 226), as they walked up toward Heorot (v. 321), and when they sat by the wall (v. 327). *To come* and *to bear weapons* are synonyms (vv. 333, etc.). Warriors were typically *lind-hæbbende* (v. 245), "shield-bearers"; the shields are of linden wood, broad (v. 325), and gilded, or adorned in some way, — *fætte scyldas* (v. 333).

The Smith was not armorer merely, — witness what was given Beowulf in Heorot: *wunden-gold, earm-hrēade twā, hrægl ond hringas, sigle ond sinc-fæt, Brōsinga mene, heals-bēaga mǣst* (vv. 1195, etc.). Of this collar, the poet goes on to tell the history (vv. 1202 ff.). As with burnie and sword, what counted for most in these treasures were age and associations. The poet is fond of phrases like *ealde mādmas* (v. 472), *eald-gestrēon* (vv. 1381, 1458), *ǣr-gestrēon* (v. 1757). And in the Dragon's cave:

> þǣr wæs swylcra fela
> in ðām eorð-hūse   ǣr-gestrēona,
> swā hȳ on gēar-dagum   gumena nāt-hwylc,
> eormen-lāfe   æþelan cynnes,
> þanc-hycgende   þǣr gehȳdde
> dēore māðmas (vv. 2231–2236).

It was *fira fyrn-geweorc* (v. 2286), this noble treasure belonging to the mysterious past. Thoroughly characteristic is the passage where Wiglaf views the treasure in the cave, in which the poet mingles delight in the glitter and pomp of the treasure, in the mysterious work of ancient smiths, with romantic regret for the past (vv. 2756 ff.).

II. MOTIVES

In the *Gest of Robin Hood*, it will be remembered, the central motive was to be defined in terms of character.[1] A character, representative of the ideals of a class, attracted only such stories as would be in

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[1] P. 90, above.

keeping with it or in which it would be thought to find self-expression.
To character and character-description the *Beowulf* gives considerably
more attention than does the *Gest*, and it is natural to expect that here
again, and in a higher degree, the central motive should be character.
But this is not the case. Although the epic hero is a character some-
what more complicated, more highly individualized, he is at the same
time more nearly universal, more nearly the representative of the ideals
of the race as a whole. The society that produced the epic was simple,
compact, undivided ; the stories told of a hero must have been of one
class only ; there was no need of a touchstone, of selection of material.
It happens that in the three principal incidents of the epic, Beowulf is
represented as in conflict with the Supernatural ; but this does not re-
quire the rejection of the swimming-match with Breca, as, in the *Gest*,
the peculiar outlaw character required the rejection of all material which
did not involve the conflict with organized society.

Not the character of the hero, then, but, as in many of the ballads,
his Valor, is to be regarded as the central motive. It is not, however,
as in the ballads, only to be deduced from the action : here, as else-
where in the *Beowulf*, the abstracting power of the poet is at work,
and words like *eafoð* and *ellen* and their compounds are of frequent
occurrence. Often, it is true, such words are used with reference to
specific actions.[1] But often they are used generally, as in the state-
ment that a warrior may overcome fate, " gif his ellen dēah." In further
contrast to the ballads, the motive of Cowardice occurs in the epic as
antithesis to Valor, Unferth to Beowulf, the coward thanes to Wiglaf. As
in the ballads, valor manifests itself mainly in single combat ; and where,
in allusions, battles are referred to, they are thought of as largely broken
up into individual encounters, though as part of international or inter-
tribal feuds. But in such cases as these there is no hint of patriotism ; the
motive is simply the loyalty of follower to leader, fidelity of comrade
to comrade. There is no more love than patriotism ; the Germanic
bride was won, not wooed, and in connection with the *Brautfahrt* —
or indeed elsewhere — no word for *love* occurs. We have, however,
the ballad delight in battle for its own sake. The poet is conscious of
— or, unconsciously, he reflects — the complex of motives that underlie
any action. His hero is a member of society, subject to social action
and reaction ; the simplicity of motive that belongs with practical
isolation has vanished.

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[1] As in v. 602.

Why does Beowulf visit Heorot? It may be partly because of Hroth-
gar's earlier kindness to Ecgtheow, but the poet does not mention this
as a motive. Beowulf says in the first place that he will seek Hrothgar
because he has need of men (v. 201). He tells the coast-guard that he
has come to counsel Hrothgar how to overcome the foe (v. 279).
Wulfgar says :

> " Wēn ic þæt gē for wlenco,   nalles for wræc-sīðum
>   ac for hige-þrymmum,   Hrōðgār sōhton " (vv. 338–339).

Hrothgar interprets his coming :

> " Hine hālig God
>   for ār-stafum   ūs onsende " (vv. 381–382),

and,

> " F[or w]ere-fyhtum þū,   wine mīn Bēowulf,
>   ond for ār-stafum   ūsic sōhtest " (vv. 457–458).

Beowulf himself says that *snotere ceorlas* advised him to come,
"forþan hīe mægenes cræft mīnne cūþon " (v. 418). He came, then,
partly through daring, partly through great-heartedness, desire to offer
kindly help, to befriend one in need of men ; and, perhaps, out of grat-
itude to his father's friend ; partly also through consciousness of his
own strength, and the desire to meet any champion whom he had not
yet defeated.[1]

Later, desire for fame animates Beowulf's valor : he is determined to
achieve glory in the fight with Grendel's mother (v. 1491), and in the
cave he is mindful of fame (v. 1530). Valor is inspired by revenge
(vv. 1384, 1577), by love of gold and treasure, as in the last battle of
the hero (vv. 2535, 2747), where, however, it. is to be remembered,
Beowulf was fighting single-handed, as the King, as the protector and
avenger of his people. In general, the valor of the epic is inspired by
the ideals of the race ; death is better than disgrace. It is the valor of
the fatalist ; it is without definite thought of rewards in another world.
It is a chivalrous valor : Beowulf vows to meet Grendel unarmed, —
ignorant, apparently, that no weapon will avail against his supernatural
foe.[2] As the fight begins this valor blazes up in battle wrath and

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[1] A motive common also in the Danish Heroic Ballads. Cf. p. 119, above.

[2] Cf. p. 121, above, for the same sort of chivalry in the ballad *Bewick and
Graham*. Although none of the characters in the poem have sympathy for the
beaten foe, yet the poet seems to have it, so that the modern reader feels for
Grendel, seeking his joyless dwelling, much as he does for Shylock, returning to
his empty home. Cf. vv. 86, 820, 844 ff.

indignation. In Heorot, Beowulf slept not, and, though he had not yet seen Grendel, he " bād bolgen-mōd beadwa geþinges " (v. 709). Valor appears, in the three main incidents of the poem, in conflict with the Supernatural; and to this important motive we must now turn our attention. What is the poet's conception of Grendel, his mother, and the Dragon? By what peculiar means does he make them effective? Answers to these questions will place the method here somewhat between the ballad and the modern tale of horror and mystery. In the passage which first mentions Grendel he is not named (v. 86); he is simply the powerful spirit that dwells in the darkness. An account of the hall-joys and of the scop's song of the creation follows; then the poet turns back to Grendel. The vagueness of the description (in v. 86) is carried on in the *ān* (in v. 100); but now he is named immediately, and then spoken of as *mǣre mearc-stapa* (v. 103). He was, then, well known, and the poet attempts no mystification as to who or what it was that committed the crimes in Heorot.[1] There are suggestions of a Christian " rationalization " : he is a fiend in hell; he rules indeed the country of the race of monsters, but because of the Creator's proscription.[2] In the verses that follow (to v. 114) this same idea is carried out: he is of the kin of Cain, from whom sprang eotens, elves, and monsters. What mystery there is, then, in the conception of Grendel is not due to the conscious effort of the poet; it is rather the mystery of the vague and ill-defined. *Ellen-gǣst* (v. 86) looks like a spiritual conception; elsewhere Grendel and his mother are called *ellor-gǣstas* (v. 1349); and Grendel, like the devil, is *wērga gāst* (v. 133). There is no further evidence of a spiritual conception, however, and the word *gǣst* is in general loosely used. Both Grendel and his mother were clearly seen to have human forms, though Grendel was larger than any man (v. 1353). Beowulf, indeed, calls him *þyrs* (v. 426). Elsewhere he is *fēa-sceaft guma* (v. 973). There is a vague but effective description of his hand, which seems not quite human (vv. 984 ff.). His head, too, in its effect when brought into the hall, seems not quite human (vv. 1647 ff.). More specifically supernatural quality is shown in the fact that he

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[1] It is here perhaps instructive to contrast the method of Poe's *Murders in the Rue Morgue.*

[2] Cf. the similar account in vv. 1261 ff. He is " grom-heort guma Godes ond-saca " (v. 1682), who " Godes yrre bær " (v. 711). His hand is " hǣðenes hand-sporu " (v. 986).

was impervious to weapons, and in that baleful light which shone from his eyes (vv. 726 f.).

Grendel's mother, as we have seen, went about in a woman's form. Yet she is spoken of as *brim-wylf* (v. 1506), *grund-wyrgen* (v. 1518), *mere-wīf mihtig* (v. 1519). She is armed with *atolan clommum* (v. 1502), with *lāþan fingrum* (v. 1505). She is *wīf unhȳre* (v. 2120); *āglǣc-wīf*, and in the same line, *ides* (v. 1259). Like Grendel she is "rationalized" as a much-sinning being (v. 1379). To these contradictions must be added that in regard to her sex. Here the poet is regularly inconsistent: she is "*wīf*" in one line (v. 1259), referred to as *sē* in the next (v. 1260), — appropriately, perhaps, unsexed. Like Merlin, and other beings with supernatural powers, Grendel was fatherless, or at least no father was known (vv. 1355 ff.).

In general, however, it is only vagueness, confusion, contradiction, that distinguish the conception of these supernatural beings. They are terrible in the same way in which a human foe would be terrible, — because of size, strength, invulnerability. In this absence of special features they resemble the supernatural creatures of the ballads; they differ from these in that they are made effective in the epic by accompanying circumstances. The *Beowulf*, we shall see, does more with setting than did *Gest* or ballad. This setting is emphasized very largely for the purpose of giving proper atmosphere and verisimilitude to the supernatural figures of the poem. The formal description of the great landscape is to be cited, and its effect of mystery and terror analyzed.[1] We have already seen how Grendel and his dam are associated with moor, with misty hills and fens, with the sea cave where Beowulf found "þæt hē [in] nīð-sele nāt-hwylcum wæs" (v. 1513). This *nāt-hwylc* is especially effective. And in general it is evident enough that, however little mystery and terror there may be in the figures themselves, there is much in their surroundings. It is noteworthy, moreover, that they are beings of another world: they tread exiles' paths, rule over the land of monsters, hover on the marches, attack the outposts of civilization, dwell in mists and darkness; Grendel is even, for the Christian poet, a fiend in hell. He and his dam, moreover, gain through time-relations as well as through place-relations. They are creatures of the night.[2]

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[1] Pp. 221 f., below.

[2] Cf. p. 157, above, and vv. 161, 2007, 2072 f.

Last, and not least notable, these figures are made effective by one special means. The epic is rich in dialogue, and this often takes the form of the conventional vow and challenge before battle. In contrast with the eloquence of Beowulf and · the other warriors, the absolute silence of these beings is perhaps best evidence of their superhuman nature. It is, apparently, partly to preserve this silence that the poet is forced to substitute direct description of mental states for the more dramatic speeches. Grendel's woe found expression only in that inarticulate song which struck terror to the hearts of the Danes.[1]

The Dragon is a rather less effective, more mechanical manifestation of the supernatural. We even learn that he was fifty feet in length (v. 3042). He was *lāð lyft-floga* (v. 2315), and *ðeod-sceaða* (vv. 2278, 2688). He was terrible mainly because of the fire which he spewed forth, burning hall and dwellings. From his cave flowed a stream of fire. Like the others, he was a creature of the night (vv. 2760, 2271, etc.). The phrase *eldum uncūð* (v. 2214) is the only suggestion of mystery in connection with the dragon. The terror that he inspires depends partly on time and setting; but it is a more obvious, more purely physical, and less suggestive matter than that inspired by Grendel. He gains something through the age and mystery associated with the hoard which he watches.

Roughly speaking, the method of the epic, in dealing with the supernatural, stands rather nearer to ballad methods than to those of modern writers. Like the balladist, the epic poet is under no necessity of getting his story believed. For his audience there was in it nothing incredible, and it was well known, apparently, and generally accepted. It is possible, however, to trace the beginnings of art methods. There is some description of the effect produced by the supernatural beings upon the persons of the poem; the effect of terror is enhanced by the emphasis on time and place. The supernatural beings are conceived vaguely, yet they have definite superhuman qualities. Their actions are carefully motived. Nevertheless, in epic as in ballad, the story itself, the action, is still the main thing. The account of the monster who devoured Hrothgar's thanes, and of Beowulf's struggle with him and his dam, needs no special treatment to make it effective.

Of the subsidiary motives, the account of the Phase of Life leaves little to be said. From this account the relative richness of the epic in

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[1] Cf. p. 218, below.

this respect will be already obvious. This is in keeping with the more rational method and with the greater interest in mental states. In the incident of Hrethel and his sons, for instance, the conflict of duties is clearly set forth, not hinted at or avoided as in *Bewick and Graham*. The poet is evidently interested in the conflict of motives for its own sake, without regard to what action may follow. For every action a sufficient motive may be assigned. Grendel was enraged by the continual sound of revelry and so attacked Heorot (v. 87). The Christian poet, feeling that this was not enough, made Grendel a descendant of Cain and thus by his very nature, from necessity, an enemy of society. Beowulf's motives for coming to Heorot have been set forth.[1] After his struggle with Grendel the action proceeds in the regular course of feud. The motivation of the last part is even more elaborate. Beowulf's catastrophe is traced back to a kind of "first cause,"—to that accumulation of treasure which came into the hands of the last survivor of his race, passed then into the guardianship of the Dragon, who was aroused by the theft of the cup by a man compelled by oppression (vv. 2222 ff.), who, in flight, had blundered into the place. In revenge, the Dragon began his depredations, and Beowulf, by reason of his strength, prowess, and position, was the only man to meet him. With this insistence upon causal relations is to be associated the poet's sense of an ever-present Fate, controlling the actions of men.[2] And if the minor motivation of the main stream of the narration is carefully worked out, episode and allusion are often treated with almost equal care. The Hrethel incident has just been cited. The swimming-match, the Finn episode, the stories of Heremod and of Thrytho, all these surpass the ballads in the care of their motivation.

III. Structure

The purpose of the present section is merely to compare the structure of our epic, as it stands, with what we have found to be the typical structure of ballad and of *Gest*. Discussion of the *Liedertheorie*, of the questions of origin, of the theories of Müllenhoff, ten Brink, Möller, is foreign to this purpose. It is conceivable, however, that the conclusions here reached may have some value in connection with such matters, — a value all the greater in that the present analysis is made quite without reference to them.

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[1] P. 180, above.　　[2] Cf. pp. 173 f., above.

At the outset is to be noticed the greater length of the epic : the *Gest* is about 13,700 words in length ; *Beowulf* has nearly 23,000.[1] Roughly speaking, then, the *Beowulf* is about twice as long as the *Gest*. To what is the difference due? Is the *Beowulf* story longer, does it contain more incidents ? Could *Gest* have become epic by accretion, simply? So far as the main story is concerned, the opposite process would have been necessary; the number of incidents in the epic is less by half. What is significant here is the essentially different manner of the epic. Unlike the *Gest* it is never in a hurry; "Behagen" is its most striking characteristic ; it is expansive in tendency; it has time for leisurely elaboration in every direction ; it betrays no great anxiety to get on with the action. It pauses to describe character, states of mind, setting ; it lingers now and then over the moral significance of the story. Instead of following a slender narrative thread, it reflects with relative completeness a complicated social organism. It carefully motives the action of the whole, and introduces and discusses motives not • directly concerned in that action. It loves detail of every kind, and this leads not only to the descriptions already noted but to a different treatment of the action. In ballad and *Gest* emphasis of action meant interest in plot : in the epic it means rather a delight in reproducing, just as they are, the aspect of the world and the movements of men in it.

If elaboration was thus the main factor in increasing the length of the epic, it was not the only one; accretion played a part also, but a part less significant. Unlike the writer of the *Gest*, the epic poet had no touchstone; he included in his poem all that he knew. When a character or incident in his story reminded him of a similar character or incident, he straightway introduced the latter. Thus the structure of the *Beowulf* comes to be a series of loosely connected incidents, mingled with independent episodes. As far as the incidents are concerned, the poem falls into two separate parts, — the adventure with Grendel and his mother, and the adventure with the Dragon. Though interrupted by digressions and episodes, the action within these parts has marked unity. The parts may be broken up into minor incidents, but these are logically connected one with the other, and the poet takes care to make this connection clear.

Where the incidents to be connected occur in different places, the necessary journey is seldom omitted, as it is in the ballads, or hurried

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[1] Cf. p. 315, below.

over with a perfunctory line or two, as it is in the *Gest;* it is described with some care; nowhere, in fact, is there better evidence of the love of detail, nowhere a more marked contrast with the *Gest.* Ten Brink's analysis of these journeys leaves nothing to be said. Where Homer, he says, presents action, the *Beowulf* presents a series of pictures. In place of the continuity in Homer, in *Beowulf* "sind nur die Hauptmomente ausgewählt, diese möglichst selbständig hingestellt und jedes für sich, wo es angeht, ausgemalt." [1] It would seem, then, that the Homeric method is at this point more primitive than that of the *Beowulf;* and in general this shift of interest from action to tableaux,[2] and to the hitherto neglected elements of narration, before the story had received its fullest development, may well be one cause of the stunting of epic growth.

It is to be noted that in the account of the journeys some suggestion of the distance is given by the reference to the passage of time. For instance, — and the passage illustrates ten Brink's observation, —

> Gewāt þā ofer wǣg-holm   winde gefȳsed
> flota fāmi-heals   fugle gelīcost,
> oð þæt ymb an-tīd   ōþres dōgores
> wunden-stefna   gewaden hæfde,
> þæt ðā līðende   land gesāwon,
> brim-clifu blīcan,   beorgas stēape,
> sīde sǣ-næssas;   þā wæs sund liden
> eoletes æt ende (vv. 217–224).

There is other evidence that the poet had a feeling for temporal perspective. Thus when Grendel dwelt in Heorot,

> Wæs sēo hwīl micel;
> twelf wintra tīd   torn geþolode
> wine Scyldinga (vv. 146–148).

Again, after Beowulf became king,

> Hē gehēold tela
> fīftig wintra (vv. 2208–2209).

Such passages as these consist of what we have called *general narrative.* They deal with groups of events; they characterize and classify. They

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[1] Paul's *Grundriss*, II, i, 527.

[2] The series of pictures in the *Beowulf* is, of course, to be distinguished from the series of situations (pointed out as a ballad characteristic) which gave the impression of action.

occur commonly by way of introduction or transition. The accounts of
the reigns of Scyld and Beowulf Scylding, of Hrothgar's early years, —
all this preliminary matter is told in general terms. Similar is the account
of Grendel's first attack : one may compare

> on ræste genam
> þrītig þegna (vv. 122–123),

with the detailed account of the devouring of a single thane in the later
attack. Here the whole story is told in ten lines : there, — where the
fight with Beowulf occurs, — in a hundred and twenty-five.[1]

This tendency to generalize in the narrative is evident not only in
transitions and introductions. In discussing the *Gest* we had occasion
to note the use of a generalizing "would."[2] Something analogous is
found in the *Beowulf*, — dealing with action, however, and not with
character. Beowulf is giving to Hygelac an account of the adventures
in Heorot; one should note the recurrence of the word "hwilum,"
and the summary at the close of the passage :

> *Hwilum* hilde-dēor   hearpan wynne,
> gomen-wudu grētte,   *hwilum* gyd āwræc
> sōð ond sārlīc ;   *hwilum* syllīc spell
> rehte æfter rihte   rūm-heort cyning ;
> *hwilum* eft ongan   eldo gebunden,
> gomel gūð-wiga   gioguðe cwīðan
> hilde-strengo ;   hreðer inne wēoll,
> ðonne hē wintrum frōd   worn gemunde.
> *Swā wē þǣr inne   ondlangne dæg*
> *nīode nāman*,   oð ðæt niht becwōm (vv. 2107–2116).

The sketch of the woes of a father whose son hangs upon the gallows
(vv. 2447 ff.), and that of the evils to follow Beowulf's death (vv. 3021 ff.)
are in the same manner.[3] This generalizing or abstracting power is sig-
nificant, not only as indicating a phase of the approach to prose and
reason, but as indicating also a new mastery of the material. In the
Gest the incidents were all, so to speak, on a level ; in the *Beowulf* the
poet distinguishes between what is of first importance, and what is

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[1] For the method of the longer passage see the discussion of the treatment of
the objective point (pp. 192 ff., below).

[2] P. 103, above.

[3] Cf. also vv. 864 ff., 916, 2016 ff.

merely introductory, transitional, repetitive, or otherwise subordinate. The treatment of important passages is relatively concrete and elaborate ; of the others, relatively general and brief.

In this connection it is to be noted that while the poet welcomes interruptions he reaches his goal in spite of them. Beowulf's journey to Heorot (vv. 200 ff.) is a case in point. The opinions of the wise men prior to his departure, detail of embarking and landing, longish dialogue with the coast-guard and with Wulfgar, descriptions of the men, of the setting, — all such matters the poet is able to linger over and elaborate without losing sight of his purpose. It does not seem probable that the poet of the *Gest* could have gone so far.

Actual digressions and episodes are managed with similar skill. Epic expansiveness so far prevailed over the poet's sense of unity as to allow these departures from the main stream of the narrative ; but he recognized them as departures, he marked the points of divergence and of return. Thus, describing the hall-joys that angered Grendel :

> Sægde sē þe cūþe
> frumsceaft fīra   feorran reccan (vv. 90–91),

and an account of the Creation, — brief, general, subordinate, — follows. Then the bearing of the digression is made clear :

> Swā ðā driht-guman   drēamum lifdon
> ēadiglīce,   oð ðæt ān ongan, etc., — (vv. 99–100), —

thus returning to Grendel. Beowulf, again, when he is narrating his adventures to Hygelac, tells how Hrothgar's daughter, Freawaru, bore the ale-cup to those sitting in the hall. This suggests a long digression concerning Freawaru and Ingeld (vv. 2020–2069) ; when he says :

> Ic sceal forð sprecan
> gēn ymbe Grendel,   þæt ðū geare cunne, etc., — (vv. 2069–2070), —

it is clear that the digression is at an end, and that he has returned to his story. This story itself interrupts the action of the poem. At its close Beowulf offers presents to Hygelac and Hygd. A general characterization of Beowulf follows, suggesting the account, by way of contrast, of the hero's inglorious youth (vv. 2183 ff.). This departure from chronological order is exactly paralleled by the passage in the *Odyssey* where the discovery of Ulysses's scar brings up the story of the boar-hunt and his youth. In the *Beowulf* it is a matter of a few lines merely ; it seems

part of the passing characterization; and at the close the hero com-
mands to bring in the sword (v. 2190). By rapid summary the poet
passes on to the stealing of the cup from the Dragon's hoard. Again
he interrupts the story to give an account of the hoard and its possess-
ors, and again we may note the treatment of departure and return
(vv. 2214–2280). Again, when Beowulf was preparing to fight with the
Dragon, he was not afraid (v. 2350). Why should he be? Had he not
cleansed Heorot? And he had fought a harder battle when Hygelac
was slain. The story of this battle follows; then that of Beowulf's long
swim, of Hygd's desire that he should be king and his refusal, of Heard-
red's death and Beowulf's kingship. At last the poet returns with a
summary to the main theme of the narrative. The incident of the swim-
ming-match is similarly treated; Unferth's taunt brings out the story;
Beowulf at the close of his own version taunts Unferth with cowardice,
and thus easily returns to the subject of Grendel and his own vow. The
passage is all in dialogue, and, as when Ulysses tells his story at the
court of Alcinous, the use of the first person continually reminds the
reader that the passage is a digression.

The chief episodes are similarly treated. Those of Sigemund and
Finn (vv. 871 ff.) are introduced as sung by Hrothgar's scop, though the
former is in indirect discourse merely. An account of Heremod follows
it, and after this the return is abrupt and unexpected (v. 1063). In the
case of the Finn episode both departure and return are made much
more emphatic (vv. 1065, 1159).

It is clear, then, that the poet had that quality of mind which enabled
him to hold the story in check as long as he pleased, to elaborate with
comfortable leisure his digression or episode, and then to pick up the
story at the point where he had left it, making clear to his hearers,
meantime, what he was about. This absence of haste, this ability to
hold in mind two things and to hold them apart, suggests the presence
of a temperament akin to that which produced the Homeric simile; only
the sense of beauty is not yet sufficiently developed. It is a tempera-
ment clearly foreign to balladist and writer of *Gest*.

So far we have been concerned with methods of relating these episodes
and digressions to the narrative proper. If we look at the passages them-
selves, we shall find that what was true of subordinate narrative in gen-
eral is true of them also. The stories are told rapidly, and in general
terms. The treatment of Sigemund's encounter with a dragon forms a
striking contrast to Beowulf's last battle. It is brief, rapid, unmotived,

and-quite without elaboration. In these qualities, and in the apparent assumption on the part of the poet of the hearer's familiarity with the story, it is not unlike a ballad. But its very general nature is in sharp contrast to ballad methods. In the Heremod passage, which immediately follows, and in the account of Finn (vv. 1068 ff.), is to be found the same assumption of familiarity, — an assumption probably in no need of contemporary justification. The obscurity of the episode must be due only to the ignorance of the modern reader; it cannot be alleged as a defect in the method of the poet. The Thrytho episode is somewhat less obscure, but it has all the other marks of an intentional subordination (vv. 1931 ff.). It is notable that no specific one of her evil deeds is mentioned, no individual courtier who suffered at her hands. The statements are all general. In the episode of Freawaru they are equally general (vv. 2024 ff.); and though we have here the actual words of an individual warrior, the use of the present tense throughout that portion of the episode gives one the impression[1] that it is intended to be imaginary and typical merely. Least general is the episode of Ravenswood and Ongentheow (vv. 2922 ff.). Yet even this is obviously different in manner from the main narrative; it is more rapid, less detailed, less vivid, less picturesque. With it may be contrasted even the incident of the swimming-match, — a minor incident, indeed, and yet not an episode, since it is concerned with an important event in the life of the hero, though chronologically somewhat out of place. In its detail and vividness, and in the comparative frequency of specific statement, it approaches much more nearly to the manner of the chief incidents of the epic.

The *Beowulf* is a poem of two adventures, and each adventure is treated as an organic whole. Aside from the digressions and episodes just discussed, no question arises as to the relation of part to part.[2] The attempt to connect incident with incident, which formed part of our discussion of the *Gest*,[3] now confines itself, therefore, to the connection of the two adventures, one with another. This connection is but slight: there is no evidence that the second part is foreseen in the first. The second does, indeed, connect itself with the first by two brief references

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[1] Probably, however, we have merely an instance of the common Anglo-Saxon use of the present tense to refer to the future.

[2] The minor inconsistency of Beowulf's throwing away the sword Hrunting, and then returning it with thanks and compliments to Unferth, may be disregarded.

[3] Pp. 92 ff., above.

(vv. 2351, 2521) to the cleansing of Heorot. But these occur in con-
nection with references to other early adventures, adventures not men-
tioned in the first part. Between the cleansing of Heorot and the fight
with the Dragon there is no organic or causal connection : the fits in
the *Gest* stand closer to one another. A discussion of structure in the
narrower sense, — of beginning, middle, and end, — must treat the two
parts as distinct wholes.[1]

The poet begins, if not with the Creation, at least with the genealogy
of his nation, and traces back the royal line to the mythical ancestor,
Scyld. The ship-funeral seems a bit of unnecessary elaboration, but it
is not difficult to guess the reason for its presence. It emphasizes the
mysterious origin of the race. A similar elaboration of the mysterious
coming would have been more effective, no doubt, but the mysterious
departure serves the same purpose. For it was a return "into whence
he came." No one will deny that this ship-funeral is in itself impress-
ive ; how far, in Freytag's phrase,[2] it indicates the peculiar mood of the
piece is another matter. *Beowulf* is not a tragedy, yet the mood of the
poem is melancholy, — melancholy relieved by grim triumph. This
quality one finds at once in

> Þā gyt hīe him āsetton   segen gyldenne
> hēah ofer hēafod,   lēton holm beran,
> gēafon on gār-secg ;   him wæs gēomor sefa,
> murnende mōd (vv. 47–50).

But, after all, this ship-funeral is only a matter of twenty-five lines or
so, forming a part of a genealogical introduction, which comes down to
Hrothgar and the building of Heorot. The introduction, indeed, has
nothing to say of the "nationality and life-relations of the hero."[3] The
account of Heorot and Grendel's first attack, which follows, does, how-
ever, serve to indicate the objective point, and the hearer looks for-
ward to the coming of a hero to cleanse the hall, as we look forward to
the coming of Ulysses and the defeat of the suitors.

What Freytag calls the "exciting force"[4] begins at the point where
Beowulf learns of Grendel's deeds and resolves to seek out Hrothgar
over sea. The "Rising Movement"[5] follows in the form of Beowulf's

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[1] Cf. Aristotle, *Poetics*, trans. Butcher, p. 31.
[2] *Technique of the Drama*, trans. MacEwan, Chicago, 1896, p. 118.
[3] Id., p. 118.   [4] Id., p. 121.   [5] Id., p. 125.

voyage and arrival, and the scenes in Heorot, including the dialogue concerning the swimming-match leading up to the Climax, or Objective Point.

The climax is double; it consists of the fight with Grendel and the fight with Grendel's mother. They are separated by the rejoicing in Heorot, the Sigemund episode, the Finn episode, the coming of Grendel's mother, and Hrothgar's description of the mere. If we look now at the objective points themselves, we are struck at once with the fullness of elaboration, with the contrast which they offer to the merely subordinate narrative. A single clause, in the latter, tells of Grendel's meal of thirty thanes:

> ond on ræste genam
> þrītig þegna (vv. 122–123).

It may be contrasted with the devouring of the single thane which immediately preceded the fight:

> ac hē gefēng hraðe   forman sīðe
> slæpendne rinc,   slāt unwearnum,
> bāt bān-locan,   blōd ēdrum dranc,
> syn-snædum swealh;   sōna hæfde
> unlyfigendes   eal gefeormod,
> fēt ond folma (vv. 740–745).

The elaboration in this canto (xi) is mainly in the direction of description of mental states;[1] but it includes also much in regard to action, — exemplified in the lines last quoted. Ten Brink's analysis of battle-description is here in point: "In Kampfbeschreibungen pflegt der Dichter häufiger Halt zu machen, um die Empfindungen, Absichten, Entschlüsse der Kämpfer darzulegen oder um eine Reflektion über ihre Lage u. dgl. einzuflechten. . . . An sinnlich wirkenden Nebenzügen und an Bildlichkeit des Ausdrucks fehlt es . . . auch hier keineswegs."[2] That, as ten Brink says, the decisive moment is not brought out effectively, is true. But it is true also that, in a sense, there is in this first combat no decisive moment: Grendel escapes alive.

The combat with Grendel's mother is similarly treated. Description of mental states is here, however, less common; the action is more varied and the passage is richer in detail. This is because arms and armor are employed. Beowulf's burnie twice saves his life; his sword

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[1] Cf. pp. 215 ff., below.
[2] Paul's *Grundriss*, II, i, 528.

refuses to bite and he finds another hanging on the cave wall. The
" wolf of the sea-bottom " attempts to kill him with her short knife. It
is notable, also, that in this encounter the issue is in doubt; when Beo-
wulf's sword fails him and he is thrown on the ground he is as near
death as ever was epic hero in the middle of the poem. Here, too, the
decisive moment is more effectively brought out (vv. 1563 ff.). After
it come the cutting off of Grendel's head and the effective passage in
regard to the blood on the water. What follows, — Beowulf's account
of the fight, and Hrothgar's moralizing speech (pleasing though it may
have been to the contemporary audience), — can hardly be said to form
a dramatic close. The contemporary audience would no doubt delight in
the gift-giving, however, and Beowulf's return to his own land forms a
definite close to this first adventure. Here, it will be remembered, some
account of his character is mingled with the account of his presentation
of the gifts to Hygelac and Hygd.

The second adventure opens with the rapid summary (vv. 2200 ff.)
of the hero's reign, already quoted. The account of the Dragon's dep-
redations and the reason for them follows, — a careful exposition of the
causes which lead eventually to Beowulf's death.[1] Beowulf prepares for
the contest; but this is delayed by the long digressions concerning the
death of Hygelac and Heardred, the affair of Herebeald and Hæthcyn,
and the slaying of Dæghrefn. It is further delayed by the journey to
the cave (vv. 2400 ff.), by Beowulf's long speech to his men, and his
challenge of the Dragon. The combat itself (vv. 2550 ff.) resembles
that with Grendel's mother. It is richer in external details, — in the
handling of arms and armor, the failure of the sword, the curves and
belching fire and smoke of the dragon, — than in descriptions of mental
states. In the one hundred and fifty lines from the challenge to the
Dragon's death, we learn only of the battle wrath of the hero (v. 2550),
that each of the combatants feared the other (v. 2565), and that the
hill's keeper was enraged by the first blow. We learn at great length,
however, what Wiglaf's thoughts were (vv. 2605 ff.) ; and the combat is
delayed while he speaks suitable words (*word-rihta fela*, v. 2631) to
the thanes (vv. 2633–2660), and by his shorter speech to Beowulf
(vv. 2663–2668). Beyond this we know only that Beowulf was mindful
of fame to the end. Here, again, ten Brink makes the same criticism
in regard to the decisive moment, — " dass der entscheidende Moment

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[1] Cf. p. 184, above.

nicht wirkungsvoll genug hervortrete. Letzteres gilt zumal vom Kampf mit dem Drachen, wo Wiglaf's grosse That in einem Nebensatz unterge-bracht ist."[1] It is clear that ten Brink was at this point comparing the *Beowulf* not with the ballad but with the poetry of art. His comment is not historically true. The ballad, as we have seen, shows a decided tendency to slip past the climax, to omit the objective point altogether, to rest satisfied with implication or suggestion.[2] The method of the *Beowulf* is at this point directly opposed to the method of the ballad, and what is remarkable is, that so much is made of the deciding moment (vv. 2697 ff.). There is no room for doubt as to what happened; the Dragon was slain, and we learn in the lines that follow that Beowulf was mortally wounded.

The conclusion of the poem is somewhat long-drawn-out. Yet it is a definite and logical close, not a mere arbitrary stoppage of the narrative. The movement is, however, slow, broken by Wiglaf's curse of the thanes, the speech of the messenger, when it should have hurried on to the end. The poem closes as it begins, with a funeral, and as in the *Gest* the last lines are in praise of the hero.

IV. General Characteristics of the Narrative Method

Our analysis of the structure of the *Beowulf* will have made it evident that the Movement is neither the steady jog-trot of the *Gest*, nor the leaps and bounds of the ballads. It is not only that the epic movement is broken by digressions, episodes, and by the poet's interest in other things, — like Setting, Character, States of Mind; even where we have to do with nearly pure narrative, there is a deal of restlessness, but no steady advance. This is due in part to the well-known peculiarity of Anglo-Saxon poetic style, so that within the bounds of the sentence one takes a step backward for every two forward. It is characteristic also of the conduct of the narrative as a whole. The poet, with all his skill in the management of digressions, seems at times incapable of keeping his place in the story. The account of Beowulf's setting out for Heorot is a case in point:

> fiftena sum
> sund-wudu sohte;   secg wisade,
> lagu-cræftig mon,   land-gemyrcu (vv. 207–209).

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[1] Paul's *Grundriss*, II, i, 528.
[2] P. 46, above.

They have embarked, one gathers, and the voyage has begun. But one turns the page and reads :

> Fyrst forð gewāt ;   flota wæs on ȳðum,
> bāt under beorge.   Beornas gearwe
> on stefn stigon ;   strēamas wundon
> sund wið sande (vv. 210 ff.).

Surely they are off now ! But :

>   secgas bǣron
> on bearm nacan   beorhte frætwe,
> gūð-searo geatolīc ;   guman ūt scufon,
> weras on wil-sīð,   wudu bundenne (vv. 213 ff.).

This is completely typical : nothing, obviously, could offer greater contrast to the movement of ballad or *Gest*. We have noted the poet's delight in ships and the sea : clearly it pleased him to dwell upon the embarkation ; apparently he could linger only by means of this repetition.

Repetition of a more obvious sort, — where the same incident is narrated as a whole several times, in passages widely separated, — also occurs. Thus, after the poet has told how Beowulf overcame Grendel's mother (vv. 1515 ff.), Beowulf himself tells the story to Hrothgar, in briefer form, but retaining the essential features (vv. 1655 ff.). After his return to Hygelac, Beowulf gives him a complete account of his adventures at Heorot, — so that all that part of the poem is here repeated, — and includes, now in still briefer form, the encounter with Grendel's mother (vv. 2135 ff.). Unlike ballad repetitions, the phrasing is varied ; nor can the epic show any exact parallelism like the contrasted incidents of monk and knight in the *Gest*.[1] The poet liked to repeat what he thought an effective part of his narrative ; but he was too much of an artist not to vary the treatment.[2] And not only phrases but facts are varied : the poet adds new details in the later account. It is only from Beowulf's report to Hygelac that we learn, for instance, of the presence of Freawaru in Heorot, and of her betrothal ; and Grendel's pouch (*glōf*, v. 2085) is not mentioned elsewhere. But omissions are more common than additions, and in general the later narratives

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[1] Cf. pp. 93 ff., above.

[2] We shall see presently that dialogue does not exactly repeat the narrative. Cf. p. 198, below.

are shorter than the earlier. Clearly it was the poet's intention to make them so :

> " Tō lang ys tō reccenne,   hū ic ðām lēod-sceaðan
> yfla gehwylces   hond-lēan forgeald " (vv. 2093 f.)

he makes Beowulf say.

Repetition, unintentional or intentional, of whatever the poet finds effective, is then a characteristic of the narrative method. One of the most telling things in the poem is the coming of Grendel, and it is not surprising that here, as in the embarkation of Beowulf, repetition should occur. Grendel "cōm on wanre niht" (v. 702), "cōm of mōre" (v. 710),

> Wōd under wolcnum,   tō þæs þe hē wīn-reced,
> gold-sele gumena,   gearwost wisse (vv. 714 f.);

"cōm þā tō recede" (v. 720). In the when, whence, whither, and in the use of *wōd* ("went with difficulty"), the repetition is in a sense incremental, and for this reason more justifiable than in cases like the embarkation. With the bearing of such repetitions upon the origin of the poem we are not concerned. We have to note simply the frequency of their occurrence,[1] and the fact that they differ from ballad repetitions in that the phrasing is varied and that they delay the movement.

These repetitions constitute departures from the chronological order of events, and, in spite of the new interest in temporal relations, such departures, not repetitions, are common. This, — if one may regard the *Odyssey* as a type, — is a regular epic trait. It cannot occur in the drama. Not only in his dealing with episodes and with events external to the action of the poem, but even in his narration of the events of the hero's life, the poet evidently felt free to depart from the chronological order.[2] If we add to the effect of these departures, that involved in the

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[1] One may compare also the repeated statement of the fact of the Dragon's death (vv. 2706, 2745, 2771, 2777–2782, 2824–2835, 2844, 2903, 3038 f.).

[2] A table of the order of events of Beowulf's life will show what changes the poet has made :

The Son of Ecgtheow (373).

After his Seventh Year Brought up at Hrethel's Court (2428).

His Slothful and Unwarlike Youth (2183).

Fight with the Nickers (418) (perhaps same as next).

Swimming-Match with Breca (506).

Journey to Heorot (194).

Fight with Grendel (710).

Fight with Grendel's Dam (1310).

Return to Hygelac, and account of adventures (1799).

Death of Hygelac and the Long Swim (2357).

Refusal of Throne (2370).

Death of Heardred and Succession of Beowulf (2200, 2385).

Fifty Years' Reign (2209).

Fight with the Dragon (2401).

Funeral (2821).

repetitions, it becomes evident that the movement of the narrative as a whole is similar to its movement in detail, that there is an endless advance and return. And even this halting progress is broken by digressions and episodes, by description of character, of mental state, of setting.

Like the composer of the Heroic Ballads, the poet of the *Beowulf* is more likely to hint at dark things to come, to play upon the hearers' knowledge of the fate awaiting one of the persons, in a kind of tragic irony, than to attempt to arouse intense curiosity as to the outcome. Thus, after the defeat of Grendel,

> Bēor-scealca sum
> fūs ond fǣge   flet-rǣste gebēag (vv. 1240–1241),

and the audience were no doubt thrilled by the thought of Grendel's mother and the fate of Æschere. Toward the close of the poem, again, there are frequent hints of the tragic end of the hero.[1] Yet dramatic suspense is ordinarily preserved : Beowulf is ignorant of what is to come, as for instance before the fight with Grendel's mother, where he gives directions as to what is to be done in case of his death (vv. 1474 ff.). On the whole, it is clearly unsafe to insist much upon the conscious narrative art of the poet. For what we find in place of suspense is primarily the indulgence in melancholy thoughts for their own sake. Sometimes, however, the hint of what is to come is by way of reassuring the audience.[2]

In the narrative of art the writer sometimes creates suspense by telling what might have happened, then what did happen. The poet of the *Beowulf* reverses this order : the conjecture follows the fact. Thus after the account of how Beowulf's burnie saved his life in the sea-cave :

> Hæfde ðā forsīðod   sunu Ecgþēowes
> under gynne grund,   Gēata cempa,
> nemne him heaðo-byrne   helpe gefremede (vv. 1550 ff.).

Similarly, a few lines below, Beowulf's followers see Grendel's blood come to the surface, and suppose Beowulf slain. It is easy to see how effective this might have been made for one who should share the ignorance of the waiting thanes, staring at the sea. The waiting earls toward the end of the poem offer an opportunity of the same sort (v. 2893).

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[1] Cf. vv. 2309, 2341, 2419, 2586.
[2] Cf. vv. 734, 805.

There is similar contrast between Grendel's expectation and its fulfil-
ment (vv. 712 ff.), or between the thanes' peaceful sleep after the ban-
quet and what was to follow it (vv. 118 ff.). In other passages the
contrast lies between present and past, instead of present and future,
and the effect is that of emphasis rather than of suspense. Thus in
the fight with the Dragon :

<div align="center">

nearo ðrōwode

fȳre befongen,   sē ðe ǣr folce wēold (vv. 2594 f.).[1]

</div>

The transition from ballad to *Gest* was accompanied by an increase
in the amount of Dialogue. This, however, does not continue in the
Beowulf.[2] It replaces the dramatic tendency of the *Gest* by a quality
peculiar to the epic and characteristic of the heroic style. Instead of
the quick interchange of speeches, carrying on the action, we have
long[8] and formal harangues interrupting the action. This formality
bears no resemblance to the ballad conventions of dialogue. Question
is not repeated in answer,[4] — even question and answer are themselves
less common, — and there is nothing to correspond with the stanzaic
groups, so characteristic of ballad dialogue. When, as in the ballad, the
dialogue repeats the narrative, — as do the coast-guard (vv. 237 ff.),
Wulfgar (vv. 333 ff.), Beowulf (vv. 1652 ff., 2000 ff.), the messenger
(vv. 2900 ff.), Wiglaf (vv. 3077 ff., 3114 ff.), — in all such cases the
repetition is never verbally exact or even approximately close. The
poet's ideal is clearly variety, rather than similarity. The formality is
rather of a kind peculiar to the epic. M. Jusserand distinguishes Celt
from Teuton by readiness of speech. " ' The people of Gaul,' said Cato,
' have two passions, to fight well and talk well.' "[5] Not the passion for
clever repartee, certainly, but surely that for eloquence, appears in the
Beowulf. The long speeches are there for their own sake : they do not
characterize, do not carry on the action. They are formal, dignified,
ceremonial in character. They are introduced often with the full name
of the speaker and the verb *maðelian* :

<div align="center">

Bēowulf maðelode   bearn Ecgðēowes

</div>

or

<div align="center">

Hrōðgār maðelode   helm Scyldinga.

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[1] Cf. also vv. 1522 ff.

[2] For the figures see p. 315, below.

[8] The average length of speeches is 30 lines ; longest, 128 ; shortest, 4.

[4] Professor Robinson points out one apparent case of such repetition at the
beginning of the Finnsburh fragment.

[5] *Literary History of the English People*, p. 9.

This *maðelian* has distinctly formal associations, — with *mæðel*, "a council, a meeting, a popular assembly,"[1] and means "to harangue, address, make a speech." Twenty-four of the forty-one speeches are introduced by it; the others by a number of colorless words like *secgan, sprecan*, no one of them used more than three or four times. Further evidence of the character of the speeches is given in the passage:

> Ðā se wīsa spræc,
> sunu Healfdenes;   *swīgedon ealle* (vv. 1698–1699).

Again, it is said that Hygelac greeted Beowulf with courtly speech and solemn words (v. 1980). Akin to the giving relationship or title in the assignment is the heaping up of a kind of kennings in the speech itself, producing the same effect of ceremonial formality. Thus Wulfgar:

> "Ic þæs *wine Deniga*,
> *frēan Scildinga*,   frīnan wille,
> *bēaga bryttan*,   swā þū bēna eart,
> *þēoden mǣrne*,   ymb þīnne sīð,
> ond þē þā ondsware   ǣdre gecȳðan,
> ðe mē *se gōda*   āgifan þenceð" (vv. 350 ff.).

It would be easy to multiply examples. This is, of course, merely a convention of Anglo-Saxon poetry; it is not confined to the dialogue, nor is it certain that it is consciously used by the poet to dignify the speeches. It has this result, nevertheless, and helps to produce an effect very different from the rapid, give-and-take informality of question and answer in the *Gest*.[2]

The subject-matter of the epic speeches is in keeping with their manner. They are essentially "occasional," called forth always by typical situations which might have been foreseen and prepared for. There is nothing impromptu about them. There is, in the first place, the sentinel's challenge[3] and the reply, — the coast-guard and Beowulf, Wulfgar and Beowulf. Beowulf's reception at Heorot has been discussed.[4] Hrothgar in a formal speech entrusts the hall to his keeping. Later, Beowulf takes a formal farewell and offers to return at need. A boast

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[1] The coast-guard asked Beowulf his errand in *meðel-wordum* (v. 236).

[2] See p. 101, above.

[3] Cf. the similar challenge in the Border Ballads — e.g., in *Otterburn*. The enemy refuses to tell his name or who he is, though each party knows all about the other.   [4] Pp. 153 ff., above.

or vow precedes every combat (vv. 415 ff., 632 ff., 677 ff., 1392 ff., 1490 ff., 2511 ff., 2518 ff.). When the thanes are to take part in the fight, the leader exhorts them to do their duty[1] (vv. 2633 ff.). After the battle the king thanks and praises the hero (vv. 928 ff., 1700 ff., 1841 ff.), once (vv. 1700 ff.) wandering off into an interminable sermon. The hero makes formal reply (vv. 958 ff.). The queen bears the mead-cup to the hero, or rewards him with jewels, and makes a formal speech of presentation (vv. 1169 ff., 1216 ff.). Wiglaf solemnly pronounces judgment upon the coward thanes (vv. 2864 ff.). The hero makes his will, or gives directions for his own pyre and barrow (vv. 1474 ff., 2800 ff.). The one formal description is in dialogue form (vv. 1357 ff.) and many of the episodes and minor incidents are thus related.

The most significant[2] phase of the occasional speech is the lament for the dead. It is evidently conceived by the poet as a formal dirge. Thus it is said that Hildeburh, at Hnæf's funeral pyre, *gēomrode giddum* (v. 1118); and it is no easy thing for an old man to endure that he should see his son ride young upon the gallows,

> þonne hē gyd wrece,
> sārigne sang (vv. 2446–2447).

Beowulf's men rode about his body;

> woldon [ceare] cwīðan,　　kyning mænan,
> word-gyd wrecan,　　ond ymb w[er] sprecan;
> eahtodan eorl-scipe,　.　ond his ellen-weorc
> duguðum dēmdon,　　*swā hit ge-dē[fe] biþ*
> þæt mon his wine-dryhten　　wordum herge (vv. 3171 ff.).

And when, in the closing lines of the poem, these words themselves are given, parallelism and rhyme suggest that the poet is making use of a conventional form :

> manna mildust　　ond mon-[ðw]ærust,
> lēodum līðost,　　ond lof-geornost (vv. 3181–3182).

Somewhat artificial in the use of the sonorous name for its own sake is, as we have seen, Hrothgar's lament for Æschere. Here, however, parallelism is confined to a single line (v. 1325), and it is something like

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[1] On the "Kampfreden" in A. S. poetry, cf. ten Brink, Paul's *Grundriss*, II, i, 531.　　　　[2] Cf. Gummere, *The Beginnings of Poetry*, pp. 222 ff.

the "envelope figure" of the Psalms ("Dēad is Æschere . . . swylc Æschere wæs") that suggests the conventional quality of the dirge. As for contents, we have always a celebration of the character of the dead, with strong emotional coloring. It is significant that, as has been said, Hrothgar's grief is predominatingly official; it is significant, too, that Beowulf is lamented, in the passage just quoted, not by an individual but by a chorus.

A special form of Germanic dialogue, — the Flyting, — occurs once in our epic (vv. 506 ff.). It is a very simple affair. Unferth, envious of Beowulf, says that he was beaten in a swimming-match; Beowulf shows that he was not, and accuses Unferth of being his brother's murderer, and of cowardice. "Beowulf crushes all he touches; in his fights he upsets monsters, in his talks he tumbles his interlocutors headlong. His retorts have nothing winged about them; he does not use the feathered arrow, but the iron hammer."[1] Ballad and *Gest* approach far nearer the Celtic ideal.

The *Beowulf* has one instance of soliloquy or apostrophe. It is the lament of the last survivor for his fallen kinsmen and comrades, for the vanished joys of the hall and of fellowship. It is remarkable for its dramatic and lyric quality, for the imaginative sympathy of the poet with the speaker; the elegiac mood might well have been the poet's own, and yet, of course, he could never have found himself in this situation. For insight and imaginative power there is no parallel in ballad or *Gest*. The method, however, is not unlike that of the lyrical ballads:[2] it is the method of indirection and suggestion, of "potential pathos." Not one word expresses directly the emotion of the speaker : he enumerates results merely, known causes, attendant circumstances. We learn indeed that the kinsmen "gesāwon sele-drēam," that now "nis hearpan wyn" (vv. 2252, 2262); but only in this "denial of opposites" are emotions named. Yet there can be no doubt whatever of the emotional effect intended. It would be impossible, for instance, to regard the closing lines of the lament as mere statement of fact :

> Nis hearpan wyn,
> gomen glēo-bēames,   ne gōd hafoc
> geond sæl swingeð,   ne se swifta mearh
> burh-stede bēateð.   Bealo-cwealm hafað
> fela feorh-cynna   forð onsended (vv. 2262 ff.).

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[1] Jusserand, *Literary History of the English People*, p. 55.   [2] Cf. p. 33, above.

The peculiar quality of this soliloquy becomes more evident as one compares it with *The Ruin*.[1] The writer of this poem "placed his thought in the midst of the destruction of the town by the West Saxons, and pitied those who suffered it."[2] In method it is similar to the *Beowulf* passage : the mood of the speaker, — of the poet, — is expressed by an enumeration of external objects, which serve to create the same mood in the reader. Once the poet transfers the mood to the objects, — "ðās hofu drēorgiað," he says (v. 30); and, like the Last Survivor, he directly describes past joys; but for the rest the subjective element is implied only.[3] Here is the same contrast of past and present, the same "tender regret" for the Past, the same connotative detail, and regret for vanished hall-joys, — conceiving this vanished life in terms of Anglo-Saxon society. As in the *Beowulf*, too, the poet refers the building of the burg to a mysterious past; it was the work of giants; and the Fates shattered it. So far the *Beowulf* and *The Ruin* are at one. But in *The Ruin* it is general calamity that the poet laments, not the fate of an individual involved in that calamity :

> Crungon walo wīde   cwōman wōldagas:
> swylt eall fornom   secgrōf wera;
> wurdon hyra wīgsteal   wēsten staðolas,
> brosnade burgsteall.   Bētend crungon
> hergas tō hrūsan (vv. 26 ff.).

The poet is detached; he is of another time, another place, another race. In *Beowulf*, on the contrary, the poet buries his own personality in that of the Last Survivor, sees the whole calamity only from his point of view, makes him speak and lament his fallen comrades. The *Beowulf*, it seems, has greater lyric, and, at the same time, greater dramatic power. It is further from communal beginnings, shows more distinctly the hand of the individual artist.

Hrothgar's laments for his thanes and for Æschere (vv. 473 ff., 1321 ff.) have this same emotional quality. But in these the situation is more obvious, and the emotional unity is not so well sustained ; the speeches are briefer, and with grief are mingled other emotions. Here the expression is in part direct, — "Sorh is mē tō secganne" (v. 473) Hrothgar begins. It is wholly so in Hygelac's speech to Beowulf (vv. 1992 ff.).

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[1] Grein-Wülcker, I, 298.

[2] Brooke, *Early English Literature*, p. 107.

[3] Cf. especially vv. 30 ff.

In the light of the Last Survivor's lament, and of Beowulf's regret that he has no son (v. 2729) it is clear that far more than a mere statement of fact is intended in Beowulf's last words :

> " þū eart ende-lāf   usses cynnes,
>   Wǣgmundinga ;   ealle wyrd forswēop
>   mīne māgas   tō metod-sceafte,   .
>   eorlas on elne ;   ic him æfter sceal " (vv. 2813 ff.).

The dignity and simplicity, compactness and suggestiveness, of this fare-well are worthy the hero of the poem. But the lines need no comment.

Dialogue in the epic is, then, capable of emotional coloring and far surpasses *Gest* and ballad. And this in spite of its formal character and conventional tendencies. For the purposes of character-suggestion, how-ever, the style is not sufficiently flexible. And the conventions are too much for it ; on those typical occasions which give rise to the speeches no one could say anything else, or say it in a very different way.

Indirect Discourse, scarcely present in ballad or *Gest*, is common in the epic. Examples are not necessary.[1] There is a case of indirect within direct discourse (vv. 391 ff.), which is interesting also as repeti-tion of direct in indirect. A case of direct within direct (vv. 2047 ff.) involves similar complications, — where in Beowulf's account of Hroth-gar's attempt to compose a feud by a marriage, the old spear-warrior speaks to the young Dane. Such complexity implies the same sort of intellectual method as that required to handle the parentheses in an algebra problem, — a method of prose, not found in ballad or *Gest*. Our poet is not quite up to it. He begins the account of the Sigemund Episode in indirect discourse (vv. 874 ff.), but presently changes to direct discourse or forgets that the scop was supposed to be telling the story (v. 884). Perhaps also to be classified as cases of indirect discourse are those passages where the substance of a speech is given, but without any attempt at paraphrase.[2]

In the assignment of Dialogue, — to which we may now turn our attention, — there is often a preliminary summary of the speech in indirect discourse.[3] In some cases this takes the form of a preliminary characterization of the speech rather than that of a summary.[4] Unlike

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[1] Cf. vv. 200, 386, 991, 1809, 2152, 3180, etc.
[2] E.g. vv. 1978 ff., 2550 ff.
[3] E.g. vv. 652 ff., 3110 ff., etc.
[4] E.g. vv. 675, 2510.

the habit of the ballads, and carrying further that of the *Gest*, the speeches are always assigned, usually with some care and elaboration. The epic shows a tendency to use a formula for the purpose :

Bēowulf maðelode[1]   bearn Ecgðēowes.[2]
Hrōðgār maðelode   helm Scyldinga (vv. 371, 456, 1321).
Wīglāf maðelode   Weohstānes sunu (vv. 2862, 2876).
Unferð maðelode   Ecglāfes bearn (v. 499).

The tendency to give full name or title is characteristic of the formality of epic dialogue. Sometimes the character of the speaker is conveyed in an epithet.[3] Or the appearance of the speaker at the moment is described (v. 405), or the speaker's attitude or position (vv. 499, 2041); or his accompanying or immediately preceding action (vv. 389, 925, 1687, 2809); or the speech is interrupted by an action (v. 2661). Sometimes the assignment includes a parenthetical account of the speaker's mental state (vv. 501 ff.). Often the poet tells to whom the speech is addressed (vv. 340 f., 1840, 2631 f.).

The ballads were noteworthy, it will be remembered, for the omission of these assignments. The *Gest* assigned the speeches, told often to whom they were addressed, characterized — though vaguely and conventionally — the speech before it was uttered, described appearance or action of the speaker to show his emotion, described his character or state of mind. The epic hardly does more, but does it more carefully, shows an increased nicety and discrimination in description of character or states of mind. It is more leisurely, digressive, parenthetical in tendency. The assignments, it will be noted, serve often to emphasize the dignity of the speaker and so enhance the peculiarly formal or ceremonial effect of epic dialogue.

V. The Undeveloped Elements of Narration

The key to the transition from Ballad to Cycle and *Gest* was found, it will be remembered, in a new emphasis of Character. Character, still simple, still little more than the mere doer of deeds, came to embody a class-feeling, to serve as test for acceptance or rejection of new material, as unifying principle for the whole. In the transition from *Gest* to Epic

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[1] For the use of *maðelian* cf. p. 199, above.

[2] This line occurs nine times: vv. 529, 631, 957, 1383, 1473, 1651, 1817, 1999, 2425. *Bēowulf maðelode*, simply, is also common.

[3] E.g. vv. 340, 348, 675, 1698, etc.

there is no such shift of emphasis: in the *Beowulf*, Character is still unifying principle; it is increase, rather than shift. In the *Beowulf*, however, Character no longer embodies class-feeling. The hero stands, not for the class, but for the nation, and in rank and attainment he is typical of the best that the nation knows. In place, moreover, of class-feeling resulting from rivalry with another class, there is a national feeling, which is not the result of rivalry with another nation, but of a contest more significant and far-reaching, of the human contest with hostile and mysterious powers. As a result of this change, of this higher and more serious conception, the hero bulks larger, he is greater, nobler, more powerful; and he raises, almost to his own heroic level, the characters with whom he comes in contact. He completely dominates the action, for he is supreme, subject to the power of Fate alone.

The chief person of the Epic is a good deal more complex than the chief person of the *Gest.* That interest in character for its own sake, which we saw beginning in the *Gest*, is carried further here ; certainly it would not be possible for Beowulf to change places with any other character without affecting the action. Before we finish the poem he comes to have for us a definite and palpable personality. We know a good deal about him : he was *good*, whatever that may mean (*se gōda*, vv. 205, 384, 758, 1190, 1518, 3036; *gōd*, vv. 195, 1870, 2543, 2563). No one was better than he (v. 860); he was the best of men (vv. 947 1759). He was "wīgend weorð-fullost wīde geond eorðan" (v. 3099). He was, moreover, *æþele* (v. 198); *æþeling ēadig* (v. 1225); *æðeling ān-hȳdig* (v. 2667). It is chiefly Beowulf's valor that the poet delights to dwell upon, and to set forth in epithet and action. He was *mōdig* (vv. 502, 1643, 1812, 3011); *hige-rōf* (vv. 204, 403); *ellen-rōf* (v. 340); *heaþo-rōf* (v. 381); *rōf ōretta* (v. 2538); *beadwe heard* (v. 1539); *nið-heard cyning* (v. 2417); *heard under helme* (v. 2539); *hilde-dēor* (v. 834). He was careless of his life, — " nā ymb his līf cearað " (v. 1536); "nalles for ealdre mearn " (v. 1442), — contrasted with Unferth, who durst not " under ȳða gewin aldre genēþan " (v. 1469) ; most of all men he " mærða gefremmede dæda dollicra " (v. 2645). He saw victory or death at the end of every conflict (vv. 635, 1491, 2535). He would not use arms against Grendel (v. 679); he scorned to attack the Dragon with an army (v. 2345), or with his thanes (v. 2529). As the guardian of his people he was determined to seek out the Dragon (v. 2511); even in this conflict he would not have borne arms, but for the fire and poison, — that was no coward's work (v. 2541). His size and strength made

great deeds possible. The coast-guard had never seen a larger man
(v. 247): "sē wæs mon-cynnes mægenes strengest" (vv. 196, 780),
wigena strengest (v. 1543), *þrȳð-swȳð* (v. 736); he had thirty men's
strength in his hand-grip (v. 380); Grendel never experienced a
stronger (v. 752); he trusted to his hand-grip, — so shall a man do
(v. 1534); no one else could wield the giant's sword in the sea-cave
(v. 1561); no sword was strong enough for him (v. 2685); after the
battle in which Hygelac was slain, Beowulf escaped by swimming, carry-
ing the equipment of thirty men (v. 2380). He was of the aggressive
type; he took the initiative, the offensive. He went to Heorot upon a
sudden determination (v. 1988), seeking adventure; he tracked Gren-
del's mother to her sea-cave and slew her there; he sought the contest
with the Dragon. He thought that it was better for a man to avenge his
friend than to mourn him long (v. 1384). Here his own vigorous action
is contrasted with Hrothgar's impotent grief; the same contrast is evi-
dent at the close of Hrothgar's long moralizing speech. To this Beowulf
had no reply; the poet says merely:

> Gēat wæs glæd-mōd,   gēong sōna tō
> setles nēosan,   swā se snottra heht (vv. 1785 f.).

The contrast is evident again at the parting of Beowulf and Hrothgar:

> Wæs him [Hrothgar] se man tō þon lēof,
> þæt hē þone brēost-wylm   forberan ne mehte,
> ac him on hreþre   hyge-bendum fæst
> æfter dēorum men   dyrne langað
> bearn wið blōde.   Him Bēowulf þanan,
> gūð-rinc gold-wlanc,   græs-moldan træd
> since hrēmig (vv. 1876 ff.).

This is partly contrast in character, partly the eternal contrast between
youth and age; and we find Beowulf himself, near the close of the poem,
grown reminiscent and inclined to moralize (vv. 2426 ff., 2445 ff.). Beo-
wulf was strong in mind as well as in body: *hige-þihtig* (v. 746); *collen-
ferhð* (vv. 1806, 2785); *swið-mōd* (v. 1624); *swȳð-ferhð* (v. 826);
stearc-heort (v. 2552); *þrīst-hȳdig* (v. 2810); he was wise, — *snotor*
(v. 826); *se snotera* (v. 1313); *wīs ond gewittig* (v. 3094); said
Hrothgar:

> "ne hȳrde ic snotorlīcor
> on swā geongum fēore   guman þingian;
> þū eart mægenes strang,   ond on mōde frōd,
> wīs word-cwida" (vv. 1842 ff.).

His strength of mind was the more notable in one who had had a stupid youth (v. 2183). He was unselfish, too : in case of his death, he asked Hrothgar to look after his thanes (v. 1480), and to send gifts to Hygelac as evidence that he had found Hrothgar a generous lord (vv. 1485 ff.). He would not succeed Hygelac while Heardred lived (vv. 2375 ff., 2369 ff.). Dying, he thought of the future needs of his people (v. 2801), and Wiglaf said that he " folc-rēd fremede," — " wrought his folk's good " (v. 3006). In his thought of others he was generous, also : as he returned from Heorot he gave a sword to the boat-ward (v. 1900), gave Hrothgar's gifts to Hygelac and Hygd ("swā sceal mǣg dōn," v. 2166). As king, Beowulf was " gold-wine Gēata " (vv. 2419, 2585), " wil-geofa Wedra lēoda " (v. 2900). Wiglaf recalled to the recreant thanes their leader's generosity in the giving of arms and jewels (vv. 2635 ff., 2864 ff.), spoke of him as one " þe ūs bēagas geaf " (v. 3009), and the thanes found dead " þone þe him hringas geaf " (v. 3034). This thought of others showed itself also in a less obvious and more delicate way, in Beowulf's praise of Unferth's sword, Hrunting, which had failed him in the battle :

> sægde him þæs lǣnes þanc,
> cwæð, hē þone gūð-wine   gōdne tealde,
> wīg-cræftigne,   nales wordum lōg
> mēces ecge.   þæt wæs mōdig secg (vv. 1809 ff.).

As a result of all these good qualities, Beowulf was not only admired and respected but beloved. He was addressed as *Bēowulf lēofa*, by Wealhtheow (v. 1216), by Hrothgar (vv. 1759, 1854), by Hygelac (v. 1987), by Wiglaf (v. 2663); he was spoken of as *se lēofesta* (v. 2823), *lēof þēoden* (v. 3079), *lēof manna* (vv. 2897, 3108), *lēof hlāford* (v. 3142). His friends at home wished him to essay the adventure in Heorot, " þēah hē him lēof wǣre " (v. 203). Hrothgar twice expressed his affection for him (vv. 948, 1707), and grieved at their parting (v. 1876). His relation to his subjects and retainers is indicated by phrases like *winia bealdor* (v. 2567), *eorla hlēo* (v. 791), *lid-manna helm* (v. 1623), and by Hrothgar's prophecy, contrasting him with the savage Heremod :

> " þū sceält tō frōfre weorþan
> eal lang-twidig   lēodum þīnum,
> hæleðum tō helpe.   Ne wearð Heremōd swā " (vv. 1707 ff.).

In view of Beowulf's manifest unselfishness and generosity, it is not unfair to assume disinterested motives in his love of treasure. He is

described as *gūð-rinc gold-wlanc* (v. 1881); and as he lay mortally wounded he bade Wiglaf hasten to bring out the jewels of the Dragon's hoard, that, seeing them, he might die the easier. The Christian improvement is hardly necessary:

> Næs hē gold-hwæt; gearwor hæfde
> Āgendes ēst ǣr gescēawod (vv. 3074-3075).

He *was* "gold-hwæt," but in no bad sense, and the poem gives evidence not of low ideals but of frank acceptance of common motives. There is similar absence of modern sophistication in Beowulf's love of fame: he was *mǣrða gemyndig* (v. 1530), he *mǣrða gemunde* (v. 2678); Wiglaf recalled to him his own saying, that he would never let his honor cease (v. 2665), and the last word of the poem describes him as *lof-geornost*. He boasted frankly of his own great deeds in the past;[1] and he delighted to vow or promise great deeds for the future (vv. 636 ff.), in words very pleasing to the queen Wealhtheow.

In addition to these scattered bits of evidence, there are a few longer and more formal characterizations. Hrothgar praises at some length Beowulf's prudence and patience (vv. 1705 ff.). The poet sums up, near the end of the first part of the poem, the hero's life and character (vv. 2177 ff.); and it is, finally, with praise of Beowulf's character that the poem closes:

> Swā begnornodon Gēata lēode
> hlāfordes hryre, heorð-genēatas;
> cwǣdon þæt hē wǣre wyruld-cyning,
> manna mildust ond mon-ðwǣrust,
> lēodum līðost, ond lof-geornost.

Here, then, is a character, good, wise, unselfish, generous, thoughtful of others, beloved, fond of treasure and of fame, proud of great deeds in the past, ready to boast of others to come, — a character relatively complex, embodying high ideals, and notably real.

Aside from the hero, the mere number of characters, also, shows a marked advance. We are no longer in the unpeopled region of the ballads, or in the limited and isolated region of Robin Hood. In the *Beowulf* there is a complicated society; the poet is conscious of whole nations, of kings, queens, heroes, warriors, retainers. This is not because the *Beowulf* is a longer poem, merely, for at any moment the reader

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[1] Cf. vv. 408 ff., 532 ff., 2097 ff., 2732 ff.

knows something of the positions and actions of a large number of persons, as when Beowulf struggles with Grendel, while his retainers vainly bring their swords to his aid, Hrothgar and Wealhtheow sleep in their bower, and Hrothgar's retainers, far from the hall. Minor characters and characters which play no part in the poem receive their full share of description. And to the methods of this description we may now turn our attention.

There was in the *Gest*, it will be remembered, evidence of the writer's feeling of the importance of character; the poem opened with a description, comparatively set and formal, of the chief person. It is easy to trace a distinct advance in the epic; there is even greater evidence of the same feeling: not the hero, merely, but minor characters are described with more or less formality; and it is characteristic of the epic " Behagen " that these descriptions do not occur at the beginning of the whole poem or of parts of it alone, but that the writer feels that he may turn aside from the narrative and introduce them whenever he likes. The description of Hygd is the most notable example :

> Hygd swīðe geong,
> wīs, wel þungen,   þēah ðe wintra lȳt
> under burh-locan   gebiden hæbbe
> Hæreðes dohtor;   næs hīo hnāh swā þēah,
> ne tō gnēað gifa   Gēata lēodum,
> māðm-gestrēona (vv. 1926 ff.).

Hygd plays no part in the story; it is a clear case of interest in character for its own sake. It is notable, moreover, that abstraction (of character from action) is here carried much farther than in the *Gest*. There, it was a matter of habitual action merely,[1] — the evidence was given and no conclusion drawn, except such as might appear in some conventional phrase or meaningless epithet: here, only the conclusion is given (" næs hīo hnāh swā þēah "), without the evidence, yet close, in the last phrase, to habitual action (" ne tō gnēað gifa ").

Character reveals itself, however, here, as in the *Gest*, in repeated actions. Hrothgar,

> Hē bēot ne ālēh,   bēagas dǣlde,
> sinc æt symle (vv. 80–81).[2]

But the commonest and most characteristic method is perhaps that of the epithet. The epithet usually does not go very far in the way of

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[1] Cf. pp. 103 f., above.   [2] Cf. also vv. 434, 2645.

definite characterization, — as far perhaps in the following parenthesis
as anywhere :

> Wulfgār maþelode   (þæt wæs Wendla lēod,
> wæs his mōd-sefa   manegum gecȳðed,
> wīg ond wīs-dōm) (vv. 348 ff.).

More colorless are the descriptions of Hrothgar as *frōd ond gōd* (v. 279),
se gōda (v. 355), *þēoden mærne* (v. 353); *glædman Hrōðgār* (v. 367)
is a little more definite. Often the epithet is a kenning, — sometimes
more, sometimes less, conventional. Purely conventional are *bēaga
brytta* (vv. 35, 352, etc.), *sinces brytta* (v. 607), *sinc-gyfa* (vv. 1012,
1342, 2309). A little less so, perhaps, are *helm Scyldinga, folces hyrde*
(v. 610), *lidmanna helm* (v. 1623). Characterization by epithet, kenning,
alliterating phrase, may occur anywhere in the sentence; and the poet
seems to take a special delight in filling out his line with brief descriptive
phrases. Thus, in the seafarers' report of Beowulf, they said

> þæt hē þrittiges
> manna mægen-cræft   on his mund-gripe
> *heaþo-rōf* hæbbe (vv. 379 ff.).[1]

Or, as in the passage about Wulfgar (v. 348), characterization is part of
the assignment or introduction of the speech. These formulæ imply,
obviously, no careful examination of character, no nice distinctions.
But the very fact that so many of the kennings and alliterating phrases
describe character shows the importance, in the common poetic con-
sciousness, of the persons to the narrative. In general, it is the poet's
power of saying two or three things in a great many different ways that
strikes one in the description of character by epithet.[2]

The method of self-description is uncommon : Beowulf, however,
gives an account of his own character, though in general terms, and
implying no introspection (vv. 2732 ff.). Although what he says is nar-
rative in form, he is clearly thinking of his career as a whole, as he had

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[1] Cf. also vv. 340 ff.

[2] The poet makes use of the following epithets: *ān-hȳdig, ār-fæst, æðelu,
beadu-rōf, blīðe, collen-ferhð, cræftig, cwēnlīc, cyning-bald, dǣd-cēne, dēor-līc,
dryhtlīc, ellen-rōf, earg, fela-hrōr, fracod, fram, fyrd-hwæt, fyrd-wyrðe, gār-cēne,
gilphlæden, glæd, glæd-man, gnēað, gold-hwæt, gold-wlanc, gōd, gōd-fremmend,
gūð-rēow, hēaðo-dēor, hild-lata, hyge-rōf, mon-ðwǣre, milde, mōdig, nīð-hēard,
nīð-hēdig, orleahtre, rūm-heort, scearp, snell, snotor, stearc-heort, til, unfrom, wæl-
rēow, wel-ðungen, weorðfull, wīg-cræftig, wīs, wīs-fæst, wīs-hycgende, wītig, wlanc.*

made it, — which amounts to saying that he was making an estimate of his own character, based on the history of his life. This method of characterization is made use of in the *Gest*,[1] but only in the case of the knight, briefly, and in a bit of special pleading, where such an explanation is immediately necessary for the purposes of the action. In the *Beowulf* it is detached from the action ; it has no immediate value as motive or explanation ; it exists for itself alone, and so marks in another way the epic's advance beyond the *Gest*.

Not so much is to be made of the expression of character in dialogue. Beowulf's speeches are commonly eloquent and formal (e.g. vv. 407 ff.), yet hardly more so than many others. He is perhaps more cheerful and vigorous than Hrothgar, whose words, now and again, have a melancholy tone (vv. 470 ff., 1700 ff.; especially v. 1761). But this is all inevitable as a result of the action ; and certainly there is no evidence of conscious art. In this matter the epic goes as far as the *Gest*, but no farther.

If not character, characteristic emotion at least, is reflected in the soliloquy or apostrophe of that single survivor of his race, whose hoard Beowulf in the end paid his life to win (vv. 2247 ff.). This passage is so much more serious, so much more significant (not of method merely, but as criticism of life), that it seems absurd to compare it with Little John's soliloquy.[2] But, compared with any passage in the *Gest*, or with the *Gest* as a whole, the immense difference in scope is evident at once. One may look through the *Gest* in vain for anything like the suggestion of universal truth in the opening line :

> "Heald þū nū, hrūse, nū hæleð ne mōstan,
> eorla æhte " (vv. 2247–2248).

There is no such obvious emphasis of specific action for purposes of character in the *Beowulf* as in the *Gest*. In the latter the emphasis was made obvious by contrast : Robin doffed his hat when the monk did not ; the knight told the truth when the monk lied. When contrast is used for the same purpose in the *Beowulf*, it is less neatly exact. With Beowulf's probable treatment of his people is compared Heremod's treatment of his (vv. 1710 ff.). The comparison is on a larger scale, it deals with more significant matters, as befits the method of the epic. Unimportant actions are introduced less obviously for the purpose of character-description, and they are not emphasized by contrast. After all, however,

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[1] Cf. p. 104, above.   [2] The *Gest*, st. 154.

Gest and epic are practically at one on this point. Whatever difference one may feel is due to the greater dignity of epic characters, epic action, and epic style.

In the matter of contrasting characters, however, the epic makes a distinct advance beyond the *Gest*. In only one case[1] are two characters contrasted which are both concerned in the action of the poem ; and here again the contrast is not so immediate or so obvious : Unferth's cowardice serves as a foil for Beowulf's courage. In the flyting, Beowulf silences Unferth with a taunt[2] (v. 590), and goes on to make promise of what he himself will do. The poet brings out the same contrast before the fight with Grendel's mother. Unferth gave his sword to Beowulf :

<blockquote>
selfa ne dorste
under ȳða gewin   aldre geneþan,
driht-scype dreogan ;   þær hē dōme forlēas,
ellen-mǣrðum.   Ne wæs þǣm ōðrum swā,
syððan hē hine tō gūðe   gegyred hæfde (vv. 1468 ff.).
</blockquote>

More common and more significant is a second kind of comparison or contrast. In the comparison of Hygd and Thrytho (vv. 1926 ff.), of Beowulf and Heremod (vv. 901 ff., 1705 ff.), and of Beowulf and Sigemund (vv. 875 ff.), a character is brought in from outside, as a character merely. To do this, the character in the poem must first have been thought of as a type ; then the nature of this type is made clear by contrast with the other, — of Hygd, by placing Thrytho, the type of cruel queen, beside her ; of Beowulf, by placing Heremod ("stock example of bad and cruel king") beside him. As in the contrast of Wiglaf and the cowardly retainers (vv. 2850 ff.), so in the case of Sigemund (vv. 871 ff.) it is a matter of action rather than of character.[3] This allusion is introduced abruptly, not, perhaps, consciously for purposes of comparison. Similarly abrupt is the introduction of Thrytho (v. 1931). Hrothgar, on the contrary, deliberately contrasts Beowulf and Heremod : Beowulf shall be "hæleðum tō helpe. Ne wearð Heremōd swā" (v. 1709).[4]

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[1] More than one, if we include that of Wiglaf and the cowardly retainers, or those mentioned by ten Brink (cf. note 4, below).

[2] The two are reconciled in the end : note the matter of the sword (p. 207, above).

[3] As in the Finn episode (vv. 1068 ff.), so here, we have not only the poet's account of a method of composition, but also a case of literary allusion.

[4] Ten Brink (Paul's *Grundriss*, II, i, 530) points out other cases of contrasting characters : Hrothgar and Beowulf ; Ingeld and the "eald æsc-wiga" (v. 2042) ; Beowulf and Wiglaf. These are all within the poem, and, as involving mainly the mere contrast of age and youth, do not seem so significant.

Another phase of contrast, not found in the *Gest*, is that which involves, in each case, only one character. After the comparison of Hygd and Thrytho, just mentioned, the poet goes on to recount Thrytho's history (vv. 1946 ff.), telling how when she had become Offa's wife she ceased to inflict "folk-woes" and was renowned for gifts. And in the case of Beowulf, there is a contrast where inglorious youth enhances glorious manhood (vv. 2183 ff.). But, except what is involved in the change from early manhood to old age, it is difficult to trace development and "purification" of character within the action of the poem. This method is clear, however, in the case of Thrytho, just cited ; it is a method not made use of in the *Gest*.

As far as the appearance of the characters is concerned, while there is ample evidence of visualization (and, in this respect, an advance beyond the *Gest*), this visualization seems to take certain conventional forms. It does not individualize; and it confines itself almost wholly to dress.[1] The coast-guard was clearly impressed by something more in Beowulf's appearance than his armor ; but his description sums up an effect merely, gives no details (vv. 247 ff.). So far as this, however, the poet rarely goes ; ordinarily he confines himself to descriptions of arms and armor. In these he was clearly interested for their own sake, and in visualization and effective description he goes far beyond anything in the *Gest*. Not only in brief parenthetical passages,[2] like

> Bēowulf maðelode   (on him byrne scān,
> searo-net sēowed   smiþes or-þancum) (vv. 405–406),

but also in longer and more formal descriptions, like that of the arming of Beowulf before the encounter with Grendel's mother [3] (not unsuggestive of Homeric methods), or like that of the arrival at Heorot of Beowulf and his men, does this enthusiasm for arms and armor manifest itself. The passage last mentioned is worthy of special attention :

>   Eofor-līc scionon,
> ofer hlēor-bergan,   gehroden golde,
> fāh ond fȳr-heard ;   ferh wearde hēold (vv. 303 ff.).

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[1] Like Macbeth, watching the apparition of Banquo and the eight kings, the poet seems to have seen nothing but the hair: he found this usually gray, — *blonden-feax, gamol, gamol-feax, unhār*, and, once, *bunden-heorde ;* these, with the vague words *ansȳn* and *wlite*, complete the vocabulary of personal description. And even in these, apparently, the writer was not thinking primarily of personal appearance, but of age or general effect.

[2] Cf. also v. 1162.   [3] Vv. 1441 ff.

Gūð-byrne scān
heard hond-locen,   hring-īren scīr
song in searwum,   þā hīe tō sele furðum
in hyra gryre-geatwum   gangan cwōmon.
Setton sæ-mēþe   sīde scyldas,
rondas regn-hearde,   wið þæs recedes weal,
bugon þā tō bence ;   byrnan hringdon,
gūð-searo gumena ;   gāras stōdon,
sæ-manna searo,   samod ætgædere,
æsc-holt ufan græg ;   wæs se īren-þrēat
wæpnum gewurþad (vv. 321 ff.).

Such a description deals not with an individual, but with a troop, and it is obvious that it is not indicative of character at all, unless of business-like preparation for hard fighting. It is notable, however, for its relative richness in detail, for the appeal to ear as well as to eye (" hring-īren scīr song in searwum," and " byrnan hringdon "), and for the way in which the action is continued throughout (especially in vv. 324 ff.). It is nota-ble, moreover, for its highly suggestive quality. It is surely not to the modern reader alone that

Eofor-līc scionon
ofer hlēor-bergan,   gehroden golde (vv. 303–304),

connotes triumph, or that *æsc-holt ufan græg* connotes grim battle. The poet's delight in his own work seems to ring out in his final summary,

wæs se īren-þrēat
wæpnum gewurþad (vv. 330–331).

Finally, in this examination of characterization, we have to note a method which was seldom found in the *Gest*, — namely, description by the effect upon others, or by the report of others. The seafarers' report of Beowulf's strength, and Wiglaf's account of his character have been already cited (vv. 379 ff., 2642 ff.). To these might be added Wulfgar's report to Hrothgar of the strangers at the door of Heorot (vv. 361 ff.). Such passages show, of course, the effect of the one char-acter upon the other. This is made a little more definite in passages like those that reveal how Beowulf was beloved by his subjects and by Hygelac (vv. 3180 ff., 1987 ff.), how Hrothgar esteemed his wisdom (vv. 1842 ff.), how the coast-guard was impressed by his *ænlīc ansȳn* (v. 251), and how Grendel found that he had never met a man of such strength and was terrified (v. 751).

As compared, then, with the *Gest*, we find the characters more heroic, more complex, and more numerous ; formal descriptions of them are more common, and, in these descriptions, there is evidence of greater power of abstraction, greater consciousness of the type. There is evidence, that is, of an intellect at work, classifying, ordering, drawing conclusions. It is still a far cry to the Eighteenth Century, but in these methods of characterization, poetry has moved perceptibly in that direction, in the direction of the methods of prose and reason.[1]

We commonly say that the Epic is objective, meaning thereby that it reveals nothing of the personality or feelings of a writer. Shakspere's plays are, in the same sense, objective. To say, however, that the epic is objective in the sense that it reveals nothing of the thought or emotions of its characters, — this is another matter. To find out how far the *Beowulf* may be said to be objective in this latter sense, there is no better way than to take some few lines from the poem, to note those words and sentences that depict thought or emotion, and to see what proportion they bear to the whole passage. A passage like Canto xi, which deals with Grendel's approach and fight with Beowulf, one of the objective points of the poem, when action is in full swing, — such a passage, we should expect, more than any other, to emphasize physical movement, outward matters, the appearance of things. References to mental states should be, at least, below, certainly not above, the average for the whole poem.

Ðā cōm of mōre   under mist-hleoþum   710
Grendel gongan, · *Godes yrre bær;*
mynte se mān-scaða   manna cynnes
sumne besyrwan   in sele þām hēan.
Wōd under wolcnum,   tō þæs þe hē wīn-reced,
gold-sele gumena, *gearwost wisse,*   715
fǣttum fāhne ;   ne wæs þæt forma sīð,
þæt hē Hrōþgāres   hām gesōhte.
Nǣfre hē on aldor-dagum   ǣr ne siþðan
heardran hæle,   heal-ðegnas fand.
Cōm þā tō recede   rinc sīðian   720
drēamum bedǣled;   duru sōna onarn,
fȳr-bendum fæst,   syþðan hē hire folmum hrān ;
onbrǣd þā *bealo-hȳdig,   ðā hē gebolgen wæs,* .

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[1] For discussion of Grendel and Methods of Characterization, see under "Supernatural" (pp. 181 ff., above).

recedes mūþan.   Raþe æfter þon
on fāgne flōr   fēond·treddode,   725
ēode *yrre-mōd;*   him of ēagum stōd
ligge gelīcost   lēoht unfæger.
Geseah hē in recede   rinca manige,
swefan sibbe-gedriht   samod ætgædere,
mago-rinca hēap.   *þā his mōd āhlōg;*   730
mynte þæt hē gedælde,   ǣr þon dæg cwōme,
atol āglǣca,   ānra gehwylces
līf wið līce,   þā him ālumpen wæs
_ *wist-fylle wēn.*   Ne wæs þæt wyrd þā gēn,
þæt hē mā mōste   manna cynnes   735
ðicgean ofer þā niht.   *þrȳð-swȳð behēold*
mǣg Higelāces,   hū se mān-scaða
under fǣr-gripum   gefaran wolde.
Ne þæt se āglǣca   yldan þōhte,
ac hē gefēng hraðe   forman sīðe   740
slǣpendne rinc,   slāt unwearnum,
bāt bān-locan,   blōd ēdrum dranc,
syn-snǣdum swealh;   sōna hæfde
unlyfigendes   eal gefeormod,
fēt ond folma.   Forð nēar ætstōp,   745
nam þā mid handa   hige-þihtigne
rinc on ræste;   rǣhte ongēan
fēond mid folme;   *hē* [1] *onfēng hraþe*
inwit-þancum   ond wið earm gesæt.
Sōna þæt onfunde   fyrena hyrde,   750
þæt hē ne mētte   middan-geardes,
eorþan sceatta,   on elran men
mund-gripe māran;   *he on mōde wearð*
forht, on ferhðe;   nō þȳ ǣr fram meahte.
Hyge wæs him hin-fūs,   wolde on heolster flēon,   755
sēcan dēofla gedræg;   ne wæs his drohtoð þǣr,
swylce hē on ealder-dagum   ǣr gemētte.
Gemunde þā se gōda   mǣg Higelāces
ǣfen-sprǣce,   ūp-lang āstōd
ond him fæste wiðfēng;   fingras burston;   760
eoten wæs ūt-weard;   eorl furþur stōp.
Mynte se mǣra,   hwǣr hē meahte swā,
wīdre gewindan   ond on weg þanon
flēon on fen-hopu;   wiste his fingra geweald

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[1] Taken as referring to Beowulf.

on grames grāþum. þæt wæs gēocor sīð, 765
þæt se hearm-scaþa tō Héorute ātēah.
Dryht-sele dynede ; *Denum eallum wearð,*
ceaster-būendum, *cēnra gehwylcum,*
eorlum ealu-scerwen. *Yrre wǣron begen*
rēþe rēn-weardas. Reced hlynsode ; 770
þā wæs wundor micel, þæt se wīn-sele
wiðhæfde heaþo-dēorum, þæt hē on hrūsan ne fēol,
fæger fold-bold ; ac hē·þæs fæste wæs
innan ond ūtan īren-bendum
searo-þoncum besmiþod. þēr fram sylle ābēag 775
medu-benc monig, mīne gefrēge,
golde geregnad, þēr þā graman wunnon ;
þæs ne wēndon ǣr *witan Scyldinga,*
þæt hit ā mid gemete *manna ǣnig,*
betlīc ond bān-fāg, *tōbrecan meahte,* 780
listum tōlūcan, *nymþe līges fæþm*
swulge on swaþule. Swēg ūp āstāg
nīwe geneahhe ; *Norð-Denum stōd*
atelīc egesa, *ānra gehwylcum,*
þāra þe of wealle *wōp gehȳrdon,* 785
gryre-lēoð galan *Godes ondsacan,*
sige-lēasne sang, *sār wānigean*
helle hæfton. Hēold hine fæste,
sē þe manna wæs mægene strengest
on þēm dæge þysses līfes. 790

An examination of this passage shows that 31½ out of 80 lines deal
with thought or emotion. They deal with the thought or emotion of all
in any way concerned in the action (Grendel, 18 ; Builders of the Hall,
5 ; Danes, 3½ ; Beowulf, 3½ ; Beowulf and Grendel, 1 ; God, ½). One
is at first surprised to find so little apparent interest in Beowulf, so much
in Grendel. But this is clearly because the writer is making his hero as
effective as possible.[1] He tells first of Grendel's purpose, of his wrath
and fury, of his joy in finding the hall full of thanes, of his more definite
intention. After he had devoured Hondscio, and attacked Beowulf and
felt his hand-grip, by way of contrast are described his fear, his eager-
ness to escape. This contrast of feelings redounds to Beowulf's glory,
as does his own momentary fear and that of the Danes, as contrasted

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[1] The same thing was noted in the cases of Robin Hood and the Knight, in the
Gest (cf. p. 107, above).

with his courage (v. 767). The thoughts of the builders of the hall (vv. 775 ff.) imply the fierceness of the struggle and the strength of the combatants, — only a great hero could conquer such a foe. The song of the vanquished, finally, arouses again the Danes' terror, and implies the power of the victor.

The passage shows, moreover, that, much as the poet is interested in mental processes, — purposes, resolutions, and emotional results of reactions, — he is not interested in elaborate psychological analyses, or capable of them. What he deals with is thought or emotion of the simplest, most obvious sort. His psychologizing — such as it is — is to emphasize action, merely; it has, as we have just seen, no purpose of its own. It is, furthermore, exceedingly limited in scope : the poet seems to be fairly familiar with what goes on in a man's mind before, during, and after battle. He knows the dread of the conflict and tells us not without suggestions of pathos, how, when Beowulf and his men lay down to sleep in Heorot,

> Nǣnig heora þōhte,   þæt hē þanon scolde
> eft eard-lufan   ǣfre gesēcean,
> folc oþðe frēo-burh,   þǣr hē āfēded wæs (vv. 691 ff.);[1]

or how, during battle, a mighty wrath strengthened the hero's blows (v. 1564); or how the thought of his vow held him to his purpose (v. 758). After the battle was the grief of the vanquished, — Grendel singing his " victory-less lay " (v. 787), or returning to his joyless dwelling (v. 821), — or the sorrow for the dead (v. 128), or the joy of the victors (v. 1063).

Of mental states not connected with the battle the poet has little to say. Three times his characters are consumed by curiosity;[2] the pleasure of Wealhtheow in Beowulf's vow has been mentioned (v. 639);[3] and the recreant thanes felt shame as they bore back their shields (v. 2850).

Beyond such minor matters as these there is little or nothing to show the scope of the poet's psychology.[4] Clearly his range is greater than that of the poet of the *Gest*, just as his attention is more constantly directed to mental states. We have now to ask whether there is the

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[1] Cf. vv. 2564 ff.
[2] The coast-guard, Hygelac, Wiglaf (vv. 232, 1985, 2784).
[3] P. 208, above.
[4] See, however, the discussion of Motives (pp. 178 ff., above).

same gain in the methods of presentation. Here again Canto xi is fairly typical. The closing lines show the way in which various methods are combined :

> Norð-Denum stōd
> atelīc egesa,   ānra gehwylcum,
> þāra þe of wealle   wōp gehȳrdon,
> gryre-lēoð galan   Godes ondsacan,
> sige-lēasne sang   sār wānigean
> helle hæfton (vv. 783 ff.).

First we have the direct epithet, — the *atelīc egesa ;* then the cause of this, — the *gryre-lēoð, sige-lēas sang,* itself an expression of feeling. The first of these methods — the rendering of emotion by direct epithet — occurs most frequently. Often the poet devotes a whole clause or sentence to this purpose ; as to Scyld's retainers after the ship-funeral :

> him wæs gēomor sefa,
> murnende mōd (v. 49).

More commonly, however, such epithets are parenthetic, sometimes in the introduction of speeches :

> Wīglāf maðelode   word-rihta fela,
> sægde gesīðum   (him wæs sefa gēomor) (vv. 2631 f.).

Sometimes the epithet occurs in the course of the ordinary narrative, in the form of an adjective used as a noun, and so produces its effect incidentally and rapidly :

> Setton sǣ-mēþe   sīde scyldas (v. 325).[1]

This same direct method is used in the rendering of thought also ; the present purpose of a character is clearly described (as in Beowulf's determination not to let Grendel escape alive, v. 791), or the method takes the form of a narrative of past events (as in the thoughts of the builders of Heorot in regard to their work).

Occasionally the poet pursues more dramatic methods than these : he allows the characters to express emotion by their own actions or words. After Grendel's inroads, he who slept not in hall but in bower was "easy

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[1] It should be noted also that the number and variety of these epithets, and the possibility of nicety in their application (of which the *sǣ-mēþe* is an excellent illustration, — a definite kind of weariness) are much greater here than in the *Gest.* A glance through Wyatt's glossary will show this more effectively than quotations.

to find " (v. 138). While Beowulf fought with Grendel's mother in the
sea-cave, many of the watchers left the cliff, but his own retainers

> Gistas sētan
> mōdes sēoce,   ond on mere staredon ;
> wiston ond ne wēndon,   þæt hīe heora wine-drihten
> selfne gesāwon (vv. 1602 ff.).[1]

The *on mere staredon*[2] is as effective in its way as Keats's sonnet :

> Or like stout Cortez, when with eagle eyes
> He stared at the Pacific — and all his men
> Look'd at each other with a wild surmise —
> Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

The simple, universal expressions of emotion, — tears and laughter, —
are not wanting.[3] Dialogue, too, has an emotional coloring : " word
wǣron wynsume " (v. 612); and Beowulf challenged the dragon, " þā
hē gebolgen wæs " (v. 2550). And the speeches have in themselves
emotional quality, — as Hrothgar's   " is mīn flet-werod,

> wīg-hēap, gewanod ;   hīe wyrd forswēop
> on Grendles gryre " (vv. 476 ff.).

Emotion is suggested by mention of known or easily conceivable causes ;
or partly suggested thus, partly denoted by other means. Purely sug-
gestive is the passage where the coward thanes come from their hiding
places after the fight with the Dragon, and find Wiglaf, who

> gewērgad sæt,
> fēðe-cempa,   frēan eaxlum nēah,
> wehte hyne wætre ;   him wiht ne spēow.
> Ne meahte hē on eorðan,   ðēah hē ūðe wel,
> on ðām frum-gāre   feorh gehealdan (vv. 2852 ff.).

Denotation and connotation combine in the account of Wiglaf's grief
(vv. 2821 ff.); in that general picture of imaginary misery,[4] which fol-
lows as a comment on the case of Hrethel (vv. 2444 ff.); and in the
account of Grendel's sufferings in the outer darkness :

> Đā se ellen-gǣst   earfoðlīce
> þrāge geþolode,   sē þe in þystrum bād,
> þæt hē dōgora gehwām   drēam gehȳrde
> hlūdne in healle ;   þǣr wæs hearpan swēg,
> swutol sang scopes (vv. 86 ff.).

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[1] Cf. also vv. 1288 f.   [2] For this effective use of *starian* cf. also v. 2796.
[3] Cf. vv. 128, 611 f., 1872 f., etc.
[4] Another evidence of power of generalization or abstraction.

Emotional effect is heightened, in Hrothgar's lament for Æschere, by references to surrounding circumstances:

> Hröðgar maþelode, helm Scyldinga:
> " Ne frïn þü æfter sælum ; sorh is genïwod
> Denigea lëodum. Dëad is Æschere,
> Yrmenläfes yldra bröþor,
> mïn rün-wita ond mïn ræd-bora,
> eaxl-gestealla, ðonne wë on orlege
> hafelan weredon, þonne hniton fëþan,
> eoferas cnysedan " (vv. 1321 ff.).

And we have already seen [1] how the dread of the conflict was heightened, for Beowulf and each of his men, by thoughts of " folc oþðe frëo-burh, þær hë äfëded wæs " (v. 693). Finally, we have to note cases where emotions of persons are indicated by epithets transferred to objects. After the fight with Beowulf, Grendel returned to a " wyn-lëas wïc " (v. 822). The whole description of that secret land where dwelt Grendel and his mother has an emotional coloring, due partly to such transferred epithets. The path that leads thither is a *frëcne fen-geläd* (v. 1359); the nightly fire on the flood is a *nïð-wundor* (v. 1365); the land itself, *dÿgel*, not a *hëoru stöw* (v. 1372). This, however, is primarily a matter of setting, described in terms of the feelings which it involves ; *wyn-lëas wïc* is primarily a matter of emotion.

If, then, we except facial expression, in which, as we have seen, the *Beowulf* does really nothing at all, it would seem that the epic gains not only in the amount of description of mental states, and in their variety, but also in the methods of presentation. Epithets are more numerous and more nicely applied, actions are more various, in the *Beowulf* than in the *Gest*. In the use of known causes and in the heightening of emotional effect by reference to surrounding circumstances, our epic carries on ballad methods.

The question as to what, in general, the Setting is, has been considered in connection with the " Phase of Life " ; [2] our present concern, therefore, is merely with Methods of Description.

There is only one formal description, that of the secret land inhabited by Grendel and his mother (vv. 1357 ff.) ; it is " formal " mainly in its length, — twenty lines devoted to description, and to nothing else, not to be paralleled from *Gest* or ballad. But in the sense of giving

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[1] See p. 218, above, on vv. 691 ff. [2] Pp. 150 ff., above.

one first a general oversight of the whole country and then proceeding
to details, in the sense even of suggesting a plan, or of giving a system-
atic enumeration of parts, or of seeing all from a definite point of
view, — in any of these senses it is anything but formal.. It has unity,
however, unity of effect, so marked as to justify our " formal " after all.
Details are carefully selected with a view to an effect of " mystery and
terror " : it is a secret land (v. 1357) ; no man living is so wise that he
knows it (v. 1366) ; there the mountain stream goes down, under the
mists of the nesses, the water under the earth (v. 1359) ; there nightly
one may see a dread wonder, fire on the water (v. 1366). The very
vagueness of the description enhances the effect of mystery. A dread
path leads thither (v. 1359) ; it is a gloomy spot where great trees
overshadow the water (v. 1364). Even the hunted stag fears it more
than the hounds that pursue him (v. 1368). This famous bit of descrip-
tion by effect is the most telling of all, contributes most to the reader's
feeling about the place, — most, at any rate, after what he knows of
the inhabitants.[1] Finally, the poet describes it (or, at least, suggests its
appearance) at a particular moment : it is not a cheerful spot in times
of storm, when the air grows dark and the heavens weep (v. 1372).
The purpose of the description, in its suggestion of mystery and terror,
is to enhance not only the effectiveness of the whole supernatural
motive,[2] by localizing it and thus increasing its verisimilitude, but also
to heighten the dramatic effect of the moment. It is in this connec-
tion that the facts that Hrothgar is speaking, apparently from first-hand
knowledge, and that he is speaking to Beowulf, become significant. " As
yet you know not the dread place," Hrothgar concludes. " Seek it out
if you dare. I will reward you with ancient treasures and twisted gold,
gyf þū onweg cymest" (v. 1382). *if you come away*

This long description, however, stands alone, and what we know of
the setting we learn, for the most part, from mere glimpses, picturesque
touches here and there in the course of the narrative.[3] Thus as Beowulf
and his men approached Heorot,

> stræt wæs stān-fāh,   stīg wīsode
> gumum ætgædere (vv. 320–321);

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[1] It is what, perhaps, Professor Genung would call " dynamic description."

[2] For discussion of Setting as enhancing the effect of the Supernatural, see
under " Supernatural " (p. 181, above).

[3] These certainly do not give the same impression as Stopford Brooke's collec-
tive description in *Early English Literature* (pp. 31 f.).

and

> sigon ætsomne,   oþ þæt hȳ sæl timbred,
> geatolīc ond gold-fāh,   ongyton mihton (vv. 307–308).

Glimpses like these, or like that of Beowulf's Barrow (v. 2802), have a certain local color, not present in those picturesque touches that suggest natural phenomena like the coming of winter or of spring, or sunrise or nightfall. For example :

> siðða̅n hīe sunnan lēoht   gesēon [ne] meahton,
> oþðe nīpende   niht ofer ealle, ·
> scadu-helma gesceapu   scrīðan cwōman, ˏ
> wan under wolcnum (vv. 648–651).

Such passages are more effective in connection with the action, or as applied to a particular moment. As in the description in the swimming-match with Breca :

> Ðā wit ætsomne   on sǣ wǣron
> ɪ   fīf nihta fyrst,   oþ þæt unc flōd tōdrāf,
> wado weallende ;   wedera cealdost,
> nīpende niht   ond norþan wind,
> heaðo-grim ondhwearf ;   hrēo wǣron ȳða (vv. 544–548).

>   Lēoht ēastan cōm,
> beorht bēacen Godes ;   brimu swaþredon,
> þæt ic sǣ-næssas   gesēon mihte,
> windige weallas (vv. 569–572).

Here, as in others of the passages cited, there is evidently a gradual change in the point of view while the <u>viewer remains the same</u>. This method of "description from the traveler's point of view" is comparatively common, occurs here and there throughout the poem.[1] It occurs in the account of Beowulf's return to Hygelac after cleansing Heorot (vv. 1963 ff.). More specific, more indicative of a definite journey is the account of the pursuit of Grendel's mother :

> Oferēode þā   æþelinga bearn   ˏ
> stēap stān-hliðo,   stīge nearwe,
> enge ān-paðas,   uncūð gelād,   ˗
> nēowle næssas,   nicor-hūsa fela (vv. 1408–1411).

Though this is more specific, nearer the concrete, it is still generalized. And this is the common tendency of the description in the *Beowulf*,

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[1] See under Structure, "Journeys," p. 186, above.

— to fling together, hurriedly and without order, the elements of a land-scape, — often in the plural, as here, where there is not a *single* hill or path or ness, but *stān-hliðo, ān-paðas, nīowle næssas*. With all this vagueness, the descriptions are always impressive because of their unity of effect. One may note here how these vague plurals are saved in each case by the first member of the compound suggesting roughness, soli-tude. This effect (of mystery and terror, again) is notable when, at the end of the journey, Beowulf suddenly finds the joyless wood over-hanging the cliff, and the water beneath bloody and troubled (v. 1414). Important as was the Setting in the *Gest*, there was, it will be remem-bered, no formal description whatever,[1] and of method there was nothing to be said ; glimpses were rather fewer than in the *Beowulf*. As here, the details produced, usually, a general, though a less complex effect ; they suggested the delight in the woodland life. The details themselves were different, — smaller, less imposing, suggestive of lighter emotions, — in keeping with the smaller scale and lighter tone of the *Gest*. They were, however, more definite, easier to grasp, easier to visualize. There was nothing vague or mysterious about them.[2]

That absence of interest in questions of ethics is not a characteristic of popular literature as such, there is evidence in the Beast Fable. It was the intense interest in action, manifested in the balladists and in the poet of the *Gest*, that made them feel that, with the account of the action, the story was done. To abstract from this action, to follow out and to state explicitly its implications in regard to Character or Mental States was no part of their business. With the greater scope of the epic, however, with the more intellectual processes of the writer, — processes of comment, criticism, abstraction, — might well come a new consciousness of the ethical significance of the action, or even an increased interest in ethical questions for their own sake. And this, it turns out, is actually the case. No more, of course, than in ballad or *Gest*, is the whole impulse moral ; yet passages like those already noted, where a good character is set off by contrast with a bad, passages of no inconsiderable length, owe their presence in the poem to just such an impulse. As in the descriptions of character and mental states, some of these didactic passages are comparatively long and formal, while some are incidental or parenthetical merely. Some, furthermore, are

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[1] See p. 88, above.   [2] Cf. p. 109, above.

direct comments upon the action, while some seem to be mere isolated statements. Some, finally, are comments made by the poet, others are made, dramatically, by the characters in the poem. Taken altogether these passages present evidence of considerable weight and significance.

The dramatic comments (to begin with this class) are not so common as the others. Beowulf's advice to Hrothgar — that revenge is better than grief — has been cited (vv. 1384 f.). He anticipates the modern " Go West, young man " in his reason for Hrethric's seeking the Geatish court, —

> " feor-cyþðe beoð ·
> sēlran gesōhte,   þǣm þe him selfa dēah " (vv. 1838-1839).

Striking, also, is Beowulf's comment on his own action (vv. 1668 ff.). And the coast-guard's dictum shows how purely general these reflections may be (vv. 287 ff.). More commonly it is the poet himself that expresses approval or disapproval of the action, and in so doing he is likely to use the " swā-sceal " formula.[1] A phase of this didacticism, — the tendency to generalize, to see in the fate of one character the type of human experience, — is exemplified (together with the formula) in the comment on Beowulf's death : he,

> sceolde [ofer] willan   wīc eardian
> elles hwergen,   swā sceal ǣghwylc mon
> ālǣtan lǣn-dagas (vv. 2589 ff.).

But the *sceal* is more often directly didactic, — *ought* instead of *inevitably must,* and prescribes specific duties.[2] Another formula appears as comment on the subjects' praise of their dead king, Beowulf :

> ond his ellen-weorc
> duguðum dēmdon,   *swā hit gedēfe bið* (vv. 3173-3174).[3]

And similar in sense is the negative in verse 1940. Comments like the *ðæt wæs gōd*[4] *cyning* (v. 11), or the brief summary of the deeds of Scyld Scefing, show how readily the poet might take the ethical point of view. The same thing is shown in the whole treatment of the coward thanes of Beowulf, — in Wiglaf's reproach of them, and his depriving them of citizenship (vv. 2865 ff.). The poet is dealing with a concrete case in a concrete way, but he feels, clearly enough, its general significance.

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[1] On these passages, " formulated with the gnomic *sceal*," see Earle, *The Deeds of Beowulf*, p. lxxvi.   [2] As in vv. 20 f., 1531 f., 2165 f., 2708 f.

[3] Cf. v. 1670.   [4] Whatever *gōd* may signify.

Thus, in his account of what Wiglaf saw as he walked through the
dragon's cave, he pauses to insert the general reflection:

> Sinc ēaðe mæg,
> gold on grunde,   gum-cynnes gehwone
> oferhīgian,   hȳde sē ðe wylle (vv. 2764 ff.).

And when he has told how the treasure which Beowulf had given his
life to win was placed in the barrow with him, he adds:

> þǣr hit nū gēn lifað
> eldum swā unnyt,   swā hi[t ǣro]r wæs (vv. 3167 f.).

The longest and most elaborate of these gnomic passages is Hrothgar's
sermon on the transitoriness of human life and happiness (vv. 1700 ff.),
in the course of which he makes special application of the idea to Beo-
wulf's life and to his own (vv. 1761 ff.). He himself had ruled the
Danes for fifty years, and had so secured them by war that he dreaded
no enemy, but then came a change, sorrow after joy, when Grendel
became a visitor to Heorot (vv. 1774 ff.). Hrothgar thus, in a sense,
moralizes a large portion of the first part of the poem. With the ques-
tion as to whether this whole sermon is a Christian interpolation we are
not concerned; we have only to note its presence. It seems, however,
that the majority of the passages just discussed are of heathen origin;
it is the virtues of the Germanic warrior that they emphasize, not —
except in so far as the two may be identical — those of the perfect
Christian. In any case they prove the presence of a moralizing tend-
ency. This is another phase of that tendency which we have noted in
the treatment of Character, Mental States, Setting, — the tendency to
abstract and generalize, to approximate, though never so little, the
methods of poetry to the methods of prose and reason.

CHAPTER VI

THE ROLAND

I. The Phase of Life

The place relations are on the whole less significant than in the
· *Beowulf*. The *Roland* is indeed far richer in geography: more than a
hundred geographical names, — of countries, towns, and rivers, — are
mentioned, and produce a realistic effect, much as in the English Bor-
der Ballads. If some of these names denote purely imaginary localities,
the greater number deal with places real and still familiar, like Cordova,
Saragossa, Aix, Spain, France, England; even the modern reader feels
that he can localize the action.

This effect of reality, however, is due almost wholly to the names and
to what for the reader they connote. The scene of the action is by no
means so completely visualized as in the *Beowulf*. The *Roland*, like
the English ballad, is an inland poem ; there is no glimpse of the sea
or of wild, rocky coast, none of that peculiar suggestion of mystery and
sorrow which is so characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon poem. For the
French poet Nature is no longer " aware," no longer closely associated
with man ; it is dead, external. Thunderstorm and earthquake, indeed,
accompanied the death of Roland (vv. 1423 ff.) ;[1] but here the poet
seems to depend rather more upon St. Matthew[2] than upon his own
experience. The sun, too, stood still while Charlemagne completed his
revenge (v. 2459); but this is clearly mere reminiscence of a Biblical
miracle, the result, not of direct contact with nature, but of a learned
tradition. And throughout the poem there is little evidence of first-hand
observation. There is no description which approaches in length, in
formality, or in completeness that of the haunt of Grendel. Of the
scene of the main action of the *Roland* we have only a few of the ele-
ments, casually mentioned in somewhat conventional line or phrase, like :

> Halt sunt li pui et li val tenebrus,
> Les roches bises, li destreit merveillus (vv. 814–815).

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[1] The numbers refer to Stengel, *Das Altfranzösische Rolandslied*, 1900.
[2] xxvii, 51.

Thus in the course of the narrative we hear much of the narrow passes and defiles (v. 741) ; we learn of the presence of running water (v. 1831), of trees (v. 2267), pines (v. 2357), olives (v. 11), yews (v. 406), of flowers in a green meadow, stained with French blood (v. 2871). The emperor we see first sitting in a grove, beneath a pine beside an eglantine (v. 114). Marsilie similarly seeks the shade near Saragossa (v. 11) ; Ganelon rides into the city *suz une olive halte* (v. 366), and when in danger stands with a pine at his back (v. 500). The pagans arm beneath fir trees (v. 993). Such knowledge of the names of trees does not appear in the *Beowulf*. These scattered details clearly suggest a warm and pleasant landscape, not wild or forbidding, but friendly and, at the worst, romantic.

The action takes place for the most part in the open air, and, just as there is nothing which approaches a complete description of a landscape, so there is no material in the *Roland* for any architectural reconstruction as complete as that of the Hall Heorot. For no building is so important for the action, and details are mentioned only casually in the course of the narrative. These indicate cities with walls (v. 97) and towers (v. 3655), with synagogues and *mahumeries* (v. 3662), — where again, clearly, tradition, not observation, is responsible. There is reference to the baths at Aix (v. 154), " al meillor sied de France " (v. 3706), to Charles's chapel (v. 52), and to the *palais seignurill* (v. 151), with its *perrun* (v. 3697) and *cambre voltice* (v. 3992). Platform, lofty palace and vaulted chamber, like all of the handiwork of man mentioned in the *Roland*, imply a civilization far more advanced than that which built Heorot.

At least as often as in the *Beowulf* are mentioned Relations of Time. In contrast, however, to the Anglo-Saxon poet's insistence upon winter, the *Roland* mentions no seasons whatever, and indicates *time when* by the feast days[1] of the Church. No doubt the action was conceived as taking place in summer ; the weather is invariably pleasant; it is commonly described in those passages which indicate the time of day, such as : " Clere est la noit et la lune luisant " (v. 2512).[2] Often the time of day is mentioned alone, as : " Li emperere est par matin levez " (v. 163).[3] With an indication of the *duration of time* the poem opens :

> Carles li reis, nostre emperere magnes,
> Set anz tuz pleins ad estéd en Espaigne (vv. 1–2).[4]

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[1] St. Michael's, vv. 37, 53, 152, etc.; St. Silvester's, v. 3746.
[2] Cf. v. 157.　　[3] Cf. vv. 1807, 2845.　　[4] Cf. vv. 693–694.

Commonly, however, it is only with the passage of day or night that the poet is concerned, and such phrases, naturally enough, fall into a somewhat conventional form, as : "Tresvait li jorns, la noit est aserïe" (v. 717).[1] Clearly we are here, as in the *Beowulf*, a long way from the ballad neglect or ignorance of temporal perspective. But there are some striking contrasts. In describing the dawn, the French poet is, as we have seen, content with a simple statement of fact : "Tresvait la noit et apert la clere albe" (v. 737). Compare with this the Anglo-Saxon sunrise :

> Siððan morgen-lēoht
> ofer ylda bearn   ōþres dōgores,
> sunne swegl-wered,   sūðan scīneð (vv. 604 ff.).

—Not only more picturesque, but more closely associated with the world of men. We may compare, too, with the passage descriptive of the coming of night, just quoted from the *Roland* (v. 717), lines like :

> nīpende   niht ofer ealle,
> scadu-helma gesceapu   scrīðan cwōman,
> wan under wolcnum (vv. 649 ff.).

— More picturesque, imaginative, more suggestive of mood, of mystery and terror, than anything in the *Roland*. The French poem lacks, too, the conception of indefinite or infinite time which becomes so effective in the *Beowulf*. It lacks, likewise, the romantic regret and the glorification of the Past. So far, therefore, as relations of time are concerned, the *Roland* has less scope, less atmosphere, less emotional coloring, than the *Beowulf*.

In the matter of Human Relations, however, the *Roland* carries on the epic development begun in the *Beowulf*. The poet's observation of the physical man is more minute, and the descriptions of wounds reveal a knowledge of anatomy almost Homeric.[2]

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[1] Cf. vv. 162, 715, 737, 3659, 3991.

[2] The poet mentions head (vv. 1355, 1371, 3928), temple (vv. 1764, 1786), face (vv. 1328, 3920), eyes (vv. 1328, 1355), teeth (vv. 1603, 1956), cheek (v. 3921), brain (vv. 1356, 1764, 1786, 3928), body (vv. 1272, 1330), breast (vv. 1200, 1271, 1294), lungs (v. 1278), liver (v. 1278), heart (vv. 1278, 2019), back (v. 1201), spine (v. 1201), members (v. 3971), hands (vv. 1903, 1969), shoulders (v. 1969), fork (v. 1330), feet (vv. 1356, 1969), bones (v. 1200), sinews (v. 3970), blood (passim), nose and mouth (v. 1603, Oxford MS.; see Stengel, p. 169). See also the description of personal appearance, pp. 276 f., below.

The *Roland*, moreover, reflects a higher civilization, a larger, more significant society, a society less homogeneous and more highly organized, yet more compact, more conscious of itself as a nation. The poet does not indeed betray any interest in remote ancestors, begins with no genealogy, ascribes no mysterious origin to the race; yet, — and in spite of the new emphasis of the larger relations, — the conception of the Family is more significant for the French than for the Anglo-Saxon poet. When Oliver urges Roland to sound his horn,

> " Ne placet deu " ço li respunt Rollanz
> " Que ço seit dit de nul home vivant
> Que pur paien ja seie jo cornant !
> Ja n'en avrunt reproece mi parent " (vv. 1073 ff.).[1]

Thirty of Ganelon's relatives stand by him in his trial; one of these, Pinabel, attempts to prove Ganelon's innocence in the trial by combat; when he is slain by Thierri the others are hanged. As the French return from Spain, they think of possessions, *des pulceles*, and noble wives (vv. 820 f., Oxford MS.). And as the body of the army return to find the rearguard slain, they mourn their sons, their brothers, and their nephews, their friends and their liege lords (vv. 2420 ff.). Roland, perhaps, would have been one of those who remembered *des pulceles*. Yet his relation with Aude is referred to only in passing, and plays no part in the action of the poem.[2] There is no other suggestion of the relation of lovers. Of the wives, Bramimonde alone appears in the poem. Ganelon's wife (v. 637), who was Charlemagne's sister and Roland's mother, like Beowulf's mother, is not even named in the poem. It is typical of the lack of interest in mental states for themselves, which, in spite of the greater emphasis upon those directly connected with the action, is still characteristic of the Epic at this stage, typical perhaps of its severer unity, that the poet should neglect this opportunity to develop an Old French Gertrude. As for Bramimonde, she is represented as a loyal and loving wife, overcome with grief at Marsilie's defeat and death. Evidently her position was an important one, since it was she who surrendered to Charlemagne Saragossa and its sixty towers (v. 3655); but

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[1] " Notons ici le sentiment de la solidarité de la famille noble, tout entière glorifiée ou déshonorée par la conduite d'un de ses membres." Paris, *Extraits*, note 29.

[2] Cf. v. 1720; Aude dies of grief when she learns of Roland's death (v. 3720), but he, dying, does not think of her (vv. 2377 ff.).

there is no glimpse of daily life like the scenes in Heorot, to exhibit her dignity. Like that of husband and wife, the relation of father and son does not become significant for the action. As so often in the *Beowulf* the father is mentioned to give dignity to the son. Thus in his " regret,"

> Ço dit Rollanz : " Bels cumpaing Oliviers,
> Vos fustes filz al riche duc Reinier,
> Ki tint la marche et le val de Riviers " (vv. 2207 ff.).

With even such casual mention, however, the father of Roland is not honored ; he is thus less fortunate than Ecgtheow. Charlemagne offers his son to Aude in place of Roland ; Marsilie's son is slain by Roland at Roncevaux. Ganelon declares that he shall never return from his dangerous mission, never see his son again (vv. 295 ff.). Blanchandrin advises Marsilie to send his son as hostage to Charles (v. 42).

Most important for the poem of all the human relations is that of stepfather and stepson, for it is the conflict of Ganelon and Roland that leads to the main action. Yet it is not mainly by virtue of this relation that they come into conflict : the causes are to be discussed in connection with the Motives. At present we are concerned only with the hero's conception of the relation. Roland will not permit even Oliver to speak evil of Ganelon ; " He is my stepfather," he says (v. 1027). Yet he himself declares that Ganelon has sold them for gold (v. 1148), and when Marsilie's second host approaches he admits that the treason can be no longer concealed, and predicts Charles's vengeance (vv. 1458 f.).

Like Beowulf to Hygelac, Roland was sister's son to Charlemagne. The relation, obviously enough, was a close one, though in both cases that of own son was closer. It was Heardred, it will be remembered, who succeeded Hygelac, and of Louis Charles says to Aude : " Il est mes filz, tendrat mes marches grandes " (v. 3716). Marsilie's son and heir (Marsilie is so far as possible symmetrical with Charles) is Jorfaleu (v. 504). Nevertheless, as we have seen, Roland's father is not mentioned ; his relationship through his mother to Charles is alone regarded as significant. And when Charles demands the punishment of Ganelon, he is acting, not as the emperor, who must see justice done or mete out to a traitor his just dues, he is acting rather as the nearest relative of Ganelon's victim, whose duty it is to demand or to execute vengeance for the death of his kinsman.

The relation of brothers plays no part in the *Roland;* that of Roland and Oliver, however, looks like a survival of the Germanic substitute,

brotherhood-in-arms, just as the twelve peers seem to be a reminiscence, not only of the Apostles, but of the *comitatus* as well.[1] The relations of Roland and Oliver to one another and to Charles are the same, though in higher degree, as those of the others of the twelve, and the smaller relation is best approached through the larger. There is apparently only one complete list of the peers (vv. 2402 ff.).[2] "Charlemagne," says Clédat,[3] "arrive sur le champ de bataille de Roncevaux et déplore la mort de ses douze pairs." From the last line (" Li .XII. per que j'aveie laisiez?" v. 2410) we may infer that Charles himself was under that impression. Turpin is here mentioned in addition to the twelve, as if closely associated with them, as, indeed, he is in the action. There are numerous incomplete lists, and the names vary so that it is clear that the poet did not keep them all in mind.[4] That they are named at all marks an advance beyond the *Beowulf*. Of the *comitatus* that accompanied the hero to Heorot only Hondscio, who was slain by Grendel's mother, is named ;[5] and of the later group only the faithful Wiglaf. In the *Roland* they are not only named, but the characters of many are briefly described.[6] They are spoken of as Charlemagne's twelve peers, not as Roland's. Unlike the members of the Germanic *comitatus* they are thus separated from their chief. Roland seems to be in command, but he gives no orders, except to Gualtier (who is not really one of the twelve, and who has declared : " Hom sui Rollant" [v. 801]), and his function seems to be merely to praise or exhort. It is he who has the foremost place in valor. Like the Germanic clansmen, however, the peers are marked by fidelity and devotion to their chief.[7] There is plenty of evidence of Charles's love of the peers. He refuses to allow any of them to undertake the dangerous mission to Marsilie. The poet speaks of them as " Li XII per, que Carles aimet tant " (v. 560). With their devotion to the emperor the peers combine a religious and patriotic fervor [8] which is completely lacking in the *Beowulf*. They are

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[1] Cf. J. Flach, *Le Compagnonnage dans les Chansons de Geste*, in *Études romanes dédiées à G. Paris*, pp. 141 ff.

[2] That is, in the Oxford MS. Charles mentions Roland, the archbishop, Oliver, Gerin and Gerier, Otto and Berengier, Ive and Ivorie, Engelier, Sanson and Anseis, and Gerard de Roussillon.　　　[3] *La Chanson de Roland*, p. 89.

[4] Cf. vv. 103 ff., 792 ff., and the series of combats, vv. 1188 ff. See also Gautier, *La Chanson de Roland*, p. 30.

[5] *Beowulf*, v. 2076.

[6] Cf. pp. 272 ff., below.

[7] Cf. vv. 1008 ff., 1117 ff., 1376 ff.

[8] Cf. Motives, p. 243, below.

inspired, too, by desire for personal glory, and, as in the *Beowulf*, the members of the group are completely loyal to one another : " Li uns ne volt l'altre nïent laissier²" (v. 2069). And when Gualtier is slain and Turpin unhorsed, Roland says to Turpin :

> " Sire, a pied estes et jo sui a ceval,
> Pur vostre amur ici prendrai estal ;
> Ensemble avruns et le bien et le mal.
> Ne vos lerrai pur nul hume de car " (vv. 2138 ff.).

Roland, himself near death, seeks out the bodies of the other peers and ranges them before the archbishop (vv. 2184 ff.). Turpin himself dies while trying to fetch water for Roland (vv. 2222 ff.).

In Charlemagne's " regret " for the peers he asks for Gerin and Gerier (v. 2404) and for Ive and Ivorie (v. 2406). With these companionships belongs the more famous one of Roland and Oliver. Gerin and Gerier are both slain by Grandonie (vv. 1570 ff.) ; Ive and Ivorie by Marsilie (v. 1895) ; that is all that we know of them, and their relation is thus not significant for the action. Nor, indeed, is that of Roland and Oliver, except in so far as emulation leads to great deeds ; the relation is impor-tant rather as involving a comparatively subtle contrast in character, and is to be considered mainly in that connection.[1] Each, — we may note here, — addresses the other as " compaing;" " bels compaing," or " frere." Each praises the other's mighty blows. Roland concludes his " regret " for Oliver : " En nule tere n'out meillor chevalier " (v. 2214). Oliver, dying, prays God to bless " Sun cumpaignun Rollant desur tuz homes " (v. 2018).

The names of the other two pairs are united, like those of Germanic brothers or fathers and sons, by alliteration.[2] With the exception of Basan and Basilie (v. 490) these are the only examples. Delight in names for their own sake is still more common in the *Roland* than in the *Beowulf*. Partial lists of the peers occur, as we have seen, frequently. Similar lists of those about to engage in the action, Frenchmen and Sar-acens, occur throughout the poem. Sometimes " honors " or possessions are mentioned with the name, thus enhancing the dignity of the owner :

> N'i ad paien ki un sul mot respundet,
> Fors Blancandin del castel de Valfunde (vv. 22–23).

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[1] Cf. p. 275, below.
[2] Cf. p. 162, above.

Similar in effect are Roland's lists of the countries that he has conquered
(vv. 198 ff.).[1] The mere list of geographical names gains emotional color-
ing from the context in Charlemagne's lament for Roland :

> " Encuntre mei revelerunt li Saisne
> Et Hungre et Bolgre et tante gent averse,
> Romain, Puillain et tuit cil de Palerne
> E cil d'Affrike e cil de Califerne " (vv. 2921 ff.).

The list of nations represented at the trial of Ganelon clearly suggests
Charles's power (vv. 3793 ff.).

This power of Charles, — for to the conception of the Emperor we
may now turn, — is thus clearly greater and more far-reaching than that
of the Germanic King. He is *li reis pöesteïs* (v. 460) ; is thought of
more definitely as ruler of a certain country ; Marsilie speaks of him as
" Carles . . . ki France ad en baillie " (vv. 94, 488). Though he seems
to take no active part in the fighting in the poem,[2] yet he is conceived
as a valorous warrior and world-conqueror (vv. 370 ff., 525 ff.). Roland's
conquests are made in his name. Vast numbers of men are at his com-
mand. His state and magnificence, the sense of his greatness and power,
are perhaps best indicated by the tableau, comparable with the assembly
in Heorot, which Blanchandrin finds when he comes as messenger from
Marsilie (vv. 103 ff.). In this scene he is distinguished by his appear-
ance, by the appearance of age ; and it is partly by the exaggeration of
his years that the poet seeks to give him dignity. " Vielz est," says
Marsilie, " Mien escïent dous cenz anz ad passez " (v. 524).

The emperor's power and dignity, however, are not without limita-
tions. It seems to be the function of his council to suggest a course of
action, while to him belongs merely the power of veto (vv. 180 ff.).
Thus by silence he rejects counsels which he does not approve (v. 216) ;
or he rejects them by more emphatic rebuke.[3] His wrath in these lat-
ter cases seems, indeed, to the modern reader unmotived, though this
effect may be due to the poet's compression of the scene and to its
consequent rapidity. At the trial of Ganelon Charles summons the
barons and acts as the accuser (vv. 3750 ff.). He himself is appar-
ently powerless. Apparently, moreover, Charles must accept Ganelon's
appointment of Roland to the rearguard, though he declares Ganelon

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[1] Cf. also vv. 2322 ff. Many more lists of sonorous names of persons and places
might be cited.   [2] Except in the Baligant episode.

[3] Cf. vv. 248 ff., 259 ff., 271 ff.

possessed of living devils for suggesting it (v. 747). Yet it is to be noted that when Ganelon becomes pathetic about parting with his son, Charles insists : " Puisquel comant, aler vus en estoet " (v. 300).[1] Obviously, then, the poet had not in mind a clear definition of the emperor's powers. Nor does it seem that he was completely consistent in his conception of the emperor's dignity. The modern reader, at least, is surprised that Charles does not resent Ganelon's

> " Ja estes vieilz, si avez les peils blans,
> Par tels paroles vos resemblez enfant " (vv. 1771–1772).[2]

Although Marsilie lacks Charlemagne's age and peculiar virtues, he is conceived in much the same terms. His state and power are similar. Ganelon finds a group as theatrically magnificent as that which he had left (vv. 407 ff.). Later, Marsilie informs Ganelon that he has at his command an army of four hundred thousand men (v. 565).

Many other kings, — a dozen or more, — are mentioned, but their kingship is not significant. Though not completely consistent, then, in the matters of dignity and power, the conception of Emperor or King is more exalted and more elaborate than that of the King in the *Beowulf*.

Charles is spoken of indifferently as king or emperor, and, in general, there is little or no insistence upon rank or upon the exact use of titles. The persons are all of noble blood ; in this respect society seems as homogeneous and compact as in the *Beowulf;* and titles like baron, duke, count, are applied indifferently to them all. Even the emperor is " Carlemagnes li ber " (v. 430). Nationality is suggested by titles : the *almaçurs*, *amirafles* and *vezcontes*, like *l'algalifes*, were apparently peculiar to Spain.[3] Slight, however, as is the emphasis upon rank, a man is commonly named by his title. He is thus not conceived, as in the *Beowulf*, primarily or merely as a warrior.[4] The *Roland* furnishes no list of picturesque terms indicative of the arms or armor which he bore. The common soldier, who must have been present in great numbers in both armies, is mentioned in passing only, by Blanchandrin, and in no heroic connection : with the money which Marsilie is to send Charles, he says, " Bien en purrat lüer ses soldeiers " (v. 34). Names indicative of the warrior's special office or function are not so common in the

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[1] Stengel prints this line in parenthesis.
[2] Cf. also v. 1760.
[3] Cf. vv. 453, 848 f. Stengel takes *Lalgalifes* as a proper name.
[4] Cf. p. 168, above.

Roland. Gefreiz d'Anjou was "li rei gunfanuniers" (v. 106). When Ganelon's treason was discovered he was turned over to the tender mercies of the cooks (v. 1817), and four *serjant* (v. 3967) rode the horses which accomplished his death. The smith, with the associations of magic and mystery which accompany him in the Anglo-Saxon epic, is not mentioned. At Roncevaux, however, Turpin slew Siglorel, the enchanter who had been in hell (v. 1391).

Like the *Beowulf,* or, indeed, in far higher degree than the *Beowulf,* the *Roland* is a national epic. The discussion of motives will attempt to show the importance of patriotism.[1] The conflict is that of nation against nation ; it was conceived largely, however, as a religious conflict, and the two, — national feeling and religious feeling, — are inextricably intermingled. Besides France and Spain many countries are mentioned, as conquered by Charles or Roland, as furnishing kings or barons for one army or the other, or judges for the trial of Ganelon. These names — though not all can be identified — are frequently suggestive of historical Europe, and produce an effect of reality.

As closely connected with these human relations are to be considered certain customs and ceremonies. The *Beowulf,* we found, exhibited a tendency to insist more and more upon such matters ; this tendency the *Roland* carries somewhat further. There is nothing in the *Beowulf* so elaborate as the trial of Ganelon (vv. 3750 ff.). From the *Beowulf,* again, we learn of the presence of councillors, not of their method of advising the king. In the *Roland,* however, the king is more accessible. Perhaps because he is in camp rather than in the palace, Charles receives Blanchandrin directly ; there is no one to play Wulfgar's part of chamberlain ;[2] and the ambassador is not obliged to lay aside his arms. The poet is no doubt conscious of a distinction between the French and their enemies in his constant reference to the fate of Basan and Basilie (v. 490, etc.), in his insistence upon the danger of Ganelon's mission, and in the nature of Ganelon's reception by Marsilie (vv. 438 ff.). For the rest, the ambassador carries glove and staff as sign of his office (v. 247). When Ganelon drops them as they are handed to him the French regard it as an evil omen (v. 334). The formal ceremony of asking and giving leave to go is to be noted in this scene, and it is still more striking after Roncevaux, when all their companions are dead and Roland and Turpin are left alone upon the field (vv. 2177 ff.). We

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[1] Cf. pp. 244 f. and p. 250, below.   [2] Cf. p. 154, above.

learn, as we have seen, of the feudal custom of holding lands, — as of the rich duke Austorie, " Ki tint Valence et l'onor sur le Rosne " (v. 1583).[1] And when Roland asks him to occupy the hills, Gualtier replies : " Pur vos le dei bien faire " (v. 807). The poem is not without mention of the ceremonial joining of the hands which accompanied submission to an overlord (v. 223). It is made clear, too, that it was customary to issue a formal defiance before one could act as enemy (v. 287). Ganelon, when he is accused of treason, tries to justify himself by recalling his defiance of Roland and the peers (vv. 3775 f.).

In the *Roland* there is no conflict with supernatural beings like Grendel or the Dragon ; there is no conception of a Fate governing the affairs of men. Christian elements, mere external comments in the *Beowulf*, have become all-important ; a discussion of relations with the Supernatural comes thus to be a discussion of the poet's modification of Christian teaching as to the nature of God, man's relation to him, to the saints and angels, and to the other world. Here belongs also an account of the poet's portrayal of the Church, its officers and its ceremonies. This importance of Christian elements is due to the fact that the *Roland* is a religious as well as a national epic, and deals with a conflict, not of Frenchmen and Spaniards merely, but of believers and infidels. This is clearly indicated at the beginning of the poem (vv. 7 ff.). And Roland sums up French opinion in a single line : " Paien unt tort et chrestïen unt dreit " (v. 1015),[2] and although the poet says of Abisme : " Vasselage ad e molt grant estultïe " (v. 1639), Turpin declares :

> " Mielz voeil morir que jo ne l'alge ocire,
> Unches n'amai cuard ne cuardïe " (vv. 1646–1647).

Abisme's shield, it appears, had belonged to a devil (v. 1663), and Satan carried off the souls of the pagans (vv. 1268, 1510). To reduce the number of the pagans was the main thing, whether by killing them and sending their souls to hell, or by converting them. Thus after the taking of Saragossa, the bishops

> Meinent paiens entresqu'al baptistirie.
> S'or i ad cel qui Carle cuntredïe,
> Il le fait pendre o ardeir ou ocire.
> Baptizét sunt asez plus de .C. milie
> Veir chrestïen ne mais sul la reïne (vv. 3668 ff.).

She was led captive to France to be converted by love.

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[1] Cf. v. 801.   [2] Cf. also v. 1549.

Such passages as these do not lead us to expect any great advance in
the refinement of the conception of God. By the poet of the *Beowulf*
he was conceived, as has been said, as an all-powerful human king; he
was thought of as avenger; and there seemed to be no contradiction
between Christian teaching and Beowulf's dictum that it is better that
a man avenge his friend than that he much grieve.[1] The action of the
Anglo-Saxon epic was not, finally, affected by the interposition of Provi-
dence. The French poet's conception is no less anthropomorphic; for
him God is a feudal lord. Roland conducts himself as his loyal vassal,[2]
and dying, "Pur ses pecchiez deu puroffrid son guant" (v. 2365).[3] God,
like Charlemagne, is conceived as avenging, or as sanctioning vengeance
for those who die in his service. When Charles, pursuing the pagans,
prays that the sun may stand still[4] until their destruction is complete,
his prayer is answered. God made the baths at Aix for Charles (v. 154),
and the laws of nature were thus conceived as subject to his will. Human
actions were similarly controlled. When Margariz shivers Oliver's shield
and grazes his side, it is said that God saved him (v. 1316), and when
the pagans fly it is because God wishes it (v. 3625). God knows what
the result of the trial by combat will be (v. 3872), and when Pinabel
deals Thierri a terrible blow, God saves him from death (v. 3923). At
the close of the combat the French cry "Deus i ad fait vertut"
(v. 3931). And it is of course upon this idea that the trial by combat
is based. It is again this aspect of God, — performing miracles for the
benefit of man, — that is recalled from the Old Testament or from
the New (vv. 2384 ff.). And the poet's comment upon the taking of
Saragossa may sum up his conception of the whole matter: "Mult bien
espleitet qui damnes deus aiüet !" (v. 3657). God is, then, a feudal lord
who takes an active part in the affairs of men. In general he is "Le
glorïus qui devum aürer" (v. 429). He is one who "unkes ne mentit"
(v. 1865), who is to be *guaranz* to the souls of the departed (v. 2518),
and who could forgive sins and guard the soul from all perils (v. 2387).
These references, to his absolute truth, to the fact that we are to adore
him, to his having to do especially with the soul, are all that we have to
indicate the divinity or spirituality of his nature.

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[1] *Beowulf*, v. 1385.

[2] Cf. Paris, *Extraits*, p. 104, n. 104.

[3] Cf. also vv. 2015 and 223: "Qu'il devendrat jointes ses mains vostr' hom."

[4] Cf. with this borrowing of an Old Testament miracle that of the thunderstorm
and earthquake which presage Roland's death (vv. 1423 ff.).

Christ and the Virgin Mary are mentioned merely.

As Roland dies he proffers his right glove to God ; St. Gabriel receives it, and he, St. Michael of the Peril, and a cherubin bear the soul of the count into Paradise (vv. 2389 ff.). In an earlier line, angels descend to Roland (v. 2374) ; a little later in the poem an angel informs Charles that his prayer is granted (v. 2452). As in the passage just cited, the angel Gabriel is the intermediary between God and man (vv. 2390 ff.).[1] It is he whom God sends to watch over Charlemagne (v. 2526) ; he stands all night at his bed and by a vision announces to him a coming battle. To him Roland commends his soul (v. 2262). St. Michael has for his special function to guide the souls of the dead to their last resting place.[2] Satan, or the "adversaries" performed, as we have seen, this service for the pagans (vv. 1268, 1510).

The poet, then, had no doubt that the soul was separated at death from the body : when Roland slays Marsilie's nephew, "Od sun espiet l'anme li getet fors " (v. 1202). There is nothing, however, in this line, or in the other and rather numerous references to the soul, to indicate that it was regarded as spirit. The paradise which Turpin promised those who should die as martyrs he conceived in purely physical terms (vv. 1134 f., 1479 f.), and Roland's conception is similar (vv. 1854 ff.). The disposition of the bodies of the dead throws no light on the conception of the world to come (vv. 2951 ff., 3692). On the whole, as Gautier remarks,[3] the author of the *Roland* had "sur l'autre vie les notions très nettes de la doctrine chrétienne." He accepted Christian teaching ; there is no evidence of doubt, of sense of mystery, none that he raised the question at all as to whether the soul was matter or spirit, none that he regarded paradise as other than a material abode. The poet of the *Beowulf* is more confused, lacks the French clearness, seems even to contradict himself ; yet, as we have seen, he does seem to recognize the presence of a spiritual element in man ; and though he does not look forward with pleasure to the world to come, and conceives of it sometimes as the dwelling place of material bodies, yet there is some evidence of a spiritual conception as well. The most notable phase of the contrast is, however, the emphasis of mystery in the Anglo-Saxon poem. What has preceded the life of man, or what is to follow, we know

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[1] Cf. Paris, *Extraits*, p. 98, n. 88, and p. 105, n. 111.

[2] Id., p. 106, n. 112.

[3] *La Chanson de Roland* (1900), p. 108.

not. For the Anglo-Saxon there was confusion of creeds, doubt, mystery; for the Frenchman, centuries of the teachings of the Church, resulting in the thoughtless or unquestioning acceptance of her established conventions.

For the Church,[1] in the *Roland*, is clearly an important institution. References are continually made to her officers, her ceremonies, and her feast days. Thus Blanchandrin says that Charles conquered England "ad oes saint Pierre" (v. 373). The Archbishop Turpin, "que deus mist en sun num" (v. 2238), plays an important part in the action. And when the French dead were to be buried after Roncevaux,

> "Asez i ad evesques e abez,
> Clers et canonies et proveires riulez,
> Sis unt asols et seigniez de part deu,
> Mirre et amome i firent alumer,
> Gaillardement tuz les unt encensez " (vv. 2955 ff.).

This absolution and blessing of the dead occurs again when Roland places the dead Oliver beside the other peers (v. 2205). The emperor, too, has the power of granting absolution, for when he dismisses Ganelon, it is said that he absolves and blesses him (v. 340). The chief persons of the poem confess their sins : Turpin

> Claimet sa culpe, si reguardet amunt,
> Cuntre le ciel ambes dous ses mains juint,
> Si priet deu que pareïs li duinst (vv. 2239 ff.).

And, similarly, Oliver (vv. 2014 ff.) and Roland (vv. 2364 f., 2369 ff.) do not forget their *mea culpa*. None of them specify particular sins.

Baptism is several times mentioned : Blanchandrin tells Charles that Marsilie desired baptism at Aix (vv. 154 f.). More than a hundred thousand were baptized after the taking of Saragossa (v. 3671). Charles's directions for the baptism of Bramimonde have more definite suggestions as to the ceremony (vv. 3978 ff.). Mass and matins are occasionally mentioned (vv. 164, 670). And the feast days of the saints, as has been said, sometimes indicate the time of an action.[2] The ceremony of the oath, finally, is to be noted : Ganelon.

> Sur les reliques de s'espee Murglais
> La traïson jurat, si s'est forsfaiz (vv. 607–608).[3]

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[1] Cf. also the Sermon and the Prayer, p. 267, below.
[2] Cf. p. 228, above.   [3] Cf. also vv. 610 ff.

The poet's conception of the religion of the pagans must not pass —
without some consideration. This is peculiarly interesting as showing
his dramatic ability, and how far it is in his power to take another point
of view. As we have seen, " Paien unt tort et chrestïen unt dreit "
(v. 1015). But we find the pagans saying among themselves, — " Li
emperere ad tort " (v. 1942). They are represented as worshipping
Mahomet, Apollin, and Tervagant (vv. 416, 2468). These gods, how-
ever, cannot help them at need, for they call upon Mahomet in vain to
curse Terre Maior (v. 1616); and just after the day has been lengthened
in answer to Charlemagne's prayer, upon Mahomet, Tervagant, and
Apollin, who cannot help them (v. 2468). Mahomet as head of their
church is set over against St. Peter (v. 921), and the officers of that
church against those of the Christian (vv. 3637 ff.). The pagans are
represented as idolaters,[1] and as destroying the images of their gods
when they permit Marsilie's defeat (v. 2580). After the taking of Sara-
gossa the French search synagogues and " Mahumerïes," and break in
pieces the idols (vv. 3662 ff.).

Of Animals, our list is longer and more significant than that derived
from the *Beowulf*. Reflecting an age of chivalry and equestrian com-
bats, the *Roland*, like the Danish ballads, lays great stress upon the
horse, merely mentioned in the *Beowulf*. Gautier has collected the
significant passages.[2] Besides the horse, many other animals are men-
tioned. Horses are described as swifter than " espreviers ne arunde "
(v. 1492), or than " uns falcuns " (v. 1529). Blanchandrin advises Mar-
silie to send Charles " urs et leons et chiens," " cameilz et mil hosturs
muiers," and " quatre cenz muls " laden with gold and silver (vv. 30 ff.).
When Blanchandrin presents these gifts to Charles, he describes the
" chiens " as " veltres enchaenez " (v. 128). For his ambassadors Marsilie
had led forth ten white mules (v. 89). In Charles's vision, after Ganelon's
return, a bear, a leopard, coming " devers Espagne " (v. 728), and a
" veltre " appear; and in the night following Roland's death, Charles,
in a vision, sees the French attacked by a legion of savage beasts.[3] The
stag appears in a simile (v. 1874), and after the bodies of Roland, Tur-
pin, and Oliver have been prepared for burial, they are wrapped in deer-
kins (v. 2968). After the defeat of the Saracens they fling the images

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[1] V. 853, and Gautier, *La Chanson de Roland*, p. 84, n.

[2] *La Chanson de Roland*, p. 396.

[3] Cf. vv. 2542 ff., 2549 ff., 2555 ff.

of Mahomet to dogs and swine (v. 2591). In Turpin's plea, finally, for
the sounding of the horn is a suggestion of the Anglo-Saxon battlefield.[1]
The French, he says, cannot come in time to save our lives, but

> " Enfueront nos en aitres de mustiers,
>   N'en mangerunt ne lu, ne porc, ne chien " (vv. 1750–1751).

The list of properties cannot begin and end, as in the discussion of
this phase of the *Beowulf*, with an account of the work of the smith;
the *Roland* reflects a society which had developed more peaceful arts
as well; yet even of the products of his skill the conception is larger
and more complete. The old delight in arms and armor for their own
sake is still present; but it is now a delight rather in the pomp and
glitter of a great army than in the businesslike equipment of a small
band. As the French army ride to Roland's rescue,

> Esclargiz est li vespres et li jurz.
> Cuntre soleil reluisent cil adub,
> Osberc et helme i gietent grant flambur
> Et cil escut ki bien sunt peint a flurs
> Et cil espiet, cil orét gunfanun (vv. 1807 ff.).[2]

Gautier's careful collection of passages relating to arms and armor[3] ren-
ders unnecessary an account of the sword, algier,[4] lance, banner, bow,
helm, hauberk, shield, trumpet,[5] olifant,[5] spurs, stirrup, saddle, bridle,
etc. His results may be compared with those obtained from the simi-
lar study of the *Beowulf*.[6] There are more passages in the *Roland;*
yet the amount of information given is not much greater; so far as
arms and armor are concerned, the epic love of detail has not much
increased. In this connection, as in others, the importance of the past
has decreased. There is no longer a disposition to regard sword or
helm or hauberk as heirloom, as having a long history, or as being of
mysterious origin,[7] the work of wonder-smiths.

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[1] Cf. p. 176, above.   [2] Cf. vv. 682 ff., 994 ff., 1028 ff., 1452 ff.

[3] Cf. *La Chanson de Roland, Éclaircissement* III, pp. 384 ff., *Sur le Costume de
Guerre.*   [4] Id., p. 47.   [5] Id., pp. 102 f.   [6] Cf. pp. 176 ff., above.

[7] Similar, though Christianized, origin, seems to be implied, thinks Gautier
(p. 384), for Durendal: " un ange remit à Charlemagne la fameuse Durendal
pour le meilleur capitaine de son armée." But does the text justify this interpre-
tation? The lines occur in Roland's apostrophe; he is addressing Durendal in
the second person singular:

> " Carles esteit es vals de Morïane,
>   Quant deus del ciel li mandat par sun angle
>   Qu'il te dunast a un cunte cataignie " (vv. 2318 ff.).

The *Roland* boasts no collection like that in the Dragon's cave. The only mention of the goldsmith's work is that of the presents sent by Bramimonde to Ganelon's wife (vv. 637 ff.). The keys of Saragossa complete the list of the work of the smith.

The early tableaux of the poem owe much of their effect of oriental magnificence to the mention of marble, carved ivory, and silks. Marsilie is discovered "sur un perrun de marbre" (v. 12); when Ganelon first sees him, he sits upon a *faldestoel* of fine gold (v. 407); later it is of ivory (v. 609).[1] Marsilie swears upon a book (v. 610). Ganelon is described as dressed in a sable mantle covered with a *palie alexandrin* (v. 462). And when Bramimonde gives him the necklaces, "en sa hoese les butet" (v. 641). Marsilie, to make reparation for his inhospitable reception of Ganelon, offers him "pels martrines" (v. 515), worth more than a hundred livres of gold. Marsilie is to send to Charlemagne "cinquante carre" (v. 33). The symbolic use of certain properties remains to be noted. Marsilie's nephew asks that he may strike the first blow against Roland; by way of reply Marsilie gives him his glove (v. 873). The ambassador, as has been said, is given glove and staff as sign of office (v. 247); Roland gives his right glove to God in token of submission (vv. 2365, 2373); he asks for the bow as symbol of his authority as leader of the rearguard (v. 767). He brings Charles an apple, and says : "De trestuz reis vos present les curunes" (v. 388).

II. MOTIVES

In even less degree than in the *Beowulf* is the character of the hero to be regarded as the Central Motive of the poem. He does not so clearly dominate the action, is not so significant as a unifying principle. The *Beowulf* closes with his death; the *Roland* runs on for sixteen hundred lines, not merely of interpolated Baligant episode, but carrying along the main action through the Reprisals, first upon the Pagans,

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Gautier himself translates :

> "Quand Dieu, du haut du ciel, lui manda par son ange
> De te donner à un vaillant capitaine,"—

as if Charles already had the sword. The Anglo-Saxon poet would have told us where he got it, or remarked upon the mystery of its origin. A better case of mysterious origin is that of Abisme's shield, which had belonged to a devil (v. 1663).

[1] Cf. the description of Charlemagne's state, vv. 110 ff.

then upon Ganelon.   Ganelon's trial, moreover, the combat of Thierri and Pinabel, and the manner of the traitors' death, — these receive more elaborate treatment than does any of the actions in which Roland himself is concerned.   And even Roncevaux is the struggle of the French against the Pagan forces, a general conflict and a series of single combats in many of which the hero has no share.

Not the hero's character, then ; nor, as in the *Beowulf,* the Valor that animates him ; the Central Motive is rather the Valor of the French, or indeed, of all those concerned at Roncevaux, and before and after, whether friends or enemies or traitors.   It manifests itself, of course, in individuals, and individual modifications are to be considered presently ; but it is primarily the valor of all the persons that is the mainspring of the action of the poem.   For the French, Roncevaux is a fight against odds, a hopeless struggle, in which, like the ballad heroes, they engage with desperate courage (vv. 1886 ff.).   If, however, there was no hope of quarter, there was distinct promise of Heaven and of rewards in the life to come ; Turpin's sermon before Roncevaux is significant ; it is well to die for your king, he says ;. and if you die you will be holy martyrs, with seats in the greater paradise (vv. 1127 ff.).[1] But French valor was inspired not alone by religion, by hope of future reward ; it was inspired by a less selfish motive, by patriotism, as well.   The French speak of their country as *dulce France* so frequently that the phrase becomes convention, and is used by Marsilie's nephew (v. 1194), by his brother (v. 1223), and even by Ganelon while he is plotting against it (v. 573).   And when Roland felt that death was at hand, "a remembrer li prist . . . de dulce France" (vv. 2377 ff.).   The whole poem is filled with a spirit of patriotism still effective in its appeal.   Clédat's edition is prepared expressly for secondary schools ; the introduction of the poem into secondary education is justified, he thinks, not only by its literary but by its moral value : "Du premier au dernier vers, il respire un ardent amour de 'douce France,' un profond sentiment de l'honneur et du devoir."[2] Gaston Paris, writing in December, 1870, found in the *Roland* "l'amour du sol, l'honneur national," and "l'amour des institutions nationales." "Tous ces traits," he said, "concourent à donner à la *Chanson de Roland* son caractère grandiose, à en faire un monument incomparable, non seulement de notre poésie, mais de notre

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[1] Cf. also vv. 1478 ff.

[2] *La Chanson de Roland*, p. xii.

nationalité."[1] Gautier, writing his introduction just after the Franco-Prussian war, declares : " A ceux qui menacent aujourd'hui ma pauvre France, j'ai bien le droit de montrer combien déjà elle était grande il y a environ huit cents ans."[2] One cannot imagine an editor of the *Beowulf* writing thus at any time. Love for the persons of their leaders also inspired French valor. Turpin begins his first exhortation :

> " Seignur barun, Carles nus laissat ci ;
> Pur nostre rei devum nus bien murir " (vv. 1127–1128).

After his second,

> Cel nen i ad, Munjoie ne demant (v. 1482).

And this " Munjoie," expressly connected by the poet with Charles's sword, is clearly a personal more than a national battle cry. The French, finally, were inspired by desire for glory, though this, naturally, appears less frequently in references to common, than in those to individual, effort or motive. It is Turpin, again, who exhorts the knights,

> " Pur deu vos pri que ne seiez fuiant,
> Que nuls proz oem malvaisement n'en chant " (vv. 1473–1474),

— clearly suggesting the hope of songs of an opposite character.

The struggle in *Beowulf* was that of Valor *versus* Supernatural forces. Here Valor struggles with Valor; for, as has been said, the pagan hosts show scarcely less courage than the French. Their plan of action includes the sacrifice of their hostages and the annihilation of the first division of their army. The thirty relatives of Ganelon, too, who may be reckoned among Charlemagne's enemies, stand by the head of the house, even to the death. It is conceivable, however, that the poet intended to differentiate pagan and Christian valor, to show that the former was more selfishly motived. Blanchandrin, speaking of the death of the hostages, even of his own son, declares that

> " Asez est mielz qu'il i perdent les chies,
> Que nus perduns d'Espaigne la deintiet,
> Ne nus seiuns cunduit a mendeier " (vv. 44–46).

He emphasizes individual misfortunes[3] a good deal more than those of Spain the Fair. It is perhaps significant, too, that Oliver is slain by a

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[1] Paris, " La Chanson de Roland et la Nationalité française," in *La Poesie du Moyen Age*, pp. 110–111.
[2] *La Chanson de Roland*, p. xxxiii. [3] Cf. also vv. 58 ff.

blow from behind (v. 1945); certainly it is characteristic that he should sell his life dear; for after he has received his mortal wound he kills the algalife and many others in the midst of the press. The pagan champion is commonly put to death with a single stroke. The pagan boasting,[1] moreover, is sharply contrasted with the fulfilment, while the Christians are able to keep their vows. Finally, pagan valor is limited, for the moment, by fear; a thousand foot and forty thousand horse dared not approach Roland, Gualtier, and Turpin (vv. 2071 ff.).

Quite aside from the matter of religion or of patriotism, the conception of a large body of men inspired by the same valor is not to be paralleled from our Anglo-Saxon epic. When this valor finds expression in action, moreover, it is again, primarily, the large bodies, the opposing hosts, that are concerned. Thus we learn more of the conduct of the battle as a whole than from any of the documents previously considered. Directly or indirectly, Roncevaux was the result of well-conceived plans, affecting each army as a whole. If Marsilie will promise to embrace Christianity and become Charlemagne's vassal, sending hostages as evidence of good faith, Blanchandrin assures him that the French army will withdraw from Spain. Ganelon falls in with this scheme:

> " Par XX hostages que li enveiereiz
> En dulce France s'en repairrat li reis,
> Sa riereguarde lerrat derriere sei " (vv. 572–574).

— The rearguard, we learn thus incidentally, was an established custom; we learn from a previous speech of Ganelon's that Roland, Oliver, the twelve peers, and twenty thousand knights composed the vanguard; later, Charles appoints Ogier to lead it. The rearguard, Ganelon said, would consist of Roland, Oliver, and twenty thousand French. Against them Marsilie was to send first a detachment of a hundred thousand, and then, when these had suffered martyrdom, to advance with the rest of his host; Roland could not escape both. These plans are carried out. While the French are camping at Valterre the pagans follow them; four hundred thousand await the dawn. Roland is appointed leader of the rearguard; Charles offers him half of his army, but he declares that twenty thousand are enough. Roland orders Gualtier, who has volunteered to accompany him, to occupy the hills and passes with a thousand French. The hundred thousand pagans appear and make their

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[1] E.g. that of Marsilie's nephew, vv. 860 ff., 1188 ff. Cf. p. 254, below.

attack; only Margariz survives. Then Marsilie advances, his great army divided into twenty columns. Part of these attack and are put to flight; Marsilie advances with fresh troops, and after five attacks only sixty French survive. Roland sounds his horn; Charlemagne's army mount and return. Roland, meantime, cuts off Marsilie's right hand and kills his son, whereupon a hundred Saracens take to flight. But fifty thousand Ethiopians remain. Oliver is slain, and of all the rearguard only Turpin, Gualtier, who has lost all of his men, and Roland, survive. They perform prodigies of valor, and a thousand Saracens on foot and forty thousand horse are afraid to approach them, and hurl lances, javelins, and darts. Gualtier is slain; Turpin, mortally wounded, kills four hundred Saracens. The sixty thousand trumpets of Charlemagne's army answer Roland's horn. Four hundred pagans unite for a last attack, only to be repulsed by Roland and Turpin. They fling darts and spears from a distance, kill Roland's horse, so that he cannot pursue them, then take to flight. Charles, who reaches the field after the death of Roland and Turpin, leaves four barons and a thousand knights to guard the dead, and pursues the Saracens. He overtakes them, and drives them into the Ebro where most of them are drowned. The French camp in a meadow by the river, setting no watch that night. — This is the story of Roncevaux, omitting the single combats; these are so numerous and described in such detail that ordinarily the poem seems to consist of little else, and the reader loses sight of the movements of the armies. The abstract is worth making. We have thus a relatively skilful treatment of a new epic feature.[1] We have, moreover, evidence of an interest in strategy, and the reflection of considerable organization, discipline, and military skill : — the rear and vanguard, the watch, the divisions into columns and battalions, the occupation of points of vantage, the concealment of true numbers. There is nothing like it in the *Beowulf.*

As has just been said, however, the account of Roncevaux in the poem itself consists mainly of descriptions of individual encounters. These do not much vary from a single type : a Saracen is introduced, his name and relations (place and human) are mentioned, and sometimes his character is described. He makes a speech, which is assigned to him and characterized beforehand. The feeling of the Frenchman who hears the speech is described. He spurs his horse; his spear pierces shield and hauberk and passes through the body of the enemy,

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[1] See also the discussion of General Narration, pp. 258 f., below.

who falls dead from his horse. The victor looks down and insults the vanquished.[1] This formula is repeated, time after time, with little variation, as of sword and spear, or in the outcome of the combat. It becomes, to the modern reader, somewhat wearisome. Yet the very repetition deepens the impression of the numbers engaged, of the great deeds and the slaughter on both sides, of the duration of the battle.

The only combat which has been so elaborated as to depart completely from the type is that of Thierri and Pinabel (vv. 3850–3933); and one may perhaps permit oneself to wonder whether this elaboration may not have been the result of an independent treatment in a poem, — conceivably even a ballad, for it preserves some ballad features, — earlier than the *Roland*. The account is too long to quote in full, yet only the passage itself can give the effect of the detailed elaboration. A summary, however, will serve to contrast it with the common type. Thierri presents his right glove to Charlemagne, who furnishes a pledge for him. The two champions are confessed and hear mass. They arm, mount, and ride out to a vast field below Aix, where they are to fight in the presence of a hundred thousand knights. Both are unhorsed at the first encounter and continue the duel on foot. They exchange fierce blows. At length Pinabel calls upon Thierri to yield,[2] saying that he will become his man and place his fortune at Thierri's disposal if he will reconcile the king and Ganelon. Thierri refuses, and proposes to reconcile Charlemagne to Pinabel if he will agree to the punishment of Ganelon. The combat continues. Thierri is wounded in the face, but God saves his life and he strikes Pinabel a blow that lays him dead at his feet.[3] The emperor embraces the victor and wipes his face upon his own mantle. Then they return to Aix.

We must now turn back from the manifestations of valor, whether in general conflict or in single combats, to the motive itself, as it is found in the hero, modified by his characteristics, accompanied or inspired by other motives peculiar to him. " Le refus de Roland," says Paris,

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[1] One may contrast *The Hunting of the Cheviot* (Child, 162). There is no generous grief for fallen foe in the *Roland*.

[2] With this interruption of the fight for conversation compare the Danish ballad *Bermand og Holger Danske* (Grundtvig, 30, A).

[3] Two blows, one of which almost kills the hero, while the second is fatal to his antagonist, occur in the ballads; cf. Grundtvig, 15, sts. 13–14. The contention is not that these features are peculiar to the ballad; merely that they occur in the ballad.

"d'appeler Charles à son secours en sonnant son cor est dans notre poème la vraie cause du désastre de Roncevaux : c'est un trait d'héroïque folie, comme on en retrouve souvent dans l'histoire militaire de la France. . . . Par là ce désastre prend un caractère vraiment tragique, puisqu'il provient en grande partie de la faute du héros, de sa *desmesure*."[1] Heroic folly, however, is not a trait peculiar to the French ; it is more likely to be a universal one, at least in popular literature. We have seen it in the tragic heroic ballads ;[2] and much the same motive is present in many of the Robin Hood and Border ballads.[3] So far as Roland is concerned, this same courage, obstinate, unreasoning, unyielding, inspires not only his refusal to blow the horn, but his words and actions throughout. Toward the close of the battle the Ethiopians attack the few surviving French :

> Ço dist Rollanz : " Ci recevrums martyrie,
> Et or sai bien : n'avons guaires a vivre.
> Mais tuz seit fel, chier ne s'en vende primes.
> Ferez, seignur, des espees furbïes,
> Si calengiez e voz morz e voz vïes,
> Que dulce France par nus ne seit hunïe !
> Quant en cest camp vendrat Carles mis sire
> Et de paiens verrat tel discipline,
> Cuntre un des noz en truverat morz XV,
> Ne lairrat mïe que nos ne beneïsse " (vv. 1922 ff.).

The last four lines of this passage are significant in that they suggest the self-conscious quality of Roland's valor. This becomes even more apparent in his regard for the appearance which he should present after death (vv. 2360 ff.). Yet it is no empty pose ; the attitude is really characteristic, — breast and back as either should be ; and we find in Roland that same tendency to take the initiative, not to rest satisfied with mere defense, that sends Hagbard crashing through the doors to meet his foes, and Beowulf seeking out Grendel's mother under the sea or the Dragon in his cave. Thus he welcomes the prospect of battle, and when the four hundred pagans unite for the last attack, spurs Veillantif and rides into the press (vv. 2124 ff.).

This valor of Roland's, unreasoning, passive and yet active, somewhat self-conscious, is accompanied or inspired by other motives. As its

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[1] *Extraits*, p. 75, n. 26.   [2] Cf. pp. 119 f., above.
[3] Cf. pp. 64 and 73, above.

self-consciousness suggests, it is inspired, like Beowulf's, partly by desire for fame or glory. If he should blow the horn, he tells Oliver, he would act like a fool, he would lose his glory in France (v. 1053). He prefers death to shame (v. 1091). He will strike great blows with Durendal, in order that he who possesses the sword after him may say that it belonged to a "noble vassal" (v. 1123); in order that no one may sing an evil song of him (vv. 1014, 1466); or in order that he may not set a bad example (v. 1016). Roland's valor is inspired, as has been said, by thought of family, and by loyalty to the emperor, who loves us, he says, for striking great blows (v. 1092); "God grant us a great battle," he exclaims,

> " Bien devuns ci estre pur nostre rei ;
> Por sun seignor deit hom suffrir destreiz
> Et endurer et granz chalz et granz freiz " (vv. 1009 ff.).

It is inspired by patriotism : it is his glory " en dulce France" that Roland does not wish to lose (v. 1054). He will not blow the horn because he does not wish that France because of any act of his should lose her worth (*valur*) or be disgraced (vv. 1090, 1064). Beowulf's defence of his people against the dragon is thus not simply patriotism in the terms of another civilization. For he is concerned with a real and material danger ; Roland, with an idea, a sentiment. The existence of France or of her people is not threatened, and Roland dies to save, not his country, but her reputation, her glory. The *Roland*, then, does not merely reflect the new motive of patriotism, but refines upon it, spiritualizes it. Whatever religious impulse there may be behind it, Roland's valor is more refined, too, not than Beowulf's, for he has none, but, — hardly, one thinks, by the poet's intention, — than that of his countrymen. It does not appear that his deeds are ever performed with a view to rewards in the world to come, though he prays that God may receive the souls of his companions and place them upon the holy flowers of paradise (v. 2197). But when his own hour comes he confesses his sins and asks God for mercy and the protection of his soul from all perils (vv. 2369 ff., 2383 ff.) ; he says nothing of paradise. Nor, among his reasons for not blowing the horn, does any religious one appear. The manner of his death, strong evidence of a religious habit of mind, makes all the more striking this absence of thought of future reward. Roland's motives for not blowing the horn are, then, while no more complex than Beowulf's for visiting Heorot, less realistic, more refined, more spiritual, more fanciful.

Iri the matter of temporal rewards, moreover, there is a similar contrast between Roland and Beowulf, between Roland and his countrymen. The knights, we hear, found much booty in Cordova, gold and silver and valuable ornaments (v. 99)[1]; and Roland promises great booty after Roncevaux, — "Encoi avrum un eschec bel e gent" (v. 1167), — but there is no evidence of his own delight in his share, past or future. So far as the hero himself is concerned, and except in the give and take, blow for blow, life for life, in the battle, desire for revenge does not strengthen his arm. Thus it was with Beowulf. Nevertheless Roland believed that it was the emperor's duty to avenge his death (v. 1149), and he urges him to avenge the deaths of Basan and Basilie (v. 213).

As in the *Beowulf*, cowardice is contrasted with valor. Corsabrin does not wish to be a coward (v. 888). Roland says that there is not a coward in the rearguard (v. 1116), yet Turpin feels it necessary to exhort: "Pur deu vos pri que ne seiez fuiant" (v. 1473). Cowardice does not, then, appear in the action, unless it be in the case of the four hundred who are afraid to approach Roland and Turpin. *Their* valor is thus magnified.

Manifestations of the Central Motive in characters other than the hero are to be dealt with later.[2] For the subsidiary motives the implications of the analysis of the Phase of Life must once more suffice. Motivation, the causal chain which leads to Roncevaux and the tragedy, remains for discussion. It may be traced, link by link, from the very beginning of the poem. Charles's conquest of all Spain except Saragossa leads to Blanchandrin's plan as a last resort. Roland's objections to Blanchandrin's proposal are motived in character (vv. 196 ff., 210 ff.). Roland jumps to his feet and speaks first; he recalls his own services, and urges Charles to complete the conquest, and avenge Basan and Basilie. To the old warrior such a speech would inevitably seem hasty, boastful, hotheaded, would arouse anger and opposition. Especially would it arouse the anger and opposition, — whatever the merits of the case might be, — of the older warrior who stood nearest to him, who would find it peculiarly unpleasant to be outshone by his own stepson. It is not necessary, then, to go back of the moment for the motive for Ganelon's reply. "Ja mar crerez bricun" (v. 220), he cries, the last

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[1] Cf. also Blanchandrin's belief in the efficacy of the gifts to be sent by Marsilie to Charles (vv. 30 ff.), and Ganelon's account of the effect upon the French of the booty Roland won for them (vv. 397 ff.).

[2] In connection with Character, pp. 275 ff., below.

word emphatic because of its substitution for the "Marsilie" of Roland's first sentence (v. 196). He advises the ratification of the treaty, and concludes :

> "Cunseilz d'orguill n'est dreiz que a plus munt.
> Laissum les fols, as sages nus tenuns" (vv. 228–229).

Roland does not reply, but no one need be told that these words were not pleasant for him to hear, nor Naime's approval of them, nor the French applause of Naime. Yet when Charles asks who shall be sent to Saragossa, Roland, always eager for action, is among those who volunteer. Only when the emperor has rejected him, Naime, Oliver, the twelve peers, and Turpin, does Roland suggest Ganelon : "Ço'st Guenes mis parastre " (v. 277). Roland here seems to introduce his stepfather as a person unknown to the French, and it is, perhaps, not over-subtle to regard even the form of the suggestion as peculiarly obnoxious to Ganelon. The fact that he should owe this perilous honor to Roland is obviously galling. He issues his formal defiance at once (v. 287). Add to this Ganelon's fear of a real danger, — Roland himself had recalled the fate of Basan and Basilie, and the event shows that this fear was fully justified, — and we have sufficient motive for all his subsequent machinations. Yet even these would not have been fatal, had not Roland's peculiar character led him to refuse to blow the horn. Charles's earlier arrival upon the field, moreover, might have saved his life; but his delay is provided for by Ganelon's persuading him for a time to believe that Roland is amusing himself merely. Somewhat less convincing is the emperor's sudden change of heart. But on the whole the chain is forged with extreme care, link by link; everything is provided for, and the tragedy seems inevitable.

III. Structure

The *Roland* is some 30,000 words in length ;[1] but of these it clearly owes to late accretion the 6000 words[2] of the Baligant episode ; without this accretion it is thus about the same length as the *Beowulf*. The *Roland* tells a shorter story, deals, that is, with a single incident rather than with two independent incidents. It owes its length then to greater

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[1] That is, in Stengel's edition. The Oxford MS. has about 26,000 words.
[2] In Stengel's edition. The Oxford MS. has about 5700 words.

elaboration, and mainly to greater elaboration of plot.[1] To a certain
extent the means of this elaboration is repetition and detail ; but on a
far larger scale it works along lines of cause and effect. In the growth
of the *Roland* are involved processes analogous to those which produced
the ballads of *Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough, and William of Cloudesly,*
of *Robin Hood and the Monk,* and of *Robin Hood and Guy of Gis-
borne.*[2] In each case we have, to begin with, a central incident, and
to this is prefixed as " exciting cause " another incident. To the Death
of Roland and the Disaster of Roncevaux is prefixed as " exciting
cause," — and patriotic explanation, — the Treason of Ganelon. What
follows the central incident, however, is not, as in *Adam Bell,* mere
external addition. In the *Roland,* the Reprisals are the result of the
tragedy and of the treason. And the poem has come by the Baligant
Episode, even, honestly enough ; for this is the result of the Reprisals.
The unity of the *Roland,* though it is not of the kind which is conferred
by the presence throughout of a single dominating figure, is thus more
marked than that of any of the longer documents with which we have
been concerned, — than that of *Adam Bell,* the *Gest,* or the *Beowulf.*
The *Roland* may even be regarded as a single drama, and there is no
better road to an appreciation of its structural excellence than an anal-
ysis according to Freytag's scheme. The Introduction tells us what
nations are at war, and of Charlemagne's conquests. Then, in the form
of reaction against the French, the Rise begins with the council of Mar-
silie and the embassy to Charles. In the scene of the French council
a new force, — Ganelon, — enters, and thenceforward the reaction is
chiefly against Roland. The Treachery of Ganelon continues the Ris-
ing Movement, and it is carried on through the battle itself, with its
series of single combats and general attacks, up to the Climax, the
death of Roland. The treatment of this Climax carries still farther
than the *Beowulf* the tendency to elaborate the objective point, and
affords still more marked contrast to the ballad habit of omitting it.
The events which intervene between " Ço sent Rollanz que la mort
li est près " (v. 2259) and " L'anme del cunte portent en pareïs "
(v. 2396) require more than one hundred and thirty lines: they are,
the swooning of Roland, the attempt of the Saracen to gain possession

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[1] To greater elaboration of Undeveloped Elements, also, for it possesses the
epic leisure and expansiveness. Cf. pp. 272 ff., below.

[2] Cf. pp. 82 and 75, above.

of Durendal, Roland's three attempts to destroy the sword, his choice
of the place and attitude of death, and the descent of the angels, who
bear his soul to paradise. In each case Roland's actions are recorded
in detail.[1] Nearly half of this account of Roland's death consists of his
own words, — of his address to the dead Saracen, the three apostrophes
to Durendal, and the confession of sins and prayer for mercy. Finally,
the thoughts of the dying hero are recorded (vv. 2377 ff.). The other
important scenes are elaborated along much the same lines. In the com-
bats, for instance, the decisive moment is always emphasized, and ten
Brink's criticism is even less valid for the *Roland* than for the *Beowulf*.[2]

To return now to the analysis of our epic as drama : the tide turns
at the moment of Roland's death, and throughout the Downward Move-
ment, — the Reprisals, and the trial and death of Ganelon, — the
French are successful. The Conclusion is brief and abrupt ; the mat-
ter of Roland had closed with the death of Ganelon, the contest with
Spain with the baptism of Bramimonde ; Charles is to continue his
religious wars. Single scenes display a similar dramatic structure, rise
and fall, action and reaction : Ganelon before Marsilie, the two series
of combats at Roncevaux, the trial of Ganelon, the combat of Thierri
and Pinabel. The plot of the *Roland* is, then, an organic unit, the result
for the most part, not of arbitrary accretion from without, but of log-
ical elaboration from within.

Still further evidence of the poet's grasp of the whole is to be found
in those passages which look backward or forward, show thought of
past or future action while dealing with the present. Thus Adalroth
asks the privilege of striking the first blow against Roland, and declares
that he will slay him with his sword (vv. 860 ff.). At Roncevaux, accord-
ingly, he rides before the host, and declares that Charles is to lose his
right arm that day (vv. 1188 ff.). Roland kills him. Like Roland,
Adalroth is one of twelve peers, and this very symmetry tells for con-
catenation.[3] Before the battle each of the others makes his boast just as
Adalroth does (vv. 875 ff.), and in the battle each is slain (vv. 1213 ff.).
The same order is followed. Ganelon, incensed at Roland, issues a formal
defiance (v. 287). As his defence against the charge of treason he men-
tions this defiance (v. 3775). In the battle Roland cuts off the right

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[1] Cf., for example, vv. 2357 f.   [2] Cf. p. 194, above.

[3] Cf. the symmetrical scenes of the Monk and the Knight in the *Gest*, pp. 93 ff.,
above.

hand of Marsilie (v. 1903). After the flight of the pagans Marsilie reaches Saragossa, and faints from loss of blood : " La destre main ad perdüe trestute " (v. 2574). In the midst of his account of the slaughter of the French at Roncevaux the poet comforts his hearers by a reference to the trial and death of Ganelon (vv. 1406 ff., cf. 3734 ff.). Before the battle Roland orders Gualtier to occupy the heights (v. 804) ; when all the French but Turpin and Roland have been slain, Gualtier returns (v. 2040). Before Roncevaux, Roland refuses to sound the Olifant (vv. 1053 ff.); when the battle is nearly over and he announces his intention of doing so, Oliver recalls the earlier refusal (vv. 1716 ff.), and repeats one of Roland's arguments against it. The positions of Oliver and Roland are thus reversed, and symmetry, again, tells for coherence. More such passages might be cited ; but enough have been mentioned to show that, in this phase of coherence, the *Roland* surpasses the other documents discussed. A few minor inconsistencies do not affect this general impression.[1]

Synchronism becomes, in the *Roland*, for the first time really necessary for the action. While the French are camping, the Saracens continue their advance (vv. 709–710), and are thus in position to attack the rearguard when opportunity offers. In the scene that follows, Roland is appointed to the command of the rearguard, and Charles continues his march. The divergence of the two narrative streams is clearly marked : " Li XII per sunt remés en Espaigne " (v. 826) ; " Li emperere s'en repairet en France " (v. 829). In the following passage the narrative deals with Marsilie's preparations and advance, the poet making use of Ganelon as a mechanical device for transition, — he mentions his treason, that is, then his gifts from Marsilie (v. 845). Presently Oliver sees the approach of the pagans, and the two streams come significantly together (v. 1021). The battle follows and Charles is not mentioned. He is not forgotten, however, and the poet's treatment of the blowing of the horn and its results, — of the convergence of the two streams, — is notable. There are continual and abrupt changes of scene ; in the first *laisse* the transition is made by dwelling upon the distance travelled by the sound of the horn (vv. 1753 ff.); in the second

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[1] Paris seems inclined to find an inconsistency in Roland's preoccupation concerning the fate of his sword and the poet's subsequent silence, — except in the interpolated Baligant episode, — in regard to it. — *Extraits*, p. 102, n. 99. Ganelon, moreover, was not "jugiez a pendre," as the poet says in the anticipatory passage (v. 1409). Cf. also Paris, *Extraits*, pp. xxvi f.

laisse the sound only is emphasized ; in the third *laisse*, the transition is still more abrupt ; Roland

> L'olifan sunet a dulor et a peine.
> Karles l'oït et si Franceis l'entendent (vv. 1787 f.).

In each case Roland's action is described in some detail, and dialogue — Charles and Ganelon, or Charles and Naime — follows. For fifty lines the poet is concerned only with Charles and his army ; then he returns to Roland. The transition is skilfully made by introducing the thoughts of those who ride to Roland's rescue (vv. 1844 ff.). For some three hundred lines the poet is concerned with Roland, then he transports the reader, again with the sound of the horn (v. 2104), to Charlemagne's army, then back to the battle, with the sound of the French trumpets. Hearing this, the pagans rally for a last vain attack and then fly. Thus it is clear that the streams are converging ; they do not meet, however, until, after the death of Turpin and of Roland, the emperor comes upon the field (v. 2398). The poet of the *Beowulf*, as we have said, was able to keep his place in the narrative, in spite of digressions or pauses for the elaboration of detail ; it is idle to speculate whether, if his story had required it, he could have carried along, through fifteen hundred verses, two or three distinct lines of narrative. He did not do it ; and the significant matter is perhaps the fact that he did not so far elaborate his plot as to demand any such trial of skill.

So far as the lines of narrative themselves are concerned, they are notably continuous ; we have come a long way from the abrupt transitions and omitted connections of the Simple Ballad. The poet even inserts transitional passages where, for the modern reader, they are not needed. Gautier points out,[1] however, that the jongleur probably did not sing the whole poem at once ; it was, therefore, so constructed as to permit him to begin where he liked. Thus at the beginning of a new scene or incident, he goes back, rapidly, over ground already traversed, and so gains momentum for a fresh start, much as the modern magazine prints a summary of the earlier narrative with each new instalment of the serial story. This summary is commonly confined to a single line, often introduced by the word *quant :*

> Quant Tierris ad vencüe sa bataille,
> Venuz i est li emperere Carles (vv. 3934–3935).[2]

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[1] *La Chanson de Roland*, p. 70, n.   [2] Cf. also vv. 3975 f., 3988 ff.

Even more common is connection by a parallelism of the closing lines of one *laisse* and the opening lines of the next: thus, —

> Munte en un tertre, — desuz un arbre bel
> Quatre perruns i ad de marbre faiz —
> Sur l'erbe verte la est caeiz envers,
> Si s'est pasmez; kar la mort li est près.
>
> Halz est li puis e mult halz est li arbres,
> Quatre perruns i ad luisanz de marbre;
> Sur l'erbe verte li quens Rollanz se pasmet (vv. 2267 ff.).

Often the lines deal with two closely associated actions, and there is close parallelism and occasional, though never complete, verbal repetition: for example, —

> Li reis Marsilie len ad dunét le guant (v. 873).
> Li nies Marsilie tient le guant en sun poign (v. 874).

Occasionally the connection is made by the repetition of a single name; we learn, for instance, at the close of one *laisse* that only two of the Spanish peers remain alive: "Ço est Chernubles et li quens Margariz" (v. 1310), and the next *laisse* begins: "Margariz est mult vaillanz chevaliers" (v. 1311). The effect is similar to the connection by repetition of stanza and stanza in the Border and Heroic Ballads.[1]

After an interruption or digression the poet returns to his main line of thought by means of a rapid summary. Thus the poet tells us of Charles's return to Aix and of his summoning the judges for the trial of Ganelon, and adds: "Desor cumencet li plaiz de Guenelun" (v. 3704). It does not commence, however, and, instead, the next thirty lines are concerned only with the death of Aude. Then a new *laisse* begins:

> Li emperere est repairiez ad Ais.
> Guenes li fel en caeines de fer (vv. 3734-3735);

and the poet proceeds with the trial of Ganelon, thus giving evidence of a power, like the Anglo-Saxon's, of keeping his place in the narrative.

When the transitions involve for the persons of the poem movement from place to place, some account of the Journey is always given. This Journey, necessarily by land,[2] was, however, a commonplace affair, implying no details or processes picturesque or unusual, or interesting

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[1] Cf. pp. 67 and 141, above.

[2] Except in the Baligant Episode, vv. 2624-2647; and it is said that Charlemagne crossed the salt sea to conquer England (v. 372).

in themselves. There is thus nothing so elaborate as the account of Beowulf's voyages to and from Heorot. Like these, however, Ganelon's journey to Saragossa emphasizes departure and arrival, though in less degree (vv. 365 ff., 402 ff.). His conversation with Blanchandrin follows the account of his departure. Thereafter, ‸

> Tant chevalchierent Guenes et Blancandins,
> Que l'uns a l'altre la süe feit plevit
> Que il querreient que Rollanz fust ocis.
> Tant chevalchierent et veies et chemins,
> Qu'en Sarraguce descendent suz un if (vv. 402 ff.).

As in the *Gest*, the poet is clearly anxious to get on with the action,[1] to have done with transition; the *tant que* formula is significant and so are the plurals, *veies et chemins*.[2] The return is treated even more lightly (v. 660). Ordinarily, intervening action is emphasized, separating departure and arrival and suggesting the time occupied by the journey. More suggestive of landscape, though of a vague and conventional one, is the journey of the French army after the detachment of the rearguard (vv. 814 ff.). The display of geographical learning is notable and characteristic,[3] as is, also, the emphasis of accompanying Mental States.[4]

The plurals, and the summaries already noted as a means of transition or connection, are typical of the tendency toward narrative in general terms. The opening lines of the poem exemplify the tendency and show the scope and power of the poet:

> Carles li reis, nostre emperere magnes,
> Set anz tuz pleins ad estéd en Espaigne,
> Cunquist la terre jusqu'a la mer haltaigne,
> N'i ad castel ne nul borc qu'il ne plagne,
> Ne mur tant halt qu'a la terre ne fragne;
> Citét n'i ad qui contre lui remagne,
> Fors Sarraguce ki 'st en une muntaigne (vv. 1 ff.).

It is instructive to compare with this clear and impersonal bit of generalization the introductory lines of the *Beowulf*, where the poet scarcely escapes at all from the concrete, explains the situation by accounts of specific kings, and colors the narrative by his own mood. Similar power is displayed in the general characterizations of the battle

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[1] Cf. p. 98, above.   [2] Cf. also vv. 2852, 3695.
[3] Cf. the geographical passages, vv. 819 ff., 3682 ff.
[4] Cf. the passages dealing with Mental States, vv. 1842 ff.

where the poet sums up his impression,[1] and in the summaries of the results of a series of combats, or of general encounters.[2] In some cases general narrative is used to dispose rapidly of the single combats themselves.[3] Large movements like Charles's pursuit and slaughter of the Saracens (vv. 2460 ff.) are occasionally described with the same rapidity. So far as rapid movement and geographical suggestions are concerned, the beginnings of this method have been pointed out in the Border Ballads,[4] — notably in *The Battle of Otterburn* (Child, 161); the *Roland*, however, deals more powerfully with the movements and fates of larger groups of men than does any other of the documents under consideration. The same generalizing process, moreover, is frequently applied to the deeds of individuals.[5] Finally, rapid paraphrase in general terms sometimes takes the place of concrete dialogue. Thus the substance merely of Marsilie's oath is given (vv. 612 ff.). And Marsilie gives us Charles's letter not in concrete reproduction of word for word but only in substance (vv. 487 ff.). The effect of these bits of narrative in general terms is much more marked in the poem itself than in the present analysis, because of the frequency of their occurrence. Another step is thus taken in the direction of prose and reason, — a step suggestive, also, of national temperament.

Yet it is not to be supposed that with this increase in power of generalization the poet has lost his grasp of the concrete. The epic still "loves detail." The extent to which it is possible to reconstruct the phase of life has been already indicated ; and we have just seen what wealth of detail of all sorts is involved in the treatment of the objective points. More notable, however, than such details as these are those which are clearly given not to further the plot, but for their own sake. Roland's disarming of Turpin is an excellent example :

> A l'arcevesque Turpin alat aidier,
> Sun elme ad or li deslaçat del chief,
> Puis li ad trait le blanc osberc legier
> E sun blialt li ad tut detrenchiet ;
> Dedenz ses plaies en bote un grant quartier,
> Le remanant dessus ad fort liiet ;
> Cuntre sun piz puis si l'ad enbraciet,
> Sur l'erbe verte puis l'at süef culchiet (vv. 2169 ff.).[6]

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[1] Cf. vv. 1396 ff. (where the plurals and repeated *tant* are significant), 1610 ff., 1620 ff., etc.   [2] Cf. vv. 1308 ff., 3648 ff.

[3] Cf. vv. 1580 ff.   [4] Cf. p. 61, above.

[5] As in vv. 1412 ff.   [6] Cf. also vv. 340 ff., 484, 860 f.

The lines recall Wiglaf's tender performance of the last offices for Beowulf; it is instructive to compare, also, the parting words of Turpin (vv. 2195 ff.) with Beowulf's farewell.[1]

Of Episodes like those in the *Beowulf*, — of Finn, Sigemund, Thrytho, and the rest, — the *Roland* has none. There is, indeed, passing reference to events outside the poem, but this is usually to the conquests of Roland or of Charles,[2] not to the deeds of outsiders. Certain events, again, are elaborated for their own sake; but in these, too, — the death of Aude, the trial of Ganelon, the baptism of Bramimonde, — Charles is directly, and even Roland indirectly, concerned. They are, moreover, the natural result of what has gone before. This, as has been said, is true of the Baligant episode itself. But the Baligant episode cannot justify its presence by intrinsic interest; it is only a long yet fragmentary imitation of Roncevaux. It is not worked over to fit it for the unimportant position which it should occupy, not condensed, not made more rapid in movement, more general in its terms, not subordinated, in a word, as are the similar passages in the *Beowulf*, or the passing references to earlier conquests in the *Roland*, which carry subordination much further than does the *Beowulf*. Thus it impairs the unity of the poem, and it has the air of having been an independent epic, taken in bodily, and, except for a few omissions, without change. Yet this old epic must have been a careful imitation of the *Roland*, and there are few or no significant differences in matter or manner.

IV. General Characteristics of the Narrative Method

What has just been said of the poet's care in the matter of transitions and connections will have shown that the Movement of the *Roland* has departed still further from the leaps and bounds of the ballad. The method of connection by repetition, moreover, recalls the peculiar forward-and-back of Anglo-Saxon poetry, yet is essentially different in that it concerns not the sentence, but the paragraph or *laisse*, and does not to the same degree retard the movement. The movement is thus steadier, calmer, more prosaic than that of English ballad or epic; this suggests that it resembles the jog-trot of the *Gest;* but with this also it is to be contrasted. What has been said of narrative in general terms implies the nature of this contrast: the power of rapid summary, of

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[1] *Beowulf*, vv. 2813 ff.

[2] E.g. vv. 198 ff., 371 ff., 663 f., 2322 ff., etc.

indicating the rapid movements of large bodies of men, is foreign to the *Gest.* The poet of the *Beowulf* possessed it, but made use of it for episode or repetition, did not, as does the French poet, vary by this means the movement of his main story. It is this variation of the movement of the main story that marks, from the present point of view, the chief advance of the narrative art of the *Roland.*

Yet the more primitive conditions still persist : action is still retarded by repetition; and to elaboration of plot by means of many sorts of repetition is the greater length of the *Roland* largely due. Repetition for connection, and the repetitive summary in general terms have been discussed.[1] In the *Roland*, as in the *Beowulf*, " commonplace " lines turn up when similar ideas allow similar phrasing. The ends of such lines are varied for the sake of the assonance; their presence seems to indicate nothing more than delight in the exercise of verbal ingenuity.[2] Clearly for the purpose of emphasizing a pathetic situation, however, are groups of lines like those which recur in the general characterization of Roncevaux :

> Tant bon Franceis i perdent lor juvente !
> Ne reverrunt lor meres ne lor femmes,
> Ne cels de France ki as porz les atendent (vv. 1401–1403).

> Franceis i perdent lor meillors guarnemenz. . . .
> Ne reverrunt ne peres ne parenz
> Ne Carlemagne ki as porz les atent (vv. 1420–1422).

For purpose of emphasis, too, is the repetition of Charles's question as to who shall be sent as ambassador to Saragossa (vv. 244 f.).[3] Each question begins a new *laisse*, and some variation is necessary for the sake of assonance ; yet it may be regarded, for the most part, as evidence of the poet's delight in repetition with verbal variety, thus similar to the *Beowulf*, and contrasted with the ballad love of repetition with verbal similarity.

Not found, however, in the *Beowulf*, yet a common characteristic of the ballads, is the markedly symmetrical treatment of similar situations.

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[1] Pp. 256 f., above.

[2] Cf. the lines indicating the passage of time ; e.g.:

> Tresvait li jorns, la noit est aserïe (v. 717).
> Tresvait la noit et apert la clere albe (v. 737).

[3] Repeated in vv. 252 f., 274 f.

To the modern reader the presence of so much symmetrical narrative, clearly not for purposes of emphasis or contrast, seems due to lack of imagination; for the contemporary audience, however, whose taste had been trained by the traditions of popular poetry, it must have been a source of keen pleasure. Very much in the ballad manner is the account of the presentation of gifts to Ganelon (vv. 617–633), and the long series of single combats at Roncevaux is treated in much the same fashion. With such passages as these it is easy to contrast the treatment of the gift-giving in Heorot, and of the three great combats of Beowulf. In this respect the Anglo-Saxon poem is clearly farther from popular origins; it is less homogeneous, and more organic in effect.

More similar, however, to the art of the Anglo-Saxon epic is the way in which by means of repetition the French poet dwells upon and emphasizes an important or effective situation. Just as the former lingered over the embarkation of Beowulf or the coming of Grendel, the latter lingers over Roland's refusal to blow the horn, over Oliver's later protest against his doing so, over Roland's death, and Charlemagne's lament for him. Not only emphasis but suspense is gained by such repetition, since it delays the action. It is not incremental, however, and there is no effect of climax. In the most notable group of *laisses similaires*, for instance, the debate of Oliver and Roland, Oliver merely repeats his request three times; he finds no new reasons why Roland should sound Durendal. Roland, each time, finds four reasons why he should not. The second *laisse*, indeed, adds two new ones to two from the first *laisse*, but the third adds nothing new.[1]

Repetition is, then, a means of Suspense; but it is not the only means. As in the *Beowulf*, the poet does not seek to conceal the tragedy to come; it is by dwelling upon it, rather, that he seeks to arouse the hearer's curiosity as to its nature. Thus, when Charles calls his council to consider Marsilie's proposal,

> Si i fut Guenes ki la traïsun fist.
> Desor cumencet li cunseilz que mal prist (vv. 178–179), —

or, as the pagans, encamped near the French, await the dawn, " Deus, quel dulur que li Franceis nel sevent ! " (v. 716). When Charlemagne and his army ride to succor Roland we have the kind of situation of

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[1] For some other types of repetition see under Dialogue, pp. 264 ff., below. It is no part of the purpose of the present essay to attack the problem of the *laisses similaires* ; the intention is only to record the effect of their presence.

which the modern narrator makes much. All depends on one thing happening before another; the modern method is to make the reader expect now one now the other, alternately to raise and dash his hopes. The poet of the *Roland* employs no such artifice. We know from the beginning that that ride is vain (vv. 1806, 1840 f.). The delay of the narrative to describe the splendor of arms and armor (vv. 1807 ff.), and the fact that Charles does, after all, arrive almost in time (vv. 2130 ff.), nearly counteract the effect of these revelations or produce suspense in spite of them. It is thus not what the outcome is to be, but when and how Roland is to die, that interests the reader.

Similar in effect to these hints of tragedy to come is the emphasis of ill omens; as when Ganelon drops the glove (vv. 333 ff.), and as when storm and earthquake ominously foreshadow Roland's death (vv. 1423 ff.). Most of the important events of the poem are revealed to Charles beforehand in symbolic dreams (vv. 717 ff., 725 ff., 2528 ff.).

Suspense must, of course, exist in many cases for the persons of the poem when it does not for the reader; yet this is seldom emphasized. Expression of such feeling as that of the French before the trial by combat is exceptional :

> Idunc plurerent C milie chevalier
> Qui pur Rollant de Tierri unt pitiet.
> Deus sét asez, cument la fins en iert (vv. 3870 ff.).

Clédat,[1] finally, calls attention to the only instance of the temporary suppression of facts for the sake of suspense : the poet gives us not the details but only the results of the conversation of Blanchandrin and Ganelon.

So far as Dialogue is concerned, the *Roland* may be said to combine some of the methods of the *Beowulf* with those of the more primitive poetry. In amount it is somewhat less than in the ballads, somewhat more than in the *Beowulf*.[2] While none of the speeches are so long as the harangues in the *Beowulf*, many of them have the same formal or "occasional" character. On the other hand, there are a good many speeches shorter than the *Beowulf's* shortest, — even the half-line speech is exceedingly common in the *Roland*, — and the effect is often much like the rapid and dramatic question and answer of the *Gest*. As in the *Beowulf*, question is not repeated in answer; and,

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[1] *La Chanson de Roland*, p. 16.
[2] For the figures, see pp. 314 f., below.

although there can be no repetitive stanzas, there is much repetition in the dialogue not unlike these in effect. Blanchandrin, for instance, twice makes the same speech about Marsilie's gifts to Charles (vv. 30 ff., 125 ff.), and Charles repeats it to his barons (vv. 180 ff.). Charles entrusts Ganelon [1] with a message to Marsilie, and Ganelon repeats it, in part word for word (vv. 430 ff.), then, for the sake of emphasis, repeats it again in slightly varied form (vv. 468 ff.). Slightly varied, — but still varied ; the ideal is clearly not the exact verbal similarity of the Simple Ballad ; nor is it similarity of thought with complete change of words, as in the *Beowulf;* it is rather a combination of verbal similarity and dissimilarity. Yet effects similar to those of the Simple Ballad persist here and there. Thus Adalroth : " Enquoi perdrat France dulce sun los " (v. 1194) ; whereupon Roland kills him and says : " Oi nen perdrat France dulce sun los " (v. 1210). And the contrast is even more emphatic in Roland's "Ja mar crerez Marsilie " (v. 196), followed by Ganelon's " Ja mar crerez bricun " (v. 220). Much as in the Simple Ballad, yet still with more verbal variety, the narrative repeats the directions given in the dialogue. Thus Jofrei says to Charles :

> " Par tut le camp faites querre les noz
> Que cil d'Espaigne en la bataille unt morz,
> En un carnier cumandez qu'hom les port ! "
> Ço dist li reis : " Sunez en vostre corn."
>   Gefreiz d'Anjou ad sun graisle sunét.
> Franceis descendent, Carles l'ad comandét ;
> Tuz lur amis qu'il i unt morz truvéz
> Ad un carnier sempres les unt portéz (vv. 2947 ff.).

Occasionally, as in the opening scenes of the poem, dialogue delays the action, yet it is so intimately connected with the action which is to follow that it creates suspense, and its liveliness and rapidity add to the interest of the narrative. How different it is from the dialogue of the *Beowulf* only a passage in the poem itself can show.[2] A dramatic silence, once indicative of acquiescence (v. 263), seems elsewhere to suggest doubt or hesitation (vv. 214 ff.), or curiosity (vv. 411 f.).

The speeches, as has been said, have often the " occasional " character of those of the *Beowulf;* they are called forth by recurring or typical situations. There is, in the first place, the formal salutation,

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[1] This occurs not in the Oxford, but in a Venice MS., inserted after v. 330. Cf. Stengel, *Rolandslied*, p. 33.   [2] See, for example, vv. 244–263.

the "salvez seiez de deu!"[1] (vv. 123, 676), spoken by Blanchandrin or by Ganelon, with a line in praise of the ruler addressed. The Germanic custom of the formal boast or vow persists also in the *Roland*. After the hero's death Charles recalls how upon a feast day they were all at Aix,

> Si se vanterent mi vaillant bacheler
> De granz batailles, de forz esturs champels (vv. 2861-2862);

and he goes on to give Roland's vows. Reference has already been made to the vows of the Spanish peers before Roncevaux. Commonly following such a vow came, as part of the typical combat, the formal defiance of the foe upon the field of battle, then the reply, then the abuse by the victor of the vanquished.[2] Not as part of the single combat, but as important factors in the conduct of the battle as a whole, are to be noted the exhortations before the fight and in the course of it, by Roland, Oliver, and Turpin,[3] as well as their brief comments on the action.

Perhaps the most marked development in the way of dialogue, of the *Roland* beyond the *Beowulf*, is the formal lament for the dead.[4] There is indeed something of the kind in Hrothgar's lament for Æschere, the councillor and companion who had often shared with him the peril of battle. Hildeburh, too, at Hnæf's funeral pyre, "gēomrode giddum" (v. 1118). And Beowulf's men rode about his body, praising their lord in words, "swā hit gedēfe bið" (v. 3174). This "swā hit gedēfe bið" may be roughly paralleled from the *Roland;* when Turpin dies Roland folds his hands upon his breast, "Forment le plaint a la lei de sa tere" (v. 2251). And when Roland sees so many of the French lying dead, "il lés pluret cum chevaliers gentils" (v. 1853). In the *Roland*, however, not such a mere report of the lament, but the *regret funèbre* itself is usually given. Sometimes, in the press of the battle, it is a mere "Tant mare fustes!"[5] Often it is a long formal speech, such as Roland's for the peers (vv. 1854 ff.), for Oliver (vv. 2207 ff.), for Turpin (vv. 2251 ff.); Charlemagne's for the peers (vv. 2402 ff.), for Roland

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[1] Cf. Beowulf's "Wæs ðū, Hrōðgār, hāl!" (v. 407).

[2] Cf. pp. 247 f., above, the account of the typical combat, and, for examples of the speeches, vv. 1191 ff., 1207 ff.

[3] E.g. vv. 1165 ff., 1170 ff., 1472 ff., 1922 ff., etc.

[4] See pp. 200 f., above; and one may compare also Percy's "Woe's me for thee" in *The Hunting of the Cheviot* (Child, 162), *The Bonny Earl of Murray* (Child, 181), and *Bonnie James Campbell* (Child, 210).   [5] V. 2221.

(vv. 2887 ff., 2898 ff., 2909 ff., 2916 ff., 2933 ff.); Turpin's for the peers (vv. 2195 ff.); cf. the words of Bramimonde (vv. 2598 ff.). As Paris points out,[1] Roland's apostrophe of Durendal, — the address of the dying to that which he leaves, — is a form very similar to the funeral oration. These laments begin commonly with a prayer for the souls of the departed, then mention the loyalty and the prowess of the dead. The loss to France is emphasized, and Charles declares that the death of Roland marks the beginning of his honor's decline. Roland praises the character, as man and priest, and prays for the soul of Turpin. The personal grief of the speaker is actually expressed only in Charles's lament for Roland. Bramimonde sees in the approaching death of Marsilie the loss to Saragossa, blames the gods for their desertion, the *amiral* for his cowardice, speaks of the *vasselage* of Charles and wishes that some one might kill him. Roland's " regret " for Durendal is very similar to the lament for the dead. He is fearful concerning the fate of the sword after his death, tells what countries he has conquered with it, how it came into his possession, what relics the hilt contains.

The manner of these laments is even more significant than the matter. The *Beowulf* passages suggest that the Anglo-Saxon laments were formal in character: Hildeburh " gēomrode giddum " and Beowulf's men wished " word-gyd wrecan." Yet the only dirge in the poem — Hrothgar's for Æschere — is, indeed, necessarily in verse, and makes much of mere sound, but offers no further evidence of this formality. The formality, then, may be regarded as much further developed in the *Roland*. It is, in fact, carried almost to artificiality.[2] It is clearly no accident that two of the dirges, Charlemagne's for Roland, and Roland's for Durendal, should be in the form of the *laisses similaires* already considered. There is, moreover, a distinct tendency to use formulæ; the *tant mare fustes* occurs not only alone but as part of the longer dirges. Roland's lament for Oliver, is, in the closing lines, markedly parallel in construction:

> " Pur hanste fraindre et pur escut percier, . . .
> Pur orgoillos veintre et esmaier
> Et pur proz omes tenir et cunseillier
> (Et pur glutun veintre et esmaier)
> En nule tere n'out meillor chevalier " (vv. 2210 ff.).

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[1] *Extraits*, p. 98, n. 85.

[2] Yet an artificiality thoroughly in keeping with popular art. Mention has been made of the ballad tendency to take refuge in a " commonplace " for the expression of emotion. Cf. p. 58, above.

A single line of Roland's lament for Turpin takes the same form : " Pur kei tenir et pur humes atraire " (v. 2256). With such parallelism Charles, in his lament for the peers, combines an interesting anticipation of *ubi sunt*, — for obviously more is meant than meets the ear :

> Carles escrïet : "U estes vos, bels nies ?
> U 'st larcevesques et li quens Oliviers ?
> U est Gerins et sis cumpaing Geriers ?
> U est dus Otes et li quens Berengiers,
> Ive et Ivories que j'aveie tant chiers ?
> Qu'est devenuz li Guascuinz Engeliers,
> Sanse li dus et Anseïs li fiers ?
> U est Gerarz de Russillun li vieilz,
> Li .XII. per que j'aveie laisiez ?"
> De ço qui chielt, quant nus n'en respundiet ? (vv. 2402 ff.)

The list of " occasional " speeches may close with mention of the sermon, — which is one form of the exhortation before the battle,[1] — and of the prayer. This last type, like the lament, shows something of the tendency toward artificial construction. Thus the form of Roland's last words is made impressive largely by the remarkably effective balance, in the sense of a rise (three lines) and fall (two lines). Roland

> Claimet sa culpe, si prïet deu mercit :
> " Veire paterne ki unkes ne mentis,
> Saint Lazaron de mort resurrexis,
> E Danïel des leons guaresis,
> Garis de mei l'anme de tuz perilz
> Pur les pecchiez que en ma vïe fis !" (vv. 2383 ff.).[2]

It is interesting to compare with these last words of Roland the last words of Beowulf ; they are addressed to Wiglaf :

> Đū eart ende-lāf   usses cynnes,
> Wǣgmundinga ;   ealle wyrd forswēop
> mīne māgas   tō metod-sceafte,
> eorlas on elne ;   ic him æfter sceal (vv. 2813 ff.).

Compared with these lines the French appears as a form which any dying man might use ; it does not express the individual or the situation ; nor, — partly, perhaps, because hope and faith are there, — is it so suggestive of emotion.

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[1] E.g. Turpin's sermon before Roncevaux, vv. 1127 ff.

[2] Here Stengel adds four lines, which, however, he encloses in parentheses.

Something like the Germanic Flyting survives, perhaps, in the inter-
change of courtesies before combat, and surely in the quarrel of Roland
and Ganelon. This differs from the flyting in the *Beowulf* in that it
springs from the situation in the poem, forms part of the action, and is
not abuse for abuse's sake. It is somewhat more delicately and suggest-
ively[1] handled, too, and there is an advance, though not a great one,
in the direction of wit. Thus to Roland's " Ja mar crerez Marsilie "
(v. 196), Ganelon replies : " Ja mar crerez bricun " (v. 220), and later,
when Ganelon is protesting against undertaking the mission to Sara-
gossa, Roland's insinuation of cowardice may be compared with Beo-
wulf's direct accusation of Unferth ; to Ganelon's threats,

> Respunt Rollanz : " Orgoill oi et folage.
> Ço sét hom bien : n'ai cure de manace ;
> Mais savies hom il deit faire message.
> Si li reis voelt, prez sui por vus le face " (vv. 313 ff.).

Even more effective is Roland's reply to Ganelon's angry answer :
" Quant l'ot Rollanz, nes poet tenir de rire " (v. 323) ; whereupon Gane-
lon nearly bursts with wrath.

Soliloquy and Apostrophe[2] have been noted in connection with the
laments. Soliloquy is used elsewhere as a means of indicating emotion
or purpose. Thus when Turpin sees Abisme :

> Mult queiement le dit a sei meïsme :
> " Cil Sarrazins me semblet molt herite ;
>
> .   .   .   .
>
> Mielz voeil morir que jo ne l'alge ocire,
> Unches n'amai cuard ne cuardïe " (vv. 1644 ff.).

But the *Roland* contains nothing like the soliloquy of the last survivor
of his race.

It does contain, however, a form found occasionally in the ballads[3]
but not in the *Beowulf*, — the chorus speech. Most commonly this is
a half-line exclamation at the end of the *laisse*, by the French or
pagans, expressing the approval or disapproval, joy or sorrow or fear,
called forth by the words or deeds of the persons of the poem.[4] Speeches

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[1] Diplomatically suggestive dialogue occurs in the discussion of the conditions
of Ganelon's treason (vv. 520 ff.).

[2] Cf. also Ganelon's apostrophe to his sword (vv. 445 ff.).

[3] As in *Johnie Cock* (Child, 114, A, sts. 11, 14).

[4] E.g. vv. 61, 77, 192, 243, etc.

of similar character, but somewhat longer, are also common.[1] The lament (vv. 2146 ff.), the exhortation, the prayer (vv. 1906 ff.), sometimes take this form. Occasionally the phrase, " Dist l'uns a l'altre " takes the place of the " Dient paien," etc.

The dialogue of the *Roland* cannot be said to be more flexible than that of the *Beowulf.* It does not by its manner express character. Roland's speeches have the usual eloquence of the epic hero, and the vigor of the man of action; there is illustration of this vigor in the sudden change of mood at the end of his lament for the peers :

> " De doel murrai, s'altre ne m'i ocit.
> Sire cumpaing, alum i referir ! " (vv. 1867–1868).

He would hold with Beowulf that it is better that a man avenge his friend than that he much grieve. Yet it is hardly conceivable that the poet should have felt this closing inappropriate at the end of any other lament.

As in the *Beowulf,* then, not so much of character as of emotion is expressed by the speeches. We have already seen what an important place the lament holds among the " occasional " speeches, how express-ive of grief the dialogue may become, and how, in the lament as in the lyric, grief likes to find expression in artificial form. The emotion is rather nicely conceived by the poet, and the contrast of Charlemagne's lament for Roland with Bramimonde's for the wounded Marsilie, in regard to both speech and assignment, is notably significant : Charles

> Guarde a la tere, veit sun nevod gesir,
> Tant dulcement a regreter le prist :
> "Amis Rollanz, de tei ait deus mercit !
> Unques nuls hom tel chevalier ne vit
> Por granz batailles juster et defenir.
> La meie honor est turnee en declin ! " (vv. 2885 ff.).

Bramimonde
> mult haltement s'escriet :
> "E Sarraguce, cum ies oi desguarnie
> Del gentil rei ki t'aveit en baillie !
> Li nostre deu i unt fait felonie
> Ki en bataille oi matin li faillirent.
> Li amiralz i ferat cuardie,
> S'il ne cumbat a cele gent hardie

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[1] Cf. vv. 350 ff., 1615 ff., 2060 ff., etc.

> Ki si sunt fier, n'unt cure de lur vïes.
> Li emperere od la barbe flurïe
> De vasselage ad mult grant estultïe,
> S'il ad bataille, il ne s'en fuirat mïe.
> Mult est granz doels que nen est ki l'ocïet " (vv. 2597 ff.).

The contrast between the calm dignity and sense of finality of the one, with the falsetto, the impotent rage and accusations of the other, needs no comment.

We have seen, also, how the chorus speech expresses the common emotion, joy or sorrow, hope or fear, of the French or pagans ; and how anger finds expression in the " flyting " of Roland and Ganelon. This same emotion is expressed by the challenge and reply before the combat, and by the abuse of the slain after it. It is effectively expressed also in the first dramatic conversation of Marsilie and Ganelon. In the later meeting, the peculiar suggestiveness of the dialogue, not of emotion, but of thought or purpose, is noteworthy. On the whole, then, rather more of dialogue in the *Roland* has emotional coloring, but it is more likely to assume a conventional form, than in the *Beowulf*.

Indirect Discourse is even more common than in the *Beowulf*. Prayers are frequently paraphrased in this way,[1] and a summary of an oath is given in the same fashion (vv. 612 ff.). Quotations occur within speeches, sometimes in the direct (vv. 387 f.), sometimes in the indirect form. There is scarcely any attempt at complete paraphrase ; usually only the substance of the speech is given. The form of these passages is consistent throughout; the French poet does not, like the Anglo-Saxon, unconsciously slip back from indirect to direct.

As in the *Beowulf*, the speeches are usually assigned, but in the *Roland* the rule is not without exceptions. Repetitions of a former, assigned speech are not assigned.[2] Occasionally the dialogue grows too rapid for assignment.[3] In all these cases it is perfectly clear who is speaking ; the assignment is completely unnecessary, and there is no evidence of the ballad carelessness or neglect in this direction. They are, moreover, as has been said, exceptional. Usually the speech is assigned, and most frequently by some colorless word like *dist, parlat, respunt; dist* introduces even the most formal speeches, — like that of Blanchandrin to

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[1] E.g. vv. 1837 f., 2014 ff., 2239 ff., 2518.

[2] E.g. vv. 244, 252 (a Venice MS. inserts the assignment in both these cases), 1059, 1070.   [3] V. 290, — unless we insert with Stengel v. 289a.
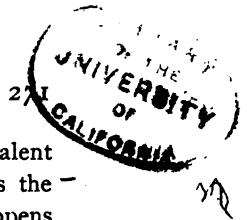
the king and nobles assembled. There is no Old French equivalent of the Anglo-Saxon *maðelian*, — unless it be *apeler*. Sometimes the speech is broken by the close of the *laisse*, and the new *laisse* opens with a new assignment. Connective repetition is at work here also:

> " Seignur " dist Guenes " vos en orrez noveles " (v. 336).
> " Sire " dist Guenes " dunez mei le cungied ! " (v. 337).

Often with the assignment of the dialogue other information is conveyed. New persons are often thus introduced and their characters rapidly described.

> Guenes i vint li fel li parjurez,
> Par grant veisdïe cumençat a parler (vv. 674–675).

Thus are introduced and described Naime (vv. 774 ff.), Thierri (vv. 3818 ff.), and Pinabel (vv. 3838 ff.). Often not the character of the speaker, but his action and his manner of speaking are described.

> Li nies Marsilie li est venuz devant,
> Sur un mulet od un bastun tuchant,
> Son oncle apelle, si li dist en riant (vv. 860 ff.).[1]

Often the action or manner of speaking indicates emotion.

> Li arcevesques ne poet müer, n'en plurt,
> Lievet sa main, fait sa beneïçun,
> Après lor dist . . . (vv. 2193 ff.).

Sometimes the expression is mentioned : " Cler en riant a Guenelun ad dit " (v. 628). Or the emotion is mentioned directly : " Ireement parlat a sun parastre " (v. 762). Or the assignment may indicate the nature or contents of the speech : " Par grant saveir parolet l'uns a l'altre " (v. 369).[2] Sometimes there is implication of the solemnity of the occasion in the assignment of the speech :

> Envirun lui plus de vint milier d'humes.
> Il en apelet et ses dus et ses cuntes :
> " Öez, seignur, quels pecchiez nus encumbret ! " . . . (vv. 13 ff.);

and at the close of Marsilie's speech :

> N'i ad paien ki un sul mot respundet,
> Fors Blancandin del castel de Valfunde (vv. 22–23).

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[1] Cf. vv. 218 f., 443 ff., 2175 f.   [2] Cf. also vv. 1188 ff.

The last line recalls the Anglo-Saxon habit of adding dignity to the speech by mentioning name or title in the assignment; but it is less common in the *Roland*. On the whole, the French poet has learned to make this phase of his work more effective than had the poet of the *Beowulf*.

V. THE UNDEVELOPED ELEMENTS OF NARRATION

The poet of the *Roland* is less interested in the world about him, less vividly conscious of its close relation to man, than was the poet of the *Beowulf*. And he is less inclined to make moral comment upon the action. He seems, however, to be more interested in Mental States, and perhaps in Character also ; for, while he does less with the character of his hero, he does a gôod deal more with the characters of the many minor persons of the epic. So far as these undeveloped elements are concerned, then, the *Roland* does not mark a consistent development beyond the *Beowulf*.

The character of the hero, as has been said, does not dominate the action of the poem as a whole ; its unity is rather a unity of action. And, while Roland is thus less important in the economy of the plot, there is less evidence concerning him, in the way either of casual epithet or formal description ; there is less variety in his actions ; thus it is inevitable that he should seem a good deal less complex than Beowulf. His chief quality is valor, and to what has been said in the course of the analysis of that motive there is not much to add. His great courage took the form of an heroic folly, not without self-consciousness ; it was eminently aggressive ; it was inspired by thoughts of glory, of family, of king, of country, of God, very little by thought of reward. He was thus valiant, aggressive, emulous, loyal, pious, unselfish. Yet this is not quite the whole story ; some modification and addition are necessary. The poet is fully conscious of Roland's valor and emphasizes it by epithet and in action. He makes use of the word itself (v. 1877 ; *vaillanz hom*, v. 2045). Roland is a *proz oem* (v. 2916), *proz*, contrasted with Oliver, who is *sages* (v. 1093), no one so *proz* (v. 2905). His great *vasselage* is mentioned (v. 1094), yet it is but folly, Oliver implies :

> Kar vasselages par sens neñ est folïe ;
> Mielz valt mesure que ne fait estultïe.
> Franceis sont mort par vostre legerïe. . . .
> Vostre prôecce, Rollanz, mar la veïmes ! (vv. 1724 ff.).

Roland, that is, has the defects of his qualities. It is characteristic that

> Li quens Rollanz unkes n'amat cuard,
> Ne orguillos hume de male part,
> Ne chevalier, s'il ne fust bons vassals (vv. 2134 ff.).[1]

He is loyal to his fellows, as has been said, and will not desert Turpin or Gualtier in the fight. Where he is, Gualtier is not afraid (v. 2046). He is unterrified by the threats of Ganelon (v. 314).

As has been said, his valor is of the aggressive type ; he does not act on the defensive merely.[2] He urges Charles not to accept Marsilie's offer, but to complete the conquest of Spain. In the course of the battle his exhortations may contain an appeal to loyalty toward king or country, but what he chiefly emphasizes is always a command like : " Fier de ta lance et jo de Durendal " (v. 1120). The sudden change of mood at the close of his lament for the peers is thoroughly in character :

> " De doel murrai, s'altre ne m'i ocit.
> Sire cumpaing, alum i referir ! " (vv. 1867–1868).

His grief again finds such expression in action :

> Rollanz ad doel, si fut maltalentis,
> En la grant presse cumencet a ferir (vv. 2056–2057).

He makes vows, as has been said, as to future action. He does not omit mention or enumeration of past victories,[3] and gives other evidence of self-satisfaction, — notably in the hour of his death, when he apostrophizes Durendal :

> " Mult bons vassals vos ad lung' tens tenüe.
> Jamais n'iert tels en France l'asolüe " (vv. 2310–2311).

Pride is excusable in this supreme moment, thinks Paris.[4] But need it be excused ? Is it not, like the similar quality in Beowulf, just absence of modern sophistication, not at all offensive to contemporary audiences ? Ganelon, indeed, emphasizes Roland's *orguill*, and tells Blanchandrin the story of the apple. Oliver tells Roland that *mesure* is worth more than his *estultie* (v. 1725) ; but Ganelon is an enemy, and Oliver is engaged in heated dispute with him. Moreover, it is said that

> Vers Sarrazins reguardet fierement,
> E vers Franceis humbles et dulcement,
> Si lur ad dit un mot curteisement (vv. 1162 ff.).

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[1] Cf. also vv. 1107 ff.
[2] E.g. vv. 2124 ff.
[3] Cf. vv. 198 ff., 2322 ff., 2352.
[4] *Extraits*, p. 101, n. 96.

This speaking courteously is characteristic. Elsewhere it is " a lei de chevalier " (v. 752), " a la lei de sa tere " (v. 2251). Yet his courtesy is a formal matter, largely, and though he would die for a comrade, we do not find acts like Beowulf's speech to Unferth about his sword, or his gift to the boat-ward. He is, however, beloved, at least by Charles, who laments him not only as the conqueror of many kingdoms, but *par amur* (v. 2897).

In person, Roland is described as *bels* (v. 2402), *juvente bele* (v. 2916). The account of the battle begins with a description of his appearance :

> As porz d'Espaigne en est entrez Rollanz
> Sur Veillantif sun bon cheval curant,
> Portet ses armes, mult li sunt avenanz ;
> Et sun espiet vait li ber palmeiant,
> Cuntre le ciel vait la mure turnant,
> Laciet en sum un gunfanun tut blanc,
> Les renges d'or li batent jusqu'as mains ;
> Cors ad mult gent, le vis cler et riant (vv. 1152 ff.).

Here, it will be noted, the description, except the last line, deals not with the man himself but with his arms. His appearance in battle was effective, moreover (vv. 1593 ff.), and he is described as *pesmes* (vv. 256, 392). He is described as *forz* also (v. 1879), and there is plenty of evidence for this in the great blows which he strikes and the numbers whom he slays. Yet his comrades almost equal him, and there is no suggestion of his having strength like Beowulf's. He meets human enemies with weapons like their own. There is no evidence that the poet regarded him as invulnerable.

Roland and Beowulf, then, possess, though in varying degrees, many of the same qualities. They are alike good,[1] noble, valorous, powerful, aggressive ; they are alike in preferring active vengeance to mourning, in love of fame, in being beloved. Aside from these common qualities, Beowulf was peculiarly strong in mind, unselfish and generous, fond of treasure ; Roland was proud, though probably in no bad sense ; and he certainly suffered from *desmesure*. On the whole, Beowulf appears the more mature, the more sane, the larger, though more primitive nature ; he risked and lost his life for the material good of others ; Roland appears the more passionate, headstrong, the more youthful and brilliant figure, more of the idealist or sentimentalist, who risked his life for his

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[1] *Bon*, v. 1097.

own glory and the glory of France. Had he, perhaps, absorbed some Celtic traits from the marches of Brittany?

In mere number of persons — nearly one hundred are named — the *Roland* goes far beyond the *Beowulf*, and it is not to be supposed that in the equipment of Roland the poet has exhausted his categories of virtues. National ideals find expression not in one, but in all the characters of the poem. Thus Oliver is placed beside Roland and contrasted with him:

> Rollanz est proz et Oliviers est sages,
> Ambedui unt merveillus vasselage.
> Puis que il sunt as chevals et as armes,
> Ja pur murir n'eschiverunt bataille;
> Bon sunt li cunte, et lur paroles haltes (vv. 1093 ff.).

Only the first line mentions the contrasting qualities; the others deal with the familiar traits in which the heroes were alike. Elsewhere, moreover, Oliver appears as "li proz et li curteis" (v. 576). In action they behave in the same way: "Mult bien i fiert Oliviers et Rollanz" (v. 1413). And after Roland, Turpin, Gerin, Gerier, has each killed his man, it is Oliver who exclaims: "Gente est nostre bataille" (v. 1274). It is Oliver, too, who slays Malsaron, then Turgin and Esturguz, with the truncheon of his spear, because he has not time to draw his sword. One recalls the Germanic delight in great deeds with an inadequate weapon, as in Falquor· Spilmand's defence with the steel bar in *Grimilds Hævn* (Grundtvig, 5).[1] Here it is Roland who advises the use of the sword and seems to be the more *sage* of the two. In his lament for Oliver, furthermore, Roland conceives him largely in the terms of his own character (vv. 2210 ff.). Yet in the line: "Et pur proz omes tenir et cunseillier" (v. 2212), it appears that Roland was thinking of Oliver *le sage*. And while it is clear that the poet conceived the two heroes as much alike, and did not continually bear in mind the contrast, there is still emphatic evidence, here and there, of the attempt to differentiate them. Thus when Roland wishes Charles to send him as ambassador to Marsilie, Oliver says:

> "Vostre talenz est mult pesmes et fiers;
> Jo me crendreie que vos vos meslisiez" (vv. 256–257).[2]

The contrast, of course, of *mesure* and *desmesure* asserts itself most clearly in the first discussion as to sounding the olifant. It is significant,

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[1] Cf. p. 120, above.   [2] Cf. also vv. 585–586.

too, that, in the second, where the rôles are interchanged, it should be Oliver who declares that *mesure* is worth more than rashness; that "Franceis sont mort par vostre legerïe" (v. 1726). The contrast is, then, confined to *mesure* and *desmesure*. What other qualities Oliver has, he possesses in common with Roland; he lacks, moreover, other qualities ascribed to Roland. As described, his character is less complex; he is not less courageous, but he is saner, less daring, than Roland.

Turpin is cast in much the same mould. He is a representative of the church militant:

> Par granz batailles et par mult bels sermons
> Cuntre paiens fut tuz tens campiuns (vv. 2243–2244).

These sermons are chiefly exhortations to strike great blows; they promise the joys of paradise to those who fall in the battle. Roland, in his lament for Turpin, has in mind his ecclesiastical character:

> " Jamais n'iert hum, plus volentiers le serve,
> Dès les apostles ne fut hom tel prophete
> Pur lei tenir et pur humes atraire.
> Ja la vostre anme nen ait dol ne sufraite,
> De pareïs li seit la porte uverte ! " (vv. 2254 ff.).

Yet the same lament begins with the line: " E gentilz hom, chevaliers de bon aire" (v. 2252). And it is rather this side of the archbishop that is emphasized throughout; his blows are no less effective than Roland's or Oliver's.[1] There is one glimpse, finally, of his appearance; when after the battle Roland finds his body,

> Cruisiedes ad ses blanches mains[2] les beles (v. 2250).

But it is the villain of the story of whose appearance we know most. When, in the course of the dispute with Roland, Ganelon loses his temper,

> De sun col gietet ses grandes pels de martre
> Et est remés en sun blialt de palie.
> Vairs out les oeilz et mult fier lu visage,
> Gent out le cors et les costez out larges, . . .
> Tant par fut bels, tuit si per l'en esguardent (vv. 302 ff.).

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[1] Cf. vv. 1563 f., 1675, 2089 ff., and his own confession of faith, vv. 1875 ff.

[2] Not a mark distinctive of the clerk. Cf. Gilbert's white hands in the *Gest*, and Svend Felding's and Sivard Snarensvend's in the Danish ballads, pp. 104 and 146, above.

And the poet has not forgotten Ganelon's appearance when he stands for trial before the king,

> Cors ad gaillard, el vis gente color;
> S'il fust leials, bien resemblast barun (vv. 3763–3764).

But he is not loyal; upon his first appearance he is " Guenes ki la traïsun fist " (v. 178). He is " li fel, li parjurez " (v. 674); when he advises Roland's appointment to the rearguard Charles declares that he is possessed by living devils (v. 747). Marsilie tells him : " Mult estes ber e sages" (v. 648). His wickedness and wisdom are clear in the action. He is not concerned in the battle, yet exhibits undoubted courage in the scene at Saragossa. But he is already in the wrong. The poet does not, and, as a result, his auditors do not, see the situation from Ganelon's point of view. There is nothing in the poet's treatment to arouse the sympathy of the modern reader.

The figure of the emperor is on the whole not unlike that of Hrothgar; he is old, white-haired,[1] melancholy, and, for the most part, passive. Though it is only in the Baligant Episode that he takes an active part in the fighting, he is conceived, as has been said,[2] as a valorous warrior and world-conqueror, distinguished by his age and appearance.

> Blanche ad la barbe et tut flurit le chief,
> Cler ot le vis, le cors gent et plenier ;
> S'est kil demandet, ne l'estoet enseignier (vv. 117 ff.).

He is " li reis a la barbe canüe " (v. 3654), " od la barbe flurïe " (v. 2605), swears " Par ceste barbe que veez blancheier " (v. 261), and, upon one occasion at least, " mult par out fier lu vis " (v. 142). His piety is emphasized :

> Li emperere est par matin levez,
> Messe e matines ad li reis escultét (vv. 163 f., cf. vv. 669 f.).

His manner of speaking is in keeping with his age and station :

> Li emperere se pensat un petit,
> De sa parole ne fut mie hastis ;
> Sa custume est qu'il parole a leisir (vv. 139 ff.).

For the rest, however, he is conceived much in the same terms as Roland, Oliver, or Turpin; he is " li gentilz reis " (v. 2321); he is *fiers*

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[1] Ðǽr Hróðgār sǽt
eald ond unhār (*Beowulf*, vv. 356–357).
[2] Cf. p. 234, above.

(vv. 28, 3654, etc.). To his enemies he is *l'orguillus* (v. 28). Ganelon declares that there is no man who knows him "Qui ço ne dïet que l'emperere est ber" (v. 531). And Bramimonde says that he

> " De vasselage ad mult grant estultïe,
> S'il ad bataille, il ne s'en fuirat mïe" (vv. 2606–2607).

Thus emperor, archbishop, and knight-at-arms are reduced to pretty much the same type.

What is, however, most remarkable in the way of characterization is the frequency of the descriptions of the less important persons. Yet in these also, the same rather vague and somewhat conventional epithets are used. Thus it is twice said of Naime : "Meillor vassal de lui n'out en curt nul" (vv. 231, 775). Again,

> Blancandins fut des plus savies paiens.
> Blanche out la barbe, recercelét le chief,
> De vasselage fist asez a preisier ;
> Prod om' i out pur sun seignur aidier (vv. 24 ff.).

Like Charles he is "al canud peil" (v. 503), and swears

> " Par ceste meie destre
> Et par la barbe ki al piz me ventelet" (vv. 47–48).

Pinabel, who defends Ganelon in the trial,

> Bien set parler e dreite raisun rendre,
> Vassals est bons por ses armes defendre (vv. 3784–3785).

In answer to Thierri's challenge,

> Devant lu rei est venuz Pinabels.
> Granz est et forz et vassals et isnels (vv. 3838–3839).

There are some individual peculiarities in the appearance of Thierri ; it differs from Pinabel's.

> Heingre out le cors et graisle et eschewid,
> Neirs les chevels et alques brun le vis,
> N'est gueres granz, ne trop nen est petiz (vv. 3820 ff.).

Abisme, also, is individualized (vv. 1632–1640), yet the poet says of him what Bramimonde says of Charles : "De vasselage ad mult grant estultïe" (v. 1639). The poem abounds in such brief and conventional character-descriptions.[1] Finally, there is a good deal of vague

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[1] As of the Saracen peers, vv. 885 ff., the French, 170 ff., 792 ff., and one may compare vv. 1213 ff., 1235 ff., 1593 ff., and in general the openings of the conventional combats.

characterization of the French or pagans *en masse;* for example :
" Deus quels seisante i ad en sa cumpaigne ! " (v. 1849).

We may turn now to the Methods of Character-Description. These
are already sufficiently illustrated in the analyses of the various charac-
ters, and no additional quotations will be necessary. There are, it will
be evident, no descriptions of character so long or so formal, none so
clearly brought into the poem for their own sake, as those quoted from
the *Beowulf.* Valor, as has been said, is the common characteristic of
all the persons of the poem, and most of the action involves this quality.
Occasionally there occur bits of general narrative, emphasizing valorous
action as such, and having for their purpose, apparently, characteriza-
tion rather than narration.[1] More specific incidents seem now and then
to have this purpose; so Oliver's great deeds with the truncheon of his
spear (vv. 1351 ff.). Quite independent of the plot, and introduced
only to describe character, is the incident related by Ganelon of Roland
and the apple (vv. 381 ff.). Character is revealed also by repeated or
habitual actions : it is Charlemagne's custom not to speak hastily
(vv. 140 f.) ; Oliver was unsurpassed in the breaking of lances, piercing
of shields, etc. (vv. 2210 ff.). It is revealed also by habitual thought or
opinion : Roland never did love a coward (v. 2134), etc. This is just
the history of the characters, in general terms ; once at least this history
deals with the later action of the poem : Ganelon is introduced as
" ki la traïsun fist " (v. 178).

Less concretely, and somewhat vaguely, character is described also by
epithets. They imply no analysis, and but little attempt at nice distinc-
tions. The number of epithets is about the same as in the *Beowulf ;*[2]
many of the words, in each case, signify simply valor, valorous. The
French list is a great deal richer than the Anglo-Saxon in terms of
emphatic though vague abuse. And the Anglo-Saxon boasts a few terms
more specific than any in the French list, and denoting qualities less
immediately connected with the main action of the poem.[3]

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[1] Cf. vv. 1320 ff., 2056 ff., 2089 ff., etc.

[2] The poet makes use of the following epithets : *barnage, barnet, barun, bon,
bricun, chevalier, cuardïe, cuard, culvert, curteis, estultïe, encrismé, felun, fier, fol,
folage, folie, gentil, hardement, isnel, legerie, legier, manevit, mesure, nobilie, orguillus,
pesme, proecce, prod ome, prot, recredant, sage, savie, vaillant, vassal, vasselage, ver-
tuus, vertut.* For the A. S. epithets, see p. 210, above. The French list is length-
ened by the different forms of the same word.

[3] Such as *earg, gnēaþ, gold-hwæt, mon-ðwǣre, milde.*

While the style is not flexible, and the manner of the speech, as has
been said, fails to reveal character, the matter is often significant. It is
perhaps to this more than to anything else that we owe our knowledge
of the persons of the poem. Valor, again, is the quality most commonly
revealed ; it is revealed in the preliminary exhortations, in expression of
the determination not to retreat in the face of overwhelming numbers
or of sure death, but to strike great blows (vv. 1922 ff.) ; or in the
expression of delight of battle (vv. 1274, etc.). More specifically, valor
is revealed in Roland's reply to Ganelon's threats (vv. 313 ff.), or in the
archbishop's characterization of the man who lacks valor as worthy only
to be a monk in a monastery and pray every day for our sins (vv. 1880 ff.).
Pride is revealed in Roland's enumerations of his victories, or in the
speech accompanying the presentation of the apple (v. 387). In the
reply to Ganelon, just cited, there is self-description : every one knows,
says Roland, that I am not afraid of threats (v. 314). He describes
himself also in the lament for Durendal as " mult bons vassals " (v. 2310).

Descriptions of personal appearance are not confined, as in the
Beowulf, to the arms or the color of the hair, though these, it is already
evident, are the chief matters. Eyes, hands, complexion, form and
stature are also mentioned. The contrast of Ganelon's appearance and
his character has been noted. In the case of the lesser pagan warriors,
however, character is suggested by grotesque personal peculiarities.
Chernuble's hair is so long that it reaches to the ground (v. 976), and
he can carry a heavier weight than the load of seven mules. Abisme is
black as pitch and does not believe in God the son of Mary ; no one
has ever seen him laugh (vv. 1635 ff.).[1] The perfidious felon Falsaron
has eyes half a foot apart (vv. 1218 f.),[2] and the black warriors from
Ethiopia, a cursed country, have large noses and wide ears (Oxford MS.,
v. 1918).

There is much description of the persons by one another. The
laments, of course, involve this method, and it is made peculiarly effect-
ive when deeds of valor compel the praise of a foe, as when Ganelon
and Blanchandrin discuss Charles and Roland (vv. 392 ff., 537 ff., etc.),
or when Bramimonde describes Charles (vv. 2605 ff.). It is first from
Oliver, too, that we learn of Roland's lack of *mesure* (vv. 255 ff.).

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[1] " Readers who have any tincture of Psychology know how much is to be
inferred from this ; and that no man who has once heartily and wholly laughed
can be altogether irreclaimably bad." Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*, ed. MacMechan,
p. 29.   [2] Like the Wee Wee Man (Child, 38).

This method implies the effect of one character upon another. In other cases this effect itself iš given and the character producing it implied, as Roland's valor in the fact that Gualtier when he was with him was not afraid (v. 2046). Even more effective is the meeting of Grandonie and Roland : terror at first sight and the pagan trying in vain to escape (vv. 1596 ff.). Unusual, in that it involves a quality not concerned in the action of the poem, is the characterization by effect of Margariz de Sibilie, the only Saracen peer who survives the first attack :

> Pur sa beltét dames li sunt amïes,
> Femme nel veit, vers lui ne s'esclargisset,
> O voelle o non, n'en ait talent de rire (vv. 957 ff.).

This tone of gallantry is not to be found elsewhere in the *Roland*.

From what has been said of the typical combats, of the assignment of speeches, of the formal lament, of the " flyting," and of the soliloquy and apostrophe, it will be already clear that the Mental States are by no means neglected in the *Roland*. Now and then, indeed, the primitive methods seem to survive, and emotion is not expressed where we should expect it. Thus Marsilie seems to feel no grief for the loss of his knights (vv. 1628 ff.). Such omissions, however, are exceptional; emotion is pretty generally expressed. But it is emotion rather than intellectual processes. There is little or nothing parallel to the study of purpose or intention in Canto xi of the *Beowulf*, and some specific passages omit in a striking way the mentiôn of change of opinion, or alteration of motive. Thus when Marsilie shows anger at hearing from Ganelon the message of Charlemagne, Blanchandrin takes him aside :

> Cil dist al rei : " Apellez le Franceis !
> De nostre prod m'ad plevïe sa feid."
> Dist Lalgalifes : " Et vos l'i amerreiz " (vv. 506 ff.).

Similarly, as Charles rides away from Roncevaux and hears Roland's horn he seems convinced by Ganelon's arguments that the sound means nothing, when suddenly he gives orders to arm and return, and to put Ganelon in chains.

We have to do, then, not with intellectual processes, but with emotions ; we seem to be nearer possible communal beginnings, to deal with verse still somewhat more under communal control. This impression is deepened by the fact that the emotion expressed is frequently not that of individuals but of large bodies of men. We have already noted the

frequency of the Chorus Speech.[1] This expresses, as has been said, approval or disapproval, joy or sorrow or fear. Much of the direct description, moreover, represents emotion common to the whole French or pagan army. Thus, " Nostre Franceis unt ferut de vigur " (v. 1438); and as they ride to Roland's rescue, " Ni ad celui, durement ne s'en plagne " (v. 1845). Like Wrath, Grief is common to all:

> Le jur passerent Franceis a grant dulur,
> De XV liues en ot hom la rimur (vv. 816–817).

Or, after repelling the first attack at Roncevaux, the French

> Vunt par le camp, si requierent les lor,
> Plurent des oilz de doel et de tendrur
> Por lor parenz par coer et par amor (vv. 1445 ff.).

And as Bramimonde grieves for Marsilie,

> Ensembl'od li plus de trente milie humes
> Qui tuit maldïent Carlun et France dulce (vv. 2578–2579).

When, finally, Grandonie slays numerous Christians, nothing is said of his emotion; it is the pagans who have great joy of it (v. 1584).

Even, furthermore, in the laments themselves the personal grief of the speaker is not always expressed; it is not, for instance, in Roland's lament for Oliver (vv. 2207 ff.),[2] or in Bramimonde's for Marsilie (vv. 2598 ff.). Charles, indeed, mentions frequently enough his own grief at the death of Roland, yet it is not so much the grief of a man for his friend as of a ruler for a great soldier and leader (vv. 2887 ff.). Thus, he enumerates the enemies who will now come against him, and says that France suffers disgrace (vv. 2920 ff.). Similar in effect is the leader's regret for his followers, — like Hrothgar's " thane-sorrow " in the *Beowulf.* Charles exclaims:

> Si grant dol ai que ne voldreie vivre
> De ma maisniee ki por mei est ocise (vv. 2936–2937),

and Roland:

> Baron Franceis, pur mei vos vei murir,
> Jo ne vos pois tenser ne guarantir (vv. 1863–1864).

It is not to be supposed, however, that individual emotion is neglected in the *Roland;* far more space than in the *Beowulf* is devoted to the description of mental states and of their expression. And although, as

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[1] See pp. 268 f., above.

[2] Roland does express his own personal sorrow in another passage, vv. 2022 ff.

in the *Beowulf*, there are no elaborate psychological analyses, and no emotions other than those closely connected with the conflicts, as cause or effect, yet there is more evidence of interest in mental states as such, rather than for the emphasis of action merely. We learn relatively more, too, of the emotions of the hero and his friends, relatively less of those of his enemies. Yet the poet employs the latter method also, and there is tribute to the power of Roland's personality in Ganelon's rage (vv. 324 ff.), and to the valor of the French in Bramimonde's shrill accusations and curses (vv. 2595 ff.). Roland, however, when he hears that he has been assigned to the rearguard, " Ireement parlat a sun parastre " (v. 762). And far more space is devoted to the French than to the pagan grief for their dead; for the laments are wholly French, and the chorus speeches express emotion more commonly French than pagan. The hatred — righteous indignation — which precedes the combat is usually French. When Corsabrin addresses his fellows,

> Bien l'entendit l'arcevesques Turpins,
> Suz ciel n'at hume que voeillet plus haïr (vv. 1243–1244).[1]

And it is, as has been said, an important phase of the characterization of Roland that his grief is often mentioned to show how, with him, emotion promptly expressed itself in action (vv. 1196 ff., 2056 ff., etc.). This battle wrath, however inspired and in whomever manifested, is mainly a French emotion. It is characteristic, again, that even before the fighting begins :

> Quant Rollanz veit, là bataille serat,
> Plus se fait fiers que leons ne leuparz (vv. 1110–1111).

One recalls how Beowulf, waiting in Heorot for the approach of Grendel, " bād bolgen-mōd." Of Oliver, Roland says:

> Mis cumpaing est iriez ; . . .
> Encuntre mei fait asez a preisier (vv. 1515 ff.).

Not only individuals were stirred by battle wrath : the Ethiopians ride to the attack " fierement e a ire " (v. 1920).

For the descriptions of these emotions all possible methods are employed. Direct descriptions are more frequent than in the *Beowulf*, but these do not employ the same variety of epithets, or apply them with the same nicety. In this respect, as in others, there is a more

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[1] Cf. also vv. 1645 ff.

marked tendency toward convention or "commonplace." Typical collections of epithets occur in the passages describing the return of the French army ; for example :

> Li emperere cevalchet par irur
> E li Franceis dolent et curuçus (vv. 1812–1813).[1]

One felt *dol, irur, joie, tendror, pitiet;* one was *maltalentis*, or *angoissables*, etc.[2] Unlike the *Beowulf*, the *Roland* sometimes indicates emotion by change of facial expression : " Quant se redrecet, mult par out fier lu vis " (v. 142) ; or by change of color : " Marsilies fut esculurez del ire " (Oxford MS., v. 485). Emotion is expressed by actions, not only such as Roland's grief by hard blows, but by actions which have for their purpose merely such expression. Thus when Roland protests against Charlemagne's accepting Marsilie's terms :

> Li emperere en tint sun chief enbrunc,
> Si duist sa barbe, afaitad sun guernun,
> Ne bien ne mal son nevot ne respont (vv. 214 ff.).

Pulling hair or beard seems to have been an action habitual with Charles ;[3] it expresses grief or wrath or doubt. Bramimonde, also, as she weeps for Marsilie, " Trait ses chevels, si se claimet caitive " (v. 2596). This would seem, then, to be a kind of epic commonplace.[4] We have already seen how grief is expressed by words in the lament ; words in briefer and less formal passages are more spontaneous in effect : Naime rides beside Charlemagne,

> Et dit al rei : " De quei avez pesance ? "
> Carles respunt : " Tort fait kil me demandet.
> Si grant doel ai, ne puis müer, ne plaigne.
> Par Guenelun serat deserte France " (vv. 832 ff.).

Less articulately Bramimonde

> Pluret et criet, mult forment se doluset ;
> Ensembl'od li plus de trente milie humes (vv. 2577–2578).

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[1] Cf. also vv. 1834 ff., 1842 ff.

[2] Sufficient illustration of the use of epithets will be found in the quotations above and below. They are not indeed employed with any great nicety ; *dol* and *irur*, for instance, seem both to denote either wrath or grief, — probably a violent emotion merely.

[3] See vv. 772, 2414, 2906, 2930, 2943, etc.

[4] Found, however, in the ballads as well. Cf. *Bonnie James Campbell* (Child, 210).

General grief finds expression in tears :

> Il nen i ad chevalier ne barun
> Que de pitiet mult durement ne plurt (vv. 2418–2419).[1]

With individuals they are no less common : when Roland sees the dead peers,

> Tendrur en out, si cumence a plurer,
> En sun visage fut mult desculurez (vv. 2217–2218).[2]

We have already seen how in the lament, — itself a conventional form, — the formal phrase " tant mare fustes" was likely to occur, or even, sometimes, to constitute the whole lament, and how in grief one conventionally tore one's hair. Similarly, a conventional half line describes the expression of grief by tears : " ne poet müer, n'en plurt."[3] One recalls the balladist's habit, upon such occasion, of taking refuge in a · " commonplace," and something very like the " lang-lang formula " of the ballads occurs in the *Roland*, where, however, " long " is replaced by a franker " never," and the tragedy is seen from the victim's point of view, rather than from the survivor's. At Roncevaux,

> Tant bon Franceis i perdent lor juvente !
> Ne reverrunt lor meres ne lor femmes,
> Ne cels de France ki as porz les atendent (vv. 1401 ff.).[4]

Sometimes one fainted from excessive grief :[5] sometimes, wished oneself dead.[6] It is reserved for Aude and for Marsilie,[7] however, actually to die of grief.[8]

As in the *Beowulf* the cause of the emotion is often mentioned ; the lament is usually preceded by a line like : " Li coens Rollanz quant veit mort sun ami " (v. 2024).[9] Charles tells Naime that he

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[1] Cf. vv. 816 f., 1446, 1814, 1836, 2908, etc.

[2] Cf. vv. 1853, 2022, etc.

[3] Cf. vv. 773, 841, 2193, 2381, 2873.   [4] Cf. also vv. 1420 ff.

[5] Cf. vv. 1988, 2220, 2422, 2880, 2891, 2932.

[6] Cf. vv. 2929, 2936.   [7] Cf. vv. 3720, 3646.

[8] Gautier finds this violent emotion natural and national : " Ses héros sont naturels et sincères : leurs chutes, leurs pâmoisons, leurs sanglots m'enchantent. Ils nous ressemblent donc, ils sont donc *humains* " (p. xxxiij). Paris, on the contrary, regards it as peculiarly mediæval : " Ces manifestations physiques dè la douleur sont habituelles au moyen âge dans la poésie et l'étaient sans doute dans la réalité. Les hommes étaient alors en toute chose plus semblables aux enfants." *Extraits*, p. 111, n. 125.

[9] Cf. vv. 1537, 1852, 2215, 2876, etc.

grieves because " Par Guenelun serat deserte France " (v. 835).[1] In these, however, as in similar passages, the cause is not allowed to stand alone ; the poet does not rely upon suggestion, and there is no passage quite like that in the *Beowulf* where Wiglaf is discovered vainly trying to bring the hero back to life. As in the *Beowulf*, emotional effects are heightened by the mention of connected circumstances. Death is hard for Roland because he fears that Durendal may fall into unworthy hands; because, perhaps, of his many victories ; because he may never again see fair France, or the men of his line, or Charlemagne. Roland's lament for the peers in the same manner depends for its effect upon enumeration of connected circumstances (vv. 1857 ff.). Similarly, the return of the French becomes pathetic in the tender feelings suggested by their domains, their wives and children whom they have not seen for so many years (vv. 818 ff.). Ganelon, too, as he sets out for Saragossa speaks of his wife and son, and Charles responds : " Trop avez tendre coer " (v. 299).[2]

The transferred epithet is not found among the means of indicating emotion in the *Roland ;* and in general, with whatever purpose or from whatever point of view, the French poet does very little with Setting. There is no formal description like that of the haunt of Grendel, and what we know we learn from lines which give only passing glimpses in more or less conventional phrasing. These have been already cited in the discussion of place-relations : the *vergier* where king or emperor was found, the elements of the Roncevaux landscape:

> Halt sunt li pui et li val tenebrus,
> Les roches bises, li destreit merveillus (vv. 814–815),

the " pui halçor " which Oliver mounts, the grassy valley upon which he looks (v. 1017), the running brooks (v. 1831), the thick green turf upon which the warriors fall (v. 1334), the moonlight nights and shining stars. As has been said, there is little organic connection of setting with plot ; and there is little attempt to produce a definite impression other than that of a gentle and pleasant landscape ; there is no suggestion of mystery or terror. If one excepts the flowers which Charlemagne finds stained with the blood of fallen heroes, there is no evidence of minute observation. In both the *Beowulf* and the *Gest of Robin Hood* Setting is a far more important matter.

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[1] Cf. also vv. 324 f.   [2] Cf. also vv. 358 ff.

The moral implications of the poem, in the actions and words of the persons, have been discussed. We have seen that the Christians are right and the pagans wrong (v. 1015), that vengeance has divine aid and sanction (v. 2456), that one ought to suffer distress of all sorts for one's king (vv. 1010 ff., 1117 ff.), that the emperor loves his knights for the great blows they strike (vv. 1377, 1517, etc.). All this, however, is closely connected with the plot; it is hardly to be regarded as evidence of the tendency to regard action as conduct, to interpret specific incidents of the poem in the light of general principles. There are, however, occasional instances of such interpretation. There is, for example, Oliver's comment on Roland's refusal to wind the horn :

> " Cumpaing, vos le feïstes ;
> Kar vasselages par sens nen est folïe ;
> Mielz valt mesure que ne fait estultïe " (vv. 1723 ff.).

Here are two lines easily detachable from the context and capable of general application. There is the poet's comment apparently[1] inspired by the grief of Charles : " Mult ad apris ki bien conuist ahan " (v. 2524), which suggests at once " Wer nie sein Brod mit Thränen ass."[2] There is the poet's comment on Ganelon's treason and the death of thirty members of his family: " Ki hume trait, sei ocit et altrui " (v. 3959), suggestive of George Eliot and the doctrine of consequences. And there is, finally, the comment upon the punishment of Ganelon : " Hom ki trait altre, nen est dreiz qu'il s'en vant " (v. 3974).

It is obvious that such comments as these have not the same scope and variety, not the same detachment from the action as those in the *Beowulf*. It would seem that the force of a popular Christian tradition had conventionalized morals, had not developed the tendency to question motives, values, and results.

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[1] Apparently, for the lines immediately preceding do not refer to Charles :

> Las est li reis ; kar la peine est mult grant.
> Endormiz est, ne pout mais enavant ;
> Par tuz les prez or se dorment li Franc.
> N'i ad cheval ki puisse estre en estant,
> Ki herbe voelt, il la prent en gisant.
> Mult ad apris ki bien conuist ahan (vv. 2519 ff.).

The poet thus seems to base his criticism of life upon this accomplishment of the French war horses.

[2] As it does to Mr. O'Hagan, *The Song of Roland*, p. 198.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

It is the purpose of this concluding chapter to pass in rapid review the material now brought together, and to show that it is possible to trace a steady development in narrative art from the Simple Ballad to the Epic.

I. THE SIMPLE BALLAD

As this is the briefest of the types under discussion, so it is the slightest, simplest, and least developed; yet it is not without a peculiar art of its own. With the exception of certain supernatural elements, the narrower, domestic, human relations are alone significant. Time and place are seldom mentioned, never emphasized; and the ballad story seems to concern always a small isolated group.[1] The motives are not abstracted from the action or explained or accounted for in any way. They are, commonly, Love, Valor, the Supernatural. Love is but lightly touched,[2] and gives way immediately to the action of resulting conflicts. The end of such conflicts is often tragic; often they involve a second motive,— Valor.[3] The Supernatural is, like the others, taken for granted.[4] Men fall in love; they fight and kill one another; they see ghosts and fairies. These are the facts of life; the balladist attempts no preliminary explanation, makes no attempt to get his story believed. He is thus all for action, just the simple, single action of his ballad, final and decisive, the close of a long story, told without preliminaries.[5] But even this single action is incomplete. Transitions and connections are omitted; there is a curious lack of perspective, temporal or spatial;[6] the narrative slips past the objective point or climax;[7] it leaves the central motive to

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[1] Cf. *Edward* (13), *Child Waters* (63), etc.
[2] Cf. *The Cruel Brother* (11), *Fair Mary of Wallington* (91).
[3] Cf. *Earl Brand* (7), *Katharine Jaffray* (221).
[4] Cf. *Sir Hugh* (155), *The Wife of Usher's Well* (79), *Clerk Colvill* (42).
[5] Cf. the contrast of *Sir Hugh* and the *Prioresses Tale*, p. 31, above.
[6] Cf. *Lord Thomas and Fair Annet* (73), *Hind Horn* (17).
[7] Cf. *Captain Car* (178), *Lady Maisry* (65), *Sir Patrick Spens* (58).

the hearer's imagination, or suppresses a key-fact until the close,[1] thus compelling a sudden reconstruction of the whole story. The narrative proceeds rapidly, by leaps and bounds, yet it finds time for "incremental repetition," and it seems to take special delight in elaborate stanzaic groups, and in the refrain,[2] which sometimes depends for its effect upon the use of sonorous geographical names.[3] The Simple Ballad is half dialogue; and in its haste to get on with the story, it neglects to assign the speeches, leaving this also to the hearer's imagination.[4] It rests satisfied with the action as it is; it shows no inclination to regard it as conduct, or to abstract character from it, or to discover the states of mind which cause it or result from it, or to provide it with a background.

II. THE BORDER BALLAD

The Border Ballad is a little longer, a little more elaborate. In it the vague and shadowy place and time relations give way to comparatively rich geographical detail[5] (the balladist, again, delights in numerous and suggestive names[6]) and to an occasional insistence upon the particular moment of the action.[7] The story involves not so much a conflict of two or three isolated individuals as a conflict of certain vaguely conceived and loosely organized groups, family with family, clan with clan, outlaws with government.[8] Although the scene is the Border, the ballad still shows no national feeling; its horizon is still too limited for that.[9] Valor, the central motive, is inspired by a narrower loyalty,[10] by honor among thieves; or it is inspired by hope of gain or of revenge.[11] Love and the Supernatural are absent. The balladist is now more likely to explain, less likely to assume or to suggest. He elaborates the plot by introducing preliminary incidents, the exciting cause of what follows;[12]

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[1] Cf. *Edward* (13), *Child Maurice* (83).

[2] Cf. *Edward* (13), *Lord Randal* (12).

[3] Cf. *The Twa Sisters* (10, D).

[4] Cf. *The Lass of Roch Royal* (76).

[5] Cf. *The Battle of Otterburn* (161).

[6] Cf. *Hobie Noble* (189), *Lord Maxwell's Last Goodnight* (195).

[7] Cf. *Jamie Telfer* (190).

[8] Cf. *Dick o the Cow* (185), *Jock o the Side* (187).

[9] See the contrast of *The Battle of Otterburn* (161) and *The Hunting of the Cheviot* (162), p. 63, above.

[10] Cf. *The Hunting of the Cheviot* (162), *Kinmont Willie* (186).

[11] Cf. *Dick o the Cow* (185), *Hobie Noble* (189).

[12] Cf. *Jamie Telfer* (190), *Dick o the Cow* (185), *The Death of Parcy Reed* (193).

he makes the movement more continuous and the motivation more complete by introducing minor incidents into the course of the story, or by breaking up the main action into minor incidents, and these he sometimes elaborates for their own sake.[1] He rounds out the story by concluding incidents, and describes in some detail journeys from place to place.[2] Such passages have a remarkable vigor and dash, which is peculiar to this type of ballad.[3] The elaborate repetition of the Simple Ballad gives place to repetition for continuity merely, which carries the story steadily forward instead of holding it in check.[4] Elaboration has come to take the place of omission and suggestion, though here and there the suggestive close or the slip past the climax still persists.[5] There is no less dialogue, but the speeches are all assigned ; and, on the whole, the narrative is more nearly complete ; much less is left to the imagination. The chief accent is still on action ; neither Mental State nor Moral Significance is abstracted, and, except for the implications of the place names, there is no background. Character, however, begins to receive some attention. The mere doer of deeds, the universal human agent of the Simple Ballad, is localized as a type, — the Border Hero, — and gains by means of the place-names, the more definite time, the more complicated human relations and more detailed action, a certain reality.[6] The persons, too, are more numerous; it is an inhabited country.[6] But still the action is concerned with groups, not with individuals, and variations of the character-type are seldom recorded.[7]

III. THE ROBIN HOOD BALLADS

The ballads of this group mark an important advance in that they give evidence of having been inspired,not by a small isolated community, but by a whole class, conscious of itself as contrasted with other classes. Class feeling has resulted in the expression of preference for a certain way of life as contrasted with others, and this in turn has involved the

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[1] Cf. *Jamie Telfer* (190).

[2] Cf. *The Battle of Otterburn* (161), *The Hunting of the Cheviot* (162), *Sir Andrew Barton* (167).

[3] Cf. *Kinmont Willie* (186), *Hobie Noble* (189), *Jock o the Side* (187).

[4] Cf. *Hughie Grame* (191), *Dick o the Cow* (185).

[5] Cf. *Johnie Cock* (114), *Hughie Grame* (191), *The Death of Parcy Reed* (193).

[6] Cf. *Jamie Telfer of the Fair Dodhead* (190).

[7] Cf. *Kinmont Willie* (186), *Jamie Telfer* (190), *Jock o the Side* (187).

emphasis of a certain background or setting.[1] Class feeling, moreover, has embodied itself in a single, ideal, definite, and individual personality, which seems to have a prior existence apart from the action of each ballad, and has thus been able to gather about it a cycle of such ballads as deal with suitable material. For all the ballads of the Cycle this vigorous personality is the mainspring or central motive. Robin Hood is the leader of an organized band which takes the place of the vague group of the Border Ballads; the relations of this leader with his followers, in conflict with organized state or church, become significant in the action. In the Cycle there is, then, evidence of a long step in advance; the balladist not only sees more of the world, but he organizes what he sees, traces causal relations, finds a connection between man and his surroundings, separates the good from the bad, the one class from the other.

With this rationalizing process his art, in a measure, keeps pace. The ballads of the Cycle are longer than the Border Ballads, and this length is due mainly to elaboration. It is largely an elaboration of plot, consisting of the addition of closely related incidents, preliminary, minor, or concluding.[2] But it is an elaboration of character also; for more or less formal descriptions now set forth the traits of the hero,[3] including even some which do not appear in the plot, and indicating qualities by mentioning the habitual actions to which they lead.[4] It is, again, an elaboration of Setting: many of the ballads set forth in the introductory stanzas by means of suggestive detail the charms of the merry greenwood, and relate these to characters and action.[5] Aside, moreover, from the application of those categories which class feeling implies, the balladist has come to regard action as conduct; he indulges in proverbial comment,[6] and insists upon piety, upon courtesy, and upon the ceremony and manners which the hero's dignity demands. It is not only, however, to these various sorts of elaboration that the Ballad of the Cycle owes its greater length; it shows also a tendency to unite independent incidents,[7] — an easy matter where there are already numerous

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[1] Cf. *Robin Hood and the Monk* (119). ·

[2] Cf. *Robin Hood and the Potter* (121), *Robin Hood and the Monk* (119).

[3] Cf. *Robin Hood and the Potter* (121), *Robin Hood and the Tanner* (126), *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne* (118).   [4] Cf. *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne* (118).

[5] Cf. *Robin Hood and the Monk* (119).

[6] Cf. *Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne* (118).

[7] Cf. *Robin Hood and the Potter* (121).

ballads dealing with the same hero. The Robin Hood Ballads are thus significant in that they form a cycle, and show, at the same time, how, by elaboration and accretion, the Ballad advances in the direction of the *Gest* and the Epic.

IV. ADAM BELL, CLIM OF THE CLOUGH, AND WILLIAM OF CLOUDESLY

Adam Bell is significant as combining, to a certain extent, characteristics of Simple and Cycle Ballads. While less emphatic as to time and place, it implies the Robin Hood preference for the greenwood, adds information as to house and town, and opposes a small, compact group — sworn comrades and husband and wife — to the larger organization of the town and its officers, and even, in the last fit, to the King. It lacks the single dominant personality of the Cycle, and the Central Motive is thus not character, but, as in the Border Ballads, a Valor inspired by such subsidiary motives as the duties of the sworn brothers, and the love of husband and wife. It is a good deal longer than the longest of the Cycle Ballads, and achieves this length by elaboration and accretion in about equal parts. The elaboration is almost wholly along lines of motivation ; an account of the capture is prefixed to that of the rescue, and throughout both incidents details of action are introduced, the relatively minute links of a continuous chain. The last fit is the result of the external addition of an independent incident. The characters are numerous, and, while there are no set descriptions, there is notable contrast of characters in action. The accent is thus rather more exclusively on action than it was in the ballads of the Cycle ; and, indeed, *Adam Bell* is mainly interesting as showing how far in the direction of the Epic it is possible for the Ballad to advance by the elaboration of action alone.

V. THE GEST OF ROBIN HOOD

The *Gest* does not owe its greater length (it is between two and three times as long as *Adam Bell*) to further advance in the same direction. It is doubtful if it carries elaboration of action so far even as does *Adam Bell*. The *Gest* is significant, rather, as showing how by mere accretion, or aggregation of independent ballads, the Ballad approaches the Epic. Accompanying this multiplication of incidents is a longer list of *dramatis personae*. The organization of the band

receives greater emphasis than in the Cycle, the relation to the green-wood is insisted upon more explicitly, and more is made, though half humorously, of providential interference. On the other side, the oppos-ing forces are larger and their organization is more clearly understood. The King, as we have seen, now plays a part; yet he is regarded as beyond and above the main action. The character of the hero, again the central motive, is more complicated, more idealized, and there is greater insistence upon Robin Hood's courtesy, and dignity, and princely grace. Although the story is a mere aggregation of incidents, with an arbitrary close, still it is grasped as a whole; there is more looking forward and back than in *Adam Bell*. The symmetrical parallel incidents are noteworthy. The presence of an incident in which a minor character is the hero suggests the greater breadth and freedom of epic treatment; but this incident has not the complete detachment of the true episode.

The *Gest*, however, owes its greater length to elaboration also; not, as has been said, elaboration of action, but elaboration of Character, Mental States, Moral Significance. There is a good deal in the way of set description of character; contrast of character in action is carried much further than in *Adam Bell*, and the action is clearly no longer introduced for its own sake, but merely as indicative of character. Action indicative of character is involved also in the description by habitual actions, which the *Gest* carries much further than the begin-ning made by the Cycle. The same tendency to generalize and abstract is exhibited in the description of mental states, whether by means of epithet or action, and in the contrast of the emotions of good charac-ters and bad. It is exhibited also in the beginning of a tendency to regard action as conduct, in the application of an ethical system inspired by class feeling or involved in the idealization of the hero.

VI. THE HEROIC BALLAD

The Heroic Ballad combines much of what has gone before and adds new features. Like the Simple Ballad, it deals with the narrower domestic relations, and with undifferentiated supernatural elements, externally Christianized.[1] The mainsprings of action are the Simple Ballad motives of Love and Valor, yet with modifications peculiar to the Heroic Ballad.[2] In length, also, it stands next the Simple Ballad,

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[1] Cf. *Kong Diderik i Birtingsland* (8).   [2] Cf. *Hagbard og Signe* (20).

and it is for this reason, perhaps, that it is forced to make use, though, indeed, in less degree, of the same methods of omission and suggestion.[1] It carries on the suggestions of architectural detail, begun in *Adam Bell;* and, like that ballad, makes much of the relation of brother-hood-in-arms.[2] It exhibits, too, a similar tendency toward elaboration of plot. Like the Border Ballad, it delights in proper names, now per-sonal and not geographical, however.[3] In spite of its brevity the struc-ture of the Heroic Ballad resembles most closely that of the ballads of the Border and Cycle. Like these it makes use of preliminary and concluding incidents.[4] It shows the cyclical tendency,[5] moreover, and a tendency like that of the *Gest*, to combine independent incidents in series,[6] and, like the Simple Ballad, deals with them in parallel groups of stanzas.[7] It carries on, too, the Robin Hood insistence on courtesy and ceremonial.[8] The Heroic Ballad is careful in the matter of transi-tions and connections; and in spite of some omission and suggestion it contrives to leave little to the hearer's imagination;[9] it completes the narrative as far as it goes. Elaboration has not affected Mental States, Setting, Moral Significance; these are no more developed than in the Simple Ballad. So far as Character is concerned, the hero, in spite of a new and very noteworthy increase in dignity, is scarcely more individualized than the Border type.

The Heroic Ballad looks not only backward toward Simple Ballad and *Gest;* in its own contributions to the development it looks forward in the direction of the Epic, or of the literature of art. It introduces the sea and authentic voyages,[10] a definitely conceived castle,[11] a real king[12] (often as hero), suggestions of the *comitatus*,[13] a larger geography,[14] definite national feeling,[14] and details as to horses[15] and arms.[16] In its

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[1] Cf. *Hagbard og Signe* (20), *Sivard og Brynild* (3).

[2] Cf. *Bewick and Graham* (Child, 211), *Sivard og Brynild* (Grundtvig, 3).

[3] Cf. *Kong Diderik og Holger Danske* (17), *Kong Diderik og hans Kæmper* (7).

[4] Cf. *Hagbard og Signe* (20), *Kong Diderik i Birtingsland* (8).

[5] In the Kong Diderik ballads (7, 8, 9, 17).

[6] Cf. *Orm Ungersvend* (11), *Den Skallede Munk* (15).

[7] Cf. *Grimilds Hævn* (5).   [8] Cf. *Svend Felding og Dronning Jutte* (32).

[9] Cf. *Grimilds Hævn* (5), *Svend Felding og Dronning Jutte* (32).

[10] Cf. *Grimilds Hævn* (5).   [11] Cf. *Hagbard og Signe* (20).

[12] Cf. *Kong Diderik* (7, 8, 9, 17), *King Estmere* (Child, 60).

[13] Cf. *Ravengaard og Memering* (13).

[14] Cf. *Svend Felding og Dronning Jutte* (32).

[15] Cf. *Svend Felding* (31).   [16] Cf. *Kong Diderik og hans Kæmper* (7).

conception of Love, its analysis of the passion, its interest in it for its own sake, in the greater dignity which it confers upon it, and in its higher moral notions, the Heroic Ballad goes a long way beyond the Simple Love Ballad.[1] The same new interest in motives for their own sake is evident in its treatment of the conflict of motives. The Simple Ballad was not conscious of the presence of a conflict;[2] the Heroic notes its presence; but the stronger motive has its way at once.[3] Dialogue, while the amount is about the same as in the other ballads, for the first time delays, instead of carrying on, the action;[4] and it abounds in ceremonial formulæ. The most noteworthy contribution of the Heroic Ballad is the increased idealization of the hero, in keeping with the new national feeling, and new dignity and rank.[5]

VII. The *BEOWULF*

Between the Narrative art of *Beowulf* and that of all the other types just passed in review is a great gulf fixed. This, however, is due not so much to difference in kind as to a marked difference in degree. We are still dealing with popular poetry, but it is popular poetry thoroughly worked over by a poet, who, while he introduces no new methods, combines most of the old ones and elaborates them, almost beyond recognition.

As in the Heroic Ballads, the sea is present; but the wild and rocky coast is added, and the sea itself is now a more insistent presence, more vivid, more authentic, more suggestive of mood, — of mystery, of terror, of grim delight. The tendency of Border and Cycle Ballads to specify time and season is carried further in connection with the sea in the *Beowulf*, and here again there is connotation of mood. The delight of the Heroic Ballad in ships and in the details of embarkation is carried further. The wood is joyless,— not the merry greenwood of the *Gest*, but, as in the Simple Ballad, a place to be avoided. It is characteristic that this quality of the wood is inferred from the action of the ballad,

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[1] Cf. *Hagbard og Signe* (20), contrasted with *Little Musgrave and Lady Barnard* (Child, 81), *Rigen Rambolt og Aller hin stærke* (27), *Gralver Kongesøn* (29).

[2] Cf. *Fair Mary of Wallington* (Child, 91).

[3] Cf. *Bewick and Graham* (Child, 211), *Sivard og Brynild* (3).

[4] Cf. *Ulv van Jærn* (10), *Svend Felding og Dronning Jutte* (32).

[5] Cf. Hagen, in *Grimilds Hævn* (5), Hagbard, in *Hagbard og Signe* (20), and Svend Felding in the ballads which bear his name (31 and 32).

described by transferred epithet in our epic. The Hall Heorot carries further the love of architectural details; but it is more closely related to the action, is, at the same time, setting and motive. The poet celebrates the way of life there, as the *Gest* celebrates that in the greenwood. Both emphasize dignity and ceremony; but in the epic the dignity is royal, the ceremony more elaborate. Temporal relations gain a new significance; the winter season is described for its own sake; night and morning have definite associations; there is regret for the passage of time, romantic regret for the Past. In every phase Time is thus suggestive of the poet's dark mood. There is evidence, too, that the time of the action is thought of as part of eternity.

The variety and extent of the human relations are noteworthy. The poet has a broad view of a highly organized society; he begins his story with the mysterious ancestors of the Danes, and he hints at events to come after the hero's death. He combines practically all the relations involved in the ballads and in the *Gest*, and mentions many that have no significance in the action of the poem. He confers dignity upon the son by mentioning the father's name; he delights in the alliterating names of brothers, and indeed, in proper names in general, because of their sonorous quality, thus carrying on the tendency evident only in slight beginnings in the ballads. He brings one closer to the King than does *Gest* or Heroic Ballad, so that he seems real and present for us as well as for the poet, not a being who lived far away and long ago. It is a homogeneous society, and poet and king seem part of it. One must contrast the way in which the king is detached from the action, shown to be distinctly of another class, in the *Gest*. Throughout the poem, too, there is evidence of national feeling, yet it is hardly so definite as in the Heroic Ballad, since there is in the main action no conflict with other nations. Society is a compact little group of men between sea and moor and joyless wood, banded together against supernatural enemies. If not part of this society, man is nothing.

There is further evidence of the greater scope and insight of the poet in the suggestions as to the soul; vague and contradictory as they are, they are not to be paralleled from ballad or *Gest*. The poet of the *Beowulf* is the first to look beyond human, or immediate supernatural causes, to find Fate determining the lives of men, making a dark background, in keeping with his own mood, for the brilliant triumphs of the hero. Only as an afterthought does he see the hand of Providence in human affairs, and even thus, it is a Providence modified to suit

the nature of the poem. In *Gest* and Cycle the Christian elements are less external.

Animals play but small part; the Simple Ballad does more with this phase of life, and the *Beowulf* shows nothing like the horses of the Heroic Ballad. That we know so much is due to the poet's delight in detail for its own sake. Suggestion, different from that of the Simple Ballad, yet akin to it, is noteworthy in the passage in regard to the birds and beasts of the battlefield. It is perhaps characteristic of a further development that the Christian epics, while they retain and conventionalize this, work out the details and leave less to the imagination.

In the matter of Arms and Armor the poet carries on a tendency begun in the Heroic Ballads. Both name and individualize the sword; both give it a will of its own, — the Heroic Ballad more explicitly; both regard it as an heirloom, and both (but here the *Beowulf* is the more explicit) ascribe to it a mysterious origin. The *Beowulf* adds detail as to its construction, and confers upon the burnie, which is only mentioned in the Heroic Ballad, similar associations. The *Beowulf* stands alone, too, in describing in detail the construction of the helmet, and it makes more of the age and the associations of the goldsmith's work. In general, the conception of the smith, half magician, living in a mysterious Past, is peculiar to the epic.

As regards motives, the mainspring of the action is the Valor of the hero, not shown in the action merely, but abstracted and explicitly named. This Valor is inspired not by love or patriotism, but by a complex of motives. It is fatalistic, chivalrous. It is not without traces of the old ballad tendency to leave the conflict unmotived, to regard it as an end in itself. Yet the poet is conscientious in the matter of motivation : one knows just why Grendel ravaged Heorot, why his mother came to avenge her son, why the Dragon laid waste Beowulf's lands. But Beowulf's reasons for undertaking the Heorot adventure are nowhere set forth ; one must pick up phrases here and there to discover that complex of motives. It was not necessary to explain why a great warrior should do battle.

In common with Simple and Heroic Ballads the *Beowulf* contains supernatural elements ; but their treatment is peculiar to the epic. Grendel is clearly not a human being, though he appears in the form of a man. He is mysterious, vague, ill-defined ; there are suggestions of external Christian rationalization, — as in the Heroic Ballads. He is a giant, impervious to weapons ; a supernatural light burns in his

eyes; he does not speak. So far as Grendel himself is concerned, the special treatment is thus mainly negative; he is mysterious through silence, through lack of definition. It is the setting that is responsible for the effect of mystery and terror; Grendel dwells in mists and outer darkness and walks the marches at night.

In the *Beowulf*, as in the Heroic Ballads, there is conflict of motives. But the stronger motive no longer has its way at once. The poet takes the trouble to point out the fact that such a conflict exists, but he does not solve the problem. No action follows, for King Hrethel dies leaving his son unavenged. Elaborate chains of motives are common; but these are not more complete than the continuous action of *Adam Bell*, or parts of the Cycle.

The *Beowulf* is nearly twice as long as the *Gest*, yet tells a shorter story. Its greater length is, then, due not so much to accretion as to leisurely elaboration in every direction. It elaborates plot, after the manner of *Adam Bell;* it goes far beyond the *Gest* in the elaboration of Character and Mental States; and it manifests an interest in the ethical interpretation of the action not to be paralleled from the other documents. It owes its length, too, to its peculiarly expansive and inclusive treatment of the Phase of Life. This is partly due to the introduction of episodes, a manner of accretion peculiar to the epic. It must be borne in mind, however, that none of these episodes are long, and that they are clearly shown to be subordinate by the general and unelaborated narrative. In this general and summary character they are at the opposite pole from the ballad method. None of the narrative with which we have hitherto dealt, considered strictly as narrative, carries us so far in the direction of prose and reason. It is by this subordination of episodes and digressions that the unity of the poem is preserved. The poet makes use of general narrative in introductory, transitional, and, indeed, in all subordinate matter; and there is special evidence of his abstracting or generalizing power in the *hwilum* passages, comparable with the *would* passages in the *Gest*. In spite of pauses for elaboration, digressions, episodes, departures from the chronological order, the poet keeps his place in the narrative. He thus possesses the faculty, of which we have hitherto seen little evidence, of holding two things in his mind, and holding them separate. With all his skill, however, and in contrast to their unity and organic structure, the two parts are almost completely independent; they are less securely bound together than the adventures in *Adam Bell*, or the various widely separated incidents of the *Gest*.

The Movement of the *Beowulf*, broken, not by omissions, or by the absence of connective matter, but by digression and elaboration of various kinds, finds no parallel in ballad or *Gest*. Peculiar, also, to our epic is the forward and back effect, involving repetition of the same event in different words. This is a significant variation of ballad repetition. With all its hurry to get on with the action, the ballad often tells the same story twice, but always in the same, or nearly the same words. When, again, the second story is new, but similar, the ballad uses, so far as possible, the same words. When the same event occurs in a great many ballads, it comes to be cast in a conventional form or " commonplace." Clearly, what pleased the ballad audience was the repetition of words, sometimes — the refrain bears witness — quite without regard to sense.[1] The poet, on the other hand, liked to dwell upon a pleasing incident, and to repeat his account of it, but always in different words, giving evidence, in this love of variety, of his own skill and imagination. Variety, however, is not confined to words alone. The ballad, dealing with similar incidents, emphasizes their similarity, makes them perfectly symmetrical. The *Beowulf*, on the other hand, varies them, individualizes them, makes them as different as possible. It is easy to contrast Hagen's slaying of mermaid and ferryman[2] with Beowulf's slaying of Grendel and his mother, and of the Dragon. There is similar evidence of artistic control in the bolder treatment of the narrative, and in the departures from the chronological order. These are not found in the ballad; they are peculiar to the epic, impossible in the drama.

A further differentiation of the epic as opposed to drama is found in the Dialogue. It is less common than in the ballad. It is a matter of long and formal harangues, lacking the various ballad repetitions, as of question in answer, poet's narrative in character's speech, etc., preferring here also to vary the words. It does not carry on the action, and it is notable rather for eloquence than for rapid interchange of thought. In this eloquence, — in harangue, " occasional " speech, soliloquy, apostrophe, emotional lament for the dead, — the poet delights for its own sake, and often makes it expressive of his own mood. Unlike those of the ballad the assignments are elaborate, and tend to add dignity to the speaker and his words. The *Beowulf* carries much further the ballad use of indirect discourse, and the poet shows new intellectual power in

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[1] Cf. also the peculiar repetition in the Danish *Frændehævn* and *Memering* (p. 141, above). [2] In *Grimilds Hævn* (Grundtvig, 5).

his handling of direct within indirect, or indirect within direct discourse. The Flyting, approached in the early dialogue ballads, and present in the Heroic, is well represented here. As in the ballad, the style is not sufficiently flexible to allow for noticeable variation of the manner of the speech to suit the character.

As regards Character, the *Beowulf* carries on the tradition of the *Gest* and Cycle, and of the Heroic Ballad, and goes beyond them. It is character alone that unites the two parts of the poem. Idealization is carried further than elsewhere. The hero unites Robin Hood's kindness and courtesy with the peculiar active and aggressive quality of the chief persons of the Heroic Ballads, and adds new characteristics of his own. He is thus more highly individualized, more complex, more real in effect than any of his predecessors. This realistic effect, however, is due not only to the complexity of the hero himself, as in the case of Robin Hood ; it is due also to the reality and complexity of his surroundings, similar to that, but much greater than that, in the Border Ballads. Even the minor characters (and this is a phase of the epic leisure and love of detail and elaboration) have a certain complexity and reality.

In the methods of characterization there is evidence of a new power of abstraction. This is especially emphatic in the use, for purposes of contrast, of persons outside the poem, — evidence also of the poet's broader view. As in the *Gest*, habitual actions are made significant of character ; and abstraction is carried further in that, in many cases, the actions themselves are not mentioned, but only the conclusions based on them. The hero's estimate of his own character, autobiography, is example of another phase of abstraction. Everywhere there is interest in character for its own sake, or, often, because it exemplifies traits declared to be universally human.

With this growth of interest in Character the growth of interest in Mental States keeps pace. These are simple, yet more complex, more various, than in the *Gest :* and they are often described. We have noted the interest in motives as such, and one case where no action followed. The poet is mainly concerned, however, with intentions or feelings during or before or after battle, — in mental states, that is, connected closely with action, or subsidiary to it. The variety of methods of description is noteworthy, — epithet, known cause, direct expression, actions (where the use of the specific verb shows the poet's art), or words. Emotion is heightened by surrounding circumstances ; or it is described by the transferred epithet. These are, indeed, all found in the ballads ; it is the

poet's lavish use of them all that distinguishes the epic. The general pictures of imaginary misery, showing, again, the abstracting or generalizing power, are peculiar to the epic.

The formal though unsystematic descriptions of Setting, with the remarkable unity of impression they produce, and their insistence upon psychological effect, are also peculiar to the epic : yet the way is well prepared for them in Cycle and *Gest*. The closer relation of Setting and Action has been pointed out. The Journeys in the *Beowulf* are largely descriptions of Setting from the traveller's point of view, and in this respect are to be contrasted with the purely narrative and less elaborate journeys of the ballads. Generalization is evident again in the tendency to heap together the elements of a landscape, named in the plural. In general, the details betray the mood of the poet, and they are in keeping with our epic's approach to the grand style, offering, in this respect, sharp contrast to the lighter and pleasanter detail of the *Gest*.

In keeping, finally, with the tendency to view the world as an organic whole, and with the tendency to abstract from the action Character and Mental States, is the tendency to regard action as conduct. The *Gest* furnishes a didactic element in its contrast of good and bad characters and in its insistence on the hero's piety. The *Beowulf* carries such contrast further, and adds direct general comment on the action, by the poet or the persons in the poem, thus referring the action to general principles of conduct. Peculiar to our epic, also, are the more narrowly and intentionally didactic *swā sceal* passages.

VIII. The *ROLAND*

In the place-relations we find, as in the Border Ballads, the realism conferred by geographical names, but less vividness. Nature is not, as in the *Beowulf*, closely associated with man, is not the object of first-hand observation, or of any even relatively complete or formal description. No building is so important as Heorot ; hints and glimpses, however, suggest the architecture of a higher civilization. Relations of place are, then, less significant. This is true also of the relations of time. *Time when* is indeed often mentioned, and there is no lack of temporal perspective. But here also the picturesque quality is lacking ; there is less direct association with man, less suggestion of mood. There is less consciousness of indefinite or infinite time ; there is no romantic regret for the Past.

There is, similarly, no thought of a mysterious origin of the race. On the other hand, the poet of the *Roland* knows more about the living individual man, —more anatomy,—and sees him in a more complex, a more highly organized society, a society with more national consciousness. The details of the narrower human relations do not differ significantly from those in the *Beowulf*. The emperor differs from the king in the *Beowulf* in that he is more elaborately conceived, more exalted, more powerful, of greater age, with greater dignity and state. Yet, as in the *Beowulf*, distinctions of rank are not regarded as very important. There is lack of picturesqueness, again, in the absence of the multitude of terms for warrior ; and lack of sense of mystery, of the Past, in the absence of the smith and his peculiar associations. Customs and ceremonies are more highly developed. Christianity has become far more important, yet the conception of God is no less that of the Old Testament, no less anthropomorphic. For the poet of the *Roland* he is a feudal lord, the avenger of the wrongs of his people, exercising control over the laws of nature and human actions, spiritual or divine only in that he is to be adored, in his absolute truth, in his special relation to the souls of men. The Angels, especially Gabriel and Michael, play their ·part, and Satan carries off the souls of the damned. The soul is thus separated from the body, —from the rest of the body, one may say, since there is no evidence that it is conceived as spirit. Paradise is clearly a material abode ; and in general, the whole supernatural relation seems to be clear and satisfactory ; there is no doubt, no mystery, no conflict or contradiction of creeds. The teachings of the Church are unconsciously modified, no doubt, yet accepted without thought or question. Indeed, it is the Church rather than any abstract religious conception that is important. In spite of his repeated assertion that the Christians are right, the pagans wrong, the poet is enough of a dramatist to see things from the pagan point of view. Yet to a limited extent, only ; there is nothing at all comparable with the Anglo-Saxon poet's treatment of Grendel and his dam. For the rest, we learn more of the horse, and there is a longer list of other animals. We learn no more of the details of arms and armor ; their more spectacular and less businesslike qualities are emphasized, and they are not regarded as heirlooms, or as of mysterious origin. A greater richness of effect is produced by the references to the carved ivory, the marble, and silks. New also is the symbolic use of the glove, bow, and baton.

The Central Motive is, as in the *Beowulf,* Valor; not especially of the hero, however, but of all concerned. It is a desperate courage, with the old delight in the fight against odds, with hope, not of quarter, but of paradise. It is inspired by patriotism, desire for glory, devotion to leaders. Roncevaux involves not only single combats, but the movements of large bodies of men, an organized army, capable of strategy. Yet it is mainly single combats, the monotonous repetition of a single type, a repetition, however, which serves to deepen the impression of numbers. Roland's valor is distinguished by his *desmesure,* his heroic folly, by a certain self-consciousness, a regard for appearances. In more marked degree he displays the usual tendency to take the initiative. He is inspired by desire for glory, by thought of family, loyalty to the emperor, patriotism, — by a sentiment, that is, rather than, — as was Beowulf, — by a fact. He is inspired by religion, yet thinks less than his comrades of rewards, temporal or eternal. Though he imputes the motive to Charles, Roland himself is not inspired by revenge. Cowardice is contrasted with valor, yet it scarcely appears in the action. The chain of motives may be traced, link by link, from the beginning to Roncevaux, and from Roncevaux to the deaths of Marsilie and Ganelon.

From this point of view the *Roland* has, therefore, greater structural unity than the *Beowulf.* It is not a series of adventures, one after the other, but a single adventure with its causes and results. It tells, that is, in about the same number of words, a shorter story, but with greater elaboration of plot. In its organic effect the structure resembles that of the drama. Unlike the Anglo-Saxon, the poet sees the end from the beginning, the beginning from the end; he makes his narrative more symmetrical; he is able to handle synchronistic events. He deals skilfully with diverging and converging streams of action. The streams are notably continuous; transitional passages, summaries and fresh starts are frequent; connective repetition, parallelism and symmetry produce the same effect. Journeys, however, are briefer and more colorless than in the *Beowulf.* As in the *Gest,* the poet is anxious to have done with them. Geography and mental states, rather than the landscape itself, are emphasized. There is a more marked tendency toward narrative in general terms; it is used for introduction, transition and connection, for summaries of the results of a series of combats, or of specific combats, for larger movements of men, and, as in the Border Ballads, for rapid movement with geographical suggestions.

The *Roland* deals most powerfully with the actions and fates of a large number of men. General narrative describes character also ; and a rapid paraphrase in general terms sometimes takes the place of dialogue. Yet the epic still " loves detail," and much detailed action is introduced for its own sake. The subordination of episodes is carried further than in the *Beowulf*. To this the Baligant Episode is the only exception ; it looks, however, and largely because of this lack of subordination, like mere interpolation.

The movement of the *Roland* is steadier, calmer, more prosaic than that of the *Beowulf*, more rapid and powerful than that of the *Gest of Robin Hood*. It is retarded by a Repetition, which is not incremental, which is used for connection, shows something of the Anglo-Saxon delight in verbal variety, involves sometimes the symmetrical treatment of similar incidents (as in *Gest* and ballad), and has for its purpose emphasis, sometimes of pathos, sometimes, as the *laisses similaires* dealing with the question of the Olifant, of an important situation.

Repetition, by delay, creates Suspense. As in the *Beowulf*, however, the poet does not seek to make the issue doubtful, he dwells upon the tragedy to come, emphasizes ill omens.

There is less Dialogue than in the ballads, more than in the *Beowulf*. The *Roland* has the long formal speeches of the *Beowulf*, the short speeches and rapid give and take of the *Gest*. As in the *Beowulf*, question is not repeated in answer, yet there is repetition in the dialogue, a combination of verbal similarity and dissimilarity, with effects like those of the Simple Ballad. Narrative repeats dialogue directions ; dialogue delays action yet leads to it, and is lively and interesting for its own sake. The poet makes effective use of dramatic silences. The " occasional speeches " show the development of form and ceremony, even beyond the *Beowulf*, — the salutation, vow, prayer, defiance and reply, exhortation, lament, — more developed, more formal, less personal. There is a kind of Flyting ; and Soliloquy and Apostrophe occur ; but there is nothing so significant as the Last-Survivor passage in the *Beowulf*. The Chorus Speech, found in the ballads, not in the *Beowulf*, is very common. As in the *Beowulf*, Dialogue does not express character ; it does express emotion, more completely and more frequently, yet it is more likely to assume an artificial form. Indirect Discourse, — paraphrase especially of prayer or oath, — is more common. The tendency is to give substance rather than complete paraphrase ; and such passages are usually consistent in form. Speeches

are usually assigned and rather more is made of the assignment. It is always clear who is speaking.

As for Character, Roland does not, as we have seen, unify or dominate the poem as does Beowulf. He is less complex. He is valorous, aggressive, possesses beauty and strength (not superhuman). Beowulf seems the more mature, the more sane, the larger, though more primitive, nature; Roland, more of the idealist and sentimentalist. The larger number of characters in the *Roland*, the greater attention paid to them, and the gratuitous characterization of them, are notable. The contrast of Roland and Oliver seems to be confined to *desmesure* and *mesure;* yet it is not always consistent, or, perhaps because of its subtlety, does not always seem so.

As to method, no character-description is so long, so formal, so clearly there for its own sake, as are those of the *Beowulf*. The characterization is by means of general narrative, specific narrative just for character, habitual thoughts or actions. Epithets are no less frequent, but are less specific. Matter, if not manner, of the speeches reveals character. Personal appearance is more completely described.

Mental States are not neglected. There is less study of purpose, more of emotion, often the common emotion of large bodies of men. The grief of the laments is, as in *Beowulf*, more or less impersonal. But individual emotion, too, gets more space and emphasis. Methods show a more frequent direct description, but with less variety of epithet. There is a more marked tendency to use commonplace and formula. Emotion is expressed by action, facial expression, words, tears, fainting, and may result even in death. Known causes are mentioned, but they are not allowed to stand alone and suggest. The effect is heightened by the mention of connected circumstances.

With Setting the poet does practically nothing. We have only passing glimpses in conventional phrasing; and there is little organic connection of setting with plot or character. There is no evidence of close observation.

There are but few reflective passages which can be detached from the plot; and there is little evidence of a tendency to regard action as conduct. Unquestioning acceptance of a tradition has led, apparently, to the conventionalization of morals.

IX. The *Roland* and the *Beowulf*

In some respects the two poems are at one : many of the human relations are the same; both betray delight in sonorous names; neither emphasizes rank, for in each there is the same implication of a homogeneous society. Each conceives God in much the same terms. Structurally, they both reveal the elaborate causal chains. Both love detail; both delight in a repetition, for emphasis, with verbal variety. Both make use of the same sort of suspense ; both proceed largely by dialogue, delighting in long and formal speeches.

In other respects the *Roland* is more advanced than the *Beowulf*. It reflects a more highly developed and complex society, a clearer consciousness of nationality, a more patriotic valor, a larger conception of the ruler, more highly developed customs and ceremonies, feudal or religious. Far larger numbers are concerned in the battles; there is more organization, more strategy. The valor of the hero is, in a sense, more refined ; but it may be due to difference in national feeling merely, that he is inspired not by a reality, but by a sentiment, an idea. The *Roland* tells a shorter story with more elaboration, an elaboration of plot, along causal lines, resulting in more marked unity, with more concatenation, more symmetry, more synchronism. There is more narrative in general terms, more powerful handling of the rapid movements of large numbers of men, with more definite geographical suggestions. The narrative is steadier in movement, more coherent. There is more indirect discourse. The minor persons of the poem are more completely described. In all these respects the *Roland* preserves or develops tendencies already present in Ballad or *Gest*.

In still other respects, finally, the *Roland* is less advanced than the *Beowulf*. There is less evidence of a consciousness of surrounding nature and of the relation of this to man. The indication of time is less picturesque, less suggestive of mood; there is no regret for the Past. Though there is greater scope in the direction of religion, it is a religion more conventional. Valor is more a communal, less completely an individual, affair. Individual encounters assume a typical form, have the cumulative effect of popular poetry, lack the variety of the three combats in the *Beowulf*. Similarly, the *Roland* preserves more of the old repetition, with more frequent verbal identity, often connective, sometimes involving the symmetrical treatment of similar situations. The Dialogue is not only formal, like that in the *Beowulf ;* it has also the

rapid conversational manner of the *Gest;* the narrative repeats the dia-
logue directions; the lament, more conventional in form, is less per-
sonal in feeling, and often takes the form of a chorus speech. There is
nothing so dramatic as the soliloquy of the last survivor. Roland's char-
acter, while less primitive, is at the same time less complex than Beo-
wulf's. In the *Roland* there is less characterization for its own sake, and
there are fewer specific epithets. Emotion, not only as expressed in
lament or chorus speech but everywhere, is more of the communal type,
and is more frequently described in conventional terms. There is less
study of purpose. There are few glimpses of setting, and these are
described in conventional terms, suggesting no first-hand observation.
There is less original reflection; moral ideas are rather those of the
conventional Church tradition.

As we pass from the earlier to the later of these epics the advance is
thus no longer consistent. In certain respects, indeed, they are at one;
in others it is the *Roland* that carries epic development further; in
others still it is the *Beowulf*. An explanation of this apparent contra-
diction lies, however, near at hand. Our examination and classification
of the evidence shows that when the *Roland* represents a higher devel-
opment it is always along the lines of pure popular tradition; it has but
carried further characteristics of subject-matter or treatment already
present in Ballad or *Gest*. When, on the contrary, the *Beowulf* repre-
sents the higher development, it is along lines indicative of the presence
of an individual poet. The author of the *Roland* we may conceive, then,
as a man of no great original force, carrying on without much change
the traditions of a highly developed popular art; the author of the
Beowulf, as a man of far greater original force, as a powerful personality,
dealing rather freely with a much less highly developed popular art.

X. General Tendencies of the Development

This rapid review of our material seems now to establish the fact that
it is possible to trace a development, along certain definite lines, through
the various types of the Ballad, to the Epic. It seems also to establish
the order in which the documents have been discussed as representative
of the several stages of development. It would be an easy matter to
arrange them in an order determined by length, or by scope, or by
elaboration of character or of structure, — in an order determined from
any one of the points of view from which they have been discussed. It

is significant that, with a few trifling exceptions, from whatever point
of view the order is determined, it is always the same. The develop-
ment is thus as consistent as the wayward phenomena of literature give
one the right to expect. We are now in a position to attempt some
characterization of the development, to point out certain tendencies
which manifest themselves in the course of this transition from popular
poetry to the poetry of art. The development is, in general, of the
nature to be expected of a transition from communal to individual con-
trol. It is reasonable to suppose that the material of popular literature
would consist wholly of the common property of the community which
produced it. It would thus be extremely limited in scope. As the indi-
vidual came to regard it more and more as under his control, he would,
conceivably, permit himself to increase this material by additions from
the store of his own peculiar experience of the world. He would, more-
over, unconsciously transform and interpret this increasing body of mate-
rial more and more in accordance with his own implicit explanation of
the universe. Whatever their cause may be, these two tendencies, —
the tendency to increase the material and the tendency to transform
it, — are actually observable, and become evident, in the transition
from the Simple Ballad to the Epic.

So far as the Increase in Scope is concerned, it is only necessary to
note once more the development of what has been called the Phase of
Life, the simplicity and meagreness of the Simple Ballad, the steady
increase through Border and Outlaw Ballads to the *Gest* and Heroic
Ballads, the enormous increase in the Epic. Accompanying this tend-
ency to see more is the tendency to look more closely, so that there is
again a gradual advance, again with a break and a leap to the Epic at
the end, from the almost complete absence of detail in the Simple Ballad
to the wealth of material in regard to ship, hall, ceremony, animals,
arms and armor, ornaments, and in regard to the relatively minute
movements and motives of men, in the Epic. It is easy to contrast our
complete ignorance of the way of life of any ballad hero, — of Edward,
for instance, — with what we know of the daily round and the look of
things in the merry greenwood : and this, again, with that wonderfully
complete picture of Anglo-Saxon life which it is possible to construct
from the *Beowulf.*

Accompanying this increase in breadth and closeness of observation
is the tendency of the poet to impress himself more and more upon his
material, to think of it more and more as a body of related phenomena.

The isolated ballad hero stands in sharp contrast, again, to the epic hero, with his complicated relations with time and place and with his fellow-men, just as his isolated and unrelated action stands in sharp contrast to the elaborate causal chains of the Epic. Here also the gulf is part way bridged by the more highly developed ballads.

Closely connected with this tendency to relate, one with the others, the phenomena with which he deals, is the tendency to abstract more and more, to infer from the action Character, Mental States, Motives. It is only in the knowledge gained by some introspection that phenomena came to have, for the poet, implications of this sort, so that as preliminary to the portrayal of character and the analysis of inferred mental states are to be noted the increasing indications of the poet's own personality or mood. It is not unlikely, as we have seen, that indications of the presence of an individual are to be found in the increasing scope and organizing power. There are, perhaps, indications of the poet's mood in the Time and Place Relations of the Cycle and *Gest;* for the prevailing cheerfulness is not inevitable; it would have been easy to take a gloomy view of the outlaw's life. Yet cheerfulness naturally accompanies the triumphant action, and it is easy to suppose it already present in the material that came into the hands of poet or compiler. There is, then, much more definite indication of a poet's mood in the *Beowulf,* where the action is far more gloriously triumphant, while the atmosphere is dark and gloomy. Here was a man who saw the world through smoked glasses : for him the sea was wild, mysterious, terrible ; the windy nesses were continually clothed in mist ; the wood was joyless ; the moor was dark and forbidding ; the hand of inexorable Fate was ever at work in the affairs of men. His mind was filled with images of grim Winter, gloomy night, cold, gray, remorseful morning ; with regret for the Past and vanished hall-joys, with thoughts of tragedy to come. Mere dark glasses were, indeed, common Germanic possession ; yet there is something·more here than racial melancholy. One can conceive of racial melancholy expressing itself in the dark action of ballads like *Edward* or *Lord Randal;* but these have no atmosphere ; it is not so easy to conceive of racial melancholy creating an atmosphere in direct contrast to the action of the poem. It is only the individual, never the community as a whole, that makes gloomy mental reservations while it rejoices in a glorious victory.

All this to account for a tendency ; the tendency itself, — to abstract, more and more, Character, Mental States, Motives from the action, —

is sufficiently evident in the review of our material. Due partly to the categorical tendency of organization, partly to the increasing habit of tracing causal relations, and partly to abstraction, is that Didactic Tendency whose history we have traced. Connected with this conception of action as conduct and with the growing insistence upon Rank is the increasing interest in Manners. There is thus an unexpected scientific basis for the assertions of those pseudo-classical critics who, like Rymer, " exalted the master of ceremonies into a leader of the Muses." Further evidence of the abstracting tendency is to be found in the increasing use of indirect discourse, or paraphrase (thus transforming the empiric), and of general narrative, of which the *hwīlum* passages in the *Beowulf* are the extreme example.

As a result, now, of the poet's increasingly exclusive possession of the material, of his disinclination to limit himself to matters of common knowledge, with his increasingly rational method, elaboration comes more and more to take the place of the peculiar omission and suggestion of the Simple Ballad. The poet is more and more inclined to complete his narrative as far as it goes, and the result is, in the first place, the elaborate causal chains, first noticeable in *Adam Bell*, and more and more important in the *Gest*, the *Beowulf*, and the *Roland*. Concerned at first with the plot alone, this elaboration involves at length even minor matters like the assignment of dialogue (the unassigned, unexplained speeches are peculiar to the Simple Ballad) ; takes the form of abstraction and elaboration of character (at first as a mainspring of action, then for its own sake) ; and, in general, affects those elements of narration which were neglected in the Simple Ballad.

This elaboration, combined with the tendency to unite two or more stories in a single whole, necessitates greater length, and greater and greater demands are made upon the poet's architectural power. It is easy for the Simple Ballad, with its love of symmetry and repetition, to achieve, within its narrow limits, a remarkable perfection of structure. The compiler of the *Gest*, striving to unite a series of independent incidents, solves a more difficult problem. The Anglo-Saxon poet shows much greater daring, much greater sense of mastery of his material, in his departures from the chronological order, and in his introduction of episodes. We have seen with what skill he conducts the departure of these digressions from the main stream of the narrative, and their return to it at exactly the same point. We have seen, also, how by means of a more general and rapid treatment he differentiates the

digressions from the far more detailed, elaborate, and leisurely manner of the main stream.

Accompanying these evidences of increasing architectural power are evidences of an increasing delight in the way of telling the story, or even in external ornament, quite aside from the delight in the story itself. We have already traced the history of repetition, from the love of verbal similarity in the Simple Ballad to the display of verbal variety in the Epic. We have traced the delight in sonorous proper names from the Simple through the Border and Heroic Ballads to the Epic; and the delight in the description of setting for its own sake from the Cycle and *Gest* to the *Beowulf*. All this is quite distinct from the matter of style in the narrower sense, from the evident delight in word and phrase and metaphor, confined almost wholly to the *Beowulf*, yet found here and there in the *Roland*, and in the Ballad as well.

XI. THE "LIEDERTHEORIE" AND THE BEOWULF

Our study of the development of narrative art, while not concerned with theories as to the composition of the *Beowulf*, may still throw some light upon such problems or suggest a method for their solution. It suggests, for instance, that it might be illuminating to base a *Liedertheorie*, in part, at least, upon a study of existing *Lieder*,[1] rather than wholly upon an attempt to dismember the epic in question. Such study reveals indeed a certain similarity in kind of Ballad and Epic; but it reveals at the same time an enormous difference in degree, in stage of development. If the *Beowulf*, then, was made up of a series of heroic songs, strung together with little or no modification, these songs must have

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[1] Cf. ten Brink, *Beowulf. Untersuchungen*, pp. 1 f.: " Die bequeme Formel, wonach der Beowulf als Ganzes genommen das Werk eines Kunstdichters sein soll, der jedoch volkstümliche Lieder in seine Darstellung verarbeitete, hat solange auf den Namen einer wissenschaftlichen Theorie keinen Anspruch, als nicht gezeigt ist, was hier Kunstdichter und was volkstümliches Lied bedeute, wodurch sich dieses von dem Produkt jenes unterscheide. . . ."

Cf. also Gaston Paris, *Romania*, XIII, 618 : " Je crois . . . que la comparaison des chants lyrico-épiques français avec les *romances fronterizos*, les ballades du *border*, les chantes serbes, est justifiée, et que ce n'est pas lui enlever sa raison d'être que de dire que ces chants n'ont pas abouti à des poèmes épiques, tandis que là où on a des poèmes épiques on n'a pas de ces chants; c'est bien naturel : l'épopée, quand elle se développe, remplace ce qui l'avait préparée ; on ne peut pas avoir le même individu à la fois à l'état de chrysalide et à l'état de papillon."

been something very different from the popular ballad; they must
have been highly developed examples of the poetry of art. The com-
piler, moreover, must have been no bungling minstrel, but a poet. For
to him (or to one of his predecessors) we must owe the retelling of the
various incidents which form so large a part of the poem. But it is not
conceivable that the *Beowulf* was composed of unmodified songs, no
matter how excellent these songs may have been. The episodes, as the
difference of their manner from that of the main stream of the narra-
tive shows, are clearly worked over, and handled in a fashion peculiarly
suitable for the subordinate place which they now occupy. This man-
ner is practically that of the repeated incidents; and we must owe both,
if not to the same hand, at least to hands trained in the same method.[1]

If, however, one understands by *Lieder* folksongs, ballads, a far more
thoroughgoing transformation of the material would be necessary. Is
it not more rational to suppose this, not the work of one poet, but the
result of a gradual development, by accretion and elaboration, with
gradual increase in scope, in abstracting, architectural, and artistic
power, the result of a very gradual transition from popular to individual
control ? Ten Brink called the *Beowulf* a "frozen epic"; thought of
it as a case of arrested development. If this development had gone on
we should have had something like the *Iliad;* but no one could con-
struct an *Iliad* by piecing *Beowulfs* together. The gap between the
popular ballad and the *Beowulf* is even greater than the gap between
the *Beowulf* and the *Iliad.* Only by long processes of gradual develop-
ment can such gaps be closed.

Whatever our study has to say to the *Liedertheorie*, it is more inter-
esting for the light that it throws on the epics themselves. Valuable as
is the historical view of any masterpiece, it is peculiarly valuable in the
case of an epic. For an epic is always more than the version that we
happen to have: it is in itself a body of tendencies, a whole literary
movement. It is not enough to know what it is at a given moment;
we must know also whence it came, whither it is going; we must know
what it was as a living form; we must know in what direction it was
carrying on the development of literature. Critics compare the Epic with

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[1] Cf. Haeuschkel, *Die Technik der Erzählung im Beowulfliede*, p. 97: "Es ist
. . . von Standpunkt der Technik der Erzählung aus nicht gerechtfertigt,· von
verschiedenen Verfassern des Beowulfliedes zu sprechen. Trotz mancher Mängel
. . . müssen wir die Technik der Erzählung im Beowulfliede als eine schon ziem-
lich hoch entwickelte, kunstmässige bezeichnen."

the modern poetry of art, and tell us that with the Epic the individual author has little to do; that the Epic is simple in construction; that it tells a story; that the moral is in solution with the story; that there is no comment on the action; that the Epic loves dialogue; that it trusts the impressions of the senses, does not search after causes.[1] It is far more enlightening, however, to make the comparison with what must have preceded the Epic, and to learn that the individual author was coming to have more and more to do with it; that it was growing more and more complicated in construction, more and more insistent on moral significance, less and less fond of dialogue, more and more interested in causes. In both the *Roland* and the *Beowulf*, viewed thus from below rather than from above, technique had already left popular beginnings far behind, and was well advanced in the direction of the modern poetry of art. This is peculiarly true of the *Beowulf*, which must be regarded as the work of a poet of remarkable taste and technical skill, who flung aside, far more boldly than the poet of the *Roland*, the binding conventions of popular art, and succeeded in impressing far more deeply his own powerful personality upon his work. It is, then, more enlightening to think of the *Beowulf* as an end than as a beginning, as a culmination than as a first awkward attempt. It is, in a sense, both; but we must not let the contrast with the *Iliad* overshadow the contrast with the ballads, with the *Roland*, or with the *Gest of Robin Hood*.

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[1] Cf. Gummere, *Handbook of Poetics*, pp. 15 ff.

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

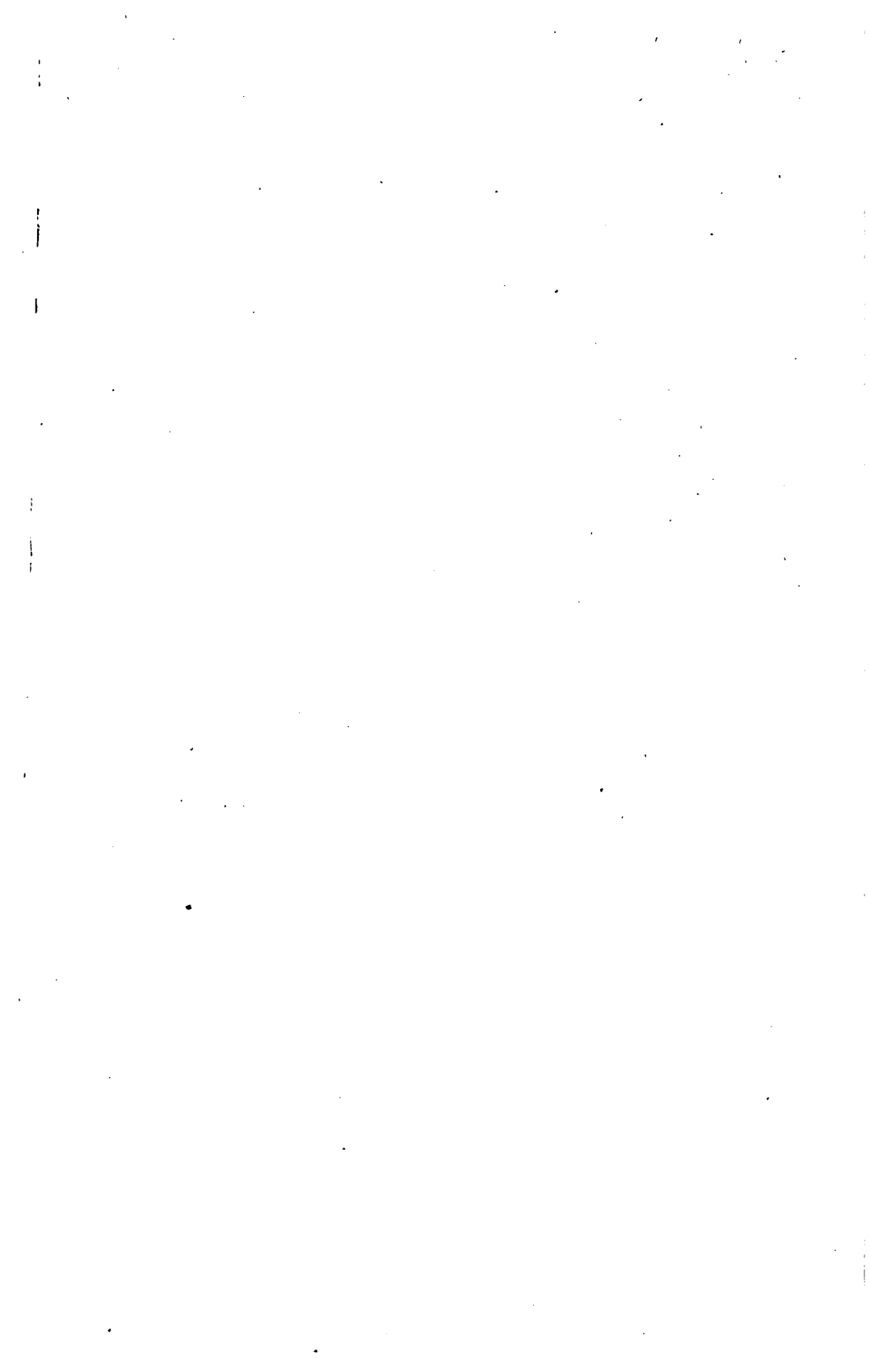**1. The Simple Ballads. (Average length, 600 words. Dialogue, .50.)**

Babylon, or, The Bonnie Banks o Fordie, 14.[1]
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Lord Thomas and Fair Annet, 73.
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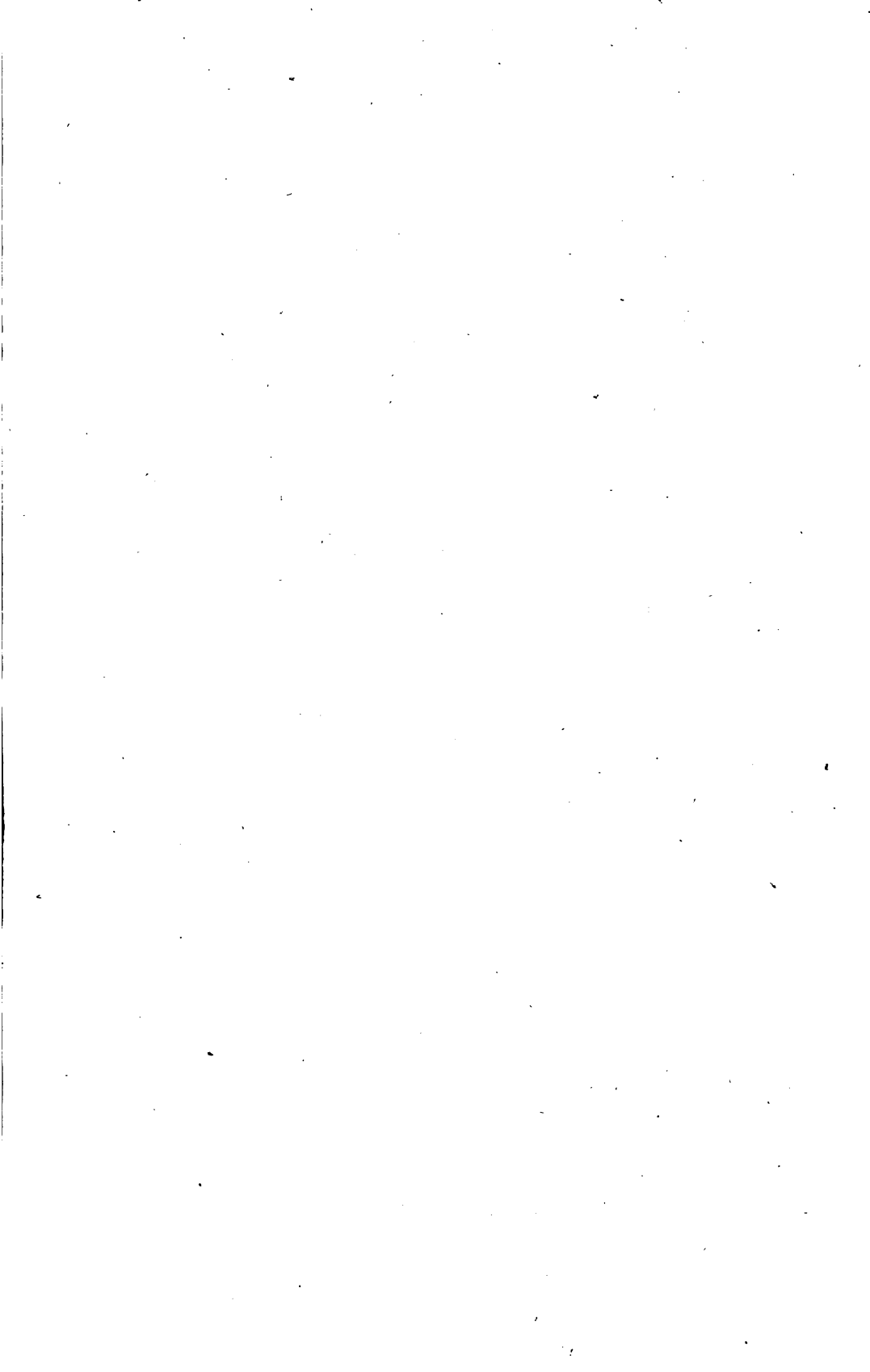Young Waters, 94.

[1] The numbers refer to Child's collection.

2. The Border Ballads. (Average length, 1400 words. Dialogue, .50.)

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The Battle of Otterburn, 161.

The Death of Parcy Reed, 193.

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Jamie Telfer of the Fair Dodhead, 190.

Jock o the Side, 187.

Johnie Armstrong, 169.

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Kinmont Willie, 186.

The Outlaw Murray, 305.

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3. The Outlaw Ballads. (Average length, 1600 words. Dialogue, .50.)

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Robin Hood and the Monk, 119.

Robin Hood's Death, 120.

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4. Adam Bell, Clim of the Clough, and William of Cloudesly, 116. (Length, 5100 words. Dialogue, .50.)

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6. The Heroic Ballads. (Average length, 1200 words. Dialogue, .50.)

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7. The Beowulf. (Length, 23,000 words. Dialogue, .37.)

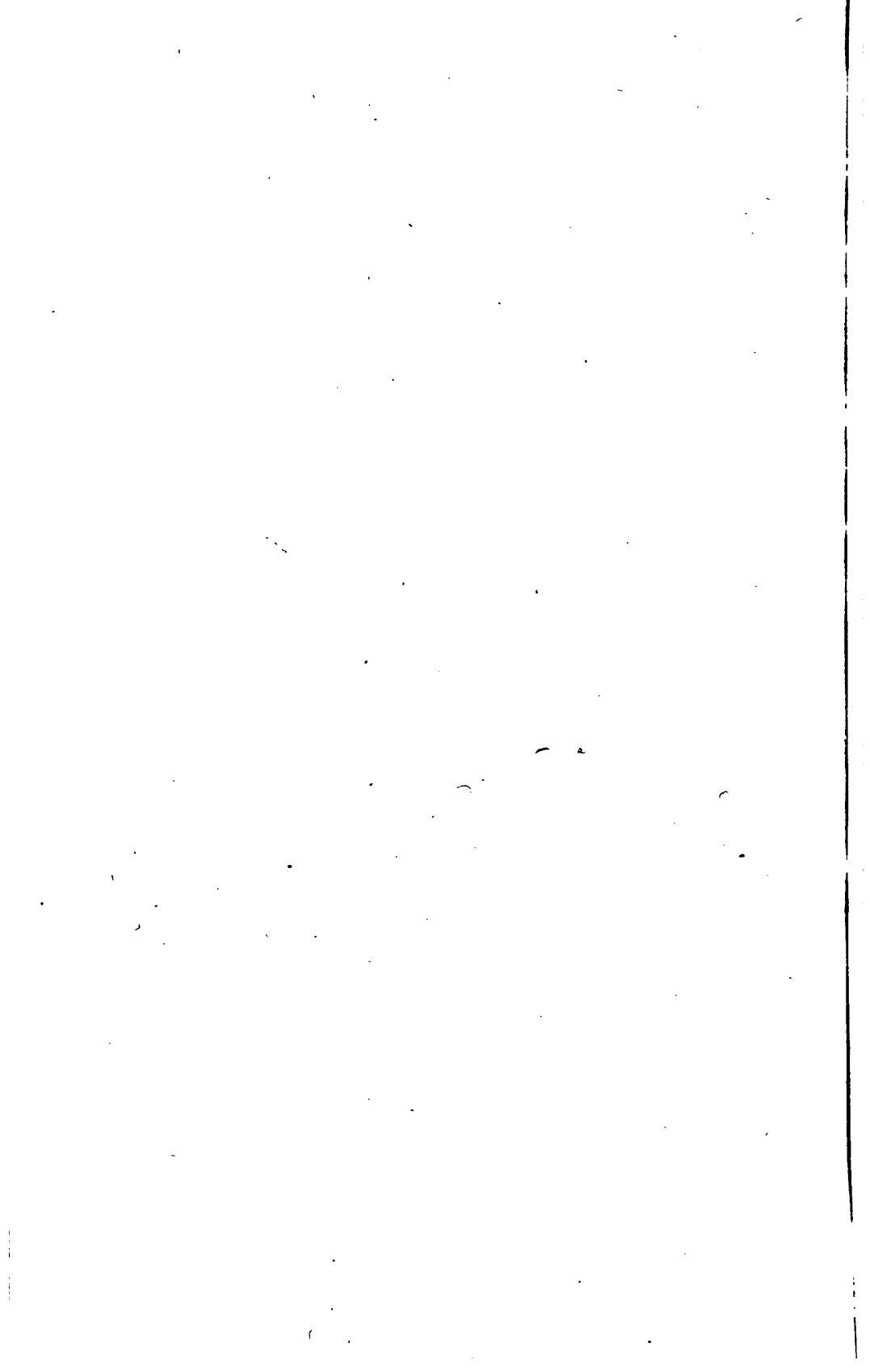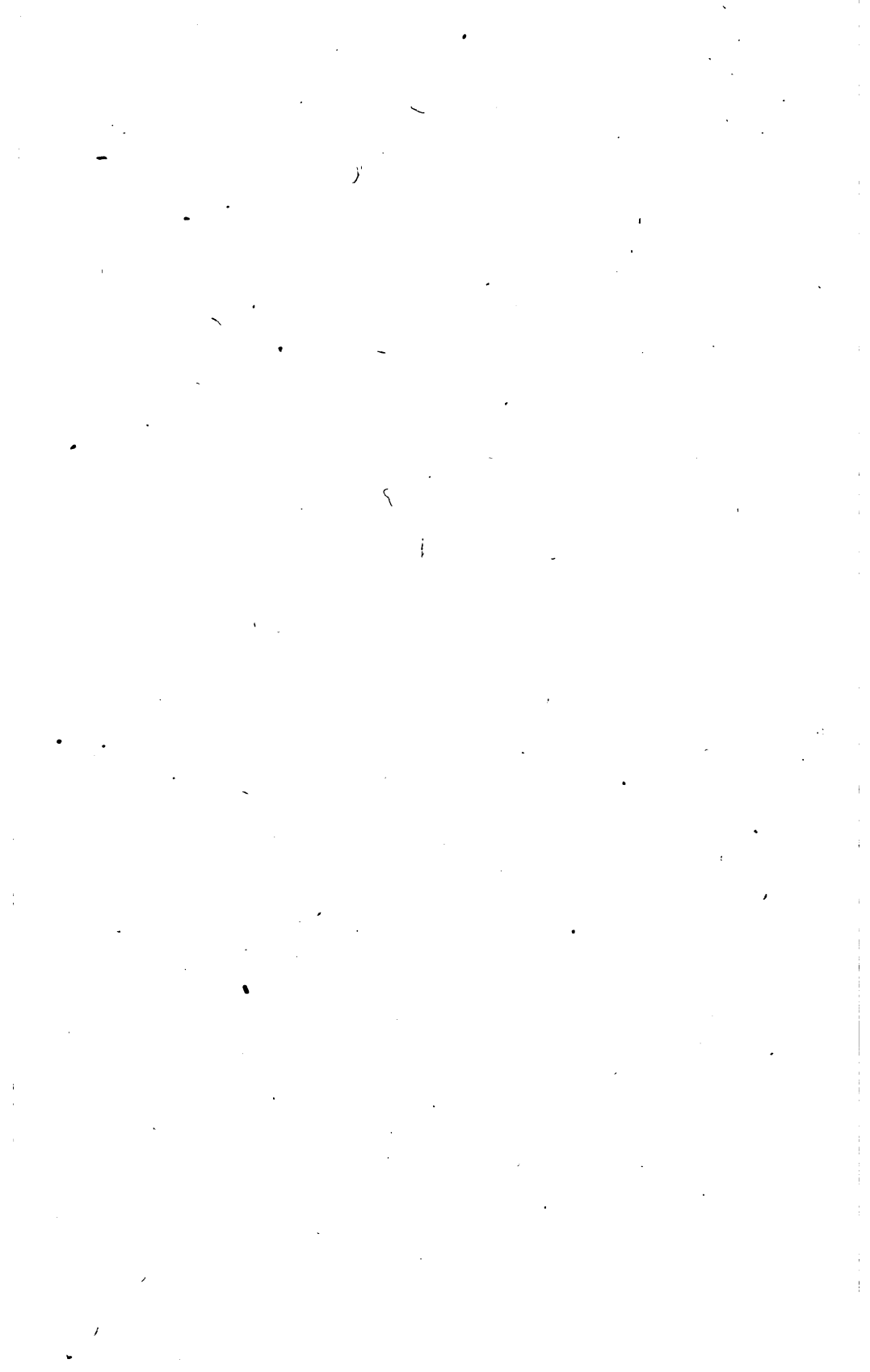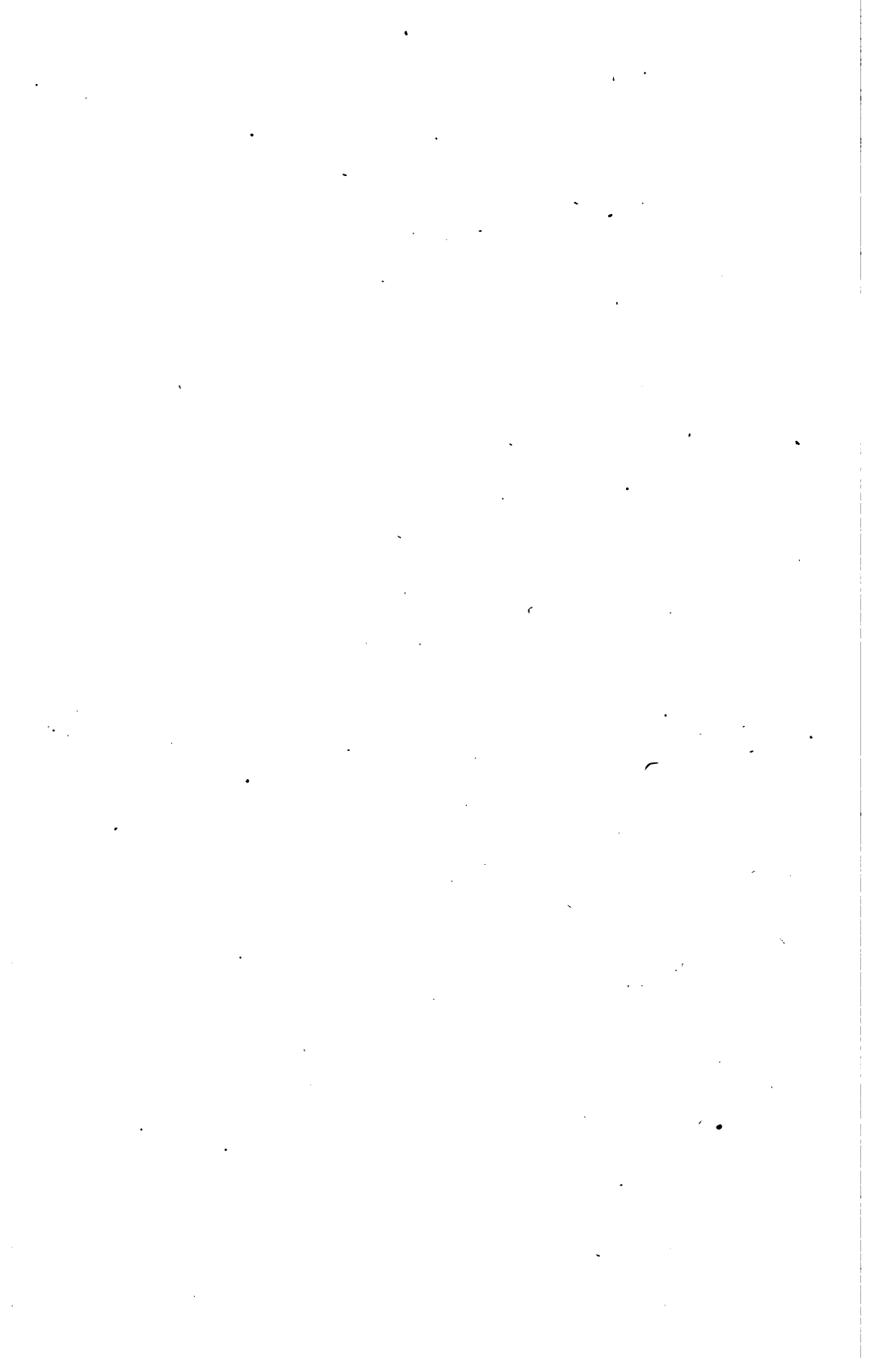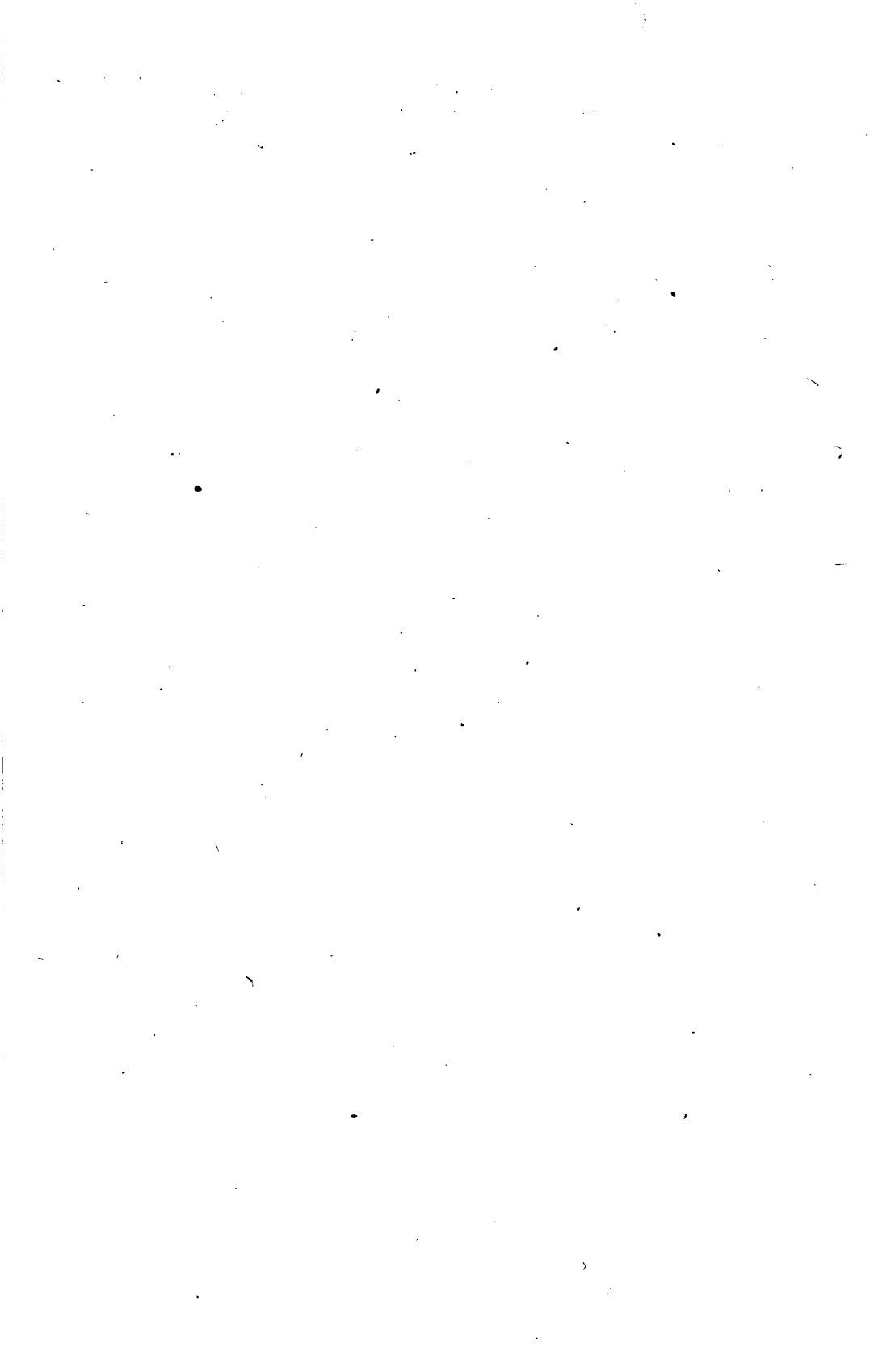**8.** The Roland. (Length, 26,000–30,000 words, 5700–6000 Baligant Episode. Dialogue, .39.)