V.—THE TRANSLATION OF BEOWULF, AND THE RELATIONS OF ANCIENT AND MODERN ENGLISH VERSE.

This subject involves, at the outset, answers to two questions: Is Beowulf in itself worth translating? Are the people who cannot read the original worth the trouble and time of a translator? Granting in each case an affirmative, how shall we bring poem and readers together?

To the first question we may answer, "Yes," and fear no challenge. So with the second: colonization surely does no harm to discovery. Translations react on the original, encourage the study of it, and give scholars the moral support of a public. But the third question waits as yet for a satisfactory answer. This paper is intended to determine the more important conditions of the problem, and to point the way to a solution. If it fail in both of these directions, it may at least stimulate interest in a question vitally important for English philology and English literature.

Translations of Beowulf have been discussed in this Journal, II 355–61, by Professor Garnett; by Professor Wülker in the Anglia IV, Anz. 69–78, and elsewhere. Wülker condemns the "alliterating" German translations, and prefers Heyne's blank verse. Garnett is still more outspoken for the latter measure. He says (p. 357): "The most suitable measure for a poet to use in translating Beowulf is the Miltonic blank verse. . . . When a knowledge of Anglo-Saxon poetry becomes a more common possession, that poet will arise, and we shall have a translation of Beowulf which will give the general public an idea of its manner as well as its matter." I beg to call attention to this view of the case, noting especially that Garnett recognizes the claims of the manner as well as of the matter of poetry, and thinks Miltonic blank verse adequate to the demands of Anglo-Saxon poetical style. But Professor Garnett has not only discussed the translations of Beowulf: he has made a translation of his own. Specimen verses of this translation are given in the article just quoted, and are prefaced by the remark that the author "does not compete with the poets, but sticks to his text (Grein, '67)." This slightly vague expression is explained by the preface to the published translation,

where we are told that "literalness" is the most important object in view. This translation of Garnett's will be considered farther on. For the present let us confine ourselves to those translations which follow the dictum of Conybeare (Illustr. of A.-S. Poetry, p. xlvii): "Poetry can alone reflect, with any degree of truth, the images of poetry." There are three methods of translating an epic poem. One can hardly be called a translation: it is simply the story of the original faithfully rendered in clear and vivid prose. Such a translation is Butcher and Lang's Odyssey, which aims to give "the simple truth about the matter of the poem." This, of course, is not a translation of the poem; it renders the story, and with the story the skilful translator contrives to give us a distant flavor of the epic style. Of the metre we get nothing. To translate the poem, we must have a rendering in some shape of the full poetical style, of the full poetical rhythm. There are, then, really two methods of translating the actual poem. One is to find a modern metre and a modern diction which will give us the general effect of the diction and metre of the original: this is what Wülker and Garnett advocate, and their choice is blank verse. The other is to adopt the original metre and the original diction, making such sacrifices alone as are rendered necessary by (1) the changed conditions of syntax, and (2) the more metrical, more regular character of our modern system of versification. I purposely refrain from any illustration or argument for this method, which may be based on the practice of Ettmüller, Grein, and Simrock, in their German translations, or on the theories of Mr. Matthew Arnold with regard to Homer's hexameters. My object is to deal solely with the problem of translation from the oldest English verse into the latest English verse: any foreign comparisons will hinder rather than help.

I think the question can be made still narrower. A careful examination of the various modern metres used in translating A.-S. poetry convinces me that, of them all, blank verse is the only one which we need to consider as a serious claimant. This is what Prof. Garnett thinks; it seems to be what Prof. Wülker thinks. The question lies, then, between blank verse and the original A.-S. metre. But first let us briefly examine the other claims.

Thus we have the ballad measure, which Col. Lumsden has selected for his translation of Beowulf. Garnett (as quoted above) has rightly ruled this metre out of the question. True, it has some advantages. It is both antique and popular; it carries us,

as blank verse does not, far back into the glories of our national past, and rids us of all dangers from the modern associations of Hamlet's soliloquies or Satan's speeches. It is not "intellectualized." It is the ballad measure, and the ballad is the lineal descendant of the epic. But not only is the ballad measure "jaunty and smart," not only has it the "jog-trot," as Mr. Arnold has shown us; not only is it too rapid for Beowulf, as Garnett points out; the ballad measure is easy and garrulous where Beowulf is breathless and rough. We feel that the ballad, once started, can flow on forever. It is of unbounded ease in diction: Beowulf gasps heavily. Such music as may be found in the verse of Beowulf is "music yearning like a god in pain." Ten Brink (Lit. Gesch. p. 26) has noticed the great expense of power and the lack of actual movement: "Bei aller Unruhe hat man das Gefühl dass man nicht von der Stelle kommt." This half-fruitless strain and effort of the verse may be likened to Milton's "tawny lion, pawing to get free" from the earth through which he cleaves his way up to life. What has this to do with the "jaunty" and "smart" pace of the modern ballad? Ballad verse is totally inadequate to the demands of Beowulf; so is the ballad diction, the so-called "ballad slang," into which modern writers are sure to fall. The peculiar style of A.-S. poetry I shall consider below, in speaking of blank verse; but let any one go over the main features of that style as set forth by Heinzel,[1] and then compare the style and manner of the ballad. Nay, even the treatment of the ballad, the tone, will jar with the treatment and tone of Beowulf. The genuine ballad has its glories, but they are not the glories of Beowulf. The translator must not let the sentiment of ballads, not even the sentiment of a later epic like the Nibelungenlied (in its present shape), invade the essentially heathen simplicity of Beowulf. This sentimental touch will apply only to the Christianized verses of Beowulf, to the isolated passages where the poet-monk glanced up nervously at his crucifix.[2] Even such a tone as we hear in the Nibelungenlied, when Siegfried is dying, may be called foreign to Beowulf:

Mir müezen warten lange mîn vater unt mîne man.

Not so in the English epos, when the hero thinks of the possibility of dying:

[1] Ueber den Stil der altgermanischen Poesie, Strassburg, 1875.
[2] Cf. Wülker, Grundriss zur Gesch. der Ags. Lit., pp. 297, 306.

Na þu minne þearft
hafalan hydan, ac he me habban wile
dreore fahne, ȝif mec deaðˇ nimeðˇ,
byreðˇ blodiȝ wæl, byrȝean þenceðˇ,
eteðˇ anȝenȝa unmurnlice,
mearcaðˇ morhopu: no þu ymb mines ne þearft
lices feorme lenȝ sorȝian!
Onsend Hiȝelace, ȝif mec hild nime,
beaduscruda betst, þæt mine breost wereðˇ,
hræȝla selest! þæt is Hrædlan laf,
Welandes ȝeweorc. ȝæðˇ a wyrd swa hio scel!
(445 ff. Wülker's text.)

Or take the words of the dying Beowulf, when he asks to see the treasure (2743 ff.), after rejoicing that he has fought a good fight, ruled his folk in honor, oppressed no one, nor sworn deceitfully. The nearest approach to our modern tone is in his last word to Wiglaf (2813 ff.):

þu eart endelaf usses cynnes
Wæȝmundinȝa! ealle wyrd forsweof,
mine maȝas to metodsceafte,
eorlas on elne: ic him æfter sceal.

But this merely states a fact. Further, cf. Beowulf's speech to Hrothgar (1474 ff.) in regard to the latter's course in case Beowulf should be killed in his second combat. The ballad style in its naked simplicity, as used centuries ago, is something we cannot even imitate; the later ballad style has too much mannerism and sentiment. To translate Beowulf in the former is an impossibility; to use the latter is to fail.

There is another measure, not mentioned by Garnett, which finds favor in the eyes of those who translate A.-S. verse for the readers of the London Academy. It is that strong metre consisting of six stresses with irregular number of light syllables—*i. e.*, with mixed double and triple measures—which Mr. William Morris chose for Sigurd the Volsung. For example, Academy, May 14, 1881, Miss E. H. Hickey translates The Wanderer. The effect is certainly pleasant—looking, that is, simply at the translation apart from the original:

Still the lone one and desolate pines for his Maker's ruth,
God's good mercy, albeit so long it tarry, in sooth:
Careworn and sad of heart, on the watery ways must he
Plough with the hand-graspt oar—how long?—the rime-cold sea:
Tread thy paths of exile, O Fate, who art cruelty.

Now the original (Wülker's text, Kl. Ags. Dicht.):

Oft him anhaȝa are ȝebideð,
metudes miltse, þeah þe he modcariȝ
ȝeond laȝulade longe sceolde
hreran mid hondum hrimcealde sæ,
wadan wræclastas: wyrd bið ful aræd!

Aside from the few mistakes in translation (as of *gebideð*, where the perfecting force of *ge-* is not brought out: "to wait for and receive," like *gefrignan*, "to ask and get an answer"), there is trouble in the number of extra words needed to fill out the long verse: "in sooth," "God's *good* mercy," etc. The version is spirited, but fails to reproduce the original. It does not follow that this metre is suitable for Beowulf because Mr. Morris has succeeded so well with it in Sigurd the Volsung. It gives us the feeling of speed, ease, inexhaustible store, that we noted above. True, one has not the sense of garrulity; but there is the same effect of the couplets and the click of rime as in the Chapman measure, the same need to patch out the verse with quaint phrases: "*yea, now*," "*in sooth*," etc. Let us try, for the nonce, to reproduce the diction and metre of the original:

Often the fugitive findeth pity,
His Maker's mercy, though he, mood-heavy,
O'er the water-ways be wearily fated
To fret with his hands the frost-cold sea,
To wander in exile: Wyrd is fulfilled!

This at least preserves the verse-movement, the rime, and the important features of the style—*e. g.*, the parallelism. But the question of original metre belongs elsewhere. Two other forms of verse may be here mentioned. The metre of Scott's well-known tales is applied to translations from the A.-S. by Conybeare (as in his paraphrase of the "Fight of Finsburg," Illustr. p. 179 ff.), and by Wackerbarth (Beowulf, London, 1849). Simple four-stress couplets are used by Conybeare for the "Gnomic Poem," Illustr. p. 228. Besides these common metres, the last-named writer employs a mixed verse with somewhat sonorous manner in his translation of Wîdsîð, 22 ff. Perhaps it would be hard to find a wider gulf than that which yawns between the manner of the original and the manner of the translation. Thus with Wîd. 70 ff. cf. the following:

Far o'er Italia's fair and fertile soil
My course was sped with Elfwine's faithful band;

And Edwin's son well recompensed the toil,
For large his soul and liberal was his hand.

It would be a miserable business to sneer at this "paraphrase" by a man who, in his day, worked so well for A.-S. philology; but it is plain that the verse "will never do." It is still worse with the Scott metre. As verses, Wackerbarth's lines read well enough for one who likes the kind; but applied to Beowulf, the effect is very bad. Beowulf is dignified. It may be ponderous, but it is "noble." This verse chatters, grins, swings about in the most nimble and tiresome way possible. Scott's great talent saved his favorite metre from the flippancy so easily attaching to it; Wackerbarth, tied down to a definite order of narration, forced to hunt for rimes, is unable to avoid the besetting sin of the verse. Take an example. The vassals of Scyld watch the ship bearing away their dead lord: "Their souls were sad, their mood mournful. Men cannot say, in sooth, hall-owners, heroes under heaven, who received that burden." Thus Wackerbarth:

His gallant band of cheer were low
And sore dispirited,
For, sooth to say, no mortal, though
He wise may be, can ever know,
Nor answer how or whereunto
The precious cargo sped.

What a relief when we come to the last line, and quiet is restored!

We now turn to the two remaining metres, blank verse, which Heyne, Wülker and Garnett regard as the best medium for translation; and the original metre, which Wülker condemns. As to the original metre itself, I accept in the main Rieger's well-known explanation (Z's'ft für deutsche Phil. VII, 1 ff.). For metre in general, I assume that the verse, or line, not the "foot," is the unit of any metrical scheme, and that the movement of the individual verse is the chief fact of rhythm. I also assume the close relation between the metre of A.-S. poetry and its style. The chief characteristics of the latter have been set forth by Heinzel, Ten Brink, Scherer, Hoffmann, and others, and are too well known to be repeated here. But it is very essential to the discussion of our question that these peculiarities should be kept constantly in mind. We may now make two inquiries: (1) Is blank verse adequate to the demands of A.-S. metre and poetical style? (2) Is it possible to reproduce the original metre?

(1) No. I am confident that the characteristics of A.-S. diction, as well as metre, will be lost, even in the most poetic blank-verse translation. Take Conybeare's translation of fragments of Beowulf: "Recht geschickt abgefasst" is Wülker's judgment. At first sight we may approve the choice of metre. It is right that the seventh-century monk should be clad in the singing-robes of Milton. But the result of Conybeare's work, vigorous as his metre often seems, is to give us neither the old epic nor the new, but a kind of Paradise-Lost-and-Water. Grendel becomes a flabby Satan. The tone, the manner of the original disappear; we have no hint of the spirit, of the style, or of the metre—so intimately joined to the style—of Beowulf. Thus, with the original verses (445–56) quoted above, compare C.'s rendering (Ill. p. 44):

> Should that fate be mine,
> Give to its earthy grave my blood-stain'd corse,
> Raise high the mound, where many a passer-by
> (Within the trench that circling marks the plain)
> May swell with pious hand the stony mass
> Unsorrowing—little need with long parade
> Of tears to grace the banquet of the dead.
> But this, the gorgeous mail that guards my breast,
> By Weland's art high-temper'd, duly send
> To royal Higelac. Now betide what may.

I choose this passage for the reason that it exhibits the three main sins of a translator. First, the sense of the opening lines is completely missed (not a matter for surprise if we remember that the translation was made in the first years of the century); secondly, "should that fate be mine" is false manner for "if death take me," just as "gorgeous mail" is vague pomp for *beadu-scruda betst*, or "by Weland's art high-temper'd," for *Welandes ȝeweorc;* besides, the parallelism *beadu-scruda betst* (453*a*) and *hræȝla selest* (454*a*) is entirely lost, "gorgeous mail" doing service for both expressions. Conybeare's literal Latin rendering of the last lines is (Ill. p. 96): *Mitte Higelaco* (*si me bellum auferat*) *apparatum Martium optimum quod pectus meum gerit, gestamen præstantissimum, id est e spoliis conservatum Welandi opus. Accidat quid* (*fatum*) *velit.* Thirdly, the metre is, of course, entirely lost. Moreover, there is nothing in this verse to give us an impression similar to the impression made by the original. It is idle to answer that the translation reads well. It reads better than the original, for that matter. It reads too well. One travels better in a Pullman car

than in a stage-coach; but suppose our object is to revive the sensations of the old-fashioned journey? The language of blank verse, more than of any other kind, is what Arnold calls "a literary and intellectualized language." It is fatal for the reader of Beowulf, the reader of verses which, in the original, picture the life and deeds of twelve centuries ago in a purely Germanic world, to be constantly hearing echoes and phrases which remind him not only of the tirades of Tamburlaine, or of the soliloquies of Hamlet, or of the declamations of Satan, but even of Greek and Latin associations. Blank verse fails to bring us to Beowulf; it fails to bring Beowulf to us; we fall into the intervening chasm among the Lorenzos and Philanders of the last century; and the epic tone, meant to be so full and sonorous, dwindles into the *vox exigua* of a ghost. The grand epic of modern times—of Dante, of Milton—is an absolutely different creation from the primitive epic—Homer, Beowulf. Blank verse, in English, has become the language of the grand epic; to render the primitive epic, we must use a metre free from such misleading tendencies.

Either the original metre, then, or else the simple story of Beowulf in clear and vivid prose. But before we answer our second question, before we consider the possibility of reviving the old verse, let us look more closely at the relations between this verse and that of modern times. Perhaps we shall not only find the reason why blank verse seemed *a priori* the proper verse for the translator of Beowulf, but also gain some ground useful in solving the final problem—some *a priori* reason for the possibility of a successful translation in the original metre.

On p. 437 of that excellent work, Schipper's Altenglische Metrik, we are told: "Dass der englische fünftaktige Vers höchst wahrscheinlich dem französischen Zehnsilbler nachgebildet worden ist." A note to this says: "Wir stellen diese Entstehungsart . . . nicht als eine Thatsache hin aus dem Grunde dass der englische Fünftakter sich ohne romanische Einwirkung durch Verkürzung um einen Takt aus dem Alexandriner entwickeln konnte, wie manche . . . Beispiele solcher Verse in altenglischen, Alexandrinischen Gedichten darthun, oder auch, dass er durch Erweiterung um einen Takt aus dem viertaktigen Verse entstanden sei, wie z. B. in dem Early English Psalter, welche, für sich genommen, sich ungezwungen in den fünftaktigen Rhythmus fügen." . . . After allowing this possibility, however, Schipper remarks that such 5-stress verses are really to be read—since they *can* be so read—

as 4-stress verses; and he concludes his note: "Für den fünftaktigen, altenglischen Vers der Kunstpoesie dürfte die Annahme, dass er dem altfranzösischen Zehnsilbler nachgebildet wurde, schwerlich anzufechten sein."

Again, Ten Brink, Chaucer's Sprache und Verskunst, p. 174, remarking that to Schipper belongs the credit of having set in motion the inquiry about English heroic verse before Chaucer, calls attention to certain 5-stress lines in the poem *L'en puet fere et defere* which he thinks are imitated from the French "Zehnsilbler." As regards Chaucer, Ten Brink thinks the heroic verse of the early poems (*e. g.*, Compleynte to Pitee) is imitated from the French, while the later metre—as in the Canterbury Tales—is strongly influenced by the Italian *Endecasillabo.*[1]

Such is the opinion of two great authorities. To run directly counter to this opinion would be folly; nevertheless, the question is open, as Schipper says in his note. He states his opinion as something "höchst wahrscheinlich," "nicht als eine Thatsache," etc. Now, if there is any one fact prominent in English history and English literature, it is that the people, their laws, their institutions, their poetry, never act *per saltum.* Foreign metres have been introduced and have become popular, like the Septenarius or the Alexandrine; foreign forms of verse, like the Sonnet; foreign forms of speech itself, like the French order of the sentence, which drove out the old Germanic arrangement; the language as a whole, too, absorbed countless Romance elements; yet we know how gradual every change has been which affected English life, or letters, or institutions. In all cases, there is in the very act of receiving foreign influence a sort of sturdy self-assertion on the part of the native element. Chaucer, who really introduced the actual 5-stress verse into English poetry—for all earlier specimens are sporadic and half accidental—is one of the greatest benefactors of English metre, because he had "die Kunst, germanische und romanische Art—die accentuirende und die syllabische Weise—nicht durcheinander zu mischen, sondern harmonisch zu verbinden."[2] This wonderfully flexible verse of his, which does equal justice to the exquisite pathos of the prioress and to the rude vigor of the miller—is this merely a French measure introduced by a *tour de force* into English poetry? Or is it not more likely to be

[1] Schröer (Anfänge des Blankverses, Angl. IV 2), speaking of Chaucer's verse, says: "Der italienische Endecasillabo ist das Vorbild."

[2] Ten Brink, Chauc. S. und V., Einleitung, p. 5.

a harmonizing—as Ten Brink puts it—of the two great systems, the Germanic and the Romance, the rhythmic and the metric, *on the basis of two representative measures?* I believe this latter to be the case. What representative English measure, then, will answer to the French 10-syllable verse, or the Italian *Endecasillabo?* All agree that Chaucer's other metre (short couplet) must be referred to a double origin: "Einmal der nachwirkung der angelsächsischen epischen halbzeile, dann dem bestreben, den französischen achtsylbler wiederzugeben" (Ten Brink, Chaucer Studien, p. 13; cf. also Schipper, M., p. 258 ff.). What, then, of his heroic verse? What English measure is the foundation upon which Chaucer, with his eye turned toward Romance models, built so strong and graceful a structure? Referring to the second alternative in Schipper's note, as well as to his distinction (p. 258) between *viertaktig* and *vierhebig*, I answer: Not the imported *zehnsilbler*, not the imitated "*viertaktig*" verse, but the old national, 4-stress verse of Beowulf, as well as of later times, corrected, changed, disguised, it may be, by a hundred influences, is the foundation of our heroic measure. Only in this way can we understand the great preponderance of this measure. Is it likely that the prevailing movement of English poetry since the middle of the fourteenth century should be an outright importation? To assume this is to run counter to the teachings of English history. The case of the Septenarius is hardly in point. Is it likely that the old verse, so popular in the work of Langley, and in the northern romances like Gawayne, should breathe its last in Skelton's hysteric lines, and leave no heir? Is it not probable that the popular native measure, and the popular foreign measure, should have combined their strength, and so should have produced the favorite modern verse? Is it likely that Chaucer, running over certain verse of Guillaume de Machault (cf. Skeat, Prioresses Tale, etc., p. 19; Furnivall, Trial Forewords, pp. 47, 115; also Skeat's references) should conceive the idea of trying that measure in English?—that he should try it, and, after a little further help from the Italian, should awake one morning and find his experiment to be the favorite English metre? That does not seem to be the English way. It does not seem like Chaucer's way. The English manner is to make a compromise between native and foreign claims. It lets the foreign form (witness our language itself) assume certain external and regulative functions; it keeps the heart of the thing native. "Der Mensch knüpft immer an Vorhandenes an." At the heart of the new heroic verse

there is the old movement; externally there is a great change. And this is a real change; it would be madness to compare the new verse directly with the old verse. The Romance element tinges all our modern metres. As English is at once very different from A.-S., and yet not different in a deeper sense, so with the verse of Beowulf and the verse of Paradise Lost. Neither our language nor our favorite verse is a mere importation. Of course, I do not undertake to say *how* Chaucer (if he first used heroic verse) combined the two elements; but I want to prove that both elements are there. In some way the Romance system of alternating stress and no-stress, of using a light and shifting cæsura (this is Italian), was applied to the free long verse with marked and fixed pause. The result was heroic verse.[1]

Both Guest (Hist. Eng. Rhythms) and Lanier (Science of English Verse) have assumed a single principle for English metres, as well before as after Chaucer. Both treat the A.-S. verse and the heroic verse from the same point of view. This is undoubtedly wrong. All writers on English metre are now pretty well agreed in regard to the sharp line which we must draw between old and new verse; and in spite of Lanier's argument, we must accept the following as a settled fact: "In der alliterierenden Poesie waren die Hebungen das Feststehende, das Wesentliche für den Bau des Verses, während die Zahl der Senkungen nicht fest begränzt war. In der mittelalterlich-lateinischen accentuierenden Poesie, sowie auch in der romanischen ist dagegen eine regelmässige Aufeinanderfolge von stärker und schwächer betonten Silben oder von Hebungen und Senkungen Gesetz, die beide von gleichem Werth für den Rhythmus sind" (Schipper, p. 79). This Romance versification penetrated our native poetry about the twelfth century. The two systems, after more or less clashing, were harmoniously united in the verse of Chaucer. Schipper has followed the process of disintegration in the old 4-stress (A.-S.) verse. Revived in Piers Pl., still vigorous, though lawless and extravagant, in a poem by Chaucer's late scholar, Dunbar, the old metre ran wild in Skelton, and in the Mysteries gasped out its last breath as an independent system. In other guise, it reappeared in the rimed verses of Minot (with strong Romance influences), and may be guessed

[1] Schipper's suggestion that heroic verse might have grown out of the *viertaktig* verse (cf. p. 437 note) cannot be accepted, since the latter has not a strongly marked pause (*ibid.* p. 258) which, giving up part of its importance, caused, by compensation, a new (fifth) stress.

in modern verse, like that of Burns, in My Nannie's Awa, as well as in all free 4-stress verse, like—

> Never on custom's oiléd grooves
> The world to a higher level moves.

In this sort of verse, however, the pause, so prominent in A.-S., is reduced to a minimum. The triple measure is introduced once, or perhaps twice; but in general the number of light syllables does not exceed that of the heavy by more than one or two. There is less of the leap and more of the march. Occasionally the pause helps the light syllables to pass the limit of triple measure, as in Lord Randal, and we have something of the old freedom:

> I hae béen to the wíld-*wood; mother*, máke my bèd sòon.

In general, however, the old verse loses its heaping of light syllables, its strongly marked pause, and, of course, its regular beginning-rime. But it is precisely this pause, invariably dividing the verse into well-marked halves, it is the number and distribution of light syllables, and, of course, alliteration, which chiefly distinguish the A.-S. metre from heroic verse. On one hand *four* stresses, fixed pause, indeterminate amount of light syllables; on the other, *five* stresses, shifting and slighter pause, strict ordering and number of light syllables. According to Rieger, however, there is in the best A.-S. poetry a certain limitation as to the number and position of *Senkungen*. "Halbverse, in welchen an den drei stellen zugleich die anschwellung das mass erreichte, das sich der dichter für jede einzelne derselben gestattet, gibt es nicht" (Alt- und Ags. Verskunst, p. 62). And again: "Mit recht beliebt sind zwei metrische haupttypen, die dadurch entstehn, dass man entweder beide senkungen ohne den auftact, oder den auftact, aber keine der senkungen, anschwellt, beide als erster und zweiter halbvers oftmals und oft in mehrmaliger widerholung hinter einander combiniert." Particularly is to be noted a tendency to add light syllables at the beginning of the second half-verse—*i. e.*, after the pause: "Im Beowulf ist, wie überall, die anschwellung des auftactes mehr im zweiten als im ersten halbvers zu hause" (p. 59). Now, it has been often noticed that in our common heroic verse there are seldom, if ever, five actual stress-syllables such as the verse-scheme demands: cf. Ellis, Early Eng. Pron., p. 334, and Abbott, Shaksp. Gram., §453a. Mr. Abbott says: "From an analysis of several tragic lines of Shakespeare, taken from

different plays, I should say that rather less than one of three has the full number of five emphatic accents. About two out of three have four, and one out of fifteen has three." Probably the first statement shows far too great a proportion for five stresses, provided we read the line in a rhetorical way; meaning five stresses *syntactically* regarded, the statement will be near the truth; though, as Abbott says, the personal element enters too largely into the question for exact results. We note, then, that the majority of heroic verses may be said to have really but four stresses. Further, any reader of English verse will remember a certain tendency, notably strong with Dryden, Pope and Johnson, to balance lines in such a way that the verse falls in halves, with a slight pause after the second measure, or in the middle of the third (masculine or feminine pause), with a very weak third or fourth stress, which in the case of a feminine cæsura gives the effect of heaped-up light syllables after the pause (cf. Rieger on the second Auftact):

No secret island *in* the boundless main.
Refund the plunder *of* the beggar'd land.

Where the pause is masculine, the fourth stress is often weak, though this does not disturb the balance:

Slow rises worth, by pover*ty* depress'd.

An analysis of the individual verses of Johnson's London with regard to the movement and the position of pauses and light syllables gives the following results. Of course, the personal element prevents the analysis from being absolutely trustworthy; in the main, however, it will hit the actual facts. I take (:) to represent the pause; (;) weak stress and pause coming together; (.) the weak stress. The figures refer to the actual stresses. Thus, the verse—

No secret island *in* the boundless main

is 2 ; 2. Of this movement there are 46 verses out of 259. Of the same balance, but with a more emphatic third stress, as—

When injur'd Thales *bids* the town farewell,

there are 23. Of the form 2 : 1 . 1, as—

Here falling houses thunder *on* your head,

there are 65. Of the form . 2 : 2, as—

While yet my steady steps no staff sustains,

there are 9. Of the form 1 . 1 : 2, as—

Where honest*y* and sense are no disgrace,

there are 8. Of the form 2 : 2 ., as—

Collect a tax or farm a lotter*y*,

there are 7. Now, all these forms undoubtedly resemble the old verse in that they have a middle pause, only four real stresses, and in most cases a heaping up of light syllables: they make 60 per cent. of the whole poem. The other prevailing movements are shown by the couplet—

Who scarce forbear, tho' Britain's court he sing,
To pluck a titled poet's borrow'd wing;—

that is, 2 : 3 and 3 : 2. There are, of course, other movements. But the fact important for us is that, against the 60 per cent. named above, we have only 31 per cent. of the form 2 : 3, or 3 : 2—that is, with five really pronounced stresses. If we chose to read as Mr. Ellis does, and count the rhetorical stresses, there would be scarcely any of the latter class.

It will be said, however, that this is only a peculiarity of the distich as developed by Waller and Dryden. Let us look at Chaucer. In the first hundred verses of the Cant. Tales we find of the movement 2 ; 2, as—

The tendre croppes, *and* the yonge sonne,

32 per cent. against less than 18 per cent. in Johnson. Of the whole class of verses which may be compared with the A.-S. rhythm, Chaucer shows 62 per cent. to Johnson's 60 per cent.; but this is not a just comparison, for whereas in Johnson 31 per cent. are of the form 2 : 3, or 3 : 2, there are in Chaucer only 5 per cent. corresponding to these—*i. e.*, with five real stresses. The other verses in Chaucer—aside from the balanced verses and those just noted—have only four stresses; but the pause excludes a balance, as in (3 : . 1):

The holy blisful martir for to seeke.

The pause after the second stress is the commonest in Chaucer. Schipper (p. 451) says that of the first two hundred lines of the Prologue, about 110 have such a pause; Prioresses Tale, 150 out of 250. In this case, the scheme is very apt to be 2 : 1 . 1, in

which Johnson wrote 21 per cent. of his entire London; cf. Chaucer:

Ful wel sche sang | the servise divyne (122).

Corresponding to this is the pause after the third stress; here the scheme is apt to be 1 . 1 : 2; cf.—

A Cristofre on his brest of silver schene (115).

The real medial pause, much used by Chaucer, is feminine just before the third stress (2 ; 2):

Sche leet no morsel | *from* hire lippes falle,
Ne wette hire fyngres | *in* hire sauce deepe (128–9).

Next to the pause after the second stress, this is Chaucer's favorite; cf. Ten Brink, Chauc. S. und V., p. 178.—This mere glance at Chaucer, then, shows us that the majority of the verses are formed, to some extent, on the A.-S. plan. We note his jealous care not to burden a verse; in 95 per cent. there is at least one weak verse-stress, whereas in Johnson it is the case in only 67 per cent. Chaucer had 32 per cent. with third stress weak; Johnson only 18 per cent. Chaucer had 62 per cent., which showed a general balance (two stresses in each half-verse); Johnson had 60 per cent.; while in Milton, of the first 100 verses of Par. Lost, I find barely 30 per cent.

Our next step ought to be an examination of the various forms of degenerate A.-S. verse—*e. g.*, in the Miracle Plays (cf. Schipper, 195–243). For that, time and material fail me. We can, however, approach our question still more closely than we have done, if we examine a well-known poem by that master of English heroic verse, Spenser. I refer to the Shepheards Calender. Unable to consult any treatise bearing on this poem, I am forced to rely on a hasty reading, where the "personal element" may, perhaps, interfere with exact analysis, though I hope it will not affect the general result. Compared with heroic verse, the verse of certain parts of the S. C. shows (1) only four stresses; (2) a more marked pause, which in nearly all cases *must* divide the verse into halves, each with two stresses; (3) a movement far more free, since triple measures are systematically used, few verses being without any, though the movement is by no means "anapestic" throughout; (4) freedom to drop the unaccented syllable between two stresses; (5) lavish use of beginning-rime, which almost rivals the end-rime used to bind the verses in couplets. But this is approaching closely to the old A.-S. verse. Let us look at the poem in detail.

It is well known that the Elizabethan poets had an overwhelming passion for the iambic movement. Where the trochaic movement —the "falling" metre—found its way into certain lyrics, such as Sidney's Serenade (in Astrophel and Stella), or the songs of Greene, Barnefield and Constable, it still remained a regular double measure; triple measures—the "dactylic" or the "anapestic" movement—were avoided. In his Certayne Notes of Instruction, etc., Geo. Gascoigne laments that "wee are fallen into suche a playne and simple manner of wryting, that there is none other foote used but one."[1] He also says: "We have used in times past other kindes of Meeters: as, for example, this following:

> No wight in this world that wealth can attayne,
> Unlesse he beleve, that all is but vayne."

But this is just the movement of many lines in S. C.—as, Sept. 222 (I use the Globe edition, ed. Morris):

> No sooner was out but swifter than thought.

Spenser took this measure because it was a country measure, an old-fashioned affair, good to play with, but banished from serious work. The triple measure was associated with the old *rom, ram, ruf*, once so popular. It was a country cousin that must stay in the country. The iambic measure of the university poets and of the learned guild generally felt, perhaps, that this "tumbling" verse might prove, on close inspection, to be a near relative. But Spenser's clowns were welcome to use it. It was undoubtedly popular in rude songs and ballads. Puttenham (Arber's Rep. p. 85) quotes some verses, prevailingly in triple measure, beginning—

> Now sucke child and sleepe child, thy mother's owne ioy,
> Her only sweete comfort, to drowne all annoy,

and says this metre is used by "ordinarie rimers," and sounds "very harshly in mine eare." Skelton, who used the "tumbling" verse, which is proved by Guest and Schipper (cf. also Eng. Stud. V 490 ff.) to be merely the old A.-S. long verse split in two and furnished with end-rime, is called by Puttenham (p. 97) "a rude rayling rimer," whose verses are compared to the "old Romances

[1] Mr. Gosse seems to have taken this statement literally when he says in his From Shakspere to Pope, Am. ed., pp. 9 and 160, "The dactylic and anapestic movement was entirely unknown to the Elizabethans." He could find many more exceptions than the two he mentions.

or historicall rimes," as the "reportes of Guy of Warwicke, Adam Bell, and Clymme of the Clough." "In our courtly maker," says Puttenham, "we banish [these "short distances and short measures"] utterly." Schipper points out that the long verse of four stresses is common in the Mysteries and the Moralities. Wherever Puttenham has any street-rime to quote, it is mostly in this measure; cf., too, what a gentleman said "in our vulgar," on p. 267. Then, there is Tusser talking in this "vulgar" metre to his audience of farmers; cf. Guest, Hist. Eng. Rhyth., 2d ed., p. 537. See, too, the songs (including that for the queen) at the end of Roister Doister; or, for a later poet, Greene's Mulidor's Madrigal—*e. g.*:

> That I with the primrose of my fresh wit
> May tumble her tyranny under my feet.

We meet it in Shakspere: "And so tell your master. O Lord, I must laugh"—Com. E.: cf. Abbott, Shaks. Gr. §502; and in Lyly: cf. Schröer, Anf. des Blankv. in Eng., Anglia, IV, p. 60. Webbe (Arber's Rep. p. 59) says of the verse for February, in the S. C., that it is a more rough or clownish sort of metre. In short, this verse with triple measure was (*a*) the lineal descendant of the A.-S. verse, though changed somewhat from the old form, and (*b*) was banished by polite "makers" because the iambic movement was practically the only one recognized. Spenser chose the metre because it was old-fashioned and rustic; or, as his friend, E. K., puts it, "having the sound of those auncient Poetes still ringing in his eares, he mought needes, in singing, hit out some of theyr tunes" (Globe Ed. p. 441). Now, I hope to show, by an analysis of parts of this poem, that our heroic verse, as I have said, is *simply the result of forcing the iambic movement (influence of foreign models played its part here) upon some late form of our old four-stress verse.* This process, in a word, reduces the pause, and cuts down all triple measures (aside from cases of slurring); but it adds a new verse-stress, though this, in the majority of cases, has no real syntactic force. Such a verse as Chaucer's (C. T. 500):

> That if gold ruste, what shall yren doo?

is itself almost enough to support the above statement; note the pause, the balance, the real movement:

⏑⏑–⏑–⏑ | ⏑⏑–⏑–⏑

as compared with the movement of the verse-scheme:

⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ | ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑

the omitted light syllable between two stresses not separated by the pause, etc. But we shall have better proof in Spenser's verses.

The Shepheards Calender for January is written in ordinary heroic verse. The form is stanzaic, with the scheme *a*, *b*, *a*, *b*, *c*, *c*. Nothing here calls for special notice. Otherwise with February. There are 246 verses of the general A.-S. form, though the beginning-rime is irregular, end-rime constant (in couplets), and the light syllables are more symmetrically ordered than in A.-S. The commonest movement is 2, 2 : 3, 2 (the figures here indicate the number of syllables in the measure or "bar"); the cæsura being sometimes masculine, sometimes feminine: as—

From good to badd, and from badde to worse,

for the masculine. The feminine pause gives a different effect, though the verse, read continuously, is still 2, 2 : 3, 2, as—

Who will not suffer the stormy time.

One-third of all the verses may be referred to this measure. We remember Rieger's statement about the *auftact* of the second half-verse. Of the second movement (2, 3 : 2, 2), as—

Yet never complained of cold nor heate,

I count 18 per cent. The next favorite is 2, 2 : 2, 3, as—

Of winters wracke for making thee sad,

of which there are found also about 18 per cent. Perhaps a dozen have the movement 2, 3 : 2, 3, as—

Now listen a while and hearken the end.

A dozen more are 3, 2 : 2, 2—

But my flowring youth is foe to frost.

Further, we have 2, 3 : 3, 2, and 2, 2 : 3, 3—

And broughten this oake to this miserye;
And mochell mast to the husband did yield;[1]

while there are a dozen without any triple measure, as—

So smirke, so smoothe, his pricked eares.

[1] This can be read, by slightly wrenched accent, as iambic 5-stress.

There are verses with the A.-S. freedom of dropped light syllable between two stresses:

The *sweete Night*ingale singing so lowde.

Many verses have the correct alliteration of A.-S., as—

So loytring live you little heardgroomes ;

the majority have some form of alliteration. But the important fact for us is that *nearly* 10 *per cent. of the verses will allow the iambic movement, and so become heroic verse.* Let us look at some of these verses. In a few cases we need to "wrench" the accent a little; in others the lines read smoothly as possible. Thus—

Whose way is wildernesse, whose ynne Penaunce,

is good 5-stress "iambic" verse; though we must probably read ⏑ ⏓ ⏑ ⏓ ⏑ | ⏑ ⏓ ⏑ ⏓. To make heroic verse of this, we simply call one of the light syllables a verse-accent. Further, cf.—

Least thou the price of my displeasure prove.

Here we have a genuine heaping up of light syllables in the second *auftact.* Accent one of these, and we have a good iambic movement, with the favorite pause. So with feminine pause,

And dirks the beauty of my blossomes rownd,

which, read in iambic movement, is the favorite "balance" of Chaucer and of Johnson. Further:

That bene the honor of your Coronall.
Submitting me to your good sufferance,
And praying to be guarded from greevance.
But all this glee had no continuance.
And beate upon the solitarie Brere.
But little ease of thy lewd tale I tasted.

These are all faultless 5-stress verses. With wrenched accent are such as—

That oft the bloud *springeth* from woundes wyde.

Cf. Milton:

Cast wanton eyes on the *daughters* of men (P. R. II 180).

Examples of such wrenched—or, rather, in this case, *hovering*—accent (Schwebende Betonung) could be collected from almost every writer of heroic verse. Even a violently wrenched accent

need not fail for good company; thus, applying the "iambic" movement to

They wont in *the* wind wagge their wrigle tayles

makes no worse effect than George Chapman's

As soul to *the* dead water that did love.—(Hero and L.)

Lastly, there are verses which could be read as "iambic" with but one syllable in the first measure—*e. g.*:

Throughly rooted and of wonderous hight.
Cherefully the winters wrathful cheare.

Passing by March, we find some interesting verses in April. Hobbinoll sings the song which Colin made about "fayre Elisa" once "as by a spring he laye, And tuned it unto the Waters fall." The water, we note, was patriotic enough to vary the "iambic" verse with a few echoes of the old A.-S. metre. In February (and, as we shall see, in May and September) the 4-stress verse breaks frequently into the regular heroic movement; in this song to Elisa, the iambic verse breaks now and then into triple measure. The first stanza ("Ye dayntye Nymphs") is regularly iambic, both in the short and in the long verses. In stan. 2, one triple measure creeps in the last short verse ("Of heavenly race"); so in 3; and in 4 (verse 4). In 5, each of the short verses has one triple measure. So in 6; where, further, the couplet is slightly irregular. In 7, verses 2 and 4 have each a triple measure; 7 and 8 forsake their scheme and take 3 stresses (all these verses short), and the heroic couplet breaks partly into the movement of the February verse—*e. g.*:

Soone as my younglings cryen for the dam
To her will I offer a milkwhite lamb.

The last verse of the stanza is also in the 4-stress movement. In 8 we have more regularity in the long verses; but in 9 there is undoubted free movement:

Lo! how finely the Graces can it foote
To the instrument:
They dauncen deffly and singen soote
In their merriment.

Note, too, the beginning-rime; and compare the corresponding verses of the first stanza:

Ye dayntye Nymphs that in this blessed brooke
Doe bathe your brest, etc.

So with the rest of the song, which deserves study. After it is sung, the two shepherds separate, each with a stanza; but this, unlike the opening stanzas, is free. This mingling, this confusion, of the old and the new movement must speak plainly for the narrow surface-breach between the two, and for a common foundation.

We pass to May. This is like February, only longer. It has 317 verses. It shows, as compared with Feb., longer lines—*i. e.*, more triple measures, and a stronger tendency to heroic verses, and even heroic couplets. About 14 per cent. have the movement 2, 2 : 3, 2; 10 per cent. have 2, 3 : 2, 2; 11 per cent. have 2, 2 : 3, 3; 14 per cent. have 2, 2 : 2, 3; and there are many other movements which we need not detail. Interesting are two 11-syll. verses:

Eke cherish his child, if in his wayes he stood.
I am a poore sheepe, albe my colour donne.

There is also much freedom in—

Yet not so prevelie but the Foxe him spyed.
For with long traveile I am brent in the sonne.[1]

But our main interest centres in the verses which admit an iambic movement. Of these there are 13 per cent.—a very good proportion. Forced into the strict scheme of the verse, these read 2, 2 : 4, 2, or 2, 2 : 2, 4, or 2, 4 : 2, 2:

Ylike as others, girt in gawdy greene.
Our bloncket liveryes bene all to sadde.
For Younkers, Palinode, such follies fitte.
To fetchen home May with her musicall.
Ah, Piers, bene not thy teeth on edge, to thinke.
{ Passen their time, that should be sparely spent,
{ In lustihede and wanton meryment.
Well is it seene theyr sheepe bene not their owne.
They must provide for meanes of maintenaunce.

And others of the same kind. Regular couplets, besides the one above, are:

{ That not content with loyall obeisaunce,
{ Some gan to gape for greedie governaunce.

[1] Spenser uses this freedom, however, in his regular heroic verse: cf. Ruins of Rome, Bellay IV:

One foote on Thetis, th' other on the Morníng . . .

Note that *Morníng* rimes with *compassíng*.

Let none mislike of that may not be mended:
So conteck soone by concord mought be ended.
Bearing a trusse of tryfles at hys backe,
As bells, and babes, and glasses, in hys packe.

Seven lines together break into heroic verse:

There at the dore he cast me downe hys pack,
And layd him downe, and groned, 'Alack! Alack!
Ah, | deare Lord! and sweete Saint Charitee!
That some good body woulde once pitee me!'
Well | heard Kiddie al this sore constraint,
And lengd to know the cause of his complaint.
Tho, creeping close behind the Wickets clink, etc.

. . . Tho on the flore she saw the merchaundise
Of which her sonne had sette to deare a prise.

These, and other like verses, in a poem whose prevailing movement is practically that of the old A.-S. verse—surely this is not accidental. Not that heroic verse is developed directly out of the 4-stress verse such as is used by Spenser's clowns; not even that Spenser's clowns use a verse as free and irregular as A.-S. verse; but rather, I claim, that the old verse, smoothed to some extent, but still allowed to use the triple measure and marked pause, becomes the verse of Spenser's clowns; while the same old verse, rigorously treated according to the new rules for harmony and alternation of strong and weak syllables—that is, made *iambic*, becomes the verse of Chaucer's Canterbury Tales or Spenser's Faery Queene. The many heroic lines (*i. e.*, lines that must be read either as heroic, or else with *Senkungen* of three syllables) point to a common origin for both kinds of verse, and this common origin can be nothing else than the A.-S. long verse. Still another form, popular in lyric poetry, results from the retaining of four stresses and the suppressing of all triple measures, as—

Tho marking him with melting eyes.

Guest (whose theory ranged A.-S. verse and heroic verse under the same movements) thought the free, "tumbling" verse of Spenser and of Lidgate (cf. his London Lickpenny) to have been developed from carelessly handled heroic verse!

The opening stanzas of August show the same mixture of 4-stress with 5-stress, of free with regular, which we found in April. The scheme of strict heroic verse breaks into movements like—

With pyping and dauncing did passe the rest.

The last stanza for the month may be quoted as example of the general effect of such a mixture:

(4) P. O Colin, Colin! the shepheards joye,
(5) How I admire ech turning of thy verse!
(4) And Cuddie, fresh Cuddie, the liefest boye,
(5) How dolefully his doole thou didst rehearse!
(?) C. Then blowe your pypes, shepheards, til you be at home;
(4) The night nigheth fast, yts time to be gone.

The third and last eclogue in free verse is September. Here again the favorite movement is 2, 2 : 3, 2—of which I count 28 per cent.:

But tell me first of thy flocks estate.

Next comes 2, 2 : 2, 3, with 14 per cent.:

They looken bigge as Bulls that bene bate.

Of verses which may be read in strict heroic measure I find 10 per cent.; examples:

Never I wist thee in so poore a plight.
{ Where is the fayre flocke thou wast wont to leade?
{ Or bene they chaffred, or at mischiefe dead?
Hobbinoll, I pray thee, gall not my old griefe.
Eche thing imparted is more eath to beare.
My sheepe bene wasted; (wae is me therefore!).
And so there is, but all of miserye.
{ I wote ne, Hobbin, how I was bewitcht
{ With vayne desire and hope to be enricht.
{ Or they bene false and full of covetise,
{ And casten [1] to compasse many wrong emprise.
They boast they have the devill at commaund.
For they will listen to the shepheards voyce.
But heedy shepheards to discerne their face.
{ For all their craft is in their countenaunce,
{ They bene so grave and full of mayntenaunce.
Too good for him had bene a great deal worse.
Diggon on fewe such freends did ever lite.

The couplet 174–5 makes us think of Chaucer:

{ He is so meekë, wise and merciable,
{ And with his word his worke is convenable.

Yet we cannot be sure of a movement; thus, we begin the couplet—

[1] Slur for heroic verse; otherwise the movement is 2, 3 : 4, 2, with feminine cæsura.

For had his wesand bene a little widder,
He would have devoured both hidder and shidder,

as heroic verse, but the second line throws us perforce into the free 4-str. movement. Surely all this points to a common origin. Then there are verses which become heroic by use of "wrenched" accent:

{ Sike question ripeth up cause of newe woe,
{ For one, opened, mote unfolde many moe.

But in November, professedly in heroic verse throughout, we have verses like (p. 481, col. 2):

For she deemed nothing too deere for thee.
Thereof nought remaynes but the memoree.

Here we have to wrench the accent sadly in order to bring out heroic rhythm. There are other like irregularities in the eclogue. Finally, in December (heroic verse in stanzas *a*, *b*, *a*, *b*, *c*, *c*) we have a couplet:

Soone as the chaffe should in the fan be fynd,
All was blowne away of the wavering wynd.[1]

That is 2, 2 : 2, 2, 2 (heroic) and 3, 2 : 3, 3. One bit of verse remains, the epilogue, in which the poet sends out his book: "Goe, lyttle Calender," etc. The metre (Alexandrine) does not interest us; the words do:

[1] Sir Thomas Wyatt shows this same tendency to confuse 4-stress with heroic verse. In the opening number of the *Wiener Beiträge* (1886) R. Alscher discusses Wyatt's free 4-stress verse (pp. 72-75). He quotes as examples:

I abíde, and abíde; and bétter abíde.
And séek to convéy it sécretlý.

Turning to the poem from which the second verse is taken, we find that 3 verses of the 13 can be read as heroic,—*e. g.*,

Handle it soft and treat it tenderly.

On the other hand, Alscher quotes as heroic verse with the license of two light syllables to a measure:

With Venus and Bacchus all their life long.
With innocent blood to feed myself fat.

These occur in undoubted heroic verse, but I am inclined to regard them as sporadic 4-stress lines, such as we found in Spenser's April or August. They have the same movement as—

I abide, and abide; and better abide.

The two forms meet in the couplet (Aldine Ed. p. 115):

(4-str.) Such grace or fortune I would I had
(Heroic) You for to please howe'er I were bestad.

Goe but a lowly gate amongst the meaner sorte:
Dare not to match thy pype with Tityrus[1] *his style,*
Nor with the Pilgrim that the Ploughman playde awhyle;
But followe them farre off, and their high steppes adore.

It is needless to comment on this confessed imitation of Chaucer and Langley, the chief representatives of the heroic and the old long verse. It seems to me that we must regard Chaucer's great creation, heroic verse, as really founded on the national verse, not an importation. How national Chaucer's poetry really was, we all know; cf. Lindner, Allit. in Cant. Tales, Chauc. Soc. 1876, p. 201 ff. He used the alliterative forms, the homely expressions, of the popular traditional songs. He sang to the people, and in their own fashion. Who can read the verse (Knight's Tale, 1747; C. T. 2605):

Ther schyveren schaftes upon scheeldes thykke,

and doubt that Chaucer wrote it in stress, in rhythm, as well as in alliteration, upon the model of that verse whose best notes we hear in Beowulf? Ten Brink says of this poet's beginning-rime (C. S. V. §338): "Am schönsten ist die Wirkung der Alliteration dann wenn der Stab auf die erste, zweite und vierte Hebung fällt, während die Cäsur nach der auf die zweite Hebung folgende Senkung eintritt,"—as in the above verse. But this is the A.-S. rule; this is the "balance" so common throughout English heroic verse—whether carrying with it remnants of alliteration or not.[2]

[1] Chaucer.

[2] What was said above in regard to the persistence of the A.-S. movement may, perhaps, find support from a study of early dramatic poetry. Schipper speaks of the late form of A.-S. verse (stripped of regular alliteration) as verse "der uns in den altenglischen Moral Plays und Interludes namentlich häufig entgegentritt sowie auch noch in den ersten Repräsentanten des regelmässigen Dramas" (p. 231); yet (p. 227) he says he will not treat this verse at length, because "jene altnationalen Rhythmen zu dem jambischen Versbau des Elisabeth'schen und späteren englischen Dramas in keinerlei directer Beziehung stehen." That the popular drama of later time (*e. g.*, the plays considered by Schröer as the earliest in blank verse) has practically no connection metrically with older Moral Plays, Interludes, or such recent work as Roister Doister, seems unlikely. In the Prol. to R. R. we stumble at once on a good heroic verse:

For Myrth prolongeth lyfe and causeth health.

From this, it is true, nothing can be argued; but a thorough study of all the material might well strengthen my position. Schipper notes (p. 217) that the dying A.-S. verse swayed now toward the *viertaktig* verse, now toward the Alexandrine. Many verses in Roister Doister can be read not simply as—

Let us gather up the threads of argument. What has the genesis of heroic verse to do with the translation of Beowulf? This: it shows why blank verse seems *a priori* a fitting medium for translation; but also why, on reflection, blank verse seems to be just the metre we should shun. In the great course of English verse we have found unity, it is true, but we have found that blank verse—even the wider term, heroic verse—is essentially modern. It is the adaptation of the old verse to the new life of English poetry, begun with Chaucer, and perfected by the Elizabethans. But our investigation also proves that *practically all the elements of Anglo-Saxon verse are preserved in our modern poetry, though in different combinations, with changed proportional importance, and subjected to demands unknown to the old verse.* Hence, I conclude: the translator of Beowulf must avoid blank verse; he can, and therefore he must, revive the original verse itself.

Now for the last stage of our inquiry. Practically, *how* are we to revive the original metre? Absolute fidelity is impossible. There are certain elements of A.-S. verse which are clearly at variance with the law of modern rhythm. But these are not the essential elements. As such, I reckon (1) the general movement of the verse; (2) the strict beginning-rime, or alliteration; (3) the metrical peculiarities which are necessary to the chief features of A.-S. poetic style—as *parallelism, variation,* etc. Translations which in some way follow the original, but not in these essentials, and not consistently, will not do. We do not want, for example, the metre of Mr. William Morris's Love is Enough for our translation of Beowulf.

On the threshold, however, of our final inquiry, some one may raise the objection that A.-S. metre has itself inherent defects, is not a desirable metre to revive, even if we can revive it. To this a sufficient answer is the mere fact that it is the metre of our original

Full gréat I do abhór this your wícked sayíng (Sch. p. 234),

but as Alexandrine:

Full gréat I dó abhór this yóur wickéd sayíng,

where *wickéd* can be matched by many cases of wrenched accent in Surrey and others. Now, that this swaying between 4-stress and 6-stress should, under pressure of iambic movement, compromise with 5-stress, is not unreasonable. And this agrees with my position: that our heroic verse was originally a late form of A.-S. long verse, with a prevailing surplus of light syllables at the pause; to this were applied the iambic movement, the light and shifting pause, and the Romance tendency to count syllables.

and gives the original its most pronounced characteristics; that it is the metre of all our national verse during some five or six centuries. But we may defend the metre for itself. True, it is inferior to its subject; it never worked itself into clear relations with the epic material (cf. the early pages of Ten Brink's Lit. Gesch.). Christianity, sweeping over the Germanic epos, disturbed and broke the process of development. The frank, outward sensations of heathendom were troubled and shaken by a religion based on personal suffering. The form of A.-S. poetry, compared with the form of the Homeric poems, had something of Mignon's fate: *Vor Kummer alterl' ich zu frühe.* But, all this concession made, the metre remains not only the one fit expression of our early national spirit, the one metre which adapts itself to the national diction: it has a strength and nobility of its own; at its best it strides along like a warrior in mail, and in its sane vigor can delight even the dull ear of this late time. But *can* we revive it?

It is the "alliteration" which most scholars think fatal to the revival of our old metre. Alliterative poetry, they say, is a thing of the past, foreign to our ears. "Mr. Ettmüller's fancy," said Thorpe, "of adopting the alliteration of the original, I consider far from happy." Another scholar of the past, the German Vilmar, says (Gesch. d. deutsch. Nat.-Lit. p. 21 f.) that alliterative forms remain in German speech "wenn gleich der Gebrauch der Alliteration in der Poesie . . . bei dem Zustande unserer Sprache . . . niemals wieder zu erwecken ist." To come to modern times, Heyne rejected the old metre for his Beowulf translation, and chose blank verse—a choice which, as we saw, Wülker called "einen entschiedenen Fortschritt"; and he added: "Ein vergleich dieser übersetzung mit Grein's und Simrock's arbeit scheint mir genügend zu beweisen, dass wir für unsre zeit den stabreim, für den man jetzt doch kein ohr mehr hat, aufgeben müssen" (cf. Ang. IV, Anz. 72.)

Against this view much can be urged. There is a fallacy in the use of the term "*alliteration*"—we make it something opposed to *rime*. But alliteration *is* rime. Beginning-rime, end-rime, assonance, perfect rime, are all varieties of the general notion, rime. Alliteration, therefore, is in no way opposed to the genius of our poetry. All poets use it in some degree; many use it frequently; some use it systematically. With Swinburne it is a factor of verse; with all poets it is an occasional ornament. To use it in a consistent way, as in A.-S., is to introduce no new principle, only a

new formula, into our modern verse. If we admire one verse, or two verses, like—

The pulse of war and passion of wonder,

or—

Maiden and mistress of the months and stars,

why not a dozen such, or a hundred, or a thousand? In the 392 verses of Swinburne's Triumph of Time there are 63 per cent. (249 verses) which have alliteration of accented syllables. The prejudice against making one's verses "run on the letter" dates from Elizabethan times (Chaucer's *rom, ram, ruf* is no argument; see his next line) when, as we saw, both alliteration *and also triple measures* were looked on as vulgar and fit only for street-songs. Who now objects to triple measures? Nay, further, do we not find pleasure in reading the half-modern Piers the Plowman, with its practically correct A.-S. metre? And did not Spenser couple Langley and Chaucer as his models for the Sheph. Cal.? If it seems, from all this, not impossible for a skilful poet to revive the old verse for original work, *a fortiori* how reasonable to use it simply in the translation of a poem where so much depends on the metre! The objection, once made to me by a well-known German professor, that there are not enough original root-words left in modern English to reproduce the alliterating words, need not frighten us. As Mr. Arnold says, *Solvitur ambulando;* besides, one is not obliged to confine himself to A.-S. derivatives.

Granted the alliteration, the *movement* must be as faithful to the original as our modern demands for regular distribution of light syllables will allow. There must be in this respect a nicer sense of proportion than is shown by the original. We cannot have verses like B. 1461:

Manna ænȝum, þara þe hit mid mundum bewand.

It will not do, however, simply to give the movement of balanced heroic verse. There must be frequent (*but not constant*) triple measures, and a more marked pause. As an approximate example of the movement which the translator may often use, I would instance those charming rimeless lyrics of Goethe, Das Göttliche and Grenzen der Menschheit. The end of the odd lines will answer to the A.-S. cæsura.

Nur allein der Mensch
Vermag das Unmögliche

has almost the rime, as well as the movement, of A.-S. verse. Who does not find exquisite melody in those opening lines of the Grenz. d. Mensch.:

Wenn der uralte,
Heilige Vater
Mit gelassener Hand
Aus rollenden Wolken
Segnende Blitze
Ueber die Erde sä't,
Küss' ich den letzten
Saum seines Kleides,
Kindliche Schauer
Treu in der Brust?

I do not say that all the translator's verses must be after this model. It is too uniform for the A.-S. But it gives him a hint. Verses little different in movement from these of Goethe will very fairly hit the usual movement of A.-S. verse; sometimes they hit it exactly: cf.—

Wenn der uralte, heilige Vater;
Oft him anhaȝa are gebideþ.

Having, I hope, established the necessity of translating Beowulf in the original metre, one question remains to be answered: Has that metre been fairly tried in English? Lanier and others cite William Morris's poem, Love is Enough, as if it were practically the same metre as the A.-S. Secondly, Prof. Garnett's translation claims to follow the original.[1]

Morris's poem dispenses with end-rime, and, with a verse of four stresses, has more or less beginning-rime. But two faults (from the A.-S. point of view) condemn the metre. The rimes are of uncertain number and position; the movement is uniformly "anapestic"—*i. e.*, modern, light, rapid. Will it be said that the position of rimes was not so important in A.-S. verse as to warrant our objection? So sensitive were the best poets, that in the second half-verse they anxiously avoided the many alliterating forms, and the so-called "grammatical" rime: cf. Kluge, Zur Geschichte des Reimes, Paul-Braune, Beit. IX, esp. 427 ff. Kluge shows a steady advance toward end-rime in the series Beowulf—Andreas—Judith —Layamon. With the latter there breaks in irregularity in position of beginning-rime. So that the translator of B. must exclude end-rime (within the verse as well as for couplets, etc.), and as

[1] I have not seen Stevens's Phœnix, said (Ang. V, Anz. 92) to be in the original metre.

rigorously bar out beginning-rime from the last verse-accent, except in the forms *a, b, a, b,* or *a, b, b, a;* both of these, by the way, Horn—unsuccessfully, it seems to me—tries to reject, as well for A.-S. as for Old Saxon (P.-B., Beit. V 165 f.) But the rimes in Love is Enough (see extract below) are quite arbitrary as to number, position, and even occurrence. Then the movement is not that of A.-S. Schipper is not quite accurate when (Eng. Stud. V 490) he maintains against Wissmann that A.-S. verse is anapestic. It is not anapestic in the modern sense. The measures in A.-S.—if we allow the expression—often exceed two syllables; but they often consist of but one. This well-known property of the verse deprives it of the modern anapestic character: the dash of the gallop is constantly broken by something to be leaped over; it is not light running, as in the anapestic, but run and leap, strain, stress, immense action, which, however, does not cover ground very fast. Rarely, onomatopœia gives us a rapid verse, as of the boat just launched and catching the wind (B. 217):

ȝewat þa ofer wæȝholm winde ȝefysed,

but it is exceptional. With a movement like (10 f.):

ofer hronrade hyran scolde,
ȝomban ȝyldan: þæt wæs ȝod cyniȝ,

cf. the following movement from Love is Enough (p. 41 Eng. ed.):

Then the world drew me back from my love, and departing
I saw her sweet, serious look pass into terror
And her arms cast abroad; and lo! clashing of armor,
And a sword in my hand, and my mouth crying loud,
And the moon and cold steel in the doorway burst open,
And thy doughty spear thrust through the throat of the foeman
My dazed eyes scarce saw; thou rememberest, my fosterer?

This is vivid poetry, but it is not A.-S. metre. It is far too vivid and rapid; the A.-S. poet would never have separated the two elements—departing maiden and on-rushing battle: they would have alternated throughout the description in a restless back-and-forth which could find its expression only in the peculiar metre of which Morris gives us scarcely a hint.

Prof. Garnett's translation of Beowulf, now in its second edition, is certainly the best existing translation for any one who wishes to know the general style and the literal meaning of the original. It is a conscientious and praiseworthy piece of work. But it is not

consistently done. Prof. Garnett "does not compete with the poets"; yet his translation is intended "to reproduce the rhythm of the original." "I have endeavored to preserve two accents to each half-line, with cæsura, and *while not seeking alliteration, have employed it purposely wherever it readily presented itself*" (1st ed. p. xii). Had the author systematically translated as he does in scattered lines, he would have made the "ideal" translation:

> Ne'er heard I of keel more comelily filled
> With warlike weapons and weeds of battle,
> With bills and burnies! On his bosom lay
> A heap of jewels which with him should
> Into the flood's keeping afar depart.

The movement of the first three lines is admirable; the fourth and fifth have no rhythmical movement whatever. They do not "go." As regards diction, Prof. Garnett has allowed the parallelisms, etc., to become matters of syntax as well as of general style, thus increasing on the reader's part that effort of mind which, according to Herbert Spencer, he ought to reserve for appreciation of the diction and metre, and not waste on study of the meaning. But this regards the translation as a poem: as a literal translation, which is what Garnett says he really sought to make, the book merits all praise.

One word more. I shall probably be told that, in trying to prove the claims of A.-S. verse for a share in the origin of our heroic measure, I ought to have instituted elaborate comparisons between the Romance models and the alleged A.-S. foundation, and so have decided what our favorite metre owes to each. It is precisely this method which one must reject. The only way likely to do justice to the "Saxon" element in our verse is to listen with one's undiverted attention to the rhythm of the old and the rhythm of the new, and so find the common elements. It is for the invading constituents of modern rhythm to prove their right and trace their claim.

I add an attempt to translate the opening lines of Beowulf in accordance with the above principles. From the "perishable" verse itself I have more than that "oriental detachment" which Mr. Arnold felt toward his hexameters. But I think the movement will be found to echo in some degree the movement of the original; if not line for line, at least in the general effect. The rime follows,

though not in every particular, the rules laid down by Rieger. I do not for a moment pretend that the whole is a poetical and faithful rendering. It may illustrate, it may strengthen, my argument: possibly it will rouse some one to an adequate translation. The beginning of Beowulf is thought by some critics to be unworthy of the rest. I cannot agree with this view. The closing verses of the extract recall a saying of Saint-Beuve: "La poésie ne consiste pas à tout dire, mais à tout faire rêver."

BEOWULF, 1–53.

Lo, of Danes spear-armèd
people-kings,
how the doughty earls
Oft Scyld Scefing
from many a clan,
—aw'd was the earl—
a friendless foundling;
he wax'd under welkin
till the folk around,
across the whale-road,
gave him gifts:
To him a boy
in his halls a prince,
in grace to the folk,
that ever they lack'd
so long a while;
the wonder-wielder,
Beowulf had renown,
the son of Scyld
So becomes it a youth
with his father's friends
that to aid him agèd
come willing clansmen,
to help their prince:
shall an earl have grace
Forth at fate's hour
grim-hearted Scyld,
Then they bore him back
loyal comrades,
while spake in power
the lief land-chieftain:
In the roadstead rock'd
ready and gleaming,
there laid they down
in the boat's wide bosom
by the mast the mighty one;
in days that are sped,
the power we have heard,
wrought deeds of valor!
from scathing armies,
the mead-bench tore,
since erst he lay
he far'd the better:
in worth and name,
both far and near,
hush'd before him,
'twas a good king!
was born thereafter,
whom heaven sent
for God saw well
an earl for leader
the Lord repaid him,
with worldly glory.
broad spread his name,
in the Scedelands.
to quit him well
by fee and gift,
in after days
should war draw nigh him,
through praiseworthy deeds
in every clan.
far'd the Scefing,
into God's protection.
to the beach of ocean,
as late he bade,
the Scyldings' friend,
long he ruled.
the ring-prow'd vessel,
a royal ship:
their dear old lord,
the breaker of rings,
many a treasure

fetch'd from far
Ne'er have I known a ship
with weapons of war
with blade and breastplate.
the heap'd-up hoard
far o'er the flood with him,
No less these gave him
ample treasure,
who in former time
sole o'er the sea
Then they rais'd above him,
high o'er his head;
gave him to ocean:
mournful their mood.
to say in sooth,
warriors under heaven,—
they flung beside him.
nobler deck'd
and weeds of battle,
On his bosom lay
that hence should go
floating away.
lordly gifts,
than erst did they
forth had sent him
a suckling child.
a banner of gold,
let the heaving sea bear him,
grave was their spirit,
Men are powerless
sons of the hall,
who welcom'd that freight.

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