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# BEOWULF

## AN ANGLO-SAXON EPIC POEM

*TRANSLATED  
FROM THE HEYNE-SOCIN TEXT*

BY

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TO  
My Wife

[v]

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THE present work is a modest effort to reproduce approximately, in modern measures, the venerable epic, Beowulf. *Approximately*, I repeat; for a very close reproduction of Anglo-Saxon verse would, to a large extent, be prose to a modern ear.

The Heyne-Socin text and glossary have been closely followed. Occasionally a deviation has been made, but always for what seemed good and sufficient reason. The translator does not aim to be an editor. Once in a while, however, he has added a conjecture of his own to the emendations quoted from the criticisms of other students of the poem.

This work is addressed to two classes of readers. From both of these alike the translator begs sympathy and co-operation. The Anglo-Saxon scholar he hopes to please by adhering faithfully to the original. The student of English literature he aims to interest by giving him, in modern garb, the most ancient epic of our race. This is a bold and venturesome undertaking; and yet there must be some students of the Teutonic past willing to follow even a daring guide, if they may read in modern phrases of the sorrows of Hrothgar, of the prowess of Beowulf, and of the feelings that stirred the hearts of our forefathers in their primeval homes.

In order to please the larger class of readers, a regular cadence has been used, a measure which, while retaining the essential characteristics of the original, permits the reader to see ahead of him in reading.

[viii] Perhaps every Anglo-Saxon scholar has his own theory as to how Beowulf should be translated. Some have given us prose versions of what we believe to be a great poem. Is it any reflection on our honored Kemble and Arnold to say that their translations fail to show a layman that Beowulf is justly called our first *epic*? Of those translators who have used verse, several have written from what would seem a mistaken point of view. Is it proper, for instance, that the grave and solemn speeches of Beowulf and Hrothgar be put in ballad measures, tripping lightly and airily along? Or, again, is it fitting that the rough martial music of Anglo-Saxon verse be interpreted to us in the smooth measures of modern blank verse? Do we hear what has been beautifully called “the clanging tread of a warrior in mail”?

Of all English translations of Beowulf, that of Professor Garnett alone gives any adequate idea of the chief characteristics of this great Teutonic epic.

The measure used in the present translation is believed to be as near a reproduction of the original as modern English affords. The cadences closely resemble those used by Browning in some of his most striking poems. The four stresses of the Anglo-Saxon verse are retained, and as much thesis and anacrusis is allowed as is consistent with a regular cadence. Alliteration has been used to a large extent; but it was thought that modern ears would hardly tolerate it on every line. End-rhyme has been used occasionally; internal rhyme, sporadically. Both have some warrant in Anglo-Saxon poetry. (For end-rhyme, see 1 53, 1 54; for internal rhyme, 2 21, 6 40.)

What Gummere<sup>1</sup> calls the “rime-giver” has been studiously kept; *viz.*, the first accented syllable in the second half-verse always carries the alliteration; and the last accented syllable alliterates only sporadically. Alternate alliteration is occasionally used as in the original. (See 7 61, 8 5.)

No two accented syllables have been brought together, except occasionally after a cæsural pause. (See 2 19 and 12 1.) Or, scientifically speaking, Sievers’s C type has been avoided as not consonant with the plan of

translation. Several of his types, however, constantly occur; e.g. A and a variant (/ x | / x) (/ x x | / x); B and a variant (x / | x /) (x x / | x /); a variant of D (/ x | / x x); E (/ x x | /). Anacrusis gives further variety to the types used in the translation.

The parallelisms of the original have been faithfully preserved. (E.g., 1 16 and 1 17: “Lord” and “Wielder of Glory”; 1 30, 1 31, 1 32; 2 12 and 2 13; 2 27 and 2 28; 3 5 and 3 6.) Occasionally, some loss has been sustained; but, on the other hand, a gain has here and there been made.

[ix] The effort has been made to give a decided flavor of archaism to the translation. All words not in keeping with the spirit of the poem have been avoided. Again, though many archaic words have been used, there are none, it is believed, which are not found in standard modern poetry.

With these preliminary remarks, it will not be amiss to give an outline of the story of the poem.

## **THE STORY.**

*Hrothgar, king of the Danes, or Scyldings, builds a great mead-hall, or palace, in which he hopes to feast his liegemen and to give them presents. The joy of king and retainers is, however, of short duration. Grendel, the monster, is seized with hateful jealousy. He cannot brook the sounds of joyance that reach him down in his fen-dwelling near the hall. Oft and anon he goes to the joyous building, bent on direful mischief. Thane after thane is ruthlessly carried off and devoured, while no one is found strong enough and bold enough to cope with the monster. For twelve years he persecutes Hrothgar and his vassals.*

*Over sea, a day's voyage off, Beowulf, of the Geats, nephew of Higelac, king of the Geats, hears of Grendel's doings and of Hrothgar's misery. He resolves to crush the fell monster and relieve the aged king. With fourteen chosen companions, he sets sail for Dane-land. Reaching that country, he soon persuades Hrothgar of his ability to help him. The hours that elapse before night are spent in beer-drinking and conversation. When Hrothgar's bedtime comes he leaves the hall in charge of Beowulf, telling him that never before has he given to another the absolute wardship of his palace. All retire to rest, Beowulf, as it were, sleeping upon his arms.*

*Grendel comes, the great march-stepper, bearing God's anger. He seizes and kills one of the sleeping warriors. Then he advances towards Beowulf. A fierce and desperate hand-to-hand struggle ensues. No arms are used, both combatants trusting to strength and hand-grip. Beowulf tears Grendel's shoulder from its socket, and the monster retreats to his den, howling and yelling with agony and fury. The wound is fatal.*

*The next morning, at early dawn, warriors in numbers flock to the hall Heorot, to hear the news. Joy is boundless. Glee runs high. Hrothgar and his retainers are lavish of gratitude and of gifts.*

[x] *Grendel's mother, however, comes the next night to avenge his death. She is furious and raging. While Beowulf is sleeping in a room somewhat apart from the quarters of the other warriors, she seizes one of Hrothgar's favorite counsellors, and carries him off and devours him. Beowulf is called.*

*Determined to leave Heorot entirely purified, he arms himself, and goes down to look for the female monster. After traveling through the waters many hours, he meets her near the sea-bottom. She drags him to her den. There he sees Grendel lying dead. After a desperate and almost fatal struggle with the woman, he slays her, and swims upward in triumph, taking with him Grendel's head.*

*Joy is renewed at Heorot. Congratulations crowd upon the victor. Hrothgar literally pours treasures into the lap of Beowulf; and it is agreed among the vassals of the king that Beowulf will be their next liegeland.*

*Beowulf leaves Dane-land. Hrothgar weeps and laments at his departure.*

*When the hero arrives in his own land, Higelac treats him as a distinguished guest. He is the hero of the hour.*

*Beowulf subsequently becomes king of his own people, the Geats. After he has been ruling for fifty years, his own neighborhood is wofully harried by a fire-spewing dragon. Beowulf determines to kill him. In the ensuing struggle both Beowulf and the dragon are slain. The grief of the Geats is inexpressible. They determine, however, to leave nothing undone to honor the memory of their lord. A great funeral-pyre is built, and his body is burnt. Then a memorial-barrow is made, visible from a great distance, that sailors afar may be constantly reminded of the prowess of the national hero of Geatland.*

*The poem closes with a glowing tribute to his bravery, his gentleness, his goodness of heart, and his generosity.*

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It is the devout desire of this translator to hasten the day when the story of Beowulf shall be as familiar to English-speaking peoples as that of the Iliad. Beowulf is our first great epic. It is an epitomized history of the life of the Teutonic races. It brings vividly before us our forefathers of pre-Alfredian eras, in their love of war, of sea, and of adventure.

My special thanks are due to Professors Francis A. March and James A. Harrison, for advice, sympathy, and assistance.

J.L. HALL.

[1] Handbook of Poetics, page 175, 1st edition.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE NOTES.**

B. = Bugge. C. = Cosijn. Gr. = Grein. Grdvtg. = Grundtvig. H. = Heyne. H. and S. = Harrison and Sharp. H.-So. = Heyne-Socin. K.= Kemble. Kl. = Kluge. M.= Müllenhoff. R. = Rieger. S. = Sievers. Sw. = Sweet. t.B. = ten Brink. Th. = Thorpe. W. = Wülcker.

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## GLOSSARY OF PROPER NAMES.

[The figures refer to the divisions of the poem in which the respective names occur. The large figures refer to fitts, the small, to lines in the fitts.]

**Ælfhere.**—A kinsman of Wiglaf.—36 3.

**Æschere.**—Confidential friend of King Hrothgar. Elder brother of Yrmenlaf. Killed by Grendel.—21 3; 30 89.

**Beanstan.**—Father of Breca.—9 26.

**Beowulf.**—Son of Scyld, the founder of the dynasty of Scyldings. Father of Healfdene, and grandfather of Hrothgar.—1 18; 2 1.

**Beowulf.**—The hero of the poem. Sprung from the stock of Geats, son of Ecgtheow. Brought up by his maternal grandfather Hrethel, and figuring in manhood as a devoted liegeman of his uncle Higelac. A hero from his youth. Has the strength of thirty men. Engages in a swimming-match with Breca. Goes to the help of Hrothgar against the monster Grendel. Vanquishes Grendel and his mother. Afterwards becomes king of the Geats. Late in life attempts to kill a fire-spewing dragon, and is slain. Is buried with great honors. His memorial mound.—6 26; 7 2; 7 9; 9 3; 9 8; 12 28; 12 43; 23 1, etc.

**Breca.**—Beowulf's opponent in the famous swimming-match.—9 8; 9 19; 9 21; 9 22.

**Brondings.**—A people ruled by Breca.—9 23.

**Brosinga mene.**—A famous collar once owned by the Brosings.—19 7.

**Cain.**—Progenitor of Grendel and other monsters.—2 56; 20 11.

**Dæghrefn.**—A warrior of the Hugs, killed by Beowulf.—35 40.

**Danes.**—Subjects of Scyld and his descendants, and hence often called Scyldings. Other names for them are Victory-Scyldings, Honor-Scyldings, Armor-Danes, Bright-Danes, East-Danes, West-Danes, North-Danes, South-Danes, Ingwins, Hrethmen.—1 1; 2 1; 3 2; 5 14; 7 1, etc.

**Ecglaf.**—Father of Unferth, who taunts Beowulf.—9 1.

**Ecgtheow.**—Father of Beowulf, the hero of the poem. A widelyknown Wægmunding warrior. Marries Hrethel's daughter. After slaying Heatholaf, a Wylfing, he flees his country.—7 3; 5 6; 8 4.

**Ecgwela.**—A king of the Danes before Scyld.—25 60.

[xiv] **Elan.**—Sister of Hrothgar, and probably wife of Ongentheow, king of the Swedes.—2 10.

**Eagle Cape.**—A promontory in Geat-land, under which took place Beowulf's last encounter.—41 87.

**Eadgils.**—Son of Ohthere and brother of Eanmund.—34 2.

**Eanmund.**—Son of Ohthere and brother of Eadgils. The reference to these

brothers is vague, and variously understood. Heyne supposes as follows: Raising a revolt against their father, they are obliged to leave Sweden. They go to the land of the Geats; with what intention, is not known, but probably to conquer and plunder. The Geatish king, Heardred, is slain by one of the brothers, probably Eanmund.—36 10; 31 54 to 31 60; 33 66 to 34 6.

**Eofor.**—A Geatish hero who slays Ongentheow in war, and is rewarded by Hygelac with the hand of his only daughter.—41 18; 41 48.

**Eormenric.**—A Gothic king, from whom Hama took away the famous Brosinga mene.—19 9.

**Eomær.**—Son of Offa and Thrytho, king and queen of the Angles.—28 69.

**Finn.**—King of the North-Frisians and the Jutes. Marries Hildeburg. At his court takes place the horrible slaughter in which the Danish general, Hnæf, fell. Later on, Finn himself is slain by Danish warriors.—17 18; 17 30; 17 44; 18 4; 18 23.

**Fin-land.**—The country to which Beowulf was driven by the currents in his swimming-match.—10 22.

**Fitela.**—Son and nephew of King Sigemund, whose praises are sung in XIV.—14 42; 14 53.

**Folcwalda.**—Father of Finn.—17 38.

**Franks.**—Introduced occasionally in referring to the death of Higelac.—19 19; 40 21; 40 24.

**Frisians.**—A part of them are ruled by Finn. Some of them were engaged in the struggle in which Higelac was slain.—17 20; 17 42; 17 52; 40 21.

**Freaware.**—Daughter of King Hrothgar. Married to Ingeld, a Heathobard prince.—29 60; 30 32.

**Froda.**—King of the Heathobards, and father of Ingeld.—29 62.

**Garmund.**—Father of Offa.—28 71.

**Geats, Geatmen.**—The race to which the hero of the poem belongs. Also called Weder-Geats, or Weders, War-Geats, Sea-Geats. They are ruled by Hrethel, Hæthcyn, Higelac, and Beowulf.—4 7; 7 4; 10 45; 11 8; 27 14; 28 8.

**Gepids.**—Named in connection with the Danes and Swedes.—35 34.

**Grendel.**—A monster of the race of Cain. Dwells in the fens and moors. Is furiously envious when he hears sounds of joy in Hrothgar's palace. Causes the king untold agony for years. Is finally conquered by Beowulf, and dies of his wound. His hand and arm are hung up in Hrothgar's hall Heorot. His head is cut off by Beowulf when he goes down to fight with Grendel's mother.—2 50; 3 1; 3 13; 8 19; 11 17; 12 2; 13 27; 15 3.

**Guthlaf.**—A Dane of Hnæf's party.—18 24.

**Half-Danes.**—Branch of the Danes to which Hnæf belonged.—17 19.

[xv] **Halga.**—Surnamed the Good. Younger brother of Hrothgar.—2 9.

**Hama.**—Takes the Brosinga mene from Eormenric.—19 7.

**Hæreth.**—Father of Higelac's queen, Hygd.—28 39; 29 18.

- Hæthcyn.**—Son of Hrethel and brother of Higelac. Kills his brother Herebeald accidentally. Is slain at Ravenswood, fighting against Ongentheow.—34 43; 35 23; 40 32.
- Helmings.**—The race to which Queen Wealhtheow belonged.—10 63.
- Heming.**—A kinsman of Garmund, perhaps nephew.—28 54; 28 70.
- Hengest.**—A Danish leader. Takes command on the fall of Hnæf.—17 33; 17 41.
- Herebeald.**—Eldest son of Hrethel, the Geatish king, and brother of Higelac. Killed by his younger brother Hæthcyn.—34 43; 34 47.
- Heremod.**—A Danish king of a dynasty before the Scylding line. Was a source of great sorrow to his people.—14 64; 25 59.
- Hereric.**—Referred to as uncle of Heardred, but otherwise unknown.—31 60.
- Hetwars.**—Another name for the Franks.—33 51.
- Healfdene.**—Grandson of Scyld and father of Hrothgar. Ruled the Danes long and well.—2 5; 4 1; 8 14.
- Heardred.**—Son of Higelac and Hygd, king and queen of the Geats. Succeeds his father, with Beowulf as regent. Is slain by the sons of Ohthere.—31 56; 33 63; 33 75.
- Heathobards.**—Race of Lombards, of which Froda is king. After Froda falls in battle with the Danes, Ingeld, his son, marries Hrothgar's daughter, Freaware, in order to heal the feud.—30 1; 30 6.
- Heatholaf.**—A Wylfing warrior slain by Beowulf's father.—8 5.
- Heathoremes.**—The people on whose shores Breca is cast by the waves during his contest with Beowulf.—9 21.
- Heorogar.**—Elder brother of Hrothgar, and surnamed 'Weoroda Ræswa,' Prince of the Troopers.—2 9; 8 12.
- Hereward.**—Son of the above.—31 17.
- Heort, Heorot.**—The great mead-hall which King Hrothgar builds. It is invaded by Grendel for twelve years. Finally cleansed by Beowulf, the Geat. It is called Heort on account of the hart-antlers which decorate it.—2 25; 3 32; 3 52.
- Hildeburg.**—Wife of Finn, daughter of Hoco, and related to Hnæf,—probably his sister.—17 21; 18 34.
- Hnæf.**—Leader of a branch of the Danes called Half-Danes. Killed in the struggle at Finn's castle.—17 19; 17 61.
- Hondscio.**—One of Beowulf's companions. Killed by Grendel just before Beowulf grappled with that monster.—30 43.
- Hoco.**—Father of Hildeburg and probably of Hnæf.—17 26.
- Hrethel.**—King of the Geats, father of Higelac, and grandfather of Beowulf.—7 4; 34 39.
- Hrethla.**—Once used for Hrethel.—7 82.
- Hrethmen.**—Another name for the Danes.—7 73.
- Hrethric.**—Son of Hrothgar.—18 65; 27 19.

[xvi] **Hreosna-beorh.**—A promontory in Geat-land, near which Ohthere's sons

made plundering raids.—35 18.

**Hrothgar.**—The Danish king who built the hall Heort, but was long unable to enjoy it on account of Grendel's persecutions. Marries Wealhtheow, a Helming lady. Has two sons and a daughter. Is a typical Teutonic king, lavish of gifts. A devoted liegeland, as his lamentations over slain liegemen prove. Also very appreciative of kindness, as is shown by his loving gratitude to Beowulf.—2 9; 2 12; 4 1; 8 10; 15 1; etc., etc.

**Hrothmund.**—Son of Hrothgar.—18 65.

**Hrothulf.**—Probably a son of Halga, younger brother of Hrothgar. Certainly on terms of close intimacy in Hrothgar's palace.—16 26; 18 57.

**Hrunting.**—Unferth's sword, lent to Beowulf.—22 71; 25 9.

**Hugs.**—A race in alliance with the Franks and Frisians at the time of Higelac's fall.—35 41.

**Hun.**—A Frisian warrior, probably general of the Hetwars. Gives Hengest a beautiful sword.—18 19.

**Hunferth.**—Sometimes used for Unferth.

**Hygelac, Higelac.**—King of the Geats, uncle and liegeland of Beowulf, the hero of the poem.—His second wife is the lovely Hygd, daughter of Hæreth. The son of their union is Heardred. Is slain in a war with the Hugs, Franks, and Frisians combined. Beowulf is regent, and afterwards king of the Geats.—4 6; 5 4; 28 34; 29 9; 29 21; 31 56.

**Hygd.**—Wife of Higelac, and daughter of Hæreth. There are some indications that she married Beowulf after she became a widow.—28 37.

**Ingeld.**—Son of the Heathobard king, Froda. Marries Hrothgar's daughter, Freaware, in order to reconcile the two peoples.—29 62; 30 32.

**Ingwins.**—Another name for the Danes.—16 52; 20 69.

**Jutes.**—Name sometimes applied to Finn's people.—17 22; 17 38; 18 17.

**Lafing.**—Name of a famous sword presented to Hengest by Hun.—18 19.

**Merewing.**—A Frankish king, probably engaged in the war in which Higelac was slain.—40 29.

**Nægling.**—Beowulf's sword.—36 76.

**Offa.**—King of the Angles, and son of Garmund. Marries the terrible Thrytho who is so strongly contrasted with Hygd.—28 59; 28 66.

**Ohthere.**—Son of Ongentheow, king of the Swedes. He is father of Eanmund and Eadgils.—40 35; 40 39.

**Onela.**—Brother of Ohthere.—36 15; 40 39.

**Ongentheow.**—King of Sweden, of the Scylfing dynasty. Married, perhaps, Elan, daughter of Healfdene.—35 26; 41 16.

**Oslaf.**—A Dane of Hnæf's party.—18 24.

**Ravenswood.**—The forest near which Hæthcyn was slain.—40 31; 40 41.

**Scefing.**—Applied (1 4) to Scyld, and meaning 'son of Scef.'

[xvii] **Scyld.**—Founder of the dynasty to which Hrothgar, his father, and grandfather belonged. He dies, and his body is put on a vessel, and set adrift. He goes from Daneland just as he had come to it—in a bark.—1 4; 1 19; 1 27.

- Scyldings.**—The descendants of Scyld. They are also called Honor-Scyldings, Victory-Scyldings, War-Scyldings, etc. (See ‘Danes,’ above.)—2 1; 7 1; 8 1.
- Scylfings.**—A Swedish royal line to which Wiglaf belonged.—36 2.
- Sigemund.**—Son of Wæls, and uncle and father of Fitela. His struggle with a dragon is related in connection with Beowulf’s deeds of prowess.—14 38; 14 47.
- Swerting.**—Grandfather of Higelac, and father of Hrethel.—19 11.
- Swedes.**—People of Sweden, ruled by the Scylfings.—35 13.
- Thrytho.**—Wife of Offa, king of the Angles. Known for her fierce and unwomanly disposition. She is introduced as a contrast to the gentle Hygd, queen of Higelac.—28 42; 28 56.
- Unferth.**—Son of Ecglaf, and seemingly a confidential courtier of Hrothgar. Taunts Beowulf for having taken part in the swimming-match. Lends Beowulf his sword when he goes to look for Grendel’s mother. In the MS. sometimes written *Hunferth*. 9 1; 18 41.
- Wæls.**—Father of Sigemund.—14 60.
- Wægmunding.**—A name occasionally applied to Wiglaf and Beowulf, and perhaps derived from a common ancestor, Wægmund.—36 6; 38 61.
- Weders.**—Another name for Geats or Wedergeats.
- Wayland.**—A fabulous smith mentioned in this poem and in other old Teutonic literature.—7 83.
- Wendels.**—The people of Wulfgar, Hrothgar’s messenger and retainer. (Perhaps = Vandals.)—6 30.
- Wealhtheow.**—Wife of Hrothgar. Her queenly courtesy is well shown in the poem.—10 55.
- Weohstan, or Wihstan.**—A Wægmunding, and father of Wiglaf.—36 1.
- Whale’s Ness.**—A prominent promontory, on which Beowulf’s mound was built.—38 52; 42 76.
- Wiglaf.**—Son of Wihstan, and related to Beowulf. He remains faithful to Beowulf in the fatal struggle with the fire-drake. Would rather die than leave his lord in his dire emergency.—36 1; 36 3; 36 28.
- Wonred.**—Father of Wulf and Eofor.—41 20; 41 26.
- Wulf.**—Son of Wonred. Engaged in the battle between Higelac’s and Ongentheow’s forces, and had a hand-to-hand fight with Ongentheow himself. Ongentheow disables him, and is thereupon slain by Eofor.—41 19; 41 29.
- Wulfgar.**—Lord of the Wendels, and retainer of Hrothgar.—6 18; 6 30.
- Wylfings.**—A people to whom belonged Heatholaf, who was slain by Ecgtheow.—8 6; 8 16.
- Yrmenlaf.**—Younger brother of Æschere, the hero whose death grieved Hrothgar so deeply.—21 4.

## LIST OF WORDS AND PHRASES NOT IN GENERAL USE.

- ATHELING.—Prince, nobleman.  
BAIRN.—Son, child.  
BARROW.—Mound, rounded hill, funeral-mound.  
BATTLE-SARK.—Armor.  
BEAKER.—Cup, drinking-vessel.  
BEGEAR.—Prepare.  
BIGHT.—Bay, sea.  
BILL.—Sword.  
BOSS.—Ornamental projection.  
BRACTEATE.—A round ornament on a necklace.  
BRAND.—Sword.  
BURN.—Stream.  
BURNIE.—Armor.  
CARLE.—Man, hero.  
EARL.—Nobleman, any brave man.  
EKE.—Also.  
EMPRISE.—Enterprise, undertaking.  
ERST.—Formerly.  
ERST-WORTHY.—Worthy for a long time past.  
FAIN.—Glad.  
FERRY.—Bear, carry.  
FEY.—Fated, doomed.  
FLOAT.—Vessel, ship.  
FOIN.—To lunge (Shaks.).  
GLORY OF KINGS.—God.  
GREWSOME.—Cruel, fierce.  
HEFT.—Handle, hilt; used by synecdoche for ‘sword.’  
HELM.—Helmet, protector.  
HENCHMAN.—Retainer, vassal.  
HIGHT.—Am (was) named.  
HOLM.—Ocean, curved surface of the sea.  
HIMSEEMED.—(It) seemed to him.  
LIEF.—Dear, valued.  
MERE.—Sea; in compounds, ‘mere-ways,’ ‘mere-currents,’ etc.  
MICKLE.—Much.

NATHLESS.—Nevertheless.  
NAZE.—Edge (nose).  
NESS.—Edge.  
NICKER.—Sea-beast.  
QUIT, QUITE.—Requite.  
RATHE.—Quickly.  
REAVE.—Bereave, deprive.  
SAIL-ROAD.—Sea.  
SETTLE.—Seat, bench.  
SKINKER.—One who pours.  
SOOTHLY.—Truly.  
SWINGE.—Stroke, blow.  
TARGE, TARGET.—Shield.  
THROUGHLY.—Thoroughly.  
TOLD.—Counted.  
UNCANNY.—Ill-featured, grizzly.  
UNNETHE.—Difficult.  
WAR-SPEED.—Success in war.  
WEB.—Tapestry (that which is ‘woven’).  
WEDED.—Clad (cf. widow’s weeds).  
WEEN.—Suppose, imagine.  
WEIRD.—Fate, Providence.  
WHILOM.—At times, formerly, often.  
WIELDER.—Ruler. Often used of God; also in compounds, as ‘Wielder of  
Glory,’ ‘Wielder of Worship.’  
WIGHT.—Creature.  
WOLD.—Plane, extended surface.  
WOT.—Knows.  
YOUNKER.—Youth.

[1]

# BEOWULF.

## I.

### THE LIFE AND DEATH OF SCYLD.

Lo! the Spear-Danes’ glory through splendid

achievements

	The folk-kings' former fame we have heard of, How princes displayed then their prowess-in-battle. Oft Scyld the Scefing from scathers in numbers	The famous race of Spear-Danes.
5	From many a people their mead-benches tore. Since first he found him friendless and wretched, The earl had had terror: comfort he got for it, Waxed 'neath the welkin, world-honor gained, Till all his neighbors o'er sea were compelled to	Scyld, their mighty king, in honor of whom they are often called Scyldings. He is the great- grandfather of Hrothgar, so prominent in the poem.
10	Bow to his bidding and bring him their tribute: An excellent atheling! After was borne him A son and heir, young in his dwelling, Whom God-Father sent to solace the people. He had marked the misery malice had caused them,	A son is born to him, who receives the name of Beowulf —a name afterwards made so famous by the hero of the poem.
15	<sup>1</sup> That reaved of their rulers they wretched had erstwhile <sup>2</sup> Long been afflicted. The Lord, in requital, Wielder of Glory, with world-honor blessed him. Famed was Beowulf, far spread the glory Of Scyld's great son in the lands of the Danemen.	
[2] 20	So the carle that is young, by kindnesses rendered The friends of his father, with fees in abundance Must be able to earn that when age approacheth Eager companions aid him requitingly, When war assaults him serve him as liegemen:	The ideal Teutonic king lavishes gifts on his vassals.
25	By praise-worthy actions must honor be got 'Mong all of the races. At the hour that was fated Scyld then departed to the All-Father's keeping Warlike to wend him; away then they bare him To the flood of the current, his fond-loving comrades,	Scyld dies at the hour appointed by Fate.
30	As himself he had bidden, while the friend of the Scyldings Word-sway wielded, and the well-lovèd land-prince Long did rule them. <sup>3</sup> The ring-stemmèd vessel, Bark of the atheling, lay there at anchor, Icy in glimmer and eager for sailing;	
35	The belovèd leader laid they down there, Giver of rings, on the breast of the vessel, The famed by the mainmast. A many of jewels, Of fretted embossings, from far-lands brought over, Was placed near at hand then; and heard I not ever	By his own request, his body is laid on a vessel and wafted seaward.
40	That a folk ever furnished a float more superbly With weapons of warfare, weeds for the battle, Bills and burnies; on his bosom sparkled Many a jewel that with him must travel On the flush of the flood afar on the current.	
45	And favors no fewer they furnished him soothly,	



	Excellent folk-gems, than others had given him	
	Who when first he was born outward did send him	He leaves
	Lone on the main, the merest of infants:	Daneland on the
	And a gold-fashioned standard they stretched under	breast of a bark.
	heaven	
[3]	50 High o'er his head, let the holm-currents bear him,	
	Seaward consigned him: sad was their spirit,	
	Their mood very mournful. Men are not able	
	Soothly to tell us, they in halls who reside, <sup>4</sup>	No one knows
	Heroes under heaven, to what haven he hied.	whither the boat
		drifted.

[1] For the 'Pæt' of verse 15, Sievers suggests 'Pá' (= which). If this be accepted, the sentence 'He had ... afflicted' will read: *He (i.e. God) had perceived the malice-caused sorrow which they, lordless, had formerly long endured.*

[2] For 'aldor-léase' (15) Gr. suggested 'aldor-ceare': *He perceived their distress, that they formerly had suffered life-sorrow a long while.*

[3] A very difficult passage. 'Áhte' (31) has no object. H. supplies 'geweald' from the context; and our translation is based upon this assumption, though it is far from satisfactory. Kl. suggests 'lændagas' for 'lange': *And the beloved land-prince enjoyed (had) his transitory days (i.e. lived).* B. suggests a dislocation; but this is a dangerous doctrine, pushed rather far by that eminent scholar.

[4] The reading of the H.-So. text has been quite closely followed; but some eminent scholars read 'séle-rædenne' for 'sele-rædende.' If that be adopted, the passage will read: *Men cannot tell us, indeed, the order of Fate, etc.* 'Sele-rædende' has two things to support it: (1) v. 1347; (2) it affords a parallel to 'men' in v. 50.

## II.

### SCYLD'S SUCCESSORS.— HROTHGAR'S GREAT MEAD-HALL.

	In the boroughs then Beowulf, bairn of the	
	Scyldings,	Beowulf
	Belovèd land-prince, for long-lasting season	succeeds his
	Was famed mid the folk (his father departed,	father Scyld
	The prince from his dwelling), till afterward sprang	
5	Great-minded Healfdene; the Danes in his lifetime	
	He graciously governed, grim-mooded, agèd.	
	Four bairns of his body born in succession	Healfdene's
	Woke in the world, war-troopers' leader	birth.
	Heorogar, Hrothgar, and Halga the good;	
10	Heard I that Elan was Ongentheow's consort,	
	The well-beloved bedmate of the War-Scylfing	He has three

	leader.	sons—one of them, Hrothgar—and a daughter named Elan. Hrothgar becomes a mighty king.
	Then glory in battle to Hrothgar was given, Waxing of war-fame, that willingly kinsmen Obeyed his bidding, till the boys grew to manhood,	
15	A numerous band. It burned in his spirit To urge his folk to found a great building, A mead-hall grander than men of the era Ever had heard of, and in it to share With young and old all of the blessings	He is eager to build a great hall in which he may feast his retainers
20	The Lord had allowed him, save life and retainers. Then the work I find afar was assigned To many races in middle-earth's regions, To adorn the great folk-hall. In due time it happened	
[4]	Early 'mong men, that 'twas finished entirely, 25 The greatest of hall-buildings; Heorot he named it Who wide-reaching word-sway wielded 'mong earlmen. His promise he brake not, rings he lavished, Treasure at banquet. Towered the hall up High and horn-crested, huge between antlers:	The hall is completed, and is called Heort, or Heorot.
30	It battle-waves bided, the blasting fire-demon; Ere long then from hottest hatred must sword-wrath Arise for a woman's husband and father. Then the mighty war-spirit <sup>1</sup> endured for a season, Bore it bitterly, he who bided in darkness,	The Monster Grendel is madly envious of the Danemen's joy.
35	That light-hearted laughter loud in the building Greeted him daily; there was dulcet harp-music, Clear song of the singer. He said that was able To tell from of old earthmen's beginnings, That Father Almighty earth had created,	[The course of the story is interrupted by a short reference to some old account of the creation.]
40	The winsome wold that the water encircleth, Set exultingly the sun's and the moon's beams To lavish their lustre on land-folk and races, And earth He embellished in all her regions With limbs and leaves; life He bestowed too	
45	On all the kindreds that live under heaven. So blessed with abundance, brimming with joyance, The warriors abided, till a certain one gan to Dog them with deeds of direfullest malice, A foe in the hall-building: this horrible stranger <sup>2</sup>	The glee of the warriors is overcast by a horrible dread.
50	Was Grendel entitled, the march-stepper famous Who <sup>3</sup> dwelt in the moor-fens, the marsh and the fastness; The wan-mooded being abode for a season	
[5]	In the land of the giants, when the Lord and Creator Had banned him and branded. For that bitter murder,	
55	The killing of Abel, all-ruling Father The kindred of Cain crushed with His vengeance; In the feud He rejoiced not, but far away drove him	Cain is referred to as a

60	<p>From kindred and kind, that crime to atone for,          Meter of Justice. Thence ill-favored creatures,          Elves and giants, monsters of ocean,          Came into being, and the giants that longtime          Grappled with God; He gave them requital.</p>	<p>progenitor of          Grendel, and of          monsters in          general.</p>
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[1] R. and t. B. prefer 'ellor-gæst' to 'ellen-gæst' (86): *Then the stranger from afar endured, etc.*

[2] Some authorities would translate 'demon' instead of 'stranger.'

[3] Some authorities arrange differently, and render: *Who dwelt in the moor-fens, the marsh and the fastness, the land of the giant-race.*

### III.

## GRENDDEL THE MURDERER.

5	<p>When the sun was sunken, he set out to visit          The lofty hall-building, how the Ring-Danes had              used it          For beds and benches when the banquet was over.          Then he found there reposing many a noble          Asleep after supper; sorrow the heroes,<sup>1</sup>          Misery knew not. The monster of evil          Greedy and cruel tarried but little,          Fell and frantic, and forced from their slumbers          Thirty of thanemen; thence he departed          Leaping and laughing, his lair to return to,          With surfeit of slaughter sallying homeward.          In the dusk of the dawning, as the day was just breaking,          Was Grendel's prowess revealed to the warriors:          Then, his meal-taking finished, a moan was uplifted,          Morning-cry mighty. The man-ruler famous,          The long-worthy atheling, sat very woful,          Suffered great sorrow, sighed for his liegemen,          When they had seen the track of the hateful pursuer,          The spirit accursèd: too crushing that sorrow,          Too loathsome and lasting. Not longer he tarried,          But one night after continued his slaughter          Shameless and shocking, shrinking but little          From malice and murder; they mastered him fully.          He was easy to find then who elsewhere looked for          A pleasanter place of repose in the lodges,          A bed in the bowers. Then was brought to his notice          Told him truly by token apparent          The hall-thane's hatred: he held himself after</p>	<p>Grendel attacks          the sleeping          heroes</p> <p>He drags off          thirty of them,          and devours          them</p> <p>A cry of agony          goes up, when          Grendel's          horrible deed is          fully realized.</p> <p>The monster          returns the next          night.</p>
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[6]

	Further and faster who the foeman did baffle.	
30	<sup>2</sup> So ruled he and strongly strove against justice Lone against all men, till empty uptowered The choicest of houses. Long was the season: Twelve-winters' time torture suffered The friend of the Scyldings, every affliction,	King Hrothgar's agony and suspense last twelve years.
35	Endless agony; hence it after <sup>3</sup> became Certainly known to the children of men Sadly in measures, that long against Hrothgar Grendel struggled:—his grudges he cherished, Murderous malice, many a winter,	
40	Strife unremitting, and peacefully wished he <sup>4</sup> Life-woe to lift from no liegeman at all of The men of the Dane-folk, for money to settle, No counsellor needed count for a moment	
[7]	On handsome amends at the hands of the murderer;	
45	The monster of evil fiercely did harass, The ill-planning death-shade, both elder and younger, Trapping and tricking them. He trod every night then The mist-covered moor-fens; men do not know where Witches and wizards wander and ramble.	Grendel is unremitting in his persecutions.
50	So the foe of mankind many of evils Grievous injuries, often accomplished, Horrible hermit; Heort he frequented, Gem-bedecked palace, when night-shades had fallen (Since God did oppose him, not the throne could he touch, <sup>5</sup>	God is against the monster.
55	The light-flashing jewel, love of Him knew not). 'Twas a fearful affliction to the friend of the Scyldings Soul-crushing sorrow. Not seldom in private Sat the king in his council; conference held they What the braves should determine 'gainst terrors unlooked for.	The king and his council deliberate in vain.
60	At the shrines of their idols often they promised Gifts and offerings, earnestly prayed they The devil from hell would help them to lighten Their people's oppression. Such practice they used then, Hope of the heathen; hell they remembered	They invoke the aid of their gods.
65	In innermost spirit, God they knew not, Judge of their actions, All-wielding Ruler, No praise could they give the Guardian of Heaven, The Wielder of Glory. Woe will be his who Through furious hatred his spirit shall drive to	The true God they do not know.
70	The clutch of the fire, no comfort shall look for, Wax no wiser; well for the man who, Living his life-days, his Lord may face And find defence in his Father's embrace!	

- [1] The translation is based on ‘weras,’ adopted by H.-So.—K. and Th. read ‘wera’ and, arranging differently, render 119(2)-120: *They knew not sorrow, the wretchedness of man, aught of misfortune.*—For ‘unhælo’ (120) R. suggests ‘unfælo’: *The uncanny creature, greedy and cruel, etc.*
- [2] S. rearranges and translates: *So he ruled and struggled unjustly, one against all, till the noblest of buildings stood useless (it was a long while) twelve years’ time: the friend of the Scyldings suffered distress, every woe, great sorrows, etc.*
- [3] For ‘syððan,’ B. suggests ‘sárcwidum’: *Hence in mournful words it became well known, etc.* Various other words beginning with ‘s’ have been conjectured.
- [4] The H.-So. glossary is very inconsistent in referring to this passage. —‘Sibbe’ (154), which H.-So. regards as an instr., B. takes as accus., obj. of ‘wolde.’ Putting a comma after Deniga, he renders: *He did not desire peace with any of the Danes, nor did he wish to remove their life-woe, nor to settle for money.*
- [5] Of this difficult passage the following interpretations among others are given: (1) Though Grendel has frequented Heorot as a demon, he could not become ruler of the Danes, on account of his hostility to God. (2) Hrothgar was much grieved that Grendel had not appeared before his throne to receive presents. (3) He was not permitted to devastate the hall, on account of the Creator; *i.e.* God wished to make his visit fatal to him.—Ne ... wisse (169) W. renders: *Nor had he any desire to do so; ‘his’ being obj. gen. = danach.*

[8]

## IV.

### BEOWULF GOES TO HROTHGAR’S ASSISTANCE.

<p>So Healfdene’s kinsman constantly mused on          His long-lasting sorrow; the battle-thane clever          Was not anywise able evils to ’scape from:          Too crushing the sorrow that came to the people,          5 Loathsome and lasting the life-grinding torture,          Greatest of night-woes. So Higelac’s liegeman,          Good amid Geatmen, of Grendel’s achievements          Heard in his home:<sup>1</sup> of heroes then living          He was stoutest and strongest, sturdy and noble.          10 He bade them prepare him a bark that was trusty;          He said he the war-king would seek o’er the ocean,          The folk-leader noble, since he needed retainers.          For the perilous project prudent companions          Chided him little, though loving him dearly;          15 They egged the brave atheling, augured him glory.          The excellent knight from the folk of the Geatmen</p>	<p>Hrothgar sees no          way of escape          from the          persecutions of          Grendel.</p> <p>Beowulf, the          Geat, hero of the          poem, hears of          Hrothgar’s          sorrow, and          resolves to go to          his assistance.</p> <p>With fourteen</p>
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	Had liegemen selected, likest to prove them Trustworthy warriors; with fourteen companions The vessel he looked for; a liegeman then showed them,	carefully chosen companions, he sets out for Dane-land.
20	A sea-crafty man, the bounds of the country. Fast the days fled; the float was a-water, The craft by the cliff. Clomb to the prow then Well-equipped warriors: the wave-currents twisted The sea on the sand; soldiers then carried	
25	On the breast of the vessel bright-shining jewels, Handsome war-armor; heroes outshoved then, Warmen the wood-ship, on its wished-for adventure.	
[9]	The foamy-necked floater fanned by the breeze, Likest a bird, glided the waters,	The vessel sails like a bird
30	Till twenty and four hours thereafter The twist-stemmed vessel had traveled such distance That the sailing-men saw the sloping embankments, The sea cliffs gleaming, precipitous mountains, Nesses enormous; they were nearing the limits	In twenty four hours they reach the shores of Hrothgar's dominions
35	At the end of the ocean. <sup>2</sup> Up thence quickly The men of the Weders clomb to the mainland, Fastened their vessel (battle weeds rattled, War burnies clattered), the Wielder they thanked That the ways o'er the waters had waxen so gentle.	
40	Then well from the cliff edge the guard of the Scyldings Who the sea-cliffs should see to, saw o'er the gangway Brave ones bearing beauteous targets, Armor all ready, anxiously thought he, Musing and wondering what men were approaching.	They are hailed by the Danish coast guard
45	High on his horse then Hrothgar's retainer Turned him to coastward, mightily brandished His lance in his hands, questioned with boldness. "Who are ye men here, mail-covered warriors Clad in your corslets, come thus a-driving	His challenge
50	A high riding ship o'er the shoals of the waters, <sup>3</sup> And hither 'neath helmets have hied o'er the ocean?	
[10]	I have been strand-guard, standing as warden, Lest enemies ever anyway ravage Danish dominions with army of war-ships.	
55	More boldly never have warriors ventured Hither to come; of kinsmen's approval, Word-leave of warriors, I ween that ye surely Nothing have known. Never a greater one Of earls o'er the earth have I had a sight of	He is struck by Beowulf's appearance.
60	Than is one of your number, a hero in armor; No low-ranking fellow <sup>4</sup> adorned with his weapons,	

But launching them little, unless looks are deceiving,  
 And striking appearance. Ere ye pass on your journey  
 As treacherous spies to the land of the Scyldings  
 65 And farther fare, I fully must know now  
 What race ye belong to. Ye far-away dwellers,  
 Sea-faring sailors, my simple opinion  
 Hear ye and hearken: haste is most fitting  
 Plainly to tell me what place ye are come from.”

- [1] ‘From hám’ (194) is much disputed. One rendering is: *Beowulf, being away from home, heard of Hrothgar’s troubles, etc.* Another, that adopted by S. and endorsed in the H.-So. notes, is: *B. heard from his neighborhood (neighbors), i.e. in his home, etc.* A third is: *B., being at home, heard this as occurring away from home.* The H.-So. glossary and notes conflict.
- [2] ‘Eoletes’ (224) is marked with a (?) by H.-So.; our rendering simply follows his conjecture.—Other conjectures as to ‘eolet’ are: (1) *voyage*, (2) *toil, labor*, (3) *hasty journey*.
- [3] The lacuna of the MS at this point has been supplied by various conjectures. The reading adopted by H.-So. has been rendered in the above translation. W., like H.-So., makes ‘ic’ the beginning of a new sentence, but, for ‘helmas bæron,’ he reads ‘hringed stefnan.’ This has the advantage of giving a parallel to ‘brontne ceol’ instead of a kenning for ‘go.’—B puts the (?) after ‘holmas’, and begins a new sentence at the middle of the line. Translate: *What warriors are ye, clad in armor, who have thus come bringing the foaming vessel over the water way, hither over the seas? For some time on the wall I have been coast guard, etc.* S. endorses most of what B. says, but leaves out ‘on the wall’ in the last sentence. If W.’s ‘hringed stefnan’ be accepted, change [line 51](#) above to, *A ring-stemmed vessel hither o’ersea.*
- [4] ‘Seld-guma’ (249) is variously rendered: (1) *housecarle*; (2) *home-stayer*; (3) *common man*. Dr. H. Wood suggests *a man-at-arms in another’s house*.

## V.

### THE GEATS REACH HEOROT.

<p>The chief of the strangers rendered him answer,          War-troopers’ leader, and word-treasure opened:          “We are sprung from the lineage of the people of              Geatland,          And Higelac’s hearth-friends. To heroes unnumbered          5 My father was known, a noble head-warrior          Ecgtheow titled; many a winter          He lived with the people, ere he passed on his              journey,          Old from his dwelling; each of the counsellors          Widely mid world-folk well remembers him.</p>	<p>Beowulf          courteously          replies.          We are Geats.            My father          Ecgtheow was          well-known in          his day.</p>
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[11]	<p>10 We, kindly of spirit, the lord of thy people, The son of King Healfdene, have come here to visit, Folk-troop's defender: be free in thy counsels! To the noble one bear we a weighty commission, The helm of the Danemen; we shall hide, I ween,</p> <p>15 Naught of our message. Thou know'st if it happen, As we soothly heard say, that some savage despoiler, Some hidden pursuer, on nights that are murky By deeds very direful 'mid the Danemen exhibits Hatred unheard of, horrid destruction</p> <p>20 And the falling of dead. From feelings least selfish I am able to render counsel to Hrothgar, How he, wise and worthy, may worst the destroyer, If the anguish of sorrow should ever be lessened,<sup>1</sup> Comfort come to him, and care-waves grow cooler,</p> <p>25 Or ever hereafter he agony suffer And troublous distress, while towereth upward The handsomest of houses high on the summit." Bestriding his stallion, the strand-watchman answered,</p> <p>The doughty retainer: "The difference surely</p> <p>30 'Twi'xt words and works, the warlike shield-bearer Who judgeth wisely well shall determine. This band, I hear, beareth no malice To the prince of the Scyldings. Pass ye then onward With weapons and armor. I shall lead you in person;</p> <p>35 To my war-trusty vassals command I shall issue To keep from all injury your excellent vessel, Your fresh-tarred craft, 'gainst every opposer Close by the sea-shore, till the curved-neckèd bark shall</p> <p>Waft back again the well-beloved hero</p> <p>40 O'er the way of the water to Weder dominions. To warrior so great 'twill be granted sure In the storm of strife to stand secure." Onward they fared then (the vessel lay quiet, The broad-bosomed bark was bound by its cable,</p>	<p>Our intentions towards King Hrothgar are of the kindest.</p> <p>Is it true that a monster is slaying Danish heroes?</p> <p>I can help your king to free himself from this horrible creature.</p> <p>The coast-guard reminds Beowulf that it is easier to say than to do.</p> <p>I am satisfied of your good intentions, and shall lead you to the palace. Your boat shall be well cared for during your stay here.</p> <p>He again compliments Beowulf.</p>
[12]	<p>45 Firmly at anchor); the boar-signs glistened<sup>2</sup> Bright on the visors vivid with gilding, Blaze-hardened, brilliant; the boar acted warden. The heroes hastened, hurried the liegemen, Descended together, till they saw the great palace,</p> <p>50 The well-fashioned wassail-hall wondrous and gleaming: 'Mid world-folk and kindreds that was widest reputed Of halls under heaven which the hero abode in; Its lustre enlightened lands without number.</p>	<p>The land is perhaps rolling.</p> <p>Heorot flashes on their view.</p>



Then the battle-brave hero showed them the glittering  
 55 Court of the bold ones, that they easily thither  
 Might fare on their journey; the aforementioned warrior  
 Turning his courser, quoth as he left them:  
 "Tis time I were faring; Father Almighty  
 Grant you His grace, and give you to journey  
 60 Safe on your mission! To the sea I will get me  
 'Gainst hostile warriors as warden to stand."  
 The coast-guard,  
 having  
 discharged his  
 duty, bids them  
 God-speed.

[1] 'Edwendan' (280) B. takes to be the subs. 'edwenden' (cf. 1775); and 'bisigu' he takes as gen. sing., limiting 'edwenden': *If reparation for sorrows is ever to come*. This is supported by t.B.

[2] Combining the emendations of B. and t.B., we may read: *The boar-images glistened ... brilliant, protected the life of the war-mooded man*. They read 'ferh-wearde' (305) and 'gúðmóðgum men' (306).

## VI.

### BEOWULF INTRODUCES HIMSELF AT THE PALACE.

The highway glistened with many-hued pebble,  
 A by-path led the liegemen together.  
<sup>1</sup>Firm and hand-locked the war-burnie glistened,  
 The ring-sword radiant rang 'mid the armor  
 5 As the party was approaching the palace together  
 In warlike equipments. 'Gainst the wall of the  
 building  
 Their wide-fashioned war-shields they weary did set  
 then,  
 [13] Battle-shields sturdy; benchward they turned then;  
 Their battle-sarks rattled, the gear of the heroes;  
 10 The lances stood up then, all in a cluster,  
 The arms of the seamen, ashen-shafts mounted  
 With edges of iron: the armor-clad troopers  
 Were decked with weapons. Then a proud-mooded  
 hero  
 Asked of the champions questions of lineage:  
 15 "From what borders bear ye your battle-shields  
 plated,  
 Gilded and gleaming, your gray-colored burnies,  
 Helmets with visors and heap of war-lances?—  
 To Hrothgar the king I am servant and liegeman.  
 'Mong folk from far-lands found I have never  
 20 Men so many of mien more courageous.  
 They set their  
 arms and armor  
 against the wall.  
 A Danish hero  
 asks them  
 whence and why  
 they are come.  
 He expresses no

	I ween that from valor, nowise as outlaws, But from greatness of soul ye sought for King Hrothgar.”	little admiration for the strangers.
	Then the strength-famous earlman answer rendered, The proud-mooded Wederchief replied to his question,	Beowulf replies.
25	Hardy 'neath helmet: “Higelac’s mates are we; Beowulf hight I. To the bairn of Healfdene, The famous folk-leader, I freely will tell To thy prince my commission, if pleasantly hearing He’ll grant we may greet him so gracious to all men.”	We are Higelac’s table- companions, and bear an important commission to your prince.
30	Wulfgar replied then (he was prince of the Wendels, His boldness of spirit was known unto many, His prowess and prudence): “The prince of the Scyldings, The friend-lord of Danemen, I will ask of thy journey, The giver of rings, as thou urgest me do it,	Wulfgar, the thane, says that he will go and ask Hrothgar whether he will see the strangers.
35	The folk-chief famous, and inform thee early What answer the good one mindeth to render me.” He turned then hurriedly where Hrothgar was sitting, <sup>2</sup> Old and hoary, his earlmen attending him; The strength-famous went till he stood at the shoulder	
40	Of the lord of the Danemen, of courteous thanemen The custom he minded. Wulfgar addressed then His friendly liegelord: “Folk of the Geatmen O’er the way of the waters are wafted hither, Faring from far-lands: the foremost in rank	
[14]		He thereupon urges his liegelord to receive the visitors courteously.
45	The battle-champions Beowulf title. They make this petition: with thee, O my chieftain, To be granted a conference; O gracious King Hrothgar, Friendly answer refuse not to give them! In war-trappings weeded worthy they seem	
50	Of earls to be honored; sure the atheling is doughty Who headed the heroes hitherward coming.”	Hrothgar, too, is struck with Beowulf’s appearance.

[1] Instead of the punctuation given by H.-So, S. proposed to insert a comma after ‘scír’ (322), and to take ‘hring-íren’ as meaning ‘ring-mail’ and as parallel with ‘gúð-byrne.’ The passage would then read: *The firm and hand-locked war-burnie shone, bright ring-mail, rang ’mid the armor, etc.*

[2] Gr. and others translate ‘unhár’ by ‘bald’; *old and bald*.

## VII.

# HROTHGAR AND BEOWULF.

<p>Hrothgar answered, helm of the Scyldings:          "I remember this man as the merest of striplings.          His father long dead now was Ecgtheow titled,          Him Hrethel the Geatman granted at home his          5 One only daughter; his battle-brave son          Is come but now, sought a trustworthy friend.          Seafaring sailors asserted it then,          Who valuable gift-gems of the Geatmen<sup>1</sup> carried          As peace-offering thither, that he thirty men's              grapple          10 Has in his hand, the hero-in-battle.          The holy Creator usward sent him,          To West-Dane warriors, I ween, for to render          'Gainst Grendel's grimness gracious assistance:          I shall give to the good one gift-gems for courage.          15 Hasten to bid them hither to speed them,<sup>2</sup>          To see assembled this circle of kinsmen;          Tell them expressly they're welcome in sooth to          The men of the Danes." To the door of the building          [15] Wulfgar went then, this word-message shouted:          20 "My victorious liegeland bade me to tell you,          The East-Danes' atheling, that your origin knows he,          And o'er wave-billows wafted ye welcome are hither,          Valiant of spirit. Ye straightway may enter          Clad in corslets, cased in your helmets,          25 To see King Hrothgar. Here let your battle-boards,          Wood-spears and war-shafts, await your conferring."          The mighty one rose then, with many a liegeman,          An excellent thane-group; some there did await them,          And as bid of the brave one the battle-gear guarded.          30 Together they hied them, while the hero did guide them,          'Neath Heorot's roof; the high-minded went then          Sturdy 'neath helmet till he stood in the building.          Beowulf spake (his burnie did glisten,          His armor seamed over by the art of the craftsman):          35 "Hail thou, Hrothgar! I am Higelac's kinsman          And vassal forsooth; many a wonder          I dared as a stripling. The doings of Grendel,          In far-off fatherland I fully did know of:          Sea-farers tell us, this hall-building standeth,          40 Excellent edifice, empty and useless          To all the earlmen after evenlight's glimmer          'Neath heaven's bright hues hath hidden its glory.          This my earls then urged me, the most excellent of them,          Carles very clever, to come and assist thee,          45 Folk-leader Hrothgar; fully they knew of          The strength of my body. Themselves they beheld</p>	<p>Hrothgar remembers Beowulf as a youth, and also remembers his father.</p> <p>Beowulf is reported to have the strength of thirty men.</p> <p>God hath sent him to our rescue.</p> <p>Wulfgar invites the strangers in.</p> <p>Beowulf salutes Hrothgar, and then proceeds to boast of his youthful achievements.</p> <p>His fight with</p>
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	me	the nickers.
	When I came from the contest, when covered with gore	
	Foes I escaped from, where five <sup>3</sup> I had bound,	
[16]	The giant-race wasted, in the waters destroying	
50	The nickers by night, bore numberless sorrows,	
	The Weders avenged (woes had they suffered)	
	Enemies ravaged; alone now with Grendel	
	I shall manage the matter, with the monster of evil,	He intends to
	The giant, decide it. Thee I would therefore	fight Grendel
55	Beg of thy bounty, Bright-Danish chieftain,	unaided.
	Lord of the Scyldings, this single petition:	
	Not to refuse me, defender of warriors,	
	Friend-lord of folks, so far have I sought thee,	
	That <i>I</i> may unaided, my earlmen assisting me,	
60	This brave-mooded war-band, purify Heorot.	
	I have heard on inquiry, the horrible creature	
	From veriest rashness recks not for weapons;	Since the
	I this do scorn then, so be Higelac gracious,	monster uses no
	My liegelord belovèd, lenient of spirit,	weapons,
65	To bear a blade or a broad-fashioned target,	
	A shield to the onset; only with hand-grip	
	The foe I must grapple, fight for my life then,	I, too, shall
	Foeman with foeman; he fain must rely on	disdain to use
	The doom of the Lord whom death layeth hold of.	any.
70	I ween he will wish, if he win in the struggle,	Should he crush
	To eat in the war-hall earls of the Geat-folk,	me, he will eat
	Boldly to swallow <sup>4</sup> them, as of yore he did often	my companions
	The best of the Hrethmen! Thou needest not trouble	as he has eaten
	A head-watch to give me; <sup>5</sup> he will have me dripping	thy thanes.
[17]	75 And dreary with gore, if death overtake me, <sup>6</sup>	In case of my
	Will bear me off bleeding, biting and mouthing me,	defeat, thou wilt
	The hermit will eat me, heedless of pity,	not have the
	Marking the moor-fens; no more wilt thou need then	trouble of
	Find me my food. <sup>7</sup> If I fall in the battle,	burying me.
80	Send to Higelac the armor that serveth	Should I fall,
	To shield my bosom, the best of equipments,	send my armor
	Richest of ring-mails; 'tis the relic of Hrethla,	to my lord, King
	The work of Wayland. Goes Weird as she must go!"	Higelac.
		Weird is
		supreme

[1] Some render 'gif-sceattas' by 'tribute.'—'Géata' B. and Th. emended to 'Géatum.' If this be accepted, change 'of the Geatmen' to 'to the Geatmen.'

[2] If t.B.'s emendation of vv. 386, 387 be accepted, the two lines, 'Hasten ... kinsmen' will read: *Hasten thou, bid the throng of kinsmen go into the hall together.*

[3] For 420 (*b*) and 421 (*a*), B. suggests: *Ðær ic (on) fífelgeban ýðde eotena cyn = where I in the ocean destroyed the eoten-race.*—t.B. accepts B.'s

“brilliant” ‘fifelgeban,’ omits ‘on,’ emends ‘cyn’ to ‘hám,’ arranging: *Þær ic fifelgeban ýðde, eotena hám = where I desolated the ocean, the home of the eotens.*—This would be better but for changing ‘cyn’ to ‘hám.’—I suggest: *Þær ic fifelgeband* (cf. nhd. *Bande*) *ýðde, eotena cyn = where I conquered the monster band, the race of the eotens.* This makes no change except to read ‘*fifel*’ for ‘*fife*.’

- [4] ‘Unforhte’ (444) is much disputed.—H.-So. wavers between adj. and adv. Gr. and B. take it as an adv. modifying *etan*: *Will eat the Geats fearlessly.*—Kl. considers this reading absurd, and proposes ‘anforhte’ = timid.—Understanding ‘unforhte’ as an adj. has this advantage, viz. that it gives a parallel to ‘Geátena leóde’: but to take it as an adv. is more natural. Furthermore, to call the Geats ‘brave’ might, at this point, seem like an implied thrust at the Danes, so long helpless; while to call his own men ‘timid’ would be befouling his own nest.
- [5] For ‘head-watch,’ cf. H.-So. notes and cf. v. 2910.—Th. translates: *Thou wilt not need my head to hide* (i.e., thou wilt have no occasion to bury me, as Grendel will devour me whole).—Simrock imagines a kind of dead-watch.—Dr. H. Wood suggests: *Thou wilt not have to bury so much as my head* (for Grendel will be a thorough undertaker),—grim humor.
- [6] S. proposes a colon after ‘nimeð’ (l. 447). This would make no essential change in the translation.
- [7] Owing to the vagueness of ‘feorme’ (451), this passage is variously translated. In our translation, H.-So.’s glossary has been quite closely followed. This agrees substantially with B.’s translation (P. and B. XII. 87). R. translates: *Thou needst not take care longer as to the consumption of my dead body.* ‘Líc’ is also a crux here, as it may mean living body or dead body.

## VIII.

### HROTHGAR AND BEOWULF.

#### —Continued.

	Hrothgar discoursed, helm of the Scyldings:	Hrothgar
	“To defend our folk and to furnish assistance, <sup>1</sup>	responds.
	Thou soughtest us hither, good friend Beowulf.	
	The fiercest of feuds thy father engaged in,	Reminiscences of
5	Heatholaf killed he in hand-to-hand conflict	Beowulf’s father,
	’Mid Wilfingish warriors; then the Wederish people	Ecgtheow.
	For fear of a feud were forced to disown him.	
	Thence flying he fled to the folk of the South-Danes,	
[18]	The race of the Scyldings, o’er the roll of the waters;	
10	I had lately begun then to govern the Danemen,	
	The hoard-seat of heroes held in my youth,	
	Rich in its jewels: dead was Heregar,	
	My kinsman and elder had earth-joys forsaken,	
	Healfdene his bairn. He was better than I am!	
	That feud thereafter for a fee I compounded;	

15

O'er the weltering waters to the Wilfings I sent  
Ornaments old; oaths did he swear me.

It pains me in spirit to any to tell it,  
What grief in Heorot Grendel hath caused me,  
20 What horror unlooked-for, by hatred unceasing.  
Waned is my war-band, wasted my hall-troop;  
Weird hath offcast them to the clutches of Grendel.  
God can easily hinder the scather

Hrothgar  
recounts to  
Beowulf the  
horrors of  
Grendel's  
persecutions.

25

O'er the ale-vessel promised warriors in armor  
They would willingly wait on the wassailing-benches  
A grapple with Grendel, with grimpest of edges.  
Then this mead-hall at morning with murder was  
reeking,

My thanes have  
made many  
boasts, but have  
not executed  
them.

30

The building was bloody at breaking of daylight,  
The bench-deals all flooded, dripping and bloodied,  
The folk-hall was gory: I had fewer retainers,  
Dear-beloved warriors, whom death had laid hold of.

Sit at the feast now, thy intents unto heroes,<sup>2</sup>  
Thy victor-fame show, as thy spirit doth urge thee!"

Sit down to the  
feast, and give  
us comfort.

35

For the men of the Geats then together assembled,  
In the beer-hall blithesome a bench was made ready;  
There warlike in spirit they went to be seated,  
Proud and exultant. A liegeman did service,

A bench is made  
ready for  
Beowulf and his  
party.

[19]

40

And gleaming-drink poured. The gleeman sang  
whilom  
Hearty in Heorot; there was heroes' rejoicing,  
A numerous war-band of Weders and Danemen.

The gleeman  
sings

The heroes all  
rejoice together.

[1] B. and S. reject the reading given in H.-So., and suggested by Grtvg. B. suggests for 457-458:

wáere-ryhtum þú, wine mín Béowulf,  
and for ár-stafum úsic sóhtest.

This means: *From the obligations of clientage, my friend Beowulf, and for assistance thou hast sought us.*—This gives coherence to Hrothgar's opening remarks in VIII., and also introduces a new motive for Beowulf's coming to Hrothgar's aid.

[2] *Sit now at the feast, and disclose thy purposes to the victorious heroes, as thy spirit urges.*—Kl. reaches the above translation by erasing the comma after 'meoto' and reading 'sige-hrèðsecgum.'—There are other and bolder emendations and suggestions. Of these the boldest is to regard 'meoto' as a verb (imperative), and read 'on sæl': *Think upon gayety, etc.*—All the renderings are unsatisfactory, the one given in our translation involving a zeugma.

## IX.

## UNFERTH TAUNTS BEOWULF.

<p>Unferth spoke up, Ecglaf his son,          Who sat at the feet of the lord of the Scyldings,          Opened the jousting (the journey<sup>1</sup> of Beowulf,          Sea-farer doughty, gave sorrow to Unferth          5 And greatest chagrin, too, for granted he never          That any man else on earth should attain to,          Gain under heaven, more glory than he):          “Art thou that Beowulf with Breca did struggle,          On the wide sea-currents at swimming contended,          10 Where to humor your pride the ocean ye tried,          From vainest vaunting adventured your bodies          In care of the waters? And no one was able          Nor lief nor loth one, in the least to dissuade you          Your difficult voyage; then ye ventured a-          swimming,          15 Where your arms outstretching the streams ye did          cover,          The mere-ways measured, mixing and stirring them,          Glided the ocean; angry the waves were,          With the weltering of winter. In the water’s possession,          Ye toiled for a seven-night; he at swimming outdid thee,          20 In strength excelled thee. Then early at morning          On the Heathoremes’ shore the holm-currents tossed him,          Sought he thenceward the home of his fathers,          Beloved of his liegemen, the land of the Brondings,          The peace-castle pleasant, where a people he wielded,          [20] 25 Had borough and jewels. The pledge that he made thee          The son of Beanstan hath soothly accomplished.          Then I ween thou wilt find thee less fortunate issue,          Though ever triumphant in onset of battle,          A grim grappling, if Grendel thou darest          30 For the space of a night near-by to wait for!”          Beowulf answered, offspring of Ecgtheow:          “My good friend Unferth, sure freely and wildly,          Thou fuddled with beer of Breca hast spoken,          Hast told of his journey! A fact I allege it,          35 That greater strength in the waters I had then,          Ills in the ocean, than any man else had.          We made agreement as the merest of striplings          Promised each other (both of us then were          Younkens in years) that we yet would adventure          40 Out on the ocean; it all we accomplished.          While swimming the sea-floods, sword-blade</p>	<p>Unferth, a thane          of Hrothgar, is          jealous of          Beowulf, and          undertakes to          twit him.</p> <p>Did you take part          in a swimming-          match with          Breca?</p> <p>’Twas mere folly          that actuated you          both to risk your          lives on the          ocean.</p> <p>Breca outdid you          entirely.</p> <p>Much more will          Grendel outdo          you, if you vie          with him in          prowess.</p> <p>Beowulf          retaliates.</p> <p>O friend          Unferth, you are          fuddled with          beer, and cannot          talk coherently.</p> <p>We simply kept          an engagement          made in early</p>
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	unscabbarded	
	Boldly we brandished, our bodies expected To shield from the sharks. He sure was unable To swim on the waters further than I could,	life.
45	More swift on the waves, nor <i>would</i> I from him go. Then we two companions stayed in the ocean Five nights together, till the currents did part us, The weltering waters, weathers the bleakest, And nethermost night, and the north-wind whistled	He <i>could</i> not excel me, and I <i>would</i> not excel him. After five days the currents separated us.
50	Fierce in our faces; fell were the billows. The mere fishes' mood was mightily ruffled: And there against foemen my firm-knotted corslet, Hand-jointed, hardy, help did afford me; My battle-sark braided, brilliantly gilded,	
55	Lay on my bosom. To the bottom then dragged me, A hateful fiend-scather, seized me and held me, Grim in his grapple: 'twas granted me, nathless, To pierce the monster with the point of my weapon, My obedient blade; battle offcarried	A horrible sea- beast attacked me, but I slew him.
60	The mighty mere-creature by means of my hand-blow.	

[1] It has been plausibly suggested that 'sīð' (in 501 and in 353) means 'arrival.' If so, translate the bracket: (*the arrival of Beowulf, the brave seafarer, was a source of great chagrin to Unferth, etc.*).

[21]

## X.

### BEOWULF SILENCES UNFERTH.— GLEE IS HIGH.

	“So ill-meaning enemies often did cause me Sorrow the sorest. I served them, in quittance, With my dear-lovèd sword, as in sooth it was fitting; They missed the pleasure of feasting abundantly,	My dear sword always served me faithfully.
5	Ill-doers evil, of eating my body, Of surrounding the banquet deep in the ocean; But wounded with edges early at morning They were stretched a-high on the strand of the ocean, Put to sleep with the sword, that sea-going travelers	
10	No longer thereafter were hindered from sailing The foam-dashing currents. Came a light from the east, God's beautiful beacon; the billows subsided, That well I could see the nesses projecting, The blustering crags. Weird often saveth	I put a stop to the outrages of the sea-monsters.  Fortune helps the



15	The undoomed hero if doughty his valor!	brave earl.
	But me did it fortune <sup>1</sup> to fell with my weapon Nine of the nickers. Of night-struggle harder 'Neath dome of the heaven heard I but rarely, Nor of wight more woful in the waves of the ocean;	
20	Yet I 'scaped with my life the grip of the monsters, Weary from travel. Then the waters bare me To the land of the Finns, the flood with the current, The weltering waves. Not a word hath been told me Of deeds so daring done by thee, Unferth,	After that escape I drifted to Finland.  I have never heard of your doing any such bold deeds.
25	And of sword-terror none; never hath Breca At the play of the battle, nor either of you two, Feat so fearless performèd with weapons Glinting and gleaming . . . . .	
[22]	. . . . . I utter no boasting;	
30	Though with cold-blooded cruelty thou killedst thy brothers, Thy nearest of kin; thou needs must in hell get Direful damnation, though doughty thy wisdom. I tell thee in earnest, offspring of Ecglaf, Never had Grendel such numberless horrors,	You are a slayer of brothers, and will suffer damnation, wise as you may be.
35	The direful demon, done to thy liegelord, Harrying in Heorot, if thy heart were as sturdy, Thy mood as ferocious as thou dost describe them. He hath found out fully that the fierce-burning hatred,	Had your acts been as brave as your words, Grendel had not ravaged your land so long.
40	The edge-battle eager, of all of your kindred, Of the Victory-Scyldings, need little dismay him: Oaths he exacteth, not any he spares Of the folk of the Danemen, but fighteth with pleasure, Killeth and feasteth, no contest expecteth From Spear-Danish people. But the prowess and valor	The monster is not afraid of the Danes,  but he will soon learn to dread the Geats.
45	Of the earls of the Geatmen early shall venture To give him a grapple. He shall go who is able Bravely to banquet, when the bright-light of morning Which the second day bringeth, the sun in its ether- robes,	On the second day, any warrior may go unmolested to the mead- banquet.
50	O'er children of men shines from the southward!" Then the gray-haired, war-famed giver of treasure Was blithesome and joyous, the Bright-Danish ruler Expected assistance; the people's protector Heard from Beowulf his bold resolution. There was laughter of heroes; loud was the clatter,	Hrothgar's spirits are revived.
55	The words were winsome. Wealhtheow advanced then, Consort of Hrothgar, of courtesy mindful, Gold-decked saluted the men in the building,	The old king trusts Beowulf. The heroes are joyful.

	And the freeborn woman the beaker presented To the lord of the kingdom, first of the East-Danes,	Queen Wealhtheow plays the hostess.
60	Bade him be blithesome when beer was a-flowing, Lief to his liegemen; he lustily tasted Of banquet and beaker, battle-famed ruler. The Helmingish lady then graciously circled 'Mid all the liegemen lesser and greater:	She offers the cup to her husband first.
[23] 65	Treasure-cups tendered, till time was afforded That the decorous-mooded, diademed folk-queen Might bear to Beowulf the bumper o'errunning; She greeted the Geat-prince, God she did thank, Most wise in her words, that her wish was accomplished,	She gives presents to the heroes. Then she offers the cup to Beowulf, thanking God that aid has come.
70	That in any of earlmen she ever should look for Solace in sorrow. He accepted the beaker, Battle-bold warrior, at Wealhtheow's giving, Then equipped for combat quoth he in measures, Beowulf spake, offspring of Ecgtheow:	Beowulf states to the queen the object of his visit. I determined to do or die.
75	"I purposed in spirit when I mounted the ocean, When I boarded my boat with a band of my liegemen, I would work to the fullest the will of your people Or in foe's-clutches fastened fall in the battle. Deeds I shall do of daring and prowess,	
80	Or the last of my life-days live in this mead-hall." These words to the lady were welcome and pleasing, The boast of the Geatman; with gold trappings broidered Went the freeborn folk-queen her fond-lord to sit by. Then again as of yore was heard in the building	Glee is high.
85	Courtly discussion, conquerors' shouting, Heroes were happy, till Healfdene's son would Go to his slumber to seek for refreshing; For the horrid hell-monster in the hall-building knew he A fight was determined, <sup>2</sup> since the light of the sun they	
90	No longer could see, and lowering darkness O'er all had descended, and dark under heaven Shadowy shapes came shying around them. The liegemen all rose then. One saluted the other, Hrothgar Beowulf, in rhythmical measures,	Hrothgar retires, leaving Beowulf in charge of the hall.
95	Wishing him well, and, the wassail-hall giving To his care and keeping, quoth he departing: "Not to any one else have I ever entrusted, But thee and thee only, the hall of the Danemen, Since high I could heave my hand and my buckler.	
[24] 100	Take thou in charge now the noblest of houses; Be mindful of honor, exhibiting prowess, Watch 'gainst the foeman! Thou shalt want no enjoyments, Survive thou safely adventure so glorious!"	

- [1] The repetition of ‘hwæðere’ (574 and 578) is regarded by some scholars as a defect. B. suggests ‘swá Þær’ for the first: *So there it befell me, etc.* Another suggestion is to change the second ‘hwæðere’ into ‘swá Þær’: *So there I escaped with my life, etc.*
- [2] Kl. suggests a period after ‘determined.’ This would give the passage as follows: *Since they no longer could see the light of the sun, and lowering darkness was down over all, dire under the heavens shadowy beings came going around them.*

## XI.

### ALL SLEEP SAVE ONE.

<p>Then Hrothgar departed, his earl-throng attending                                him,              Folk-lord of Scyldings, forth from the building;              The war-chieftain wished then Wealhtheow to look for,              The queen for a bedmate. To keep away Grendel              5 The Glory of Kings had given a hall-watch,              As men heard recounted: for the king of the                                Danemen              He did special service, gave the giant a watcher:              And the prince of the Geatmen implicitly trusted              His warlike strength and the Wielder’s protection.              10 His armor of iron off him he did then,              His helmet from his head, to his henchman                                committed              His chased-handled chain-sword, choicest of weapons,              And bade him bide with his battle-equipments.              The good one then uttered words of defiance,              15 Beowulf Geatman, ere his bed he upmounted:              “I hold me no meaner in matters of prowess,              In warlike achievements, than Grendel does himself;              Hence I seek not with sword-edge to sooth him to                                slumber,              Of life to bereave him, though well I am able.              20 No battle-skill<sup>1</sup> has he, that blows he should strike                                me,              To shatter my shield, though sure he is mighty              In strife and destruction; but struggling by night we              Shall do without edges, dare he to look for              Weaponless warfare, and wise-mooded Father              25 The glory apportion, God ever-holy,              On which hand soever to him seemeth proper.”              Then the brave-mooded hero bent to his slumber,</p>	<p>Hrothgar retires.</p> <p>God has provided a watch for the hall.</p> <p>Beowulf is self-confident</p> <p>He prepares for rest.</p> <p>Beowulf boasts of his ability to cope with Grendel.</p> <p>We will fight with nature’s weapons only.</p> <p>God may decide who shall</p>
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[25]

	The pillow received the cheek of the noble; And many a martial mere-thane attending	conquer
30	Sank to his slumber. Seemed it unlikely That ever thereafter any should hope to Be happy at home, hero-friends visit Or the lordly troop-castle where he lived from his childhood; They had heard how slaughter had snatched from the wine-hall,	The Geatish warriors lie down. They thought it very unlikely that they should ever see their homes again.
35	Had recently ravished, of the race of the Scyldings Too many by far. But the Lord to them granted The weaving of war-speed, to Wederish heroes Aid and comfort, that every opponent By one man's war-might they worsted and vanquished,	But God raised up a deliverer.
40	By the might of himself; the truth is established That God Almighty hath governed for ages Kindreds and nations. A night very lurid The traveller-at-twilight came tramping and striding. The warriors were sleeping who should watch the horned-building,	God rules the world. Grendel comes to Heorot.
45	One only excepted. 'Mid earthmen 'twas 'stablished, Th' implacable foeman was powerless to hurl them To the land of shadows, if the Lord were unwilling; But serving as warder, in terror to foemen, He angrily bided the issue of battle. <sup>2</sup>	Only one warrior is awake.

[1] Gr. understood 'gódra' as meaning 'advantages in battle.' This rendering H.-So. rejects. The latter takes the passage as meaning that Grendel, though mighty and formidable, has no skill in the art of war.

[2] B. in his masterly articles on Beowulf (P. and B. XII.) rejects the division usually made at this point, 'Pá.' (711), usually rendered 'then,' he translates 'when,' and connects its clause with the foregoing sentence. These changes he makes to reduce the number of 'cóm's' as principal verbs. (Cf. 703, 711, 721.) With all deference to this acute scholar, I must say that it seems to me that the poet is exhausting his resources to bring out clearly the supreme event on which the whole subsequent action turns. First, he (Grendel) came *in the wan night*; second, he came *from the moor*; third, he came *to the hall*. Time, place from which, place to which, are all given.

[26]

## XII.

### GRENDL AND BEOWULF.

'Neath the cloudy cliffs came from the moor then Grendel going, God's anger bare he. The monster intended some one of earthmen	Grendel comes from the fens.
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	In the hall-building grand to entrap and make way with:	
5	He went under welkin where well he knew of The wine-joyous building, brilliant with plating, Gold-hall of earthmen. Not the earliest occasion He the home and manor of Hrothgar had sought: Ne'er found he in life-days later nor earlier	He goes towards the joyous building.  This was not his first visit there.
10	Hardier hero, hall-thanes <sup>1</sup> more sturdy! Then came to the building the warrior marching, Bereft of his joyance. The door quickly opened On fire-hinges fastened, when his fingers had touched it; The fell one had flung then—his fury so bitter—	His horrid fingers tear the door open.
15	Open the entrance. Early thereafter The foeman trod the shining hall-pavement, Strode he angrily; from the eyes of him glimmered A lustre unlovely likest to fire. He beheld in the hall the heroes in numbers,	He strides furiously into the hall.
20	A circle of kinsmen sleeping together, A throng of thanemen: then his thoughts were exultant, He minded to sunder from each of the thanemen The life from his body, horrible demon, Ere morning came, since fate had allowed him	He exults over his supposed prey.
25	The prospect of plenty. Providence willed not To permit him any more of men under heaven To eat in the night-time. Higelac's kinsman Great sorrow endured how the dire-mooded creature In unlooked-for assaults were likely to bear him.	Fate has decreed that he shall devour no more heroes. Beowulf suffers from suspense.
[27]	30 No thought had the monster of deferring the matter, But on earliest occasion he quickly laid hold of A soldier asleep, suddenly tore him, Bit his bone-prison, the blood drank in currents, Swallowed in mouthfuls: he soon had the dead man's	Grendel immediately seizes a sleeping warrior, and devours him.
35	Feet and hands, too, eaten entirely. Nearer he strode then, the stout-hearted warrior Snatched as he slumbered, seizing with hand-grip, Forward the foeman foined with his hand; Caught he quickly the cunning deviser,	Beowulf and Grendel grapple.
40	On his elbow he rested. This early discovered The master of malice, that in middle-earth's regions, 'Neath the whole of the heavens, no hand-grapple greater In any man else had he ever encountered: Fearful in spirit, faint-mooded waxed he,	The monster is amazed at Beowulf's strength.
45	Not off could betake him; death he was pondering, Would fly to his covert, seek the devils' assembly: His calling no more was the same he had followed Long in his lifetime. The liege-kinsman worthy	He is anxious to flee.

<p>50</p> <p>80</p> <p>[28]</p> <p>65</p> <p>70</p> <p>75</p> <p>80</p>	<p>Of Higelac minded his speech of the evening,          Stood he up straight and stoutly did seize him.          His fingers crackled; the giant was outward,          The earl stepped farther. The famous one minded          To flee away farther, if he found an occasion,          And off and away, avoiding delay,          55 To fly to the fen-moors; he fully was ware of          The strength of his grapple in the grip of the foeman.          'Twas an ill-taken journey that the injury-bringing,          Harrying harmer to Heorot wandered:          The palace re-echoed; to all of the Danemen,          60 Dwellers in castles, to each of the bold ones,          Earlmén, was terror. Angry they both were,          Archwarders raging.<sup>2</sup> Rattled the building;          'Twas a marvellous wonder that the wine-hall withstood then          The bold-in-battle, bent not to earthward,          65 Excellent earth-hall; but within and without it          Was fastened so firmly in fetters of iron,          By the art of the armorer. Off from the sill there          Bent mead-benches many, as men have informed me,          Adorned with gold-work, where the grim ones did struggle.          70 The Scylding wise men weened ne'er before          That by might and main-strength a man under heaven          Might break it in pieces, bone-decked, resplendent,          Crush it by cunning, unless clutch of the fire          In smoke should consume it. The sound mounted upward          75 Novel enough; on the North Danes fastened          A terror of anguish, on all of the men there          Who heard from the wall the weeping and plaining,          The song of defeat from the foeman of heaven,          Heard him hymns of horror howl, and his sorrow          80 Hell-bound bewailing. He held him too firmly          Who was strongest of main-strength of men of that era.</p>	<p>Beowulf recalls          his boast of the          evening, and          determines to          fulfil it.</p> <p>'Twas a luckless          day for Grendel.          The hall groans.</p> <p>Grendel's cries          terrify the Danes.</p>
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[1] B. and t.B. emend so as to make lines 9 and 10 read: *Never in his life, earlier or later, had he, the hell-thane, found a braver hero.*—They argue that Beowulf's companions had done nothing to merit such encomiums as the usual readings allow them.

[2] For 'réðe rén-weardas' (771), t.B. suggests 'réðe, rénhearde.' Translate: *They were both angry, raging and mighty.*

### XIII.

## GRENDEL IS VANQUISHED.

	For no cause whatever would the earlmen's defender Leave in life-joys the loathsome newcomer, He deemed his existence utterly useless To men under heaven. Many a noble	Beowulf has no idea of letting Grendel live.
5	Of Beowulf brandished his battle-sword old, Would guard the life of his lord and protector, The far-famous chieftain, if able to do so; While waging the warfare, this wist they but little, Brave battle-thanes, while his body intending	
10	To slit into slivers, and seeking his spirit: That the relentless foeman nor finest of weapons Of all on the earth, nor any of war-bills Was willing to injure; but weapons of victory Swords and suchlike he had sworn to dispense with.	No weapon would harm Grendel; he bore a charmed life.
[29]		
15	His death at that time must prove to be wretched, And the far-away spirit widely should journey Into enemies' power. This plainly he saw then Who with mirth <sup>1</sup> of mood malice no little Had wrought in the past on the race of the earthmen	
20	(To God he was hostile), that his body would fail him, But Higelac's hardy henchman and kinsman Held him by the hand; hateful to other Was each one if living. A body-wound suffered The direful demon, damage incurable	Grendel is sorely wounded.
25	Was seen on his shoulder, his sinews were shivered, His body did burst. To Beowulf was given Glory in battle; Grendel from thenceward Must flee and hide him in the fen-cliffs and marshes, Sick unto death, his dwelling must look for	His body bursts.
30	Unwinsome and woful; he wist the more fully The end of his earthly existence was nearing, His life-days' limits. At last for the Danemen, When the slaughter was over, their wish was accomplished.	The monster flees away to hide in the moors.
35	The comer-from-far-land had cleansed then of evil, Wise and valiant, the war-hall of Hrothgar, Saved it from violence. He joyed in the night-work, In repute for prowess; the prince of the Geatmen For the East-Danish people his boast had accomplished, Bettered their burdensome bale-sorrows fully,	
40	The craft-begot evil they erstwhile had suffered And were forced to endure from crushing oppression, Their manifold misery. 'Twas a manifest token, When the hero-in-battle the hand suspended, The arm and the shoulder (there was all of the claw	Beowulf suspends Grendel's hand and arm in Heorot.
45	Of Grendel together) 'neath great-stretching hall- roof.	

[1] It has been proposed to translate ‘myrðe’ by *with sorrow*; but there seems no authority for such a rendering. To the present translator, the phrase ‘módes myrðe’ seems a mere padding for *gladly*; i.e., *he who gladly harassed mankind*.

[30]

## XIV.

### REJOICING OF THE DANES.

	<p>In the mist of the morning many a warrior          Stood round the gift-hall, as the story is told me:          Folk-princes fared then from far and from near          Through long-stretching journeys to look at the          wonder,</p>	
5	<p>The footprints of the foeman. Few of the warriors          Who gazed on the foot-tracks of the inglorious          creature          His parting from life pained very deeply,          How, weary in spirit, off from those regions          In combats conquered he carried his traces,</p>	<p>At early dawn,          warriors from far          and near come          together to hear          of the night's          adventures.           Few warriors          lamented          Grendel's          destruction.</p>
10	<p>Fated and flying, to the flood of the nickers.          There in bloody billows bubbled the currents,          The angry eddy was everywhere mingled          And seething with gore, welling with sword-blood;<sup>1</sup>          He death-doomed had hid him, when reaved of his joyance</p>	<p>Grendel's blood          dyes the waters.</p>
15	<p>He laid down his life in the lair he had fled to,          His heathenish spirit, where hell did receive him.          Thence the friends from of old backward turned them,          And many a younker from merry adventure,          Striding their stallions, stout from the seaward,</p>	
20	<p>Heroes on horses. There were heard very often          Beowulf's praises; many often asserted          That neither south nor north, in the circuit of waters,          O'er outstretching earth-plain, none other was better          'Mid bearers of war-shields, more worthy to govern,</p>	<p>Beowulf is the          hero of the hour.          He is regarded as          a probable          successor to          Hrothgar.</p>
25	<p>'Neath the arch of the ether. Not any, however,          'Gainst the friend-lord muttered, mocking-words          uttered          Of Hrothgar the gracious (a good king he).          Oft the famed ones permitted their fallow-skinned          horses</p>	<p>But no word is          uttered to          derogate from          the old king</p>
[31]	<p>To run in rivalry, racing and chasing,          30 Where the fieldways appeared to them fair and inviting,          Known for their excellence; oft a thane of the folk-lord,<sup>2</sup>  <sup>3</sup>A man of celebrity, mindful of rhythms,          Who ancient traditions treasured in memory,</p>	<p>The gleeman          sings the deeds</p>



	New word-groups found properly bound:	of heroes.
35	The bard after 'gan then Beowulf's venture Wisely to tell of, and words that were clever To utter skilfully, earnestly speaking, Everything told he that he heard as to Sigmund's Mighty achievements, many things hidden,	He sings in alliterative measures of Beowulf's prowess.
40	The strife of the Wælsing, the wide-going ventures The children of men knew of but little, The feud and the fury, but Fitela with him, When suchlike matters he minded to speak of, Uncle to nephew, as in every contention	Also of Sigemund, who has slain a great fire-dragon.
45	Each to other was ever devoted: A numerous host of the race of the scathers They had slain with the sword-edge. To Sigmund accrued then No little of glory, when his life-days were over, Since he sturdy in struggle had destroyed the great dragon,	
50	The hoard-treasure's keeper; 'neath the hoar-grayish stone he, The son of the atheling, unaided adventured The perilous project; not present was Fitela, Yet the fortune befell him of forcing his weapon Through the marvellous dragon, that it stood in the wall,	
55	Well-honored weapon; the worm was <u>slaughtered</u> . The great one had gained then by his glorious achievement To reap from the ring-hoard richest enjoyment, As best it did please him: his vessel he loaded, Shining ornaments on the ship's bosom carried,	
[32]		
60	Kinsman of Wæls: the drake in heat melted. He was farthest famed of fugitive pilgrims, Mid wide-scattered world-folk, for works of great prowess, War-troopers' shelter: hence waxed he in honor. <sup>4</sup>	Sigemund was widely famed.
65	Afterward Heremod's hero-strength failed him, His vigor and valor. 'Mid venomous haters To the hands of foemen he was foully delivered, Offdriven early. Agony-billows Oppressed him too long, to his people he became then, To all the athelings, an ever-great burden;	Heremod, an unfortunate Danish king, is introduced by way of contrast. Unlike Sigemund and Beowulf, Heremod was a burden to his people.
70	And the daring one's journey in days of yore Many wise men were wont to deplore, Such as hoped he would bring them help in their sorrow, That the son of their ruler should rise into power, Holding the headship held by his fathers,	
75	Should govern the people, the gold-hoard and borough, The kingdom of heroes, the realm of the Scyldings. He to all men became then far more beloved, Higelac's kinsman, to kindreds and races,	Beowulf is an honor to his race.

To his friends much dearer; him malice assaulted.—  
 80 Oft running and racing on roadsters they measured The story is  
 The dun-colored highways. Then the light of the resumed.  
 morning  
 Was hurried and hastened. Went henchmen in numbers  
 To the beautiful building, bold ones in spirit,  
 To look at the wonder; the liegeland himself then  
 85 From his wife-bower wending, warden of treasures,  
 Glorious trod with troopers unnumbered,  
 Famed for his virtues, and with him the queen-wife  
 Measured the mead-ways, with maidens attending.

[1] S. emends, suggesting ‘déop’ for ‘déog,’ and removing semicolon after ‘wéol.’ The two half-lines ‘welling ... hid him’ would then read: *The bloody deep welled with sword-gore*. B. accepts ‘déop’ for ‘déog,’ but reads ‘déaþ-fæges’: *The deep boiled with the sword-gore of the death-doomed one*.

[2] Another and quite different rendering of this passage is as follows: *Oft a liegeman of the king, a fame-covered man mindful of songs, who very many ancient traditions remembered (he found other word-groups accurately bound together) began afterward to tell of Beowulf’s adventure, skilfully to narrate it, etc.*

[3] Might ‘guma gilp-hladen’ mean ‘a man laden with boasts of the deeds of others’?

[4] t.B. accepts B.’s ‘hé þæs áron þáh’ as given by H.-So., but puts a comma after ‘þáh,’ and takes ‘siððan’ as introducing a dependent clause: *He throve in honor since Heremod’s strength ... had decreased*.

[33]

## XV.

### HROTHGAR’S GRATITUDE.

Hrothgar discoursed (to the hall-building went he,  
 He stood by the pillar,<sup>1</sup> saw the steep-rising hall-roof  
 Gleaming with gold-gems, and Grendel his hand there):  
 “For the sight we behold now, thanks to the Wielder  
 5 Early be offered! Much evil I bided, Hrothgar gives  
 Snaring from Grendel:<sup>2</sup> God can e’er ’complish thanks for the  
 Wonder on wonder, Wielder of Glory! overthrow of the  
 But lately I reckoned ne’er under heaven monster.  
 Comfort to gain me for any of sorrows, I had given up  
 10 While the handsomest of houses horrid with all hope, when  
 bloodstain this brave  
 Gory uptowered; grief had offrightened<sup>3</sup> liegeman came  
 Each of the wise ones who weened not that ever to our aid.  
 The folk-troop’s defences ’gainst foes they should strengthen,

	'Gainst sprites and monsters. Through the might of the Wielder	
15	A doughty retainer hath a deed now accomplished Which erstwhile we all with our excellent wisdom Failed to perform. May affirm very truly	If his mother yet liveth, well may she thank God for this son.
	What woman soever in all of the nations Gave birth to the child, if yet she surviveth,	
20	That the long-ruling Lord was lavish to herward In the birth of the bairn. Now, Beowulf dear, Most excellent hero, I'll love thee in spirit	Hereafter, Beowulf, thou shalt be my son.
	As bairn of my body; bear well henceforward The relationship new. No lack shall befall thee	
25	Of earth-joys any I ever can give thee. Full often for lesser service I've given	
[34]	Hero less hardy hoard-treasure precious, To a weaker in war-strife. By works of distinction Thou hast gained for thyself now that thy glory shall flourish	Thou hast won immortal distinction.
30	Forever and ever. The All-Ruler quite thee With good from His hand as He hitherto did thee!" Beowulf answered, Ecgtheow's offspring:	Beowulf replies: I was most happy to render thee this service.
	"That labor of glory most gladly achieved we, The combat accomplished, unquailing we ventured	
35	The enemy's grapple; I would grant it much rather Thou wert able to look at the creature in person, Faint unto falling, the foe in his trappings!	
	On murder-bed quickly I minded to bind him, With firm-holding fetters, that forced by my grapple	
40	Low he should lie in life-and-death struggle 'Less his body escape; I was wholly unable, Since God did not will it, to keep him from going,	I could not keep the monster from escaping, as God did not will that I should.
	Not held him that firmly, hated opposer; Too swift was the foeman. Yet safety regarding	
45	He suffered his hand behind him to linger, His arm and shoulder, to act as watcher; No shadow of solace the woe-begone creature	He left his hand and arm behind.
	Found him there nathless: the hated destroyer Liveth no longer, lashed for his evils,	
50	But sorrow hath seized him, in snare-meshes hath him Close in its clutches, keepeth him writhing In baleful bonds: there banished for evil	
	The man shall wait for the mighty tribunal, How the God of glory shall give him his earnings."	God will give him his deserts.
55	Then the soldier kept silent, son of old Ecglaf, From boasting and bragging of battle-achievements, Since the princes beheld there the hand that depended	Unferth has nothing more to say, for Beowulf's actions speak louder than
	'Neath the lofty hall-timbers by the might of the nobleman, Each one before him, the enemy's fingers;	

60	Each finger-nail strong steel most resembled, The heathen one's hand-spur, the hero-in-battle's Claw most uncanny; quoth they agreeing,	words.
[35]	That not any excellent edges of brave ones Was willing to touch him, the terrible creature's	No sword will harm the monster.
65	Battle-hand bloody to bear away from him.	

[1] B. and t.B. read 'stapole,' and translate *stood on the floor*.

[2] For 'snaring from Grendel,' 'sorrows at Grendel's hands' has been suggested. This gives a parallel to 'láðes.' 'Grynna' may well be gen. pl. of 'gym,' by a scribal slip.

[3] The H.-So punctuation has been followed; but B. has been followed in understanding 'gehwylcne' as object of 'wíd-scofen (hæfde).' Gr. construes 'wéa' as nom abs.

## XVI.

### HROTHGAR LAVISHES GIFTS UPON HIS DELIVERER.

5	Then straight was ordered that Heorot inside <sup>1</sup> With hands be embellished: a host of them gathered, Of men and women, who the wassailing-building The guest-hall begeared. Gold-flashing sparkled Webs on the walls then, of wonders a many To each of the heroes that look on such objects. The beautiful building was broken to pieces Which all within with irons was fastened, Its hinges torn off: only the roof was	Heorot is adorned with hands.
10	Whole and uninjured when the horrible creature Outlawed for evil off had betaken him, Hopeless of living. 'Tis hard to avoid it (Whoever will do it!); but he doubtless must come to <sup>2</sup>	The hall is defaced, however.
15	The place awaiting, as Wyrð hath appointed, Soul-bearers, earth-dwellers, earls under heaven, Where bound on its bed his body shall slumber When feasting is finished. Full was the time then That the son of Healfdene went to the building; The excellent atheling would eat of the banquet.	[A vague passage of five verses.]
[36]	20 Ne'er heard I that people with hero-band larger Bare them better tow' rds their bracelet-bestower. The laden-with-glory stooped to the bench then (Their kinsmen-companions in plenty were joyful,	Hrothgar goes to the banquet.

<p>25 Many a cupful quaffing complaisantly), Doughty of spirit in the high-tow'ring palace, Hrothgar and Hrothulf. Heorot then inside Was filled with friendly ones; falsehood and treachery The Folk-Scyldings now nowise did practise. Then the offspring of Healfdene offered to Beowulf</p> <p>30 A golden standard, as reward for the victory, A banner embossed, burnie and helmet; Many men saw then a song-famous weapon Borne 'fore the hero. Beowulf drank of The cup in the building; that treasure-bestowing</p> <p>35 He needed not blush for in battle-men's presence. Ne'er heard I that many men on the ale-bench In friendlier fashion to their fellows presented Four bright jewels with gold-work embellished. 'Round the roof of the helmet a head-guarder outside</p> <p>40 Braided with wires, with bosses was furnished, That swords-for-the-battle fight-hardened might fail Boldly to harm him, when the hero proceeded Forth against foemen. The defender of earls then Commanded that eight steeds with bridles</p> <p>45 Gold-plated, gleaming, be guided to hallward, Inside the building; on one of them stood then An art-broidered saddle embellished with jewels; 'Twas the sovereign's seat, when the son of King Healfdene</p> <p>Was pleased to take part in the play of the edges;</p> <p>50 The famous one's valor ne'er failed at the front when Slain ones were bowing. And to Beowulf granted The prince of the Ingwins, power over both, O'er war-steeds and weapons; bade him well to enjoy them. In so manly a manner the mighty-famed chieftain,</p> <p>[37] 55 Hoard-ward of heroes, with horses and jewels War-storms requited, that none e'er condemneth Who willeth to tell truth with full justice.</p>	<p>Hrothgar's nephew, Hrothulf, is present.</p> <p>Hrothgar lavishes gifts upon Beowulf.</p> <p>Four handsomer gifts were never presented.</p> <p>Hrothgar commands that eight finely caparisoned steeds be brought to Beowulf.</p>
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[1] Kl. suggests 'hroden' for 'háten,' and renders: *Then quickly was Heorot adorned within, with hands bedecked.*—B. suggests 'gefrætwon' instead of 'gefrætwod,' and renders: *Then was it commanded to adorn Heorot within quickly with hands.*—The former has the advantage of affording a parallel to 'gefrætwod': both have the disadvantage of altering the text.

[2] The passage 1005-1009 seems to be hopeless. One difficult point is to find a subject for 'gesacan.' Some say 'he'; others supply 'each,' *i.e., every soul-bearer ... must gain the inevitable place.* The genitives in this case are partitive.—If 'he' be subj., the genitives are dependent on 'gearwe' (= prepared).—The 'he' itself is disputed, some referring it to Grendel; but B. takes it as involved in the parenthesis.

## XVII.

BANQUET (*continued*).—THE SCOP'S  
SONG OF FINN AND HNÆF.

<p>And the atheling of earlmen to each of the heroes          Who the ways of the waters went with Beowulf,          A costly gift-token gave on the mead-bench,          Offered an heirloom, and ordered that that man          5 With gold should be paid for, whom Grendel had              erstwhile          Wickedly slaughtered, as he more of them had done          Had far-seeing God and the mood of the hero          The fate not averted: the Father then governed          All of the earth-dwellers, as He ever is doing;          10 Hence insight for all men is everywhere fittest,          Forethought of spirit! much he shall suffer          Of lief and of loathsome who long in this present          Use the world in this woful existence.          There was music and merriment mingling together          15 Touching Healfdene's leader; the joy-wood was              fingered,          Measures recited, when the singer of Hrothgar          On mead-bench should mention the merry hall-              joyance          Of the kinsmen of Finn, when onset surprised them:          "The Half-Danish hero, Hnæf of the Scyldings,          20 On the field of the Frisians was fated to perish.          Sure Hildeburg needed not mention approving          The faith of the Jutemen: though blameless entirely,          When shields were shivered she was shorn of her              darlings,          Of bairns and brothers: they bent to their fate          25 With war-spear wounded; woe was that woman.          Not causeless lamented the daughter of Hoce          The decree of the Wielder when morning-light came              and          She was able 'neath heaven to behold the destruction          Of brothers and bairns, where the brightest of earth-joys          [38] 30 She had hitherto had: all the henchmen of Finn          War had oftaken, save a handful remaining,          That he nowise was able to offer resistance<sup>1</sup>          To the onset of Hengest in the parley of battle,          Nor the wretched remnant to rescue in war from          35 The earl of the atheling; but they offered conditions,          Another great building to fully make ready,</p>	<p>Each of          Beowulf's          companions          receives a costly          gift.          The warrior          killed by Grendel          is to be paid for          in gold.</p> <p>Hrothgar's scop          recalls events in          the reign of his          lord's father.</p> <p>Hnæf, the          Danish general,          is treacherously          attacked while          staying at Finn's          castle.          Queen Hildeburg          is not only wife          of Finn, but a          kinswoman of          the murdered          Hnæf.</p> <p>Finn's force is          almost          exterminated.</p> <p>Hengest succeeds          Hnæf as Danish          general.          Compact</p>
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	A hall and a high-seat, that half they might rule with The sons of the Jutemen, and that Folcwalda's son would	between the Frisians and the Danes.
	Day after day the Danemen honor	
40	When gifts were giving, and grant of his ring-store To Hengest's earl-troop ever so freely, Of his gold-plated jewels, as he encouraged the Frisians On the bench of the beer-hall. On both sides they swore then	Equality of gifts agreed on.
	A fast-binding compact; Finn unto Hengest	
45	With no thought of revoking vowed then most solemnly The woe-begone remnant well to take charge of, His Witan advising; the agreement should no one By words or works weaken and shatter, By artifice ever injure its value,	
50	Though reaved of their ruler their ring-giver's slayer They followed as vassals, Fate so requiring: Then if one of the Frisians the quarrel should speak of	No one shall refer to old grudges.
	In tones that were taunting, terrible edges Should cut in requital. Accomplished the oath was, 55 And treasure of gold from the hoard was uplifted. The best of the Scylding braves was then fully Prepared for the pile; at the pyre was seen clearly The blood-gory burnie, the boar with his gilding, The iron-hard swine, athelings many	Danish warriors are burned on a funeral-pyre.
60	Fatally wounded; no few had been slaughtered. Hildeburg bade then, at the burning of Hnæf, [39] The bairn of her bosom to bear to the fire, That his body be burned and borne to the pyre. The woe-stricken woman wept on his shoulder, <sup>2</sup>	Queen Hildeburg has her son burnt along with Hnæf.
65	In measures lamented; upmounted the hero. <sup>3</sup> The greatest of dead-fires curled to the welkin, On the hill's-front crackled; heads were a-melting, Wound-doors bursting, while the blood was a-coursing From body-bite fierce. The fire devoured them,	
70	Greediest of spirits, whom war had offcarried From both of the peoples; their bravest were fallen.	

[1] For 1084, R. suggests 'wiht Hengeste wið gefeohtan.'—K. suggests 'wið Hengeste wiht gefeohtan.' Neither emendation would make any essential change in the translation.

[2] The separation of adjective and noun by a phrase (cf. v. 1118) being very unusual, some scholars have put 'earme on eaxle' with the foregoing lines, inserting a semicolon after 'eaxe.' In this case 'on eaxe' (*i.e.*, on the ashes, cinders) is sometimes read, and this affords a parallel to 'on bæl.' Let us hope that a satisfactory rendering shall yet be reached without resorting to any tampering with the text, such as Lichtenheld proposed: 'earme ides on eaxe gnornode.'

[3] For 'gúð-rinc,' 'gúð-réc,' *battle-smoke*, has been suggested.

## XVIII.

### THE FINN EPISODE (*continued*).—THE BANQUET CONTINUES.

	<p>“Then the warriors departed to go to their dwellings,  Reaved of their friends, Friesland to visit,  Their homes and high-city. Hengest continued  Biding with Finn the blood-tainted winter,  5 Wholly unsundered;<sup>1</sup> of fatherland thought he  Though unable to drive the ring-stemmèd vessel  O'er the ways of the waters; the wave-deeps were  tossing,  Fought with the wind; winter in ice-bonds  Closed up the currents, till there came to the dwelling  10 A year in its course, as yet it revolveth,  If season propitious one alway regardeth,  World-cheering weathers. Then winter was gone,  Earth's bosom was lovely; the exile would get him,  The guest from the palace; on grewsomest  vengeance  15 He brooded more eager than on oversea journeys,  Whe'r onset-of-anger he were able to 'complish,  The bairns of the Jutemen therein to remember.  Nowise refused he the duties of liegeman  When Hun of the Frisians the battle-sword Láfing,  20 Fairest of falchions, friendly did give him:  Its edges were famous in folk-talk of Jutland.  And savage sword-fury seized in its clutches  Bold-mooded Finn where he bode in his palace,  When the grewsome grapple Guthlaf and Oslaf  25 Had mournfully mentioned, the mere-journey over,  For sorrows half-blamed him; the flickering spirit  Could not bide in his bosom. Then the building was  covered<sup>2</sup>  With corpses of foemen, and Finn too was  slaughtered,  The king with his comrades, and the queen made a prisoner.  30 The troops of the Scyldings bore to their vessels  All that the land-king had in his palace,  Such trinkets and treasures they took as, on  searching,  At Finn's they could find. They ferried to Daneland</p>	<p>The survivors go  to Friesland, the  home of Finn.</p> <p>Hengest remains  there all winter,  unable to get  away.</p> <p>He devises  schemes of  vengeance.</p> <p>Guthlaf and  Oslaf revenge  Hnæf's  slaughter.</p> <p>Finn is slain.</p> <p>The jewels of  Finn, and his  queen are carried  away by the  Danes.</p>
[40]		



	The excellent woman on oversea journey, 35 Led her to their land-folk.” The lay was concluded, The gleeman’s recital. Shouts again rose then, Bench-glee resounded, bearers then offered Wine from wonder-vats. Wealhtheo advanced then Going ’neath gold-crown, where the good ones were seated	The lay is concluded, and the main story is resumed. Skinkers carry round the beaker.
[41]	40 Uncle and nephew; their peace was yet mutual, True each to the other. And Unferth the spokesman Sat at the feet of the lord of the Scyldings: Each trusted his spirit that his mood was courageous, Though at fight he had failed in faith to his kinsmen. 45 Said the queen of the Scyldings: “My lord and protector, Treasure-bestower, take thou this beaker; Joyance attend thee, gold-friend of heroes, And greet thou the Geatmen with gracious responses! So ought one to do. Be kind to the Geatmen, 50 In gifts not niggardly; anear and afar now Peace thou enjoyest. Report hath informed me Thou’lt have for a bairn the battle-brave hero. Now is Heorot cleansèd, ring-palace gleaming; Give while thou mayest many rewards, 55 And bequeath to thy kinsmen kingdom and people, On wending thy way to the Wielder’s splendor. I know good Hrothulf, that the noble young troopers He’ll care for and honor, lord of the Scyldings, If earth-joys thou endest earlier than he doth; 60 I reckon that recompense he’ll render with kindness Our offspring and issue, if that all he remember, What favors of yore, when he yet was an infant, We awarded to him for his worship and pleasure.” Then she turned by the bench where her sons were carousing, 65 Hrethric and Hrothmund, and the heroes’ offspring, The war-youth together; there the good one was sitting	Queen Wealhtheow greet Hrothgar, as he sits beside Hrothulf, his nephew.  Be generous to the Geats.  Have as much joy as possible in thy hall, once more purified. I know that Hrothulf will prove faithful if he survive thee.
	’Twixt the brothers twain, Beowulf Geatman.	Beowulf is sitting by the two royal sons.

[1] For 1130 (1) R. and Gr. suggest ‘elne unflitme’ as 1098 (1) reads. The latter verse is undisputed; and, for the former, ‘elne’ would be as possible as ‘ealles,’ and ‘unflitme’ is well supported. Accepting ‘elne unflitme’ for both, I would suggest ‘*very peaceably*’ for both places: (1) *Finn to Hengest very peaceably vowed with oaths*, etc. (2) *Hengest then still the slaughter-stained winter remained there with Finn very peaceably*. The two passages become thus correlatives, the second a sequel of the first. ‘Elne,’ in the sense of very (swiðe), needs no argument; and ‘unflitme’ (from ‘flitan’) can, it seems to me, be more plausibly rendered ‘peaceful,’ ‘peaceable,’ than ‘contestable,’ or ‘conquerable.’

[2] Some scholars have proposed ‘roden’; the line would then read: *Then the building was reddened, etc.*, instead of ‘covered.’ The ‘h’ may have been carried over from the three alliterating ‘h’s.’

## XIX.

### BEOWULF RECEIVES FURTHER HONOR.

	<p>A beaker was borne him, and bidding to quaff it                  Graciously given, and gold that was twisted                  Pleasantly proffered, a pair of arm-jewels,                  Rings and corslet, of collars the greatest                  I've heard of 'neath heaven. Of heroes not any                  More splendid from jewels have I heard 'neath the welkin,                  Since Hama off bore the Brosingmen's necklace,                  The bracteates and jewels, from the bright-shining                      city,<sup>1</sup>                  Eormenic's cunning craftiness fled from,                  Chose gain everlasting. Geatish Higelac,                  Grandson of Swerting, last had this jewel                  When tramping 'neath banner the treasure he                      guarded,                  The field-spoil defended; Fate offcarried him                  When for deeds of daring he endured tribulation,                  Hate from the Frisians; the ornaments bare he                  O'er the cup of the currents, costly gem-treasures,                  Mighty folk-leader, he fell 'neath his target;                  The<sup>2</sup> corpse of the king then came into charge of                  The race of the Frankmen, the mail-shirt and collar:                  Warmen less noble plundered the fallen,                  When the fight was finished; the folk of the Geatmen                  The field of the dead held in possession.                  The choicest of mead-halls with cheering resounded.                  Wealththeo discoursed, the war-troop addressed she:                  "This collar enjoy thou, Beowulf worthy,                  Young man, in safety, and use thou this armor,                  Gems of the people, and prosper thou fully,                  Show thyself sturdy and be to these liegemen                  Mild with instruction! I'll mind thy requital.                  Thou hast brought it to pass that far and near                  Forever and ever earthmen shall honor thee,                  Even so widely as ocean surroundeth                  The blustering bluffs. Be, while thou livest,                  A wealth-blessèd atheling. I wish thee most truly</p>	<p>More gifts are                  offered Beowulf.</p> <p>A famous                  necklace is                  referred to, in                  comparison with                  the gems                  presented to                  Beowulf.</p> <p>Queen                  Wealththeow                  magnifies                  Beowulf's                  achievements.</p>
[42]		
[43]		

- |    |  |   |
|----|--|---|
| 35 | Jewels and treasure. Be kind to my son, thou<br>Living in joyance! Here each of the nobles<br>Is true unto other, gentle in spirit,<br>Loyal to leader. The liegemen are peaceful,<br>The war-troops ready: well-drunken heroes, <sup>3</sup>                                    | May gifts never<br>fail thee.                           |
| 40 | Do as I bid ye." Then she went to the settle.<br>There was choicest of banquets, wine drank the heroes:<br>Weird they knew not, destiny cruel,<br>As to many an earlman early it happened,<br>When evening had come and Hrothgar had parted                                      | They little know<br>of the sorrow in<br>store for them. |
| 45 | Off to his manor, the mighty to slumber.<br>Warriors unnumbered warded the building<br>As erst they did often: the ale-settle bared they,<br>'Twas covered all over with beds and pillows.<br>Doomed unto death, down to his slumber   | A doomed thane<br>is there with<br>them.                |
| 50 | Bowed then a beer-thane. Their battle-shields placed<br>they,<br>Bright-shining targets, up by their heads then;<br>O'er the atheling on ale-bench 'twas easy to see there<br>Battle-high helmet, burnie of ring-mail,<br>And mighty war-spear. 'Twas the wont of that<br>people | They were<br>always ready for<br>battle.                |
| 55 | To constantly keep them equipped for the battle, <sup>4</sup><br>At home or marching—in either condition—<br>At seasons just such as necessity ordered<br>As best for their ruler; that people was worthy.   |   |

[1] C. suggests a semicolon after 'city,' with 'he' as supplied subject of 'fled' and 'chose.'

[2] For 'feorh' S. suggests 'feoh': 'corpse' in the translation would then be changed to '*possessions*,' '*belongings*.' This is a better reading than one joining, in such intimate syntactical relations, things so unlike as 'corpse' and 'jewels.'

[3] S. suggests '*wine-joyous heroes*,' '*warriors elated with wine*.'

[4] I believe this translation brings out the meaning of the poet, without departing seriously from the H.-So. text. 'Oft' frequently means 'constantly,' 'continually,' not always 'often.'—Why 'an (on) wīg gearwe' should be written 'ánwīg-gearwe' (= ready for single combat), I cannot see. 'Gearwe' occurs quite frequently with 'on'; cf. B. 1110 (*ready for the pyre*), El. 222 (*ready for the glad journey*). Moreover, what has the idea of single combat to do with B. 1247 ff.? The poet is giving an inventory of the arms and armor which they lay aside on retiring, and he closes his narration by saying that they were *always prepared for battle both at home and on the march*.

## THE MOTHER OF GRENDEL.

- They sank then to slumber. With sorrow one paid for  
His evening repose, as often betid them
- While Grendel was holding<sup>1</sup> the gold-bedecked palace,  
Ill-deeds performing, till his end overtook him,
- 5 Death for his sins. 'Twas seen very clearly,  
Known unto earth-folk, that still an avenger  
Outlived the loathed one, long since the sorrow  
Caused by the struggle; the mother of Grendel,  
Devil-shaped woman, her woe ever minded,
- 10 Who was held to inhabit the horrible waters,  
The cold-flowing currents, after Cain had become a  
Slayer-with-edges to his one only brother,  
The son of his sire; he set out then banished,  
Marked as a murderer, man-joys avoiding,
- 15 Lived in the desert. Thence demons unnumbered  
Fate-sent awoke; one of them Grendel,  
Sword-cursèd, hateful, who at Heorot met with  
A man that was watching, waiting the struggle,  
Where a horrid one held him with hand-grapple sturdy;
- 20 Nathless he minded the might of his body,  
The glorious gift God had allowed him,  
And folk-ruling Father's favor relied on,  
His help and His comfort: so he conquered the foeman,  
The hell-spirit humbled: he unhappy departed then,
- 25 Reaved of his joyance, journeying to death-haunts,  
Foeman of man. His mother moreover  
Eager and gloomy was anxious to go on  
Her mournful mission, mindful of vengeance  
For the death of her son. She came then to Heorot
- [45] 30 Where the Armor-Dane earlmen all through the building  
Were lying in slumber. Soon there became then  
Return<sup>2</sup> to the nobles, when the mother of Grendel  
Entered the folk-hall; the fear was less grievous  
By even so much as the vigor of maidens,
- 35 War-strength of women, by warrior is reckoned,  
When well-carved weapon, worked with the hammer,  
Blade very bloody, brave with its edges,  
Strikes down the boar-sign that stands on the helmet.  
Then the hard-edgèd weapon was heaved in the building,<sup>3</sup>
- 40 The brand o'er the benches, broad-lindens many  
Hand-fast were lifted; for helmet he recked not,  
For armor-net broad, whom terror laid hold of.  
She went then hastily, outward would get her  
Her life for to save, when some one did spy her;
- 45 Soon she had grappled one of the athelings

Grendel's mother  
is known to be  
thirsting for  
revenge.

[Grendel's  
progenitor, Cain,  
is again referred  
to.]

The poet again  
magnifies  
Beowulf's valor.

Grendel's mother  
comes to avenge  
her son.

She seizes a

	Fast and firmly, when fenward she hied her; That one to Hrothgar was liefest of heroes In rank of retainer where waters encircle, A mighty shield-warrior, whom she murdered at slumber,	favorite liegemen of Hrothgar's.
50	A broadly-famed battle-knight. Beowulf was absent, But another apartment was erstwhile devoted To the glory-decked Geatman when gold was distributed. There was hubbub in Heorot. The hand that was famous	Beowulf was asleep in another part of the palace.
[46] 55	She grasped in its gore; <sup>4</sup> grief was renewed then In homes and houses: 'twas no happy arrangement In both of the quarters to barter and purchase With lives of their friends. Then the well-aged ruler, The gray-headed war-thane, was woful in spirit, When his long-trusted liegeman lifeless he knew of,	
60	His dearest one gone. Quick from a room was Beowulf brought, brave and triumphant. As day was dawning in the dusk of the morning, Went then that earlman, champion noble, Came with comrades, where the clever one bided	Beowulf is sent for.  He comes at Hrothgar's summons.
65	Whether God all gracious would grant him a respite After the woe he had suffered. The war-worthy hero With a troop of retainers trod then the pavement (The hall-building groaned), till he greeted the wise one, The earl of the Ingwins; <sup>5</sup> asked if the night had	
70	Fully refreshed him, as fain he would have it.	Beowulf inquires how Hrothgar had enjoyed his night's rest.

[1] Several eminent authorities either read or emend the MS. so as to make this verse read, *While Grendel was wasting the gold-bedecked palace*. So 20 15 below: *ravaged the desert*.

[2] For 'sóna' (1281), t.B. suggests 'sára,' limiting 'edhwyrft.' Read then: *Return of sorrows to the nobles, etc.* This emendation supplies the syntactical gap after 'edhwyrft.'

[3] Some authorities follow Grein's lexicon in treating 'heard ecg' as an adj. limiting 'sweord': H.-So. renders it as a subst. (So v. 1491.) The sense of the translation would be the same.

[4] B. suggests 'under hróf genam' (v. 1303). This emendation, as well as an emendation with (?) to v. 739, he offers, because 'under' baffles him in both passages. All we need is to take 'under' in its secondary meaning of 'in,' which, though not given by Grein, occurs in the literature. Cf. Chron. 876 (March's A.-S. Gram. § 355) and Oro. Amaz. I. 10, where 'under' = *in the midst of*. Cf. modern Eng. 'in such circumstances,' which interchanges in good usage with 'under such circumstances.'

[5] For 'néod-laðu' (1321) C. suggests 'néad-láðum,' and translates: *asked whether the night had been pleasant to him after crushing-hostility*.

## XXI.

HROTHGAR'S ACCOUNT OF THE  
MONSTERS.

	Hrothgar rejoined, helm of the Scyldings: "Ask not of joyance! Grief is renewed to The folk of the Danemen. Dead is Æschere, Yrmenlaf's brother, older than he,	Hrothgar laments the death of Æschere, his shoulder- companion.
5	My true-hearted counsellor, trusty adviser, Shoulder-companion, when fighting in battle Our heads we protected, when troopers were clashing, And heroes were dashing; such an earl should be ever,	He was my ideal hero.
	An erst-worthy atheling, as Æschere proved him.	
10	The flickering death-spirit became in Heorot His hand-to-hand murderer; I can not tell whither The cruel one turned in the carcass exulting,	
[47]	By cramming discovered. <sup>1</sup> The quarrel she wreaked then, That last night igone Grendel thou killedst	This horrible creature came to avenge Grendel's death.
15	In grewsomest manner, with grim-holding clutches, Since too long he had lessened my liege-troop and wasted My folk-men so foully. He fell in the battle With forfeit of life, and another has followed, A mighty crime-worker, her kinsman avenging,	
20	And henceforth hath 'stablished her hatred unyielding, <sup>2</sup> As it well may appear to many a liegeman, Who mourneth in spirit the treasure-bestower, Her heavy heart-sorrow; the hand is now lifeless Which <sup>3</sup> availed you in every wish that you cherished.	
25	Land-people heard I, liegemen, this saying, Dwellers in halls, they had seen very often A pair of such mighty march-striding creatures, Far-dwelling spirits, holding the moorlands: One of them wore, as well they might notice,	I have heard my vassals speak of these two uncanny monsters who lived in the moors.
30	The image of woman, the other one wretched In guise of a man wandered in exile, Except he was huger than any of earthmen; Earth-dwelling people entitled him Grendel In days of yore: they know not their father,	
35	Whe'r ill-going spirits any were borne him Ever before. They guard the wolf-coverts, Lands inaccessible, wind-beaten nesses, Fearfullest fen-deeps, where a flood from the mountains	The inhabit the most desolate and horrible places.

[48]

40 'Neath mists of the nesses netherward rattles,  
 The stream under earth: not far is it henceward  
 Measured by mile-lengths that the mere-water standeth,  
 Which forests hang over, with frost-whiting covered,<sup>4</sup>  
 A firm-rooted forest, the floods overshadow.  
 There ever at night one an ill-meaning portent  
 45 A fire-flood may see; 'mong children of men  
 None liveth so wise that wot of the bottom;  
 Though harassed by hounds the heath-stepper seek for,  
 Fly to the forest, firm-antlered he-deer, Even the  
 Spurred from afar, his spirit he yieldeth, hounded deer  
 50 His life on the shore, ere in he will venture will not seek  
 To cover his head. Uncanny the place is: refuge in these  
 Thence upward ascendeth the surging of waters, uncanny regions.  
 Wan to the welkin, when the wind is stirring  
 The weathers unpleasing, till the air groweth gloomy,  
 55 And the heavens lower. Now is help to be gotten To thee only can  
 From thee and thee only! The abode thou know'st I look for  
 not, assistance.  
 The dangerous place where thou'rt able to meet with  
 The sin-laden hero: seek if thou darest!  
 For the feud I will fully fee thee with money,  
 60 With old-time treasure, as erstwhile I did thee,  
 With well-twisted jewels, if away thou shalt get thee."

[1] For 'gefærægnod' (1334), K. and t.B. suggest 'gefægnod,' rendering 'rejoicing in her fill.' This gives a parallel to 'æse wlanc' (1333).

[2] The line 'And ... yielding,' B. renders: *And she has performed a deed of blood-vengeance whose effect is far-reaching.*

[3] 'Sé ðe' (1345) is an instance of masc. rel. with fem. antecedent. So v. 1888, where 'sé ðe' refers to 'yldo.'

[4] For 'hrímge' in the H.-So. edition, Gr. and others read 'hrínde' (=hrínende), and translate: *which rustling forests overhang.*

## XXII.

### BEOWULF SEEKS GRENDEL'S MOTHER.

Beowulf answered, Ecgtheow's son:  
 "Grieve not, O wise one! for each it is better,  
 His friend to avenge than with vehemence wail him;  
 Each of us must the end-day abide of  
 5 His earthly existence; who is able accomplish  
 Glory ere death! To battle-thane noble  
 Beowulf exhorts the old king to arouse himself for action.

	Lifeless lying, 'tis at last most fitting.	
	Arise, O king, quick let us hasten	
	To look at the footprint of the kinsman of Grendel!	
10	I promise thee this now: to his place he'll escape not,	
	To embrace of the earth, nor to mountainous forest,	
	Nor to depths of the ocean, wherever he wanders.	
[49]	Practice thou now patient endurance	
	Of each of thy sorrows, as I hope for thee soothly!"	
15	Then up sprang the old one, the All-Wielder thanked	Hrothgar rouses
	he,	himself. His
	Ruler Almighty, that the man had outspoken.	horse is brought.
	Then for Hrothgar a war-horse was decked with a bridle,	
	Curly-maned courser. The clever folk-leader	
	Stately proceeded: stepped then an earl-troop	They start on the
20	Of linden-wood bearers. Her footprints were seen	track of the
	then	female monster.
	Widely in wood-paths, her way o'er the bottoms,	
	Where she faraway fared o'er fen-country murky,	
	Bore away breathless the best of retainers	
	Who pondered with Hrothgar the welfare of country.	
25	The son of the athelings then went o'er the stony,	
	Declivitous cliffs, the close-covered passes,	
	Narrow passages, paths unfrequented,	
	Nesses abrupt, nicker-haunts many;	
	One of a few of wise-mooded heroes,	
30	He onward advanced to view the surroundings,	
	Till he found unawares woods of the mountain	
	O'er hoar-stones hanging, holt-wood unjoyful;	
	The water stood under, welling and gory.	
	'Twas irksome in spirit to all of the Danemen,	
35	Friends of the Scyldings, to many a liegeman	
	Sad to be suffered, a sorrow unlittle	The sight of
	To each of the earlmen, when to Æschere's head	Æschere's head
	they	causes them
	Came on the cliff. The current was seething	great sorrow.
	With blood and with gore (the troopers gazed on it).	
40	The horn anon sang the battle-song ready.	
	The troop were all seated; they saw 'long the water then	
	Many a serpent, mere-dragons wondrous	The water is
	Trying the waters, nickers a-lying	filled with
	On the cliffs of the nesses, which at noonday full	serpents and sea-
	often	dragons.
45	Go on the sea-deeps their sorrowful journey,	
	Wild-beasts and wormkind; away then they hastened	
	Hot-mooded, hateful, they heard the great clamor,	One of them is
	The war-trumpet winding. One did the Geat-prince	killed by
[50]	Sunder from earth-joys, with arrow from bowstring,	Beowulf.
50	From his sea-struggle tore him, that the trusty war-missile	
	Pierced to his vitals; he proved in the currents	The dead beast is



Less doughty at swimming whom death had offcarried. a poor swimmer

Soon in the waters the wonderful swimmer  
 Was straitened most sorely with sword-pointed boar-spears,  
 55 Pressed in the battle and pulled to the cliff-edge;  
 The liegemen then looked on the loath-fashioned stranger.  
 Beowulf donned then his battle-equipments, Beowulf  
 Cared little for life; inlaid and most ample, prepares for a  
 The hand-woven corslet which could cover his body, struggle with the  
 60 Must the wave-deeps explore, that war might be monster.  
 powerless  
 To harm the great hero, and the hating one's grasp might  
 Not peril his safety; his head was protected  
 By the light-flashing helmet that should mix with the bottoms,  
 Trying the eddies, treasure-emblazoned,  
 65 Encircled with jewels, as in seasons long past  
 The weapon-smith worked it, wondrously made it,  
 With swine-bodies fashioned it, that thenceforward no longer  
 Brand might bite it, and battle-sword hurt it.  
 And that was not least of helpers in prowess  
 70 That Hrothgar's spokesman had lent him when He has Unferth's  
 straitened; sword in his  
 And the hilted hand-sword was Hrunting entitled, hand.  
 Old and most excellent 'mong all of the treasures;  
 Its blade was of iron, blotted with poison,  
 Hardened with gore; it failed not in battle  
 75 Any hero under heaven in hand who it brandished,  
 Who ventured to take the terrible journeys,  
 The battle-field sought; not the earliest occasion  
 That deeds of daring 'twas destined to 'complish.  
 Ecglaf's kinsman minded not soothly, Unferth has little  
 80 Exulting in strength, what erst he had spoken use for swords.  
 Drunken with wine, when the weapon he lent to  
 A sword-hero bolder; himself did not venture  
 'Neath the strife of the currents his life to endanger,  
 [51] To fame-deeds perform; there he forfeited glory,  
 85 Repute for his strength. Not so with the other  
 When he clad in his corslet had equipped him for battle.

## XXIII.

### BEOWULF'S FIGHT WITH GRENDEL'S MOTHER.

Beowulf spake, Ecgtheow's son:

Beowulf makes a

	<p>“Recall now, oh, famous kinsman of Healfdene,          Prince very prudent, now to part I am ready,          Gold-friend of earlmen, what erst we agreed on,          5 Should I lay down my life in lending thee assistance,          When my earth-joys were over, thou wouldst              evermore serve me          In stead of a father; my faithful thanemen,          My trusty retainers, protect thou and care for,          Fall I in battle: and, Hrothgar beloved,          10 Send unto Higelac the high-valued jewels          Thou to me hast allotted. The lord of the Geatmen          May perceive from the gold, the Hrethling may see              it          When he looks on the jewels, that a gem-giver found              I          Good over-measure, enjoyed him while able.          15 And the ancient heirloom Unferth permit thou,          The famed one to have, the heavy-sword splendid<sup>1</sup>          The hard-edged weapon; with Hrunting to aid me,          I shall gain me glory, or grim-death shall take me.”          The atheling of Geatmen uttered these words and          20 Heroic did hasten, not any rejoinder          Was willing to wait for; the wave-current swallowed          The doughty-in-battle. Then a day’s-length elapsed              ere          He was able to see the sea at its bottom.          Early she found then who fifty of winters          25 The course of the currents kept in her fury,          Grisly and greedy, that the grim one’s dominion          [52] Some one of men from above was exploring.          Forth did she grab them, grappled the warrior          With horrible clutches; yet no sooner she injured          30 His body unscathed: the burnie out-guarded,          That she proved but powerless to pierce through the armor,          The limb-mail locked, with loath-grabbing fingers.          The sea-wolf bare then, when bottomward came she,          The ring-prince homeward, that he after was              powerless          35 (He had daring to do it) to deal with his weapons,          But many a mere-beast tormented him swimming,          Flood-beasts no few with fierce-biting tusks did          Break through his burnie, the brave one pursued              they.          The earl then discovered he was down in some cavern          40 Where no water whatever anyway harmed him,          And the clutch of the current could come not anear him,          Since the roofed-hall prevented; brightness a-gleaming          Fire-light he saw, flashing resplendent.          The good one saw then the sea-bottom’s monster,</p>	<p>parting speech to          Hrothgar.            If I fail, act as a          kind liegelord to          my thanes,            and send Higelac          the jewels thou          hast given me            I should like my          king to know          how generous a          lord I found thee          to be.            Beowulf is eager          for the fray.            He is a whole          day reaching the          bottom of the          sea.            Grendel’s mother          knows that some          one has reached          her domains.            She grabs him,          and bears him to          her den.            Sea-monsters          bite and strike          him.</p>
--	---	--

45	The mighty mere-woman; he made a great onset With weapon-of-battle, his hand not desisted From striking, that war-blade struck on her head then A battle-song greedy. The stranger perceived then The sword would not bite, her life would not injure,	Beowulf attacks the mother of Grendel.
50	But the falchion failed the folk-prince when straitened: Erst had it often onsets encountered, Oft cloven the helmet, the fated one's armor: 'Twas the first time that ever the excellent jewel Had failed of its fame. Firm-mooded after,	The sword will not bite.
55	Not heedless of valor, but mindful of glory, Was Higelac's kinsman; the hero-chief angry Cast then his carved-sword covered with jewels That it lay on the earth, hard and steel-pointed; He hoped in his strength, his hand-grapple sturdy.	The hero throws down all weapons, and again trusts to his hand-grip.
60	So any must act whenever he thinketh To gain him in battle glory unending, And is reckless of living. The lord of the War-Geats (He shrank not from battle) seized by the shoulder <sup>2</sup> The mother of Grendel; then mighty in struggle	
65	Swung he his enemy, since his anger was kindled, That she fell to the floor. With furious grapple She gave him requital <sup>3</sup> early thereafter, And stretched out to grab him; the strongest of warriors Faint-mooded stumbled, till he fell in his traces,	Beowulf falls.
70	Foot-going champion. Then she sat on the hall-guest And wielded her war-knife wide-bladed, flashing, For her son would take vengeance, her one only bairn. His breast-armor woven bode on his shoulder; It guarded his life, the entrance defended	The monster sits on him with drawn sword.
75	'Gainst sword-point and edges. Ecgtheow's son there Had fatally journeyed, champion of Geatmen, In the arms of the ocean, had the armor not given, Close-woven corslet, comfort and succor, And had God most holy not awarded the victory,	His armor saves his life.
80	All-knowing Lord; easily did heaven's Ruler most righteous arrange it with justice; <sup>4</sup> Uprose he erect ready for battle.	God arranged for his escape.

[53]

[1] Kl. emends 'wæl-sweord.' The half-line would then read, '*the battle-sword splendid.*'—For 'heard-ecg' in next half-verse, see note to 20 39 above.

[2] Sw., R., and t.B. suggest 'feaxe' for 'eaxle' (1538) and render: *Seized by the hair.*

[3] If 'hand-léan' be accepted (as the MS. has it), the line will read: *She hand-reward gave him early thereafter.*

[4] Sw. and S. change H.-So.'s semicolon (v. 1557) to a comma, and translate:  
*The Ruler of Heaven arranged it in justice easily, after he arose again.*

## XXIV.

### BEOWULF IS DOUBLE-CONQUEROR.

	Then he saw mid the war-gems a weapon of victory,	Beowulf grasps a
	An ancient giant-sword, of edges a-doughty,	giant-sword,
	Glory of warriors: of weapons 'twas choicest,	
	Only 'twas larger than any man else was	
[54]	5 Able to bear to the battle-encounter,	
	The good and splendid work of the giants.	
	He grasped then the sword-hilt, knight of the Scyldings,	
	Bold and battle-grim, brandished his ring-sword,	
	Hopeless of living, hotly he smote her,	
10	That the fiend-woman's neck firmly it grappled,	
	Broke through her bone-joints, the bill fully pierced	and fells the
	her	female monster.
	Fate-cursèd body, she fell to the ground then:	
	The hand-sword was bloody, the hero exulted.	
	The brand was brilliant, brightly it glimmered,	
15	Just as from heaven gemlike shineth	
	The torch of the firmament. He glanced 'long the building,	
	And turned by the wall then, Higelac's vassal	
	Raging and wrathful raised his battle-sword	
	Strong by the handle. The edge was not useless	
20	To the hero-in-battle, but he speedily wished to	
	Give Grendel requital for the many assaults he	
	Had worked on the West-Danes not once, but often,	
	When he slew in slumber the subjects of Hrothgar,	
	Swallowed down fifteen sleeping retainers	
25	Of the folk of the Danemen, and fully as many	
	Carried away, a horrible prey.	
	He gave him requital, grim-raging champion,	
	When he saw on his rest-place weary of conflict	Beowulf sees the
	Grendel lying, of life-joys bereavèd,	body of Grendel,
30	As the battle at Heorot erstwhile had scathed him;	and cuts off his
	His body far bounded, a blow when he suffered,	head.
	Death having seized him, sword-smiting heavy,	
	And he cut off his head then. Early this noticed	
	The clever carles who as comrades of Hrothgar	
35	Gazed on the sea-deeps, that the surging wave-	The waters are
	currents	gory.
	Were mightily mingled, the mere-flood was gory:	
	Of the good one the gray-haired together held converse,	

	The hoary of head, that they hoped not to see again	Beowulf is given
	The atheling ever, that exulting in victory	up for dead.
40	He'd return there to visit the distinguished folk-ruler:	
[55]	Then many concluded the mere-wolf had killed him. <sup>1</sup>	
	The ninth hour came then. From the ness-edge departed	
	The bold-mooded Scyldings; the gold-friend of heroes	
	Homeward betook him. The strangers sat down then	
45	Soul-sick, sorrowful, the sea-waves regarding:	
	They wished and yet weened not their well-loved friend-lord	
	To see any more. The sword-blade began then,	The giant-sword
	The blood having touched it, contracting and	melts.
	shriveling	
	With battle-icicles; 'twas a wonderful marvel	
50	That it melted entirely, likest to ice when	
	The Father unbindeth the bond of the frost and	
	Unwindeth the wave-bands, He who wieldeth dominion	
	Of times and of tides: a truth-firm Creator.	
	Nor took he of jewels more in the dwelling,	
55	Lord of the Weders, though they lay all around him,	
	Than the head and the handle handsome with jewels;	
[56]	The brand early melted, burnt was the weapon: <sup>2</sup>	
	So hot was the blood, the strange-spirit poisonous	
	That in it did perish. He early swam off then	The hero swims
60	Who had bided in combat the carnage of haters,	back to the
	Went up through the ocean; the eddies were	realms of day.
	cleansèd,	
	The spacious expanses, when the spirit from farland	
	His life put aside and this short-lived existence.	
	The seamen's defender came swimming to land then	
65	Doughty of spirit, rejoiced in his sea-gift,	
	The bulky burden which he bore in his keeping.	
	The excellent vassals advanced then to meet him,	
	To God they were grateful, were glad in their chieftain,	
	That to see him safe and sound was granted them.	
70	From the high-minded hero, then, helmet and burnie	
	Were speedily loosened: the ocean was putrid,	
	The water 'neath welkin weltered with gore.	
	Forth did they fare, then, their footsteps retracing,	
	Merry and mirthful, measured the earth-way,	
75	The highway familiar: men very daring <sup>3</sup>	
	Bare then the head from the sea-cliff, burdening	
	Each of the earlmen, excellent-valiant.	
	Four of them had to carry with labor	It takes four men
	The head of Grendel to the high towering gold-hall	to carry
80	Upstuck on the spear, till fourteen most-valiant	Grendel's head
	And battle-brave Geatmen came there going	on a spear.
	Straight to the palace: the prince of the people	
	Measured the mead-ways, their mood-brave companion.	

The atheling of earlmen entered the building,  
 85 Deed-valiant man, adorned with distinction,  
 Doughty shield-warrior, to address King Hrothgar:  
 [57] Then hung by the hair, the head of Grendel  
 Was borne to the building, where beer-thanes were drinking,  
 Loth before earlmen and eke 'fore the lady:  
 90 The warriors beheld then a wonderful sight.

[1] 'Pæs monige gewearð' (1599) and 'hafað þæs geworden' (2027).—In a paper published some years ago in one of the Johns Hopkins University circulars, I tried to throw upon these two long-doubtful passages some light derived from a study of like passages in Alfred's prose.—The impersonal verb 'geweorðan,' with an accus. of the person, and a þæt-clause is used several times with the meaning 'agree.' See Orosius (Sweet's ed.) 1787; 204<sub>34</sub>; 208<sub>28</sub>; 210<sub>15</sub>; 280<sub>20</sub>. In the two Beowulf passages, the þæt-clause is anticipated by 'pæs,' which is clearly a gen. of the thing agreed on.

The first passage (v. 1599 (b)-1600) I translate literally: *Then many agreed upon this (namely), that the sea-wolf had killed him.*

The second passage (v. 2025 (b)-2027): *She is promised ...; to this the friend of the Scyldings has agreed, etc.* By emending 'is' instead of 'wæs' (2025), the tenses will be brought into perfect harmony.

In v. 1997 ff. this same idiom occurs, and was noticed in B.'s great article on Beowulf, which appeared about the time I published my reading of 1599 and 2027. Translate 1997 then: *Wouldst let the South-Danes themselves decide about their struggle with Grendel.* Here 'Súð-Dene' is accus. of person, and 'gúðe' is gen. of thing agreed on.

With such collateral support as that afforded by B. (P. and B. XII. 97), I have no hesitation in departing from H.-So., my usual guide.

The idiom above treated runs through A.-S., Old Saxon, and other Teutonic languages, and should be noticed in the lexicons.

[2] 'Bróden-mæl' is regarded by most scholars as meaning a damaskeened sword. Translate: *The damaskeened sword burned up.* Cf. 25 16 and note.

[3] 'Cyning-balde' (1635) is the much-disputed reading of K. and Th. To render this, "nobly bold," "excellently bold," have been suggested. B. would read 'cyning-holde' (cf. 290), and render: *Men well-disposed towards the king carried the head, etc.* 'Cynebealde,' says t.B., endorsing Gr.

## XXV.

### BEOWULF BRINGS HIS TROPHIES.— HROTHGAR'S GRATITUDE.

Beowulf spake, offspring of Ecgtheow:  
 "Lo! we blithely have brought thee, bairn of  
 Healfdene,  
 Prince of the Scyldings, these presents from ocean

Beowulf relates  
 his last exploit.

Which thine eye looketh on, for an emblem of glory.  
 5 I came off alive from this, narrowly 'scaping:  
 In war 'neath the water the work with great pains I  
 Performed, and the fight had been finished quite nearly,  
 Had God not defended me. I failed in the battle  
 Aught to accomplish, aided by Hrunting,  
 10 Though that weapon was worthy, but the Wielder of earth-folk  
 Gave me willingly to see on the wall a God was fighting  
 Heavy old hand-sword hanging in splendor with me.  
 (He guided most often the lorn and the friendless),  
 That I swung as a weapon. The wards of the house then  
 15 I killed in the conflict (when occasion was given me).  
 Then the battle-sword burned, the brand that was lifted,<sup>1</sup>  
 As the blood-current sprang, hottest of war-sweats;  
 Seizing the hilt, from my foes I offbore it;  
 I avenged as I ought to their acts of malignity,  
 20 The murder of Danemen. I then make thee this promise,  
 Thou'lt be able in Heorot careless to slumber Heorot is freed  
 With thy throng of heroes and the thanes of thy from monsters.  
                   people  
 Every and each, of greater and lesser,  
 And thou needest not fear for them from the selfsame direction  
 25 As thou formerly fearedst, oh, folk-lord of Scyldings,  
 [58] End-day for earlmen." To the age-hoary man then,  
 The gray-haired chieftain, the gold-fashioned sword- The famous  
                   hilt, sword is  
 Old-work of giants, was thereupon given; presented to  
 Since the fall of the fiends, it fell to the keeping Hrothgar.  
 30 Of the wielder of Danemen, the wonder-smith's labor,  
 And the bad-mooded being abandoned this world then,  
 Opponent of God, victim of murder,  
 And also his mother; it went to the keeping  
 Of the best of the world-kings, where waters encircle,  
 35 Who the scot divided in Scylding dominion.  
 Hrothgar discoursed, the hilt he regarded, Hrothgar looks  
 The ancient heirloom where an old-time closely at the old  
                   contention's sword.  
 Beginning was graven: the gurgling currents,  
 The flood slew thereafter the race of the giants,  
 40 They had proved themselves daring: that people was loth to  
 The Lord everlasting, through lash of the billows It had belonged  
 The Father gave them final requital. to a race hateful  
 So in letters of rune on the clasp of the handle to God.  
 Gleaming and golden, 'twas graven exactly,  
 45 Set forth and said, whom that sword had been made for,  
 Finest of irons, who first it was wrought for,  
 Wreathed at its handle and gleaming with serpents.  
 The wise one then said (silent they all were)

- Son of old Healfdene: "He may say unrefuted  
 50 Who performs 'mid the folk-men fairness and truth  
 (The hoary old ruler remembers the past),  
 That better by birth is this bairn of the nobles!  
 Thy fame is extended through far-away countries,  
 Good friend Beowulf, o'er all of the races,  
 55 Thou holdest all firmly, hero-like strength with  
 Prudence of spirit. I'll prove myself grateful  
 As before we agreed on; thou granted for long shalt  
 Become a great comfort to kinsmen and comrades,  
 A help unto heroes. Heremod became not  
 60 Such to the Scyldings, successors of Ecgwela;  
 He grew not to please them, but grievous  
 destruction,  
 [59] And dire some death-woes to Danemen attracted;  
 He slew in anger his table-companions,  
 Trustworthy counsellors, till he turned off lonely  
 65 From world-joys away, wide-famous ruler:  
 Though high-ruling heaven in hero-strength raised him,  
 In might exalted him, o'er men of all nations  
 Made him supreme, yet a murderous spirit  
 Grew in his bosom: he gave then no ring-gems  
 70 To the Danes after custom; endured he unjoyful  
 Standing the straits from strife that was raging,  
 Longsome folk-sorrow. Learn then from this,  
 Lay hold of virtue! Though laden with winters,  
 I have sung thee these measures. 'Tis a marvel to tell it,  
 75 How all-ruling God from greatness of spirit  
 Giveth wisdom to children of men,  
 Manor and earlship: all things He ruleth.  
 He often permitteth the mood-thought of man of  
 The illustrious lineage to lean to possessions,  
 80 Allows him earthly delights at his manor,  
 A high-burg of heroes to hold in his keeping,  
 Maketh portions of earth-folk hear him,  
 And a wide-reaching kingdom so that, wisdom failing him,  
 He himself is unable to reckon its boundaries;  
 85 He liveth in luxury, little debar him,  
 Nor sickness nor age, no treachery-sorrow  
 Becloudeth his spirit, conflict nowhere,  
 No sword-hate, appeareth, but all of the world doth  
 Wend as he wisheth; the worse he knoweth not,  
 90 Till arrant arrogance inward pervading,  
 Waxeth and springeth, when the warder is sleeping,  
 The guard of the soul: with sorrows encompassed,  
 Too sound is his slumber, the slayer is near him,  
 Who with bow and arrow aimeth in malice.

Hrothgar praises  
Beowulf.

Heremod's  
career is again  
contrasted with  
Beowulf's.

A wretched  
failure of a king,  
to give no jewels  
to his retainers.

Hrothgar  
moralizes.



[1] Or rather, perhaps, '*the inlaid, or damaskeened weapon.*' Cf. 24 57 and note.

## XXVI.

### HROTHGAR MORALIZES.—REST AFTER LABOR.

- |         |  |  |
|---------|--|--|
|         | “Then bruised in his bosom he with bitter-toothed<br>missile   | A wounded<br>spirit.   |
|         | Is hurt 'neath his helmet: from harmful pollution<br>He is powerless to shield him by the wonderful mandates<br>Of the loath-cursèd spirit; what too long he hath holden   |  |
| 5       | Him seemeth too small, savage he hoardeth,<br>Nor boastfully giveth gold-plated rings, <sup>1</sup><br>The fate of the future flouts and forgetteth<br>Since God had erst given him greatness no little,<br>Wielder of Glory. His end-day anear,                                 |  |
| 10      | It afterward happens that the bodily-dwelling<br>Fleetingly fadeth, falls into ruins;<br>Another lays hold who doleth the ornaments,<br>The nobleman's jewels, nothing lamenting,<br>Heedeth no terror. Oh, Beowulf dear,  |  |
| 15      | Best of the heroes, from bale-strife defend thee,<br>And choose thee the better, counsels eternal;<br>Beware of arrogance, world-famous champion!<br>But a little-while lasts thy life-vigor's fulness;<br>'Twill after hap early, that illness or sword-edge                    | Be not over<br>proud: life is<br>fleeting, and its<br>strength soon<br>wasteth away. |
| 20      | Shall part thee from strength, or the grasp of the fire,<br>Or the wave of the current, or clutch of the edges,<br>Or flight of the war-spear, or age with its horrors,<br>Or thine eyes' bright flashing shall fade into darkness:<br>'Twill happen full early, excellent hero, |  |
| 25      | That death shall subdue thee. So the Danes a half-<br>century<br>I held under heaven, helped them in struggles<br>'Gainst many a race in middle-earth's regions,<br>With ash-wood and edges, that enemies none<br>On earth molested me. Lo! offsetting change, now,              | Hrothgar gives<br>an account of his<br>reign.  |
| [61] 30 | Came to my manor, grief after joyance,<br>When Grendel became my constant visitor,<br>Inveterate hater: I from that malice<br>Continually travailed with trouble no little.<br>Thanks be to God that I gained in my lifetime,  | Sorrow after joy.  |
| 35      | To the Lord everlasting, to look on the gory   |  |

Head with mine eyes, after long-lasting sorrow!  
 Go to the bench now, battle-adornèd  
 Joy in the feasting: of jewels in common  
 We'll meet with many when morning appeareth.”

40 The Geatman was gladsome, ganged he immediately  
 To go to the bench, as the clever one bade him.

Then again as before were the famous-for-prowess,  
 Hall-inhabiters, handsomely banqueted,  
 Feasted anew. The night-veil fell then

45 Dark o'er the warriors. The courtiers rose then;  
 The gray-haired was anxious to go to his slumbers,  
 The hoary old Scylding. Hankered the Geatman,  
 The champion doughty, greatly, to rest him:  
 An earlman early outward did lead him,

Beowulf is  
 fagged, and  
 seeks rest.

50 Fagged from his faring, from far-country springing,  
 Who for etiquette's sake all of a liegeman's  
 Needs regarded, such as seamen at that time  
 Were bounden to feel. The big-hearted rested;  
 The building uptowered, spacious and gilded,  
 55 The guest within slumbered, till the sable-clad raven  
 Blithely foreboded the beacon of heaven.

Then the bright-shining sun o'er the bottoms came going;<sup>2</sup>  
 The warriors hastened, the heads of the peoples  
 Were ready to go again to their peoples,

60 The high-mooded farer would faraway thenceward

The Geats  
 prepare to leave  
 Dane-land.

Look for his vessel. The valiant one bade then,<sup>3</sup>  
 Offspring of Ecglaf, off to bear Hrunting,  
 To take his weapon, his well-beloved iron;  
 He him thanked for the gift, saying good he  
 accounted

Unferth asks  
 Beowulf to  
 accept his sword  
 as a gift.

65 The war-friend and mighty, nor chid he with words  
 then

Beowulf thanks  
 him.

The blade of the brand: 'twas a brave-mooded hero.  
 When the warriors were ready, arrayed in their trappings,  
 The atheling dear to the Danemen advanced then  
 On to the dais, where the other was sitting,

70 Grim-mooded hero, greeted King Hrothgar.

[62]

[1] K. says 'proudly giveth.'—Gr. says, 'And gives no gold-plated rings, in order to incite the recipient to boastfulness.'—B. suggests 'gyld' for 'gylp,' and renders: *And gives no beaten rings for reward.*

[2] If S.'s emendation be accepted, v. 57 will read: *Then came the light, going bright after darkness: the warriors, etc.*

[3] As the passage stands in H.-So., Unferth presents Beowulf with the sword Hrunting, and B. thanks him for the gift. If, however, the suggestions of Grdtvg. and M. be accepted, the passage will read: *Then the brave one (i.e. Beowulf) commanded that Hrunting be borne to the son of Ecglaf (Unferth), bade him take his sword, his dear weapon; he (B.) thanked him (U.) for the loan, etc.*

**XXVII.**

**SORROW AT PARTING.**

Beowulf spake, Ecgtheow's offspring:

Beowulf's  
farewell.

"We men of the water wish to declare now  
Fared from far-lands, we're firmly determined

To seek King Higelac. Here have we fitly

5 Been welcomed and feasted, as heart would desire it;

Good was the greeting. If greater affection

I am anywise able ever on earth to

Gain at thy hands, ruler of heroes,

Than yet I have done, I shall quickly be ready

10 For combat and conflict. O'er the course of the  
waters

I shall be ever  
ready to aid thee.

Learn I that neighbors alarm thee with terror,

As haters did whilom, I hither will bring thee

For help unto heroes henchmen by thousands.

I know as to Higelac, the lord of the Geatmen,

15 Though young in years, he yet will permit me,

My liegelord will  
encourage me in  
aiding thee.

By words and by works, ward of the people,

Fully to furnish thee forces and bear thee

My lance to relieve thee, if liegemen shall fail thee,

And help of my hand-strength; if Hrethric be treating,

[63] 20 Bairn of the king, at the court of the Geatmen,

He thereat may find him friends in abundance:

Faraway countries he were better to seek for

Who trusts in himself." Hrothgar discoursed then,

Making rejoinder: "These words thou hast uttered

25 All-knowing God hath given thy spirit!

Ne'er heard I an earlman thus early in life

More clever in speaking: thou'rt cautious of spirit,

Mighty of muscle, in mouth-answers prudent.

I count on the hope that, happen it ever

30 That missile shall rob thee of Hrethel's descendant,

Edge-horrid battle, and illness or weapon

Deprive thee of prince, of people's protector,

And life thou yet holdest, the Sea-Geats will never

Find a more fitting folk-lord to choose them,

35 Gem-ward of heroes, than *thou* mightest prove thee,

If the kingdom of kinsmen thou carest to govern.

Thy mood-spirit likes me the longer the better,

Beowulf dear: thou hast brought it to pass that

To both these peoples peace shall be common,

O Beowulf, thou  
art wise beyond  
thy years.

Should Higelac  
die, the Geats  
could find no  
better successor  
than thou  
wouldst make.

40	To Geat-folk and Danemen, the strife be suspended, The secret assailings they suffered in yore-days; And also that jewels be shared while I govern The wide-stretching kingdom, and that many shall visit	Thou hast healed the ancient breach between our races.
45	Others o'er the ocean with excellent gift-gems: The ring-adorned bark shall bring o'er the currents Presents and love-gifts. This people I know Tow'rd foeman and friend firmly established, <sup>1</sup> After ancient etiquette everywise blameless.” Then the warden of earlmen gave him still farther,	
50	Kinsman of Healfdene, a dozen of jewels, Bade him safely seek with the presents His well-beloved people, early returning.	Parting gifts
[64]	Then the noble-born king kissed the distinguished, Dear-lovèd liegeman, the Dane-prince saluted him, 55 And claspèd his neck; tears from him fell, From the gray-headed man: he two things expected, Agèd and reverend, but rather the second, <sup>2</sup> That bold in council they'd meet thereafter. The man was so dear that he failed to suppress the	Hrothgar kisses Beowulf, and weeps.
60	Emotions that moved him, but in mood-fetters fastened The long-famous hero longeth in secret Deep in his spirit for the dear-beloved man Though not a blood-kinsman. Beowulf thenceward, Gold-splendid warrior, walked o'er the meadows	The old king is deeply grieved to part with his benefactor.
65	Exulting in treasure: the sea-going vessel Riding at anchor awaited its owner. As they pressed on their way then, the present of Hrothgar Was frequently referred to: a folk-king indeed that	Giving liberally is the true proof of kingship.
70	Everyway blameless, till age did debar him The joys of his might, which hath many oft injured.	

[1] For 'geworhte,' the crux of this passage, B. proposes 'geþóhte,' rendering:  
*I know this people with firm thought every way blameless towards foe and friends.*

[2] S. and B. emend so as to negative the verb 'meet.' "Why should Hrothgar weep if he expects to meet Beowulf again?" both these scholars ask. But the weeping is mentioned before the 'expectations': the tears may have been due to many emotions, especially gratitude, struggling for expression.

## XXVIII.

# THE HOMEWARD JOURNEY.—THE TWO QUEENS.

	Then the band of very valiant retainers Came to the current; they were clad all in armor, In link-woven burnies. The land-warder noticed The return of the earlmen, as he erstwhile had seen them;	The coast-guard again.
5	Nowise with insult he greeted the strangers From the naze of the cliff, but rode on to meet them; Said the bright-armored visitors <sup>1</sup> vesselward traveled Welcome to Weders. The wide-bosomed craft then Lay on the sand, laden with armor,	
[65]	10 With horses and jewels, the ring-stemmèd sailer: The mast uptowered o'er the treasure of Hrothgar. To the boat-ward a gold-bound brand he presented, That he was afterwards honored on the ale-bench more highly	Beowulf gives the guard a handsome sword.
15	As the heirloom's owner. <sup>2</sup> Set he out on his vessel, To drive on the deep, Dane-country left he. Along by the mast then a sea-garment fluttered, A rope-fastened sail. The sea-boat resounded, The wind o'er the waters the wave-floater nowise Kept from its journey; the sea-goer traveled,	
20	The foamy-necked floated forth o'er the currents, The well-fashioned vessel o'er the ways of the ocean, Till they came within sight of the cliffs of the Geatmen, The well-known headlands. The wave-goer hastened Driven by breezes, stood on the shore.	The Geats see their own land again.
25	Prompt at the ocean, the port-ward was ready, Who long in the past outlooked in the distance, <sup>3</sup> At water's-edge waiting well-lovèd heroes; He bound to the bank then the broad-bosomed vessel Fast in its fetters, lest the force of the waters	The port-warden is anxiously looking for them.
30	Should be able to injure the ocean-wood winsome. Bade he up then take the treasure of princes, Plate-gold and fretwork; not far was it thence To go off in search of the giver of jewels:	
[66]	35 Hrethel's son Higelac at home there remaineth, <sup>4</sup> Himself with his comrades close to the sea-coast. The building was splendid, the king heroic, Great in his hall, Hygd very young was, Fine-mooded, clever, though few were the winters That the daughter of Hæreth had dwelt in the borough;	Hygd, the noble queen of Higelac, lavish of gifts.
40	But she nowise was cringing nor niggard of presents, Of ornaments rare, to the race of the Geatmen. Thrytho nursed anger, excellent <sup>5</sup> folk-queen, Hot-burning hatred: no hero whatever	Offa's consort, Thrytho, is

- 45 'Mong household companions, her husband excepted  
 Dared to adventure to look at the woman  
 With eyes in the daytime;<sup>6</sup> but he knew that death-  
     chains  
 Hand-wreathed were wrought him: early thereafter,  
 When the hand-strife was over, edges were ready,  
 That fierce-raging sword-point had to force a decision,  
 50 Murder-bale show. Such no womanly custom  
 For a lady to practise, though lovely her person,  
 That a weaver-of-peace, on pretence of anger  
 A beloved liegeman of life should deprive.  
 Soothly this hindered Heming's kinsman;  
 55 Other ale-drinking earlmen asserted  
 That fearful folk-sorrows fewer she wrought them,  
 Treacherous doings, since first she was given  
 Adorned with gold to the war-hero youthful,  
 For her origin honored, when Offa's great palace  
 60 O'er the fallow flood by her father's instructions  
 She sought on her journey, where she afterwards fully,  
 Famed for her virtue, her fate on the king's-seat  
 [67] Enjoyed in her lifetime, love did she hold with  
 The ruler of heroes, the best, it is told me,  
 65 Of all of the earthmen that oceans encompass,  
 Of earl-kindreds endless; hence Offa was famous  
 Far and widely, by gifts and by battles,  
 Spear-valiant hero; the home of his fathers  
 He governed with wisdom, whence Eomær did issue  
 70 For help unto heroes, Heming's kinsman,  
 Grandson of Garmund, great in encounters.

contrasted with  
Hygd.

She is a terror to  
all save her  
husband.

[1] For 'scawan' (1896), 'scaðan' has been proposed. Accepting this, we may render: *He said the bright-armored warriors were going to their vessel, welcome, etc.* (Cf. 1804.)

[2] R. suggests, 'Gewát him on naca,' and renders: *The vessel set out, to drive on the sea, the Dane-country left.* 'On' bears the alliteration; cf. 'on hafu' (2524). This has some advantages over the H.-So. reading; viz. (1) It adds nothing to the text; (2) it makes 'naca' the subject, and thus brings the passage into keeping with the context, where the poet has exhausted his vocabulary in detailing the actions of the vessel.—B.'s emendation (cf. P. and B. XII. 97) is violent.

[3] B. translates: *Who for a long time, ready at the coast, had looked out into the distance eagerly for the dear men.* This changes the syntax of 'léofra manna.'

[4] For 'wunað' (v. 1924) several eminent critics suggest 'wunade' (=remained). This makes the passage much clearer.

[5] Why should such a woman be described as an 'excellent' queen? C. suggests 'frécnu' = dangerous, bold.

[6] For 'an dægēs' various readings have been offered. If 'and-éges' be

accepted, the sentence will read: *No hero ... dared look upon her, eye to eye*. If ‘án-dæges’ be adopted, translate: *Dared look upon her the whole day*.

## XXIX.

### BEOWULF AND HIGELAC.

		Then the brave one departed, his band along with him, Seeking the sea-shore, the sea-marches treading, The wide-stretching shores. The world-candle glimmered,	Beowulf and his party seek Higelac.
		The sun from the southward; they proceeded then onward, 5 Early arriving where they heard that the troop-lord, Ongentheow’s slayer, excellent, youthful Folk-prince and warrior was distributing jewels, Close in his castle. The coming of Beowulf Was announced in a message quickly to Higelac,	
	10	That the folk-troop’s defender forth to the palace The linden-companion alive was advancing, Secure from the combat courtward a-going. The building was early inward made ready For the foot-going guests as the good one had ordered.	
	15	He sat by the man then who had lived through the struggle, Kinsman by kinsman, when the king of the people Had in lordly language saluted the dear one, In words that were formal. The daughter of Hæreth Coursed through the building, carrying mead-cups: <sup>1</sup>	Beowulf sits by his liegelord.  Queen Hygd receives the heroes.
[68]	20	She loved the retainers, tendered the beakers To the high-minded Geatmen. Higelac ’gan then Pleasantly plying his companion with questions In the high-towering palace. A curious interest Tormented his spirit, what meaning to see in	Higelac is greatly interested in Beowulf’s adventures.
	25	The Sea-Geats’ adventures: “Beowulf worthy, How throve your journeying, when thou thoughtest suddenly Far o’er the salt-streams to seek an encounter, A battle at Heorot? Hast bettered for Hrothgar, The famous folk-leader, his far-published sorrows	Give an account of thy adventures, Beowulf dear.
	30	Any at all? In agony-billows I mused upon torture, distrusted the journey Of the beloved liegeman; I long time did pray thee By no means to seek out the murderous spirit, To suffer the South-Danes themselves to decide on <sup>2</sup>	My suspense has been great.
	35	Grappling with Grendel. To God I am thankful	

	To be suffered to see thee safe from thy journey.”	
	Beowulf answered, bairn of old Ecgtheow:	Beowulf narrates
	“’Tis hidden by no means, Higelac chieftain,	his adventures.
	From many of men, the meeting so famous,	
40	What mournful moments of me and of Grendel	
	Were passed in the place where he pressing affliction	
	On the Victory-Scyldings scathefully brought,	
	Anguish forever; that all I avengèd,	
	So that any under heaven of the kinsmen of Grendel	
45	Needeth not boast of that cry-in-the-morning,	Grendel’s
	Who longest liveth of the loth-going kindred, <sup>3</sup>	kindred have no
	Encompassed by moorland. I came in my journey	cause to boast.
	To the royal ring-hall, Hrothgar to greet there:	
	Soon did the famous scion of Healfdene,	Hrothgar
50	When he understood fully the spirit that led me,	received me very
	Assign me a seat with the son of his bosom.	cordially.
[69]	The troop was in joyance; mead-glee greater	
	’Neath arch of the ether not ever beheld I	
	’Mid hall-building holders. The highly-famed queen,	The queen also
55	Peace-tie of peoples, oft passed through the building,	showed up no
	Cheered the young troopers; she oft tendered a hero	little honor.
	A beautiful ring-band, ere she went to her sitting.	
	Oft the daughter of Hrothgar in view of the courtiers	Hrothgar’s lovely
	To the earls at the end the ale-vessel carried,	daughter.
60	Whom Freaware I heard then hall-sitters title,	
	When nail-adorned jewels she gave to the heroes:	
	Gold-bedecked, youthful, to the glad son of Froda	She is betrothed
	Her faith has been plighted; the friend of the	to Ingeld, in
	Scyldings,	order to unite the
	The guard of the kingdom, hath given his sanction, <sup>4</sup>	Danes and
65	And counts it a vantage, for a part of the quarrels,	Heathobards.
	A portion of hatred, to pay with the woman.	
	<sup>5</sup> Somewhere not rarely, when the ruler has fallen,	
	The life-taking lance relaxeth its fury	
	For a brief breathing-spell, though the bride be charming!	

[1] ‘Meodu-scencum’ (1981) some would render ‘with mead-pourers.’ Translate then: *The daughter of Hæreth went through the building accompanied by mead-pourers.*

[2] See my note to 1599, supra, and B. in P. and B. XII. 97.

[3] For ‘fenne,’ supplied by Grdvtg., B. suggests ‘fácne’ (cf. Jul. 350). Accepting this, translate: *Who longest lives of the hated race, steeped in treachery.*

[4] See note to v. 1599 above.

[5] This is perhaps the least understood sentence in the poem, almost every word being open to dispute. (1) The ‘nó’ of our text is an emendation, and is rejected by many scholars. (2) ‘Seldan’ is by some taken as an adv. (= *seldom*), and by others as a noun (= *page, companion*). (3) ‘Léod-hryre,’



some render *'fall of the people'*; others, *'fall of the prince.'* (4) 'Búgeð,' most scholars regard as the intrans. verb meaning *'bend,' 'rest'*; but one great scholar has translated it *'shall kill.'* (5) 'Hwær,' Very recently, has been attacked, 'wære' being suggested. (6) As a corollary to the above, the same critic proposes to drop 'oft' out of the text.—t.B. suggests: *Oft seldan wære after léodhryre: lýtle hwíle bongár búgeð, þéah séo brýd duge = often has a treaty been (thus) struck, after a prince had fallen: (but only) a short time is the spear (then) wont to rest, however excellent the bride may be.*

### XXX.

## BEOWULF NARRATES HIS ADVENTURES TO HIGELAC.

- [70]
- “It well may discomfit the prince of the Heathobards  
 And each of the thanemen of earls that attend him,  
 When he goes to the building escorting the woman,  
 That a noble-born Daneman the knights should be feasting:  
 5 There gleam on his person the leavings of elders  
 Hard and ring-bright, Heathobards' treasure,  
 While they wielded their arms, till they misled to the battle  
 Their own dear lives and beloved companions.  
 He saith at the banquet who the collar beholdeth,  
 10 An ancient ash-warrior who earlmen's destruction  
 Clearly recalleth (cruel his spirit),  
 Sadly beginneth sounding the youthful  
 Thane-champion's spirit through the thoughts of his bosom,  
 War-grief to waken, and this word-answer speaketh:  
 15 'Art thou able, my friend, to know when thou seest it    Ingeld is stirred  
 The brand which thy father bare to the conflict        up to break the  
 In his latest adventure, 'neath visor of helmet,        truce.  
 The dearly-loved iron, where Danemen did slay him,  
 And brave-mooded Scyldings, on the fall of the heroes,  
 20 (When vengeance was sleeping) the slaughter-place wielded?  
 E'en now some man of the murderer's progeny  
 Exulting in ornaments enters the building,  
 Boasts of his blood-shedding, offbeareth the jewel  
 Which thou shouldst wholly hold in possession!  
 25 So he urgeth and mindeth on every occasion  
 With woe-bringing words, till waxeth the season  
 When the woman's thane for the works of his father,  
 The bill having bitten, blood-gory sleepeth,  
 Fated to perish; the other one thenceward  
 30 'Scapeth alive, the land knoweth thoroughly.<sup>1</sup>  
 Then the oaths of the earlmen on each side are broken,  
 When rancors unresting are raging in Ingeld

	And his wife-love waxeth less warm after sorrow. So the Heathobards' favor not faithful I reckon,	
35	Their part in the treaty not true to the Danemen, Their friendship not fast. I further shall tell thee	
[71]	More about Grendel, that thou fully mayst hear, Ornament-giver, what afterward came from The hand-rush of heroes. When heaven's bright jewel	Having made these preliminary statements, I will now tell thee of Grendel, the monster.
40	O'er earthfields had glided, the stranger came raging, The horrible night-fiend, us for to visit, Where wholly unharmed the hall we were guarding. To Hondscio happened a hopeless contention,	Hondscio fell first
45	Death to the doomed one, dead he fell foremost, Girded war-champion; to him Grendel became then, To the vassal distinguished, a tooth-weaponed murderer, The well-beloved henchman's body all swallowed. Not the earlier off empty of hand did The bloody-toothed murderer, mindful of evils,	
50	Wish to escape from the gold-giver's palace, But sturdy of strength he strove to outdo me, Hand-ready grappled. A glove was suspended Spacious and wondrous, in art-fetters fastened, Which was fashioned entirely by touch of the craftman	
55	From the dragon's skin by the devil's devices: He down in its depths would do me unsadly One among many, deed-doer raging, Though sinless he saw me; not so could it happen When I in my anger upright did stand.	
60	'Tis too long to recount how requital I furnished For every evil to the earlmen's destroyer; 'Twas there, my prince, that I proudly distinguished Thy land with my labors. He left and retreated, He lived his life a little while longer:	I reflected honor upon my people.
65	Yet his right-hand guarded his footstep in Heorot, And sad-mooded thence to the sea-bottom fell he, Mournful in mind. For the might-rush of battle The friend of the Scyldings, with gold that was plated,	King Hrothgar lavished gifts upon me.
70	With ornaments many, much requited me, When daylight had dawned, and down to the banquet We had sat us together. There was chanting and joyance: The age-stricken Scylding asked many questions And of old-times related; oft light-ringing harp-strings, Joy-telling wood, were touched by the brave one;	
[72]	Now he uttered measures, mourning and truthful, Then the large-hearted land-king a legend of wonder Truthfully told us. Now troubled with years The age-hoary warrior afterward began to Mourn for the might that marked him in youth-days;	The old king is sad over the loss

80	His breast within boiled, when burdened with winters Much he remembered. From morning till night then We joyed us therein as etiquette suffered, Till the second night season came unto earth-folk. Then early thereafter, the mother of Grendel	of his youthful vigor.
85	Was ready for vengeance, wretched she journeyed; Her son had death ravished, the wrath of the Geatmen. The horrible woman avengèd her offspring, And with mighty mainstrength murdered a hero. There the spirit of Æschere, agèd adviser,	Grendel's mother.
90	Was ready to vanish; nor when morn had lightened Were they anywise suffered to consume him with fire, Folk of the Danemen, the death-weakened hero, Nor the belovèd liegeman to lay on the pyre; She the corpse had offcarried in the clutch of the foeman <sup>2</sup>	Æschere falls a prey to her vengeance.
95	'Neath mountain-brook's flood. To Hrothgar 'twas saddest Of pains that ever had preyed on the chieftain; By the life of thee the land-prince then me <sup>3</sup> Besought very sadly, in sea-currents' eddies To display my prowess, to peril my safety,	She suffered not his body to be burned, but ate it.
100	[73] Might-deeds accomplish; much did he promise. I found then the famous flood-current's cruel, Horrible depth-warder. A while unto us two Hand was in common; the currents were seething With gore that was clotted, and Grendel's fierce mother's	I sought the creature in her den,
105	Head I offhacked in the hall at the bottom With huge-reaching sword-edge, hardly I wrested My life from her clutches; not doomed was I then, But the warden of earlmen afterward gave me Jewels in quantity, kinsman of Healfdene.	and hewed her head off.  Jewels were freely bestowed upon me.

[1] For 'lifigende' (2063), a mere conjecture, 'wígende' has been suggested. The line would then read: *Escapeth by fighting, knows the land thoroughly.*

[2] For 'fæðmum,' Gr.'s conjecture, B. proposes 'færunga.' These three half-verses would then read: *She bore off the corpse of her foe suddenly under the mountain-torrent.*

[3] The phrase 'þíne lýfe' (2132) was long rendered 'with thy (presupposed) permission.' The verse would read: *The land-prince then sadly besought me, with thy (presupposed) permission, etc.*

## GIFT-GIVING IS MUTUAL.

<p>“So the beloved land-prince lived in decorum; I had missed no rewards, no meeds of my prowess, But he gave me jewels, regarding my wishes, Healfdene his bairn; I’ll bring them to thee, then, 5 Atheling of earlmen, offer them gladly. And still unto thee is all my affection:<sup>1</sup> But few of my folk-kin find I surviving But thee, dear Higelac!” Bade he in then to carry<sup>2</sup> The boar-image, banner, battle-high helmet, 10 Iron-gray armor, the excellent weapon, In song-measures said: “This suit-for-the-battle Hrothgar presented me, bade me expressly, Wise-mooded atheling, thereafter to tell thee<sup>3</sup> The whole of its history, said King Heregar owned it, 15 Dane-prince for long: yet he wished not to give then The mail to his son, though dearly he loved him, Hereward the hardy. Hold all in joyance!” I heard that there followed hard on the jewels Two braces of stallions of striking resemblance, 20 Dappled and yellow; he granted him usance Of horses and treasures. So a kinsman should bear him, No web of treachery weave for another, Nor by cunning craftiness cause the destruction Of trusty companion. Most precious to Higelac, 25 The bold one in battle, was the bairn of his sister, And each unto other mindful of favors. I am told that to Hygd he proffered the necklace, Wonder-gem rare that Wealththeow gave him, The troop-leader’s daughter, a trio of horses 30 Slender and saddle-bright; soon did the jewel Embellish her bosom, when the beer-feast was over. So Ecgtheow’s bairn brave did prove him, War-famous man, by deeds that were valiant, He lived in honor, beloved companions 35 Slew not carousing; his mood was not cruel, But by hand-strength hugest of heroes then living The brave one retained the bountiful gift that The Lord had allowed him. Long was he wretched, So that sons of the Geatmen accounted him worthless, 40 And the lord of the liegemen loth was to do him Mickle of honor, when mead-cups were passing; They fully believed him idle and sluggish, An indolent atheling: to the honor-blest man there Came requital for the cuts he had suffered.</p>	<p>All my gifts I lay at thy feet.</p> <p>This armor I have belonged of yore to Heregar.</p> <p>Higelac loves his nephew Beowulf.</p> <p>Beowulf gives Hygd the necklace that Wealththeow had given him.</p> <p>Beowulf is famous.</p> <p>He is requited for the slights suffered in</p>
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[74]

45	The folk-troop's defender bade fetch to the building The heirloom of Hrethel, embellished with gold, So the brave one enjoined it; there was jewel no richer	earlier days.  Higelac overwhelms the conqueror with gifts.
50	In the form of a weapon 'mong Geats of that era; In Beowulf's keeping he placed it and gave him Seven of thousands, manor and lordship. Common to both was land 'mong the people, Estate and inherited rights and possessions, To the second one specially spacious dominions, To the one who was better. It afterward happened	
55	In days that followed, befell the battle-thanes, After Higelac's death, and when Heardred was murdered With weapons of warfare 'neath well-covered targets, When valiant battlemen in victor-band sought him, War-Scylfing heroes harassed the nephew	After Heardred's death, Beowulf becomes king.
60	Of Hereric in battle. To Beowulf's keeping Turned there in time extensive dominions: He fittingly ruled them a fifty of winters (He a man-ruler wise was, manor-ward old) till A certain one 'gan, on gloom-darkening nights, a	He rules the Geats fifty years.
65	Dragon, to govern, who guarded a treasure, A high-rising stone-cliff, on heath that was grayish: A path 'neath it lay, unknown unto mortals. Some one of earthmen entered the mountain, The heathenish hoard laid hold of with ardor;	The fire-drake.
70	*        *        *        *        *        *        * *        *        *        *        *        *        * *        *        *        *        *        *        * *        *        *        *        *        *        * *        *        *        *        *        *        *	

- [1] This verse B. renders, *'Now serve I again thee alone as my gracious king.'*
- [2] For 'eafor' (2153), Kl. suggests 'ealdor.' Translate then: *Bade the prince then to bear in the banner, battle-high helmet, etc.* On the other hand, W. takes 'eaforhéafodsegn' as a compound, meaning 'helmet': *He bade them bear in the helmet, battle-high helm, gray armor, etc.*
- [3] The H.-So. rendering (ærest = *history, origin*; 'eft' for 'est'), though liable to objection, is perhaps the best offered. 'That I should very early tell thee of his favor, kindness' sounds well; but 'his' is badly placed to limit 'ést.'—Perhaps, 'eft' with verbs of saying may have the force of Lat. prefix 're,' and the H.-So. reading mean, 'that I should its origin rehearse to thee.'

## XXXII.

## THE HOARD AND THE DRAGON.

\* \* \* \* \*

He sought of himself who sorely did harm him,  
But, for need very pressing, the servant of one of  
The sons of the heroes hate-blows evaded,

5 Seeking for shelter and the sin-driven warrior  
Took refuge within there. He early looked in it,

\* \* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \* \*

[76] \* \* \* \* \* when the onset surprised him,

10 He a gem-vessel saw there: many of suchlike  
Ancient ornaments in the earth-cave were lying,  
As in days of yore some one of men of  
Illustrious lineage, as a legacy monstrous,  
There had secreted them, careful and thoughtful,  
15 Dear-valued jewels. Death had offsnatched them,  
In the days of the past, and the one man moreover  
Of the flower of the folk who fared there the longest,  
Was fain to defer it, friend-mourning warder,  
A little longer to be left in enjoyment

The hoard.

20 Of long-lasting treasure.<sup>1</sup> A barrow all-ready  
Stood on the plain the stream-currents nigh to,  
New by the ness-edge, unnethe of approaching:  
The keeper of rings carried within a

<sup>2</sup>Ponderous deal of the treasure of nobles,

25 Of gold that was beaten, briefly he spake then:<sup>3</sup>  
“Hold thou, O Earth, now heroes no more may,  
The earnings of earlmen. Lo! erst in thy bosom  
Worthy men won them; war-death hath ravished,  
Perilous life-bale, all my warriors,

The ring-giver  
bewails the loss  
of retainers.

30 Liegemen belovèd, who this life have forsaken,  
Who hall-pleasures saw. No sword-bearer have I,  
And no one to burnish the gold-plated vessel,  
The high-valued beaker: my heroes are vanished.  
The hardy helmet behung with gilding

35 Shall be reaved of its riches: the ring-cleansers slumber  
Who were charged to have ready visors-for-battle,  
And the burnie that bided in battle-encounter  
[77] O’er breaking of war-shields the bite of the edges  
Moulds with the hero. The ring-twisted armor,

40 Its lord being lifeless, no longer may journey  
Hanging by heroes; harp-joy is vanished,  
The rapture of glee-wood, no excellent falcon  
Swoops through the building, no swift-footed charger  
Grindeth the gravel. A grievous destruction  
45 No few of the world-folk widely hath scattered!”

- So, woful of spirit one after all  
 Lamented mournfully, moaning in sadness  
 By day and by night, till death with its billows  
 Dashed on his spirit. Then the ancient dusk-scather      The fire-dragon
- 50 Found the great treasure standing all open,  
 He who flaming and fiery flies to the barrows,  
 Naked war-dragon, nightly escapeth  
 Encompassed with fire; men under heaven  
 Widely beheld him. 'Tis said that he looks for<sup>4</sup>
- 55 The hoard in the earth, where old he is guarding  
 The heathenish treasure; he'll be nowise the better.  
 So three-hundred winters the waster of peoples      The dragon  
 Held upon earth that excellent hoard-hall,      meets his match.  
 Till the forementioned earlman angered him bitterly:
- 60 The beat-plated beaker he bare to his chieftain  
 And fullest remission for all his remissness  
 Begged of his liegeland. Then the hoard<sup>5</sup> was discovered,  
 The treasure was taken, his petition was granted  
 The lorn-mooded liegeman. His lord regarded      The hero  
 65 The old-work of earth-folk—'twas the earliest      plunders the  
     occasion.      dragon's den
- When the dragon awoke, the strife was renewed there;  
 He snuffed 'long the stone then, stout-hearted found he  
 [78] The footprint of foeman; too far had he gone  
 With cunning craftiness close to the head of
- 70 The fire-spewing dragon. So undoomed he may 'scape from  
 Anguish and exile with ease who possesseth  
 The favor of Heaven. The hoard-warden eagerly  
 Searched o'er the ground then, would meet with the person  
 That caused him sorrow while in slumber reclining:
- 75 Gleaming and wild he oft went round the cavern,  
 All of it outward; not any of earthmen  
 Was seen in that desert.<sup>6</sup> Yet he joyed in the battle,  
 Rejoiced in the conflict: oft he turned to the barrow,  
 Sought for the gem-cup;<sup>7</sup> this he soon perceived then
- 80 That some man or other had discovered the gold,      The dragon  
 The famous folk-treasure. Not fain did the hoard-      perceives that  
     ward      some one has  
 Wait until evening; then the ward of the barrow      disturbed his  
 Was angry in spirit, the loathèd one wished to      treasure.  
 Pay for the dear-valued drink-cup with fire.
- 85 Then the day was done as the dragon would have it,  
 He no longer would wait on the wall, but departed  
 Fire-impelled, flaming. Fearful the start was      The dragon is  
 To earls in the land, as it early thereafter      infuriated.  
 To their giver-of-gold was grievously ended.

- [1] For ‘long-gestréona,’ B. suggests ‘láengestréona,’ and renders, *Of fleeting treasures*. S. accepts H.’s ‘long-gestréona,’ but renders, *The treasure long in accumulating*.
- [2] For ‘hard-fyrdne’ (2246), B. first suggested ‘hard-fyndne,’ rendering: *A heap of treasures ... so great that its equal would be hard to find*. The same scholar suggests later ‘hord-wynne dæl’ = *A deal of treasure-joy*.
- [3] Some read ‘fec-word’ (2247), and render: *Banning words uttered*.
- [4] An earlier reading of H.’s gave the following meaning to this passage: *He is said to inhabit a mound under the earth, where he, etc*. The translation in the text is more authentic.
- [5] The repetition of ‘hord’ in this passage has led some scholars to suggest new readings to avoid the second ‘hord.’ This, however, is not under the main stress, and, it seems to me, might easily be accepted.
- [6] The reading of H.-So. is well defended in the notes to that volume. B. emends and renders: *Nor was there any man in that desert who rejoiced in conflict, in battle-work*. That is, the hoard-ward could not find any one who had disturbed his slumbers, for no warrior was there, t.B.’s emendation would give substantially the same translation.
- [7] ‘Sinc-fæt’ (2301): this word both here and in v. 2232, t.B. renders ‘treasure.’

### XXXIII.

## BRAVE THOUGH AGED.— REMINISCENCES.

	The stranger began then to vomit forth fire,	The dragon spits
	To burn the great manor; the blaze then glimmered	fire.
	For anguish to earlmen, not anything living	
[79]	Was the hateful air-goer willing to leave there.	
5	The war of the worm widely was noticed,	
	The feud of the foeman afar and anear,	
	How the enemy injured the earls of the Geatmen,	
	Harried with hatred: back he hied to the treasure,	
	To the well-hidden cavern ere the coming of daylight.	
10	He had circled with fire the folk of those regions,	
	With brand and burning; in the barrow he trusted,	
	In the wall and his war-might: the weening deceived him.	
	Then straight was the horror to Beowulf published,	Beowulf hears of
	Early forsooth, that his own native homestead, <sup>1</sup>	the havoc
15	The best of buildings, was burning and melting,	wrought by the
	Gift-seat of Geatmen. ’Twas a grief to the spirit	dragon.
	Of the good-mooded hero, the greatest of sorrows:	
	The wise one weened then that wielding his kingdom	He fears that
	’Gainst the ancient commandments, he had bitterly	Heaven is
	angered	punishing him



	20	The Lord everlasting: with lorn meditations His bosom welled inward, as was nowise his custom. The fire-spewing dragon fully had wasted The fastness of warriors, the water-land outward, The manor with fire. The folk-ruling hero,	for some crime.
	25	Prince of the Weders, was planning to wreak him. The warmen's defender bade them to make him, Earlmen's atheling, an excellent war-shield Wholly of iron: fully he knew then	He orders an iron shield to be made from him, wood is useless.
	30	That wood from the forest was helpless to aid him, Shield against fire. The long-worthy ruler Must live the last of his limited earth-days, Of life in the world and the worm along with him, Though he long had been holding hoard-wealth in plenty. Then the ring-prince disdained to seek with a war- band,	He determines to fight alone.
	35	With army extensive, the air-going ranger; He felt no fear of the foeman's assaults and He counted for little the might of the dragon, His power and prowess: for previously dared he	
[80]	40	A heap of hostility, hazarded dangers, War-thane, when Hrothgar's palace he cleansed, Conquering combatant, clutched in the battle The kinsmen of Grendel, of kindred detested. <sup>2</sup> 'Twas of hand-fights not least where Higelac was slaughtered,	Beowulf's early triumphs referred to  Higelac's death recalled.
	45	When the king of the Geatmen with clashings of battle, Friend-lord of folks in Frisian dominions, Offspring of Hrethrel perished through sword-drink, With battle-swords beaten; thence Beowulf came then On self-help relying, swam through the waters; He bare on his arm, lone-going, thirty	
	50	Outfits of armor, when the ocean he mounted. The Hetwars by no means had need to be boastful Of their fighting afoot, who forward to meet him Carried their war-shields: not many returned from The brave-mooded battle-knight back to their homesteads.	
	55	Ecgtheow's bairn o'er the bight-courses swam then, Lone-goer lorn to his land-folk returning, Where Hygd to him tendered treasure and kingdom, Rings and dominion: her son she not trusted, To be able to keep the kingdom devised him	Heardred's lack of capacity to rule.
	60	'Gainst alien races, on the death of King Higelac. Yet the sad ones succeeded not in persuading the atheling In any way ever, to act as a suzerain To Heardred, or promise to govern the kingdom; Yet with friendly counsel in the folk he sustained him,	Beowulf's tact and delicacy recalled.

- 65 Gracious, with honor, till he grew to be older,  
 Wielded the Weders. Wide-fleeing outlaws,  
 Ohthere's sons, sought him o'er the waters:  
 They had stirred a revolt 'gainst the helm of the  
     Scylfings,  
 The best of the sea-kings, who in Swedish  
     dominions
- [81] 70 Distributed treasure, distinguished folk-leader.  
 'Twas the end of his earth-days; injury fatal<sup>3</sup>  
 By swing of the sword he received as a greeting,  
 Offspring of Higelac; Ongentheow's bairn  
 Later departed to visit his homestead,
- 75 When Heardred was dead; let Beowulf rule them,  
 Govern the Geatmen: good was that folk-king.

Reference is here made to a visit which Beowulf receives from Eanmund and Eadgils, why they come is not known.

[1] 'Hám' (2326), the suggestion of B. is accepted by t.B. and other scholars.

[2] For 'láðan cynnes' (2355), t.B. suggests 'láðan cynne,' apposition to 'mægum.' From syntactical and other considerations, this is a most excellent emendation.

[3] Gr. read 'on feorme' (2386), rendering: *He there at the banquet a fatal wound received by blows of the sword.*

## XXXIV.

### BEOWULF SEEKS THE DRAGON.— BEOWULF'S REMINISCENCES.

- He planned requital for the folk-leader's ruin  
 In days thereafter, to Eadgils the wretched  
 Becoming an enemy. Ohthere's son then  
 Went with a war-troop o'er the wide-stretching currents
- 5 With warriors and weapons: with woe-journeys cold he  
 After avenged him, the king's life he took.  
 So he came off uninjured from all of his battles,  
 Perilous fights, offspring of Ecgtheow,  
 From his deeds of daring, till that day most  
     momentous
- 10 When he fate-driven fared to fight with the dragon.  
 With eleven companions the prince of the Geatmen  
 Went lowering with fury to look at the fire-drake:  
 Inquiring he'd found how the feud had arisen,  
 Hate to his heroes; the highly-famed gem-vessel
- 15 Was brought to his keeping through the hand of th' informer.  
 That in the throng was thirteenth of heroes,  
 That caused the beginning of conflict so bitter,

Beowulf has been preserved through many perils.

With eleven comrades, he seeks the dragon.

A guide leads the way, but

	Captive and wretched, must sad-mooded thenceward	
	Point out the place: he passed then unwillingly	very reluctantly.
20	To the spot where he knew of the notable cavern, The cave under earth, not far from the ocean, The anger of eddies, which inward was full of Jewels and wires: a warden uncanny,	
[82]	Warrior weaponed, wardered the treasure, 25 Old under earth; no easy possession For any of earth-folk access to get to. Then the battle-brave atheling sat on the naze-edge, While the gold-friend of Geatmen gracious saluted His fireside-companions: woe was his spirit,	
30	Death-boding, wav'ring; Weird very near him, Who must seize the old hero, his soul-treasure look for, Dragging aloof his life from his body: Not flesh-hidden long was the folk-leader's spirit. Beowulf spake, Ecgtheow's son:	
35	"I survived in my youth-days many a conflict, Hours of onset: that all I remember.	Beowulf's retrospect.
	I was seven-winters old when the jewel-prince took me, High-lord of heroes, at the hands of my father, Hrethel the hero-king had me in keeping,	
40	Gave me treasure and feasting, our kinship remembered; Not ever was I <i>any</i> less dear to him Knight in the boroughs, than the bairns of his household,	Hrethel took me when I was seven. He treated me as a son.
	Herebald and Hæthcyn and Higelac mine. To the eldest unjustly by acts of a kinsman	
45	Was murder-bed strewn, since him Hæthcyn from horn-bow His sheltering chieftain shot with an arrow, Erred in his aim and injured his kinsman, One brother the other, with blood-sprinkled spear: 'Twas a feeless fight, finished in malice,	One of the brothers accidentally kills another.
50	Sad to his spirit; the folk-prince however Had to part from existence with vengeance untaken. So to hoar-headed hero 'tis heavily crushing <sup>1</sup>	No fee could compound for such a calamity.
[83]	To live to see his son as he rideth Young on the gallows: then measures he chanteth,	[A parallel case is supposed.]
55	A song of sorrow, when his son is hanging For the raven's delight, and aged and hoary He is unable to offer any assistance. Every morning his offspring's departure Is constant recalled: he cares not to wait for	
60	The birth of an heir in his borough-enclosures, Since that one through death-pain the deeds hath experienced. He heart-grieved beholds in the house of his son the Wine-building wasted, the wind-lodging places	



	<p>Cruellest massacre. This my kinsman avengèd,                  20 The feud and fury, as 'tis found on inquiry,                  Though one of them paid it with forfeit of life-joys,                  With price that was hard: the struggle became then                  Fatal to Hæthcyn, lord of the Geatmen.                  Then I heard that at morning one brother the other                  25 With edges of irons egged on to murder,                  Where Ongentheow maketh onset on Eofor:                  The helmet crashed, the hoary-haired Scylfing                  Sword-smitten fell, his hand then remembered                  Feud-hate sufficient, refused not the death-blow.</p>	<p>Hæthcyn's fall at                  Ravenswood.</p>
	<p>30 The gems that he gave me, with jewel-bright sword I                  'Quited in contest, as occasion was offered:                  Land he allowed me, life-joy at homestead,                  Manor to live on. Little he needed                  From Gepids or Danes or in Sweden to look for                  35 Trooper less true, with treasure to buy him;                  'Mong foot-soldiers ever in front I would hie me,                  Alone in the vanguard, and evermore gladly                  Warfare shall wage, while this weapon endureth                  That late and early often did serve me</p>	<p>I requited him                  for the jewels he                  gave me.</p>
	<p>40 When I proved before heroes the slayer of                  Dæghrefn,                  Knight of the Hugmen: he by no means was suffered                  To the king of the Frisians to carry the jewels,                  The breast-decoration; but the banner-possessor                  Bowed in the battle, brave-mooded atheling.</p>	<p>Beowulf refers to                  his having slain                  Dæghrefn.</p>
[85]	<p>45 No weapon was slayer, but war-grapple broke then                  The surge of his spirit, his body destroying.                  Now shall weapon's edge make war for the treasure,                  And hand and firm-sword." Beowulf spake then,                  Boast-words uttered—the latest occasion:                  50 "I braved in my youth-days battles unnumbered;                  Still am I willing the struggle to look for,                  Fame-deeds perform, folk-warden prudent,                  If the hateful despoiler forth from his cavern                  Seeketh me out!" Each of the heroes,                  55 Helm-bearers sturdy, he thereupon greeted                  Belovèd co-liegemmen—his last salutation:                  "No brand would I bear, no blade for the dragon,                  Wist I a way my word-boast to 'complish<sup>1</sup>                  Else with the monster, as with Grendel I did it;                  60 But fire in the battle hot I expect there,                  Furious flame-burning: so I fixed on my body                  Target and war-mail. The ward of the barrow<sup>2</sup>                  I'll not flee from a foot-length, the foeman uncanny.                  At the wall 'twill befall us as Fate decreeth,</p>	<p>He boasts of his                  youthful                  prowess, and                  declares himself                  still fearless.</p> <p>His last                  salutations.</p>
	<p>65 Each one's Creator. I am eager in spirit,</p>	<p>Let Fate decide</p>

- With the wingèd war-hero to away with all boasting.      between us.  
 Bide on the barrow with burnies protected,  
 Earls in armor, which of *us* two may better      Wait ye here till  
 Bear his disaster, when the battle is over.      the battle is  
 over.
- 70 'Tis no matter of yours, and man cannot do it,  
 But me and me only, to measure his strength with  
 The monster of malice, might-deeds to 'complish.  
 I with prowess shall gain the gold, or the battle,  
 Direful death-woe will drag off your ruler!"
- [86] 75 The mighty champion rose by his shield then,  
 Brave under helmet, in battle-mail went he  
 'Neath steep-rising stone-cliffs, the strength he relied on  
 Of one man alone: no work for a coward.  
 Then he saw by the wall who a great many battles  
 80 Had lived through, most worthy, when foot-troops collided,  
 Stone-arches standing, stout-hearted champion,      The place of  
 Saw a brook from the barrow bubbling out      strife is  
 thenceward:      described.
- The flood of the fountain was fuming with war-flame:  
 Not nigh to the hoard, for season the briefest  
 85 Could he brave, without burning, the abyss that was yawning,  
 The drake was so fiery. The prince of the Weders  
 Caused then that words came from his bosom,  
 So fierce was his fury; the firm-hearted shouted:  
 His battle-clear voice came in resounding  
 90 'Neath the gray-colored stone. Stirred was his hatred,  
 The hoard-ward distinguished the speech of a man;      Beowulf calls  
 Time was no longer to look out for friendship.      out under the  
 The breath of the monster issued forth first,      stone arches.  
 Vapory war-sweat, out of the stone-cave:
- 95 The earth re-echoed. The earl 'neath the barrow      The terrible  
 Lifted his shield, lord of the Geatmen,      encounter.  
 Tow'rd the terrible stranger: the ring-twisted creature's  
 Heart was then ready to seek for a struggle.  
 The excellent battle-king first brandished his      Beowulf  
 weapon,      brandishes his  
 sword,
- 100 The ancient heirloom, of edges unblunted,<sup>3</sup>  
 To the death-planners twain was terror from other.  
 The lord of the troopers intrepidly stood then      and stands  
 'Gainst his high-rising shield, when the dragon      against his  
 coiled him      shield.
- Quickly together: in corslet he bided.      The dragon coils  
 himself.
- [87] 105 He went then in blazes, bended and striding,  
 Hasting him forward. His life and body  
 The targe well protected, for time-period shorter  
 Than wish demanded for the well-renowned leader,  
 Where he then for the first day was forced to be victor,  
 110 Famous in battle, as Fate had not willed it.

- The lord of the Geatmen uplifted his hand then,  
 Smiting the fire-drake with sword that was precious,  
 That bright on the bone the blade-edge did weaken,  
 Bit more feebly than his folk-leader needed,  
 115 Burdened with bale-griefs. Then the barrow-protector,  
 When the sword-blow had fallen, was fierce in his spirit,  
 Flinging his fires, flamings of battle  
 Gleamed then afar: the gold-friend of Weders  
 Boasted no conquests, his battle-sword failed him  
 120 Naked in conflict, as by no means it ought to,  
 Long-trusty weapon. 'Twas no slight undertaking  
 That Ecgtheow's famous offspring would leave  
 The drake-cavern's bottom; he must live in some region  
 Other than this, by the will of the dragon,  
 125 As each one of earthmen existence must forfeit.  
 'Twas early thereafter the excellent warriors  
 Met with each other. Anew and afresh  
 The hoard-ward took heart (gasps heaved then his bosom):  
 Sorrow he suffered encircled with fire  
 130 Who the people erst governed. His companions by  
 no means  
 Were banded about him, bairns of the princes,  
 With valorous spirit, but they sped to the forest,  
 Seeking for safety. The soul-deeps of one were  
 Ruffled by care: kin-love can never  
 135 Aught in him waver who well doth consider.
- The dragon rages
- Beowulf's sword fails him.
- The combat is renewed.
- The great hero is reduced to extremities.
- His comrades flee!
- Blood is thicker than water.

[88]

[1] The clause 2520(2)-2522(1), rendered by 'Wist I ... monster,' Gr., followed by S., translates substantially as follows: *If I knew how else I might combat the boastful defiance of the monster.*—The translation turns upon 'wiðgrīpan,' a word not understood.

[2] B. emends and translates: *I will not flee the space of a foot from the guard of the barrow, but there shall be to us a fight at the wall, as fate decrees, each one's Creator.*

[3] The translation of this passage is based on 'unsláw' (2565), accepted by H.-So., in lieu of the long-standing 'ungléaw.' The former is taken as an adj. limiting 'sweord'; the latter as an adj. c. 'gúð-cyning': *The good war-king, rash with edges, brandished his sword, his old relic.* The latter gives a more rhetorical Anglo-Saxon (poetical) sentence.

## XXXVI.

### WIGLAF THE TRUSTY.—BEOWULF IS DESERTED BY FRIENDS AND BY

## SWORD.

<p>The son of Weohstan was Wiglaf entitled,          Shield-warrior precious, prince of the Scylfings,          Ælfhere's kinsman: he saw his dear liegeland          Enduring the heat 'neath helmet and visor.</p>	<p>Wiglaf remains          true—the ideal          Teutonic          liegeman.</p>
<p>5 Then he minded the holding that erst he had given him,          The Wægmunding warriors' wealth-blessèd              homestead,          Each of the folk-rights his father had wielded;          He was hot for the battle, his hand seized the target,          The yellow-bark shield, he unsheathed his old weapon,</p>	<p>Wiglaf recalls          Beowulf's          generosity.</p>
<p>10 Which was known among earthmen as the relic of Eanmund,          Othere's offspring, whom, exiled and friendless,          Weohstan did slay with sword-edge in battle,          And carried his kinsman the clear-shining helmet,          The ring-made burnie, the old giant-weapon</p>	
<p>15 That Onela gave him, his boon-fellow's armor,          Ready war-trappings: he the feud did not mention,          Though he'd fatally smitten the son of his brother.          Many a half-year held he the treasures,          The bill and the burnie, till his bairn became able,</p>	
<p>20 Like his father before him, fame-deeds to 'complish;          Then he gave him 'mong Geatmen a goodly array of          Weeds for his warfare; he went from life then          Old on his journey. 'Twas the earliest time then          That the youthful champion might charge in the              battle</p>	<p>This is Wiglaf's          first battle as          liegeman of          Beowulf.</p>
<p>25 Aiding his liegeland; his spirit was dauntless.          Nor did kinsman's bequest quail at the battle:          This the dragon discovered on their coming together.          Wiglaf uttered many a right-saying,          Said to his fellows, sad was his spirit:</p>	
<p>30 "I remember the time when, tasting the mead-cup,          We promised in the hall the lord of us all          [89] Who gave us these ring-treasures, that this battle-              equipment,          Swords and helmets, we'd certainly quite him,          Should need of such aid ever befall him:</p>	<p>Wiglaf appeals to          the pride of the          cowards.</p>
<p>35 In the war-band he chose us for this journey              spontaneously,          Stirred us to glory and gave me these jewels,          Since he held and esteemed us trust-worthy              spearmen,          Hardy helm-bearers, though this hero-achievement          Our lord intended alone to accomplish,</p>	<p>How we have          forfeited our          liegeland's          confidence!</p>
<p>40 Ward of his people, for most of achievements,          Doings audacious, he did among earth-folk.</p>	



	The day is now come when the ruler of earthmen Needeth the vigor of valiant heroes:	Our lord is in sore need of us.
	Let us wend us towards him, the war-prince to succor,	
45	While the heat yet rageth, horrible fire-fight. God wot in me, 'tis mickle the liefer The blaze should embrace my body and eat it With my treasure-bestower. Meseemeth not proper To bear our battle-shields back to our country,	I would rather die than go home with out my suzerain.
50	'Less first we are able to fell and destroy the Long-hating foeman, to defend the life of The prince of the Weders. Well do I know 't isn't Earned by his exploits, he only of Geatmen Sorrow should suffer, sink in the battle:	Surely he does not deserve to die alone.
55	Brand and helmet to us both shall be common, <sup>1</sup> Shield-cover, burnie." Through the bale-smoke he stalked then, Went under helmet to the help of his chieftain, Briefly discoursing: "Beowulf dear, Perform thou all fully, as thou formerly saidst,	Wiglaf reminds Beowulf of his youthful boasts.
60	In thy youthful years, that while yet thou livedst Thou wouldst let thine honor not ever be lessened. Thy life thou shalt save, mighty in actions, Atheling undaunted, with all of thy vigor; I'll give thee assistance." The dragon came raging,	
[90]		
65	Wild-mooded stranger, when these words had been uttered ('Twas the second occasion), seeking his enemies, Men that were hated, with hot-gleaming fire-waves; With blaze-billows burned the board to its edges: The fight-armor failed then to furnish assistance	The monster advances on them.
70	To the youthful spear-hero: but the young-agèd stripling Quickly advanced 'neath his kinsman's war-target, Since his own had been ground in the grip of the fire. Then the warrior-king was careful of glory, He soundly smote with sword-for-the-battle,	Beowulf strikes at the dragon.
75	That it stood in the head by hatred driven; Nægling was shivered, the old and iron-made Brand of Beowulf in battle deceived him. 'Twas denied him that edges of irons were able To help in the battle; the hand was too mighty	His sword fails him.
80	<sup>2</sup> Which every weapon, as I heard on inquiry, Outstruck in its stroke, when to struggle he carried The wonderful war-sword: it waxed him no better. Then the people-despoiler—third of his onsets— Fierce-raging fire-drake, of feud-hate was mindful,	The dragon advances on Beowulf again.
85	Charged on the strong one, when chance was afforded, Heated and war-grim, seized on his neck With teeth that were bitter; he bloody did wax with	

Soul-gore seething; sword-blood in waves boiled.

[1] The passage ‘*Brand ... burnie,*’ is much disputed. In the first place, some eminent critics assume a gap of at least two half-verses.—‘*Úrum*’ (2660), being a peculiar form, has been much discussed. ‘*Byrdu-scrúd*’ is also a crux. B. suggests ‘*býwdu-scrúd*’ = *splendid vestments*. Nor is ‘*bám*’ accepted by all, ‘*béon*’ being suggested. Whatever the individual words, the passage must mean, “*I intend to share with him my equipments of defence.*”

[2] B. would render: *Which, as I heard, excelled in stroke every sword that he carried to the strife, even the strongest (sword).* For ‘*Ponne*’ he reads ‘*Pone,*’ rel. pr.

[91]

## XXXVII.

### THE FATAL STRUGGLE.—BEOWULF’S LAST MOMENTS.

Then I heard that at need of the king of the people      Wiglaf defends  
The upstanding earlman exhibited prowess,              Beowulf.  
Vigor and courage, as suited his nature;

<sup>1</sup>He his head did not guard, but the high-minded liegeman’s  
5 Hand was consumed, when he succored his kinsman,  
So he struck the strife-bringing strange-comer lower,  
Earl-thane in armor, that *in* went the weapon

Gleaming and plated, that ’gan then the fire<sup>2</sup>  
Later to lessen. The liegelord himself then              Beowulf draws  
10 Retained his consciousness, brandished his war-      his knife,

knife,  
Battle-sharp, bitter, that he bare on his armor:  
The Weder-lord cut the worm in the middle.              and cuts the  
They had felled the enemy (life drove out then<sup>3</sup>      dragon.

Puissant prowess), the pair had destroyed him,  
15 Land-chiefs related: so a liegeman should prove him,  
A thaneman when needed. To the prince ’twas the last of  
His era of conquest by his own great achievements,

[92] The latest of world-deeds. The wound then began      Beowulf’s  
Which the earth-dwelling dragon erstwhile had      wound swells  
wrought him    and burns.

20 To burn and to swell. He soon then discovered  
That bitterest bale-woe in his bosom was raging,  
Poison within. The atheling advanced then,  
That along by the wall, he prudent of spirit              He sits down  
Might sit on a settle; he saw the giant-work,              exhausted.

25 How arches of stone strengthened with pillars  
The earth-hall eternal inward supported.

- Then the long-worthy liegeman laved with his hand the  
 Far-famous chieftain, gory from sword-edge, Wiglaf bathes his  
 Refreshing the face of his friend-lord and ruler, lord's head.
- 30 Sated with battle, unbinding his helmet.  
 Beowulf answered, of his injury spake he,  
 His wound that was fatal (he was fully aware  
 He had lived his allotted life-days enjoying  
 The pleasures of earth; then past was entirely  
 35 His measure of days, death very near):  
 "My son I would give now my battle-equipments, Beowulf regrets  
 Had any of heirs been after me granted, that he has no  
 Along of my body. This people I governed son.  
 Fifty of winters: no king 'mong my neighbors  
 40 Dared to encounter me with comrades-in-battle,  
 Try me with terror. The time to me ordered  
 I bided at home, mine own kept fitly,  
 Sought me no snares, swore me not many  
 Oaths in injustice. Joy over all this I can rejoice in a  
 45 I'm able to have, though ill with my death-wounds; well-spent life.  
 Hence the Ruler of Earthmen need not charge me  
 With the killing of kinsmen, when cometh my life out  
 Forth from my body. Fare thou with haste now  
 To behold the hoard 'neath the hoar-grayish stone,  
 50 Well-lovèd Wiglaf, now the worm is a-lying, Bring me the  
 Sore-wounded sleepeth, disseized of his treasure. hoard, Wiglaf,  
 Go thou in haste that treasures of old I, that my dying  
 Gold-wealth may gaze on, together see lying eyes may be  
 The ether-bright jewels, be easier able, refreshed by a  
 55 Having the heap of hoard-gems, to yield my sight of it.  
 Life and the land-folk whom long I have governed."

[93]

[1] B. renders: *He (W.) did not regard his (the dragon's) head* (since Beowulf had struck it without effect), *but struck the dragon a little lower down*. —One crux is to find out *whose head* is meant; another is to bring out the antithesis between 'head' and 'hand.'

[2] 'Pæt pæt fýr' (2702), S. emends to 'pá pæt fýr' = *when the fire began to grow less intense afterward*. This emendation relieves the passage of a plethora of conjunctive *pæt*'s.

[3] For 'gefyldan' (2707), S. proposes 'gefylde.' The passage would read: *He felled the foe (life drove out strength), and they then both had destroyed him, chieftains related*. This gives Beowulf the credit of having felled the dragon; then they combine to annihilate him.—For 'ellen' (2707), Kl. suggests 'e(a)llne.'—The reading '*life drove out strength*' is very unsatisfactory and very peculiar. I would suggest as follows: Adopt S.'s emendation, remove H.'s parenthesis, read 'ferh-ellen wræc,' and translate: *He felled the foe, drove out his life-strength* (that is, made him *hors de combat*), and then they both, etc.

## XXXVIII.

WIGLAF PLUNDERS THE DRAGON'S  
DEN.—BEOWULF'S DEATH.

- Then heard I that Wihstan's son very quickly,  
 These words being uttered, heeded his liegelord  
 Wounded and war-sick, went in his armor,  
 His well-woven ring-mail, 'neath the roof of the barrow.
- 5 Then the trusty retainer treasure-gems many  
 Victorious saw, when the seat he came near to,  
 Gold-treasure sparkling spread on the bottom,  
 Wonder on the wall, and the worm-creature's cavern,  
 The ancient dawn-flier's, vessels a-standing,
- 10 Cups of the ancients of cleansers bereavèd,  
 Robbed of their ornaments: there were helmets in numbers,  
 Old and rust-eaten, arm-bracelets many,  
 Artfully woven. Wealth can easily,  
 Gold on the sea-bottom, turn into vanity<sup>1</sup>
- 15 Each one of earthmen, arm him who pleaseth!  
 And he saw there lying an all-golden banner  
 High o'er the hoard, of hand-wonders greatest,  
 Linkèd with lacets: a light from it sparkled,  
 That the floor of the cavern he was able to look on,
- 20 To examine the jewels. Sight of the dragon  
 Not any was offered, but edge offcarried him.  
 Then I heard that the hero the hoard-treasure  
 plundered,  
 The giant-work ancient reaved in the cavern,  
 Bare on his bosom the beakers and platters,
- 25 As himself would fain have it, and took off the standard,  
 The brightest of beacons;<sup>2</sup> the bill had erst injured  
 (Its edge was of iron), the old-ruler's weapon,  
 Him who long had watched as ward of the jewels,  
 Who fire-terror carried hot for the treasure,
- 30 Rolling in battle, in middlemost darkness,  
 Till murdered he perished. The messenger hastened,  
 Not loth to return, hurried by jewels:  
 Curiosity urged him if, excellent-mooded,  
 Alive he should find the lord of the Weders
- 35 Mortally wounded, at the place where he left him.  
 'Mid the jewels he found then the famous old chieftain,  
 His liegelord belovèd, at his life's-end gory:  
 He thereupon 'gan to lave him with water,  
 Till the point of his word piercèd his breast-hoard.
- 40 Beowulf spake (the gold-gems he noticed),
- Wiglaf fulfils his  
lord's behest.
- The dragon's  
den.
- The dragon is  
not there.
- Wiglaf bears the  
hoard away.

[94]

<p>The old one in sorrow: “For the jewels I look on          Thanks do I utter for all to the Ruler,          Wielder of Worship, with words of devotion,          The Lord everlasting, that He let me such treasures          45 Gain for my people ere death overtook me.          Since I’ve bartered the agèd life to me granted          For treasure of jewels, attend ye henceforward          The wants of the war-thanes; I can wait here no              longer.          The battle-famed bid ye to build them a grave-hill,          50 Bright when I’m burned, at the brim-current’s limit;          As a memory-mark to the men I have governed,          [95] Aloft it shall tower on Whale’s-Ness uprising,          That earls of the ocean hereafter may call it          Beowulf’s barrow, those who barks ever-dashing          55 From a distance shall drive o’er the darkness of waters.”          The bold-mooded troop-lord took from his neck then          The ring that was golden, gave to his liegeman,          The youthful war-hero, his gold-flashing helmet,          His collar and war-mail, bade him well to enjoy them:          60 “Thou art latest left of the line of our kindred,          Of Wægmunding people: Weird hath offcarried          All of my kinsmen to the Creator’s glory,          Earls in their vigor: I shall after them fare.”          ’Twas the aged liegelord’s last-spoken word in          65 His musings of spirit, ere he mounted the fire,          The battle-waves burning: from his bosom departed          His soul to seek the sainted ones’ glory.</p>	<p>Beowulf is          rejoiced to see          the jewels.</p> <p>He desires to be          held in memory          by his people.</p> <p>The hero’s last          gift</p> <p>and last words.</p>
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[1] The word ‘oferhígian’ (2767) being vague and little understood, two quite distinct translations of this passage have arisen. One takes ‘oferhígian’ as meaning ‘to exceed,’ and, inserting ‘hord’ after ‘gehwone,’ renders: *The treasure may easily, the gold in the ground, exceed in value every hoard of man, hide it who will.* The other takes ‘oferhígian’ as meaning ‘to render arrogant,’ and, giving the sentence a moralizing tone, renders substantially as in the body of this work. (Cf. 28 13 et seq.)

[2] The passage beginning here is very much disputed. ‘The bill of the old lord’ is by some regarded as Beowulf’s sword; by others, as that of the ancient possessor of the hoard. ‘Ær gescód’ (2778), translated in this work as verb and adverb, is by some regarded as a compound participial adj. = *sheathed in brass.*

## XXXIX.

### THE DEAD FOES.—WIGLAF’S BITTER TAUNTS.

	It had wofully chanced then the youthful retainer To behold on earth the most ardent-belovèd At his life-days' limit, lying there helpless. The slayer too lay there, of life all bereavèd,	Wiglaf is sorely grieved to see his lord look so un- warlike.
5	Horrible earth-drake, harassed with sorrow: The round-twisted monster was permitted no longer To govern the ring-hoards, but edges of war-swords Mightily seized him, battle-sharp, sturdy Leavings of hammers, that still from his wounds	The dragon has plundered his last hoard.
10	The flier-from-farland fell to the earth Hard by his hoard-house, hopped he at midnight Not e'er through the air, nor exulting in jewels Suffered them to see him: but he sank then to earthward Through the hero-chief's handwork. I heard sure it throve then	
[96] 15	But few in the land of liegemen of valor, Though of every achievement bold he had proved him, To run 'gainst the breath of the venomous scather, Or the hall of the treasure to trouble with hand-blows, If he watching had found the ward of the hoard-hall	Few warriors dared to face the monster.
20	On the barrow abiding. Beowulf's part of The treasure of jewels was paid for with death; Each of the twain had attained to the end of Life so unlasting. Not long was the time till The tardy-at-battle returned from the thicket,	The cowardly thanes come out of the thicket.
25	The timid truce-breakers ten all together, Who durst not before play with the lances In the prince of the people's pressing emergency; But blushing with shame, with shields they betook them, With arms and armor where the old one was lying:	They are ashamed of their desertion.
30	They gazed upon Wiglaf. He was sitting exhausted, Foot-going fighter, not far from the shoulders Of the lord of the people, would rouse him with water; No whit did it help him; though he hoped for it keenly, He was able on earth not at all in the leader	
35	Life to retain, and nowise to alter The will of the Wielder; the World-Ruler's power <sup>1</sup> Would govern the actions of each one of heroes, As yet He is doing. From the young one forthwith then	Wiglaf is ready to excoriate them.
40	Could grim-worded greeting be got for him quickly Whose courage had failed him. Wiglaf discoursed then, Weohstan his son, sad-mooded hero, Looked on the hated: "He who soothness will utter Can say that the liegelord who gave you the jewels, The ornament-armor wherein ye are standing,	He begins to taunt them.
45	When on ale-bench often he offered to hall-men	

[97]	Helmet and burnie, the prince to his liegemen, As best upon earth he was able to find him,— That he wildly wasted his war-gear undoubtedly When battle o’ertook him. <sup>2</sup> The troop-king no need had	Surely our lord wasted his armor on poltroons.
50	To glory in comrades; yet God permitted him, Victory-Wielder, with weapon unaided Himself to avenge, when vigor was needed. I life-protection but little was able To give him in battle, and I ’gan, notwithstanding,	He, however, got along without you
55	Helping my kinsman (my strength overtaking): He waxed the weaker when with weapon I smote on My mortal opponent, the fire less strongly Flamed from his bosom. Too few of protectors Came round the king at the critical moment.	With some aid, I could have saved our liegelord
60	Now must ornament-taking and weapon-bestowing, Home-joyance all, cease for your kindred, Food for the people; each of your warriors Must needs be bereavèd of rights that he holdeth In landed possessions, when faraway nobles	Gift-giving is over with your people: the ring- lord is dead.
65	Shall learn of your leaving your lord so basely, The dastardly deed. Death is more pleasant To every earlman than infamous life is!”	What is life without honor?

[1] For ‘dædum rædan’ (2859) B. suggests ‘déað áráedan,’ and renders: *The might (or judgment) of God would determine death for every man, as he still does.*

[2] Some critics, H. himself in earlier editions, put the clause, ‘When ... him’ (A.-S. ‘þá ... beget’) with the following sentence; that is, they make it dependent upon ‘þorfte’ (2875) instead of upon ‘forwurpe’ (2873).

## XL.

### THE MESSENGER OF DEATH.

5	Then he charged that the battle be announced at the hedge Up o’er the cliff-edge, where the earl-troopers bided The whole of the morning, mood-wretched sat them, Bearers of battle-shields, both things expecting, The end of his lifetime and the coming again of The liegelord belovèd. Little reserved he Of news that was known, who the ness-cliff did travel, But he truly discoursed to all that could hear him:	Wiglaf sends the news of Beowulf’s death to liegemen near by.
[98]	“Now the free-giving friend-lord of the folk of the	The messenger

- Weders, speaks.
- 10 The folk-prince of Geatmen, is fast in his death-bed,  
By the deeds of the dragon in death-bed abideth;  
Along with him lieth his life-taking foeman  
Slain with knife-wounds: he was wholly unable  
To injure at all the ill-planning monster
- 15 With bite of his sword-edge. Wiglaf is sitting, Wiglaf sits by  
our dead lord.  
Offspring of Wihstan, up over Beowulf,  
Earl o'er another whose end-day hath reached him,  
Head-watch holdeth o'er heroes unliving,<sup>1</sup>  
For friend and for foeman. The folk now expecteth
- 20 A season of strife when the death of the folk-king Our lord's death  
will lead to  
attacks from our  
old foes.  
To Frankmen and Frisians in far-lands is published.  
The war-hatred waxed warm 'gainst the Hugmen,  
When Higelac came with an army of vessels Higelac's death  
recalled.  
Faring to Friesland, where the Frankmen in battle
- 25 Humbled him and bravely with overmight 'complished  
That the mail-clad warrior must sink in the battle,  
Fell 'mid his folk-troop: no fret-gems presented  
The atheling to earlmen; aye was denied us  
Merewing's mercy. The men of the Swedelands
- 30 For truce or for truth trust I but little;  
But widely 'twas known that near Ravenswood Ongentheow  
Sundered Hæthcyn the Hrethling from life-joys, Hæthcyn's fall  
referred to.  
When for pride overweening the War-Scylfings first  
did  
Seek the Geatmen with savage intentions.
- 35 Early did Ohthere's age-laden father,  
Old and terrible, give blow in requital,  
Killing the sea-king, the queen-mother rescued,  
The old one his consort deprived of her gold,  
Onela's mother and Ohthere's also,
- [99] 40 And then followed the feud-nursing foemen till hardly,  
Reaved of their ruler, they Ravenswood entered.  
Then with vast-numbered forces he assaulted the remnant,  
Weary with wounds, woe often promised  
The livelong night to the sad-hearted war-troop:
- 45 Said he at morning would kill them with edges of weapons,  
Some on the gallows for glee to the fowls.  
Aid came after to the anxious-in-spirit  
At dawn of the day, after Higelac's bugle  
And trumpet-sound heard they, when the good one proceeded
- 50 And faring followed the flower of the troopers.

[1] 'Hige-méðum' (2910) is glossed by H. as dat. plu. (= for the dead). S. proposes 'hige-méðe,' nom. sing. limiting Wigláf; i.e. *W., mood-weary, holds head-watch o'er friend and foe.*—B. suggests taking the word as dat. inst. plu. of an abstract noun in '-u.' The translation would be substantially



the same as S.'s.

## XLI.

### THE MESSENGER'S RETROSPECT.

	<p>“The blood-stained trace of Swedes and Geatmen,          The death-rush of warmen, widely was noticed,          How the folks with each other feud did awaken.          The worthy one went then<sup>1</sup> with well-beloved              comrades,</p>	<p>The messenger          continues, and          refers to the          feuds of Swedes          and Geats.</p>
5	<p>Old and dejected to go to the fastness,          Ongentheo earl upward then turned him;          Of Higelac's battle he'd heard on inquiry,          The exultant one's prowess, despaired of resistance,          With earls of the ocean to be able to struggle,</p>	
10	<p>'Gainst sea-going sailors to save the hoard-treasure,          His wife and his children; he fled after thenceward          Old 'neath the earth-wall. Then was offered pursuance          To the braves of the Swedemen, the banner<sup>2</sup> to Higelac.</p>	
[100]	<p>They fared then forth o'er the field-of-protection,          When the Hrethling heroes hedgeward had thronged them.          Then with edges of irons was Ongentheow driven,          The gray-haired to tarry, that the troop-ruler had to          Suffer the power solely of Eofor:</p>	
15	<p>Wulf then wildly with weapon assaulted him,          Wonred his son, that for swinge of the edges          The blood from his body burst out in currents,          Forth 'neath his hair. He feared not however,          Gray-headed Scylfing, but speedily quited          The wasting wound-stroke with worse exchange,</p>	<p>Wulf wounds          Ongentheow.</p>
20	<p>When the king of the thane-troop thither did turn              him:</p>	
25	<p>The wise-mooded son of Wonred was powerless          To give a return-blow to the age-hoary man,          But his head-shielding helmet first hewed he to pieces,          That flecked with gore perforce he did totter,          Fell to the earth; not fey was he yet then,          But up did he spring though an edge-wound had reached him.          Then Higelac's vassal, valiant and dauntless,          When his brother lay dead, made his broad-bladed              weapon,</p>	<p>Ongentheow          gives a stout          blow in return.</p>
30	<p>Giant-sword ancient, defence of the giants,          Bound o'er the shield-wall; the folk-prince succumbed then,          Shepherd of people, was pierced to the vitals.</p>	<p>Eofor smites          Ongentheow          fiercely.</p>
35	<p>Ongentheow is</p>	

	There were many attendants who bound up his kinsman,	slain.
	Carried him quickly when occasion was granted That the place of the slain they were suffered to manage.	
40	This pending, one hero plundered the other, His armor of iron from Ongentheow ravished, His hard-sword hilted and helmet together; The old one's equipments he carried to Higelac.	Eofor takes the old king's war- gear to Higelac.
45	He the jewels received, and rewards 'mid the troopers Graciously promised, and so did accomplish: The king of the Weders requited the war-rush, Hrethel's descendant, when home he repaired him, To Eofor and Wulf with wide-lavished treasures,	Higelac rewards the brothers.
[101]	50 In land and rings wrought out of wire: None upon mid-earth needed to twit him <sup>3</sup> With the gifts he gave them, when glory they conquered; And to Eofor then gave he his one only daughter, The honor of home, as an earnest of favor.	His gifts were beyond cavil.
55	That's the feud and hatred—as ween I 'twill happen — The anger of earthmen, that earls of the Swedemen Will visit on us, when they hear that our leader Lifeless is lying, he who longtime protected His hoard and kingdom 'gainst hating assailers,	To Eofor he also gives his only daughter in marriage.
60	Who on the fall of the heroes defended of yore The deed-mighty Scyldings, <sup>4</sup> did for the troopers What best did avail them, and further moreover Hero-deeds 'complished. Now is haste most fitting, That the lord of liegemen we look upon yonder,	It is time for us to pay the last marks of respect to our lord.
65	And <i>that</i> one carry on journey to death-pyre Who ring-presents gave us. Not aught of it all Shall melt with the brave one—there's a mass of bright jewels, Gold beyond measure, grewsomely purchased And ending it all ornament-rings too	
70	Bought with his life; these fire shall devour, Flame shall cover, no earlman shall wear A jewel-memento, nor beautiful virgin Have on her neck rings to adorn her, But wretched in spirit bereavèd of gold-gems	
75	She shall oft with others be exiled and banished, Since the leader of liegemen hath laughter forsaken, Mirth and merriment. Hence many a war-spear Cold from the morning shall be clutched in the fingers, Heaved in the hand, no harp-music's sound shall	
[102]	80 Waken the warriors, but the wan-coated raven	

Fain over fey ones freely shall gabble,  
 Shall say to the eagle how he sped in the eating,  
 When, the wolf his companion, he plundered the slain.”  
 So the high-minded hero was rehearsing these stories  
 85 Loathsome to hear; he lied as to few of  
 Weirds and of words. All the war-troop arose then,  
 'Neath the Eagle's Cape sadly betook them,  
 Weeping and woful, the wonder to look at.  
 They saw on the sand then soulless a-lying,  
 90 His slaughter-bed holding, him who rings had given them  
 In days that were done; then the death-bringing moment  
 Was come to the good one, that the king very warlike,  
 Wielder of Weders, with wonder-death perished.  
 First they beheld there a creature more wondrous,  
 95 The worm on the field, in front of them lying,  
 The foeman before them: the fire-spewing dragon,  
 Ghostly and grisly guest in his terrors,  
 Was scorched in the fire; as he lay there he measured  
 Fifty of feet; came forth in the night-time<sup>5</sup>  
 100 To rejoice in the air, thereafter departing  
 To visit his den; he in death was then fastened,  
 He would joy in no other earth-hollowed caverns.  
 There stood round about him beakers and vessels,  
 Dishes were lying and dear-valued weapons,  
 105 With iron-rust eaten, as in earth's mighty bosom  
 A thousand of winters there they had rested:  
 That mighty bequest then with magic was guarded,  
 Gold of the ancients, that earlman not any  
 The ring-hall could touch, save Ruling-God only,  
 110 Sooth-king of Vict'ries gave whom He wished to  
<sup>6</sup>(He is earth-folk's protector) to open the treasure,  
 E'en to such among mortals as seemed to Him  
 proper.

The warriors go  
 sadly to look at  
 Beowulf's  
 lifeless body.

They also see the  
 dragon.

The hoard was  
 under a magic  
 spell.

God alone could  
 give access to it.

[1] For 'góða,' which seems a surprising epithet for a Geat to apply to the "terrible" Ongentheow, B. suggests 'gomela.' The passage would then stand: 'The old one went then,' etc.

[2] For 'segn Higeláce,' K., Th., and B. propose 'segn Higeláces,' meaning: *Higelac's banner followed the Swedes (in pursuit)*.—S. suggests 'sæcc Higeláces,' and renders: *Higelac's pursuit*.—The H.-So. reading, as translated in our text, means that the banner of the enemy was captured and brought to Higelac as a trophy.

[3] The rendering given in this translation represents the king as being generous beyond the possibility of reproach; but some authorities construe 'him' (2996) as plu., and understand the passage to mean that no one reproached the two brothers with having received more reward than they were entitled to.

[4] The name 'Scyldingas' here (3006) has caused much discussion, and given rise to several theories, the most important of which are as follows: (1)

After the downfall of Hrothgar's family, Beowulf was king of the Danes, or Scyldings. (2) For 'Scyldingas' read 'Scylfingas'—that is, after killing Eadgils, the Scylfing prince, Beowulf conquered his land, and held it in subjection. (3) M. considers 3006 a thoughtless repetition of 2053. (Cf. H.-So.)

[5] B. takes 'nihtes' and 'hwilum' (3045) as separate adverbial cases, and renders: *Joy in the air had he of yore by night, etc.* He thinks that the idea of vanished time ought to be expressed.

[6] The parenthesis is by some emended so as to read: (1) (*He* (i.e. *God*) *is the hope of men*); (2) (*he is the hope of heroes*). Gr.'s reading has no parenthesis, but says: *... could touch, unless God himself, true king of victories, gave to whom he would to open the treasure, the secret place of enchanters, etc.* The last is rejected on many grounds.

## XLII.

### WIGLAF'S SAD STORY.—THE HOARD CARRIED OFF.

Then 'twas seen that the journey prospered him little  
 Who wrongly within had the ornaments hidden<sup>1</sup>  
 Down 'neath the wall. The warden erst slaughtered  
 Some few of the folk-troop: the feud then thereafter  
 5 Was hotly avengèd. 'Tis a wonder where,<sup>2</sup>  
 When the strength-famous trooper has attained to the end of  
 Life-days allotted, then no longer the man may  
 Remain with his kinsmen where mead-cups are flowing.  
 So to Beowulf happened when the ward of the barrow,  
 10 Assaults, he sought for: himself had no knowledge  
 How his leaving this life was likely to happen.  
 So to doomsday, famous folk-leaders down did  
 Call it with curses—who 'complished it there—  
 [104] That that man should be ever of ill-deeds convicted,  
 15 Confined in foul-places, fastened in hell-bonds,  
 Punished with plagues, who this place should e'er ravage.<sup>3</sup>  
 He cared not for gold: rather the Wielder's  
 Favor preferred he first to get sight of.<sup>4</sup>  
 Wiglaf discoursed then, Wihstan his son: Wiglaf addresses  
 20 "Oft many an earlman on one man's account must his comrades.  
 Sorrow endure, as to us it hath happened.  
 The liegelord belovèd we could little prevail on,  
 Kingdom's keeper, counsel to follow,  
 Not to go to the guardian of the gold-hoard, but let him  
 25 Lie where he long was, live in his dwelling  
 Till the end of the world. Met we a destiny

	Hard to endure: the hoard has been looked at, Been gained very grimly; too grievous the fate that <sup>5</sup> The prince of the people pricked to come thither.	
30	I was therein and all of it looked at, The building's equipments, since access was given me, Not kindly at all entrance permitted Within under earth-wall. Hastily seized I	He tells them of Beowulf's last moments.
35	And held in my hands a huge-weighing burden Of hoard-treasures costly, hither out bare them To my liegeland beloved: life was yet in him, And consciousness also; the old one discoursed then Much and mournfully, commanded to greet you, Bade that remembering the deeds of your friend-lord	Beowulf's dying request.
40	Ye build on the fire-hill of corpses a lofty Burial-barrow, broad and far-famous, As 'mid world-dwelling warriors he was widely most honored While he reveled in riches. Let us rouse us and hasten Again to see and seek for the treasure,	
[105]		
45	The wonder 'neath wall. The way I will show you, That close ye may look at ring-gems sufficient And gold in abundance. Let the bier with promptness Fully be fashioned, when forth we shall come, And lift we our lord, then, where long he shall tarry, Well-beloved warrior, 'neath the Wielder's protection."	
50	Then the son of Wihstan bade orders be given, Mood-valiant man, to many of heroes, Holders of homesteads, that they hither from far,	Wiglaf charges them to build a funeral-pyre.
55	<sup>6</sup> Leaders of liegemen, should look for the good one With wood for his pyre: "The flame shall now swallow (The wan fire shall wax <sup>7</sup> ) the warriors' leader Who the rain of the iron often abided, When, sturdily hurled, the storm of the arrows Leapt o'er linden-wall, the lance rendered service, Furnished with feathers followed the arrow."	
60	Now the wise-mooded son of Wihstan did summon The best of the braves from the band of the ruler Seven together; 'neath the enemy's roof he Went with the seven; one of the heroes	He takes seven thanes, and enters the den.
65	Who fared at the front, a fire-blazing torch-light Bare in his hand. No lot then decided Who that hoard should havoc, when hero-earls saw it Lying in the cavern uncared-for entirely, Rusting to ruin: they rued then but little	
70	That they hastily hence hauled out the treasure, The dear-valued jewels; the dragon eke pushed they, The worm o'er the wall, let the wave-currents take him,	They push the dragon over the wall.
[106]	The waters enwind the ward of the treasures.	

75      There wounden gold on a wain was uploadd,  
 A mass unmeasured, the men-leader off then,  
 The hero hoary, to Whale's-Ness was carried.

The hoard is laid  
 on a wain.

- [1] For 'gehýdde,' B. suggests 'gehýðde': the passage would stand as above except the change of 'hidden' (v. 2) to 'plundered.' The reference, however, would be to the thief, not to the dragon.
- [2] The passage 'Wundur ... búan' (3063-3066), M. took to be a question asking whether it was strange that a man should die when his appointed time had come.—B. sees a corruption, and makes emendations introducing the idea that a brave man should not die from sickness or from old age, but should find death in the performance of some deed of daring.—S. sees an indirect question introduced by 'hwár' and dependent upon 'wundur': *A secret is it when the hero is to die, etc.*—Why may the two clauses not be parallel, and the whole passage an Old English cry of '*How wonderful is death!*'?—S.'s is the best yet offered, if 'wundor' means 'mystery.'
- [3] For 'strude' in H.-So., S. suggests 'stride.' This would require 'ravage' (v. 16) to be changed to 'tread.'
- [4] 'He cared ... sight of' (17, 18), S. emends so as to read as follows: *He (Beowulf) had not before seen the favor of the avaricious possessor.*
- [5] B. renders: *That which drew the king thither (i.e. the treasure) was granted us, but in such a way that it overcomes us.*
- [6] 'Folc-ágende' (3114) B. takes as dat. sing. with 'gódum,' and refers it to Beowulf; that is, *Should bring fire-wood to the place where the good folk-ruler lay.*
- [7] C. proposes to take 'weaxan' = L. 'vescor,' and translate *devour*. This gives a parallel to 'fretan' above. The parenthesis would be discarded and the passage read: *Now shall the fire consume, the wan-flame devour, the prince of warriors, etc.*

## XLIII.

### THE BURNING OF BEOWULF.

The folk of the Geatmen got him then ready      Beowulf's pyre.  
 A pile on the earth strong for the burning,  
 Behung with helmets, hero-knights' targets,  
 And bright-shining burnies, as he begged they should have them;  
 5      Then wailing war-heroes their world-famous chieftain,  
 Their liegelord beloved, laid in the middle.  
 Soldiers began then to make on the barrow      The funeral-  
 The largest of dead-fires: dark o'er the vapor      flame.  
 The smoke-cloud ascended, the sad-roaring fire,  
 10      Mingled with weeping (the wind-roar subsided)  
 Till the building of bone it had broken to pieces,  
 Hot in the heart. Heavy in spirit  
 They mood-sad lamented the men-leader's ruin;

And mournful measures the much-grieving widow

15 \* \* \* \* \*  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 20 \* \* \* \* \*  
 The men of the Weders made accordingly  
 A hill on the height, high and extensive,  
 Of sea-going sailors to be seen from a distance,  
 And the brave one's beacon built where the fire was,  
 25 In ten-days' space, with a wall surrounded it,  
 As wisest of world-folk could most worthily plan it.  
 They placed in the barrow rings and jewels,  
 [107] All such ornaments as erst in the treasure  
 War-mooded men had won in possession:  
 30 The earnings of earlmen to earth they entrusted,  
 The gold to the dust, where yet it remaineth  
 As useless to mortals as in foregoing eras.  
 'Round the dead-mound rode then the doughty-in-battle,  
 Bairns of all twelve of the chiefs of the people,  
 35 More would they mourn, lament for their ruler,  
 Speak in measure, mention him with pleasure,  
 Weighed his worth, and his warlike achievements  
 Mightily commended, as 'tis meet one praise his  
 Liegelord in words and love him in spirit,  
 40 When forth from his body he fares to destruction.  
 So lamented mourning the men of the Geats,  
 Fond-loving vassals, the fall of their lord,  
 Said he was kindest of kings under heaven,  
 Gentlest of men, most winning of manner,  
 45 Friendliest to folk-troops and fondest of honor.

The Weders  
 carry out their  
 lord's last  
 request.

Rings and gems  
 are laid in the  
 barrow.

They mourn for  
 their lord, and  
 sing his praises.

An ideal king.

[109]

## ADDENDA.

SEVERAL discrepancies and other oversights have been noticed in the H.-So. glossary. Of these a good part were avoided by Harrison and Sharp, the American editors of Beowulf, in their last edition, 1888. The rest will, I hope, be noticed in their fourth edition. As, however, this book may fall into the hands of some who have no copy of the American edition, it seems best to notice all the principal oversights of the German editors.

**From hámm** (194).—Notes and glossary conflict; the latter not having been altered to suit the conclusions accepted in the former.

**Pær gelyfan sceal dryhtnes dóme** (440).—Under 'dóm' H. says 'the might of the Lord'; while under 'gelyfan' he says 'the judgment of the Lord.'

**Eal bencþelu** (486).—Under 'benc-þelu' H. says *nom. plu.*; while under

‘eal’ he says *nom. sing.*

**Heatho-ræmas** (519).—Under ‘ætberan’ H. translates ‘to the Heathoremes’; while under ‘Heatho-ræmas’ he says ‘Heathoræmas reaches Breca in the swimming-match with Beowulf.’ Harrison and Sharp (3d edition, 1888) avoid the discrepancy.

**Fáh féond-scaða** (554).—Under ‘féond-scaða’ H. says ‘a gleaming sea-monster’; under ‘fáh’ he says ‘hostile.’

**Onfeng hraðe inwit-þancum** (749).—Under ‘onfón’ H. says ‘he received the maliciously-disposed one’; under ‘inwit-þanc’ he says ‘he grasped,’ etc.

**Níð-wundor séon** (1366).—Under ‘níð-wundor’ H. calls this word itself *nom. sing.*; under ‘séon’ he translates it as *accus. sing.*, understanding ‘man’ as subject of ‘séon.’ H. and S. (3d edition) make the correction.

**Forgeaf hilde-bille** (1521).—H., under the second word, calls it *instr. dat.*; while under ‘forgifan’ he makes it the *dat. of indir. obj.* H. and S. (3d edition) make the change.

**Brád** and **brún-ecg** (1547).—Under ‘brád’ H. says ‘das breite Hüftmesser mit bronzener Klinge’; under ‘brún-ecg’ he says ‘ihr breites Hüftmesser mit blitzender Klinge.’

[110] **Yðelíce** (1557).—Under this word H. makes it modify ‘ástód.’ If this be right, the punctuation of the fifth edition is wrong. See H. and S., appendix.

**Sélran gesóhte** (1840).—Under ‘sél’ and ‘gesécan’ H. calls these two words *accus. plu.*; but this is clearly an error, as both are *nom. plu., pred. nom.* H. and S. correct under ‘sél.’

**Wið sylfne** (1978).—Under ‘wið’ and ‘gesittan’ H. says ‘wið = near, by’; under ‘self’ he says ‘opposite.’

**þéow** (2225) is omitted from the glossary.

**For duguðum** (2502).—Under ‘duguð’ H. translates this phrase, ‘in Tüchtigkeit’; under ‘for,’ by ‘vor der edlen Kriegerschaar.’

**þær** (2574).—Under ‘wealdan’ H. translates *þær* by ‘wo’; under ‘mótan,’ by ‘da.’ H. and S. suggest ‘if’ in both passages.

**Wunde** (2726).—Under ‘wund’ H. says ‘dative,’ and under ‘wæl-bléate’ he says ‘*accus.*’ It is without doubt *accus.*, parallel with ‘benne.’

**Strengum gebæded** (3118).—Under ‘strengo’ H. says ‘Strengum’ = mit Macht; under ‘gebæded’ he translates ‘von den Sehnen.’ H. and S. correct this discrepancy by rejecting the second reading.

**Bronda be láfe** (3162).—A recent emendation. The fourth edition had ‘bronda betost.’ In the fifth edition the editor neglects to change the glossary to suit the new emendation. See ‘bewyrca.’

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