

# **BEOWULF: AN ANGLO- SAXON EPIC POEM**

*J. Lesslie Hall*

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**BEOWULF**  
**AN ANGLO-  
SAXON EPIC  
POEM**

*TRANSLATED  
FROM THE HEYNE-SOCIN  
TEXT*

BY

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TO  
My Wife

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# PREFACE.

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.

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.

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.*

*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 liegelord.*

*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.*

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.



# 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 widely-known 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](#).

**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 Broisinga 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](#).

**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](#).

**Healdene.**—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 Hoce, 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](#).

**Hoce.**—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](#).

**Hreosna-beorh.**—A promontory in Geatland, 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.'

**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').

WEEDED.—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.



# BEOWULF.

## I.

### THE LIFE AND DEATH OF SCYLD.

The famous race of  
Spear-Danes.

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

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.

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

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,

A son is born to him, who  
receives the name of  
Beowulf—a name  
afterwards made so  
famous by the hero of the  
poem.

Whom God-Father  
sent to solace the people.

He had marked the misery  
malice had caused them,

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.

20

So the carle that is  
young, by  
kindnesses rendered

The ideal Teutonic king  
lavishes gifts on his  
vassals.

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:

25

By praise-worthy actions must  
honor be got

'Mong all of the races. At the  
hour that was  
fated

Scyld dies at the hour  
appointed by Fate.

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,

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

By his own request, his  
body is laid on a vessel  
and wafted seaward.

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

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 He leaves Daneland on  
the breast of a bark.  
was born outward  
did send him

Lone on the main, the merest of  
infants:

And a gold-fashioned standard  
they stretched under heaven

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 whither  
the boat drifted.

Heroes under heaven, to what  
haven he hied.

[1] For the 'Pæt' of verse 15, Sievers suggests 'Þá' (= 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 succeeds his  
father Scyld

Belovèd land-prince, for long-  
lasting season

Was famed mid the folk (his  
father departed,

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 Healfdene's birth.  
body born in succession

Woke in the world, war-troopers'  
leader

Heorogar, Hrothgar, and Halga  
the good;

10

Heard I that Elan was  
Ongentheow's  
consort,

The well-beloved  
bedmate of the  
War-Scylfing  
leader.

He has three 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

Obeeyed 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, He is eager to build a  
great hall in which he  
and in it to share may feast his retainers

With young and old all of the  
blessings

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

Early 'mong men, that 'twas  
finished entirely,

25

The greatest of hall-buildings;  
Heorot he named  
it

The hall is completed,  
and is called Heort, or  
Heorot.

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:

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,

The Monster Grendel is  
madly envious of the  
Danemen's joy.

Bore it bitterly, he  
who bided in  
darkness,

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 [The course of the story is  
earthmen's interrupted by a short  
beginnings, reference to some old  
account of the creation.]

That Father Almighty earth had  
created,

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 glee of the warriors is  
overcast by a horrible  
dread.

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>

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

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;

Cain is referred to as a  
progenitor of Grendel,  
and of monsters in  
general.

In the feud He rejoiced not, but  
far away drove him

From kindred and kind, that  
crime to atone for,

Meter of Justice. Thence ill-  
favored creatures,

60

Elves and giants, monsters of  
ocean,

Came into being, and the giants  
that longtime

Grappled with God; He gave  
them requital.

[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.

## **GRENDEL THE MURDERER.**

Grendel attacks the  
sleeping heroes

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

5

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

He drags off thirty of  
them, and devours them

Thirty of thanemen; thence he  
departed

10

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:

A cry of agony goes up,  
when Grendel's horrible  
deed is fully realized.

Then, his meal-taking finished, a  
moan was uplifted,

15

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,

20

The monster returns the  
next night.

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  
otherwhere looked for

25

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

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:

King Hrothgar's agony  
and suspense last twelve  
years.

Twelve-winters' time torture  
suffered

The friend of the Scyldings, every  
affliction,

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

4Life-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



On handsome amends at the  
hands of the  
murderer;

Grendel is unremitting in  
his persecutions.

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.

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

God is against the  
monster.

(Since God did  
oppose him, not the throne could  
he touch,<sup>5</sup>

55

The light-flashing jewel, love of  
Him knew not).

'Twas a fearful affliction to the  
friend of the  
Scyldings

The king and his council  
deliberate in vain.

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.

60

They invoke the aid of  
their gods.

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

65

In innermost spirit, God they  
knew not,

Judge of their  
actions, All-  
wielding Ruler,

The true God they do not  
know.

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

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.*

## IV.

### BEOWULF GOES TO HROTHGAR'S ASSISTANCE.

Hrothgar sees no way of  
escape from the  
persecutions of Grendel.

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,

Beowulf, the Geat, hero of the poem, hears of Hrothgar's sorrow, and resolves to go to his assistance.

Good amid Geatmen, of Grendel's achievements

Heard in his home: 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

With fourteen carefully  
chosen companions, he  
sets out for Dane-land.

Had liegemen selected, likest to  
prove them

Trustworthy warriors; with  
fourteen companions

The vessel he looked for; a  
liegeman then showed them,

20

A sea-crafty man, the bounds of  
the country.



Fast the days fleeted; 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.

The foamy-necked The vessel sails like a bird  
floater fanned by the breeze,

Likest a bird,  
glided the waters,

In twenty four hours they  
reach the shores of  
Hrothgar's dominions

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

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

They are hailed by the  
Danish coast guard

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.

High on his horse then  
Hrothgar's retainer

Turned him to coastward,  
mightily brandished

His lance in his hands,  
questioned with  
boldness.

His challenge

“Who are ye men here, mail-  
covered warriors

Clad in your corslets, come thus  
a-driving

A high riding ship o'er the shoals  
of the waters,

<sup>3</sup>And hither 'neath helmets have  
hied o'er the ocean?

I have been strand-guard,  
standing as warden,

Lest enemies ever anywise 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

He is struck by Beowulf's  
appearance.

Of earls o'er the earth have *I* had  
a sight of

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.

Beowulf courteously  
replies.

The chief of the  
strangers rendered him answer,  
War-troopers' leader, and word-  
treasure opened:

“We are sprung                      We are Geats.  
from the lineage of the people of  
Geatland,

And Higelac's hearth-friends. To  
heroes  
unnumbered

My father Ecgtheow was  
well-known in his day.

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.

10

We, kindly of  
spirit, the lord of  
thy people,

Our intentions towards  
King Hrothgar are of the  
kindest.

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,

15

Is it true that a monster is  
slaying Danish heroes?

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

20

And the falling of dead. From  
feelings least selfish

I am able to render I can help your king to  
counsel to free himself from this  
horrible creature.  
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,

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

The coast-guard reminds  
Beowulf that it is easier to  
say than to do.

answered,

The doughty retainer: “The  
difference surely

30

’Twixt 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

I am satisfied of your  
good intentions, and shall  
lead you to the palace.

With weapons and armor. I shall  
lead you in person;

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

Your boat shall be well  
cared for during your stay  
here.

Close by the sea-shore, till the  
curved-neckèd bark shall

Waft back again the well-beloved  
hero

40

O'er the way of the water to  
Weder dominions.

To warrior so great  
'twill be granted  
sure

He again compliments  
Beowulf.

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,

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,

The land is perhaps  
rolling.

50

The well-fashioned wassail-hall  
wondrous and  
gleaming:

Heorot flashes on their  
view.

'Mid world-folk  
and kindreds that was widest  
reputed

Of halls under heaven which the  
hero abode in;

Its lustre enlightened lands  
without number.

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

The coast-guard, having  
discharged his duty, bids  
them God-speed.

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.”

[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 ‘gúðmódgum men’ (306).

## VI.

### BEOWULF INTRODUCES HIMSELF AT THE PALACE.

The highway glistened with  
many-hued pebble,

A by-path led the liegemen  
together.

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.

They set their arms and  
armor against the wall.

'Gainst the wall of the building

Their wide-fashioned war-shields  
they weary did set then,

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

A Danish hero asks them  
whence and why they are  
come.

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.

He expresses no little  
admiration for the  
strangers.

I ween that from valor, nowise as  
outlaws,

But from greatness of soul ye  
sought for King  
Hrothgar.”

Beowulf replies.

Then the strength-famous  
earlman answer rendered,

The proud-mooded Wederchief  
replied to his  
question,

25

We are Higelac's table-  
companions, and bear an  
important commission to  
your prince.

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.”

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,

Wulfgar, the thane, says  
that he will go and ask  
Hrothgar whether he will  
see the strangers.

The giver of rings, as thou urgest  
me do it,

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,

2Old 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,

He thereupon urges his liegelord to receive the visitors courteously.

Faring from far-lands: the  
foremost in rank

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

Hrothgar, too, is struck with Beowulf's appearance.



they seem

50

Of earls to be honored; sure the  
atheling is doughty

Who headed the heroes  
hitherward coming.”

[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.

Hrothgar remembers  
Beowulf as a youth, and  
also remembers his  
father.

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,

Beowulf is reported to  
have the strength of  
thirty men.

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,

God hath sent him to our  
rescue.

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.

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

Wulfgar went  
then, this word-  
message shouted:

Wulfgar invites the  
strangers in.

“My victorious liegelord 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

Beowulf salutes  
Hrothgar, and then  
proceeds to boast of his  
youthful achievements.

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 His fight with the nickers.  
body. Themselves they beheld me

When I came from the contest,  
when covered with gore

Foes I escaped from, where five<sup>3</sup> I  
had bound,

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 He intends to fight  
Grendel unaided.



matter, with the monster of evil,  
The giant, decide it. Thee I would  
therefore

55

Beg of thy bounty, Bright-Danish  
chieftain,

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* may unaided, my earlmen  
assisting me,

60

This brave-mooded war-band,  
purify Heorot.

I have heard on inquiry, the  
horrible creature

From veriest Since the monster uses  
no weapons,  
rashness recks not  
for weapons;

I this do scorn then, so be  
Higelac gracious,

My liegelord belovèd, lenient of  
spirit,

65

To bear a blade or a broad-  
fashioned target,

A shield to the onset; only with  
hand-grip

The foe I must I, too, shall disdain to use  
any.  
grapple, fight for  
my life then,

Foeman with foeman; he fain  
must rely on

The doom of the Lord whom  
death layeth hold  
of.

70

Should he crush me, he  
will eat my companions  
as he has eaten thy  
thanes.

I ween he will  
wish, if he win in the struggle,

To eat in the war-hall earls of the  
Geat-folk,

Boldly to swallow<sup>4</sup> them, as of  
yore he did often

The best of the Hrethmen! Thou  
needest not trouble

A head-watch to give me;<sup>5</sup> he will  
have me dripping

In case of my defeat, thou  
wilt not have the trouble  
of burying me.

And dreary with  
gore, if death  
overtake me,<sup>6</sup>

Will bear me off bleeding, biting  
and mouthing me,

The hermit will eat me, heedless  
of pity,

Marking the moor-fens; no more  
wilt thou need  
then

Find me my food.<sup>z</sup>

Should I fall, send my  
armor to my lord, King  
Higelac.

If I fall in the  
battle,

Send to Higelac the armor that  
serveth

To shield my bosom, the best of  
equipments,

Richest of ring-mails; 'tis the  
relic of Hrethla,

The work of Weird is supreme  
Wayland. Goes Weird as she  
must go!"

[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: *Þær ic (on) fifelgeban 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 Hrothgar responds.

discoursed, helm of the  
Scyldings:

“To defend our folk and to  
furnish assistance,<sup>1</sup>

Thou soughtest us hither, good  
friend Beowulf.

The fiercest of  
feuds thy father  
engaged in,

Reminiscences of  
Beowulf's father,  
Ecgtheow.

5  
Heatholaf killed he in hand-to-  
hand conflict

'Mid Wilfingish warriors; then  
the Wederish people

For fear of a feud were forced to  
disown him.

Thence flying he fled to the folk  
of the South-Danes,

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;

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,

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

What grief in Heorot Grendel  
hath caused me,

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  
From deeds so direful. Oft  
drunken with beer

25

O'er the ale-vessel  
promised warriors  
in armor

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

They would willingly wait on the  
wassailing-benches

A grapple with Grendel, with  
grimmet of edges.

Then this mead-hall at morning  
with murder was reeking,

The building was bloody at  
breaking of daylight,

30

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 down to the feast, and  
give us comfort.

Sit at the feast  
now, thy intents unto heroes,<sup>2</sup>

Thy victor-fame show, as thy  
spirit doth urge  
thee!”

A bench is made ready  
for Beowulf and his party.

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,

Who a beaker embellished bore  
with decorum,

40

The gleeman sings

And gleaming-  
drink poured. The gleeman sang  
whilom

Hearty in Heorot; The heroes all rejoice  
together.  
there was heroes'  
rejoicing,

A numerous war-band of Weders  
and Danemen.

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

wáere-ryhtum Ðú, 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.

Unferth, a thane of Hrothgar, is jealous of Beowulf, and undertakes to twit him.

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,

Did you take part in a  
swimming-match with  
Breca?

On the wide sea-currents at  
swimming contended,

10

Where to humor your pride the  
ocean ye tried,

From vainest  
vaunting  
adventured your  
bodies

'Twas mere folly that  
actuated you both to risk  
your lives on the ocean.

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,

25

Had borough and jewels. The  
pledge that he  
made thee

Breca outdid you entirely.

The son of Beanstan hath soothly  
accomplished.

Then I ween thou wilt find thee  
less fortunate  
issue,

Much more will Grendel  
outdo you, if you vie with  
him in prowess.

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, Beowulf retaliates.  
offspring of Ecgtheow:

“My good friend Unferth, sure  
freely and wildly,

Thou fuddled with O friend Unferth, you are  
beer of Breca hast fuddled with beer, and  
spoken, cannot talk coherently.

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

Younkers in years) We simply kept an  
that we yet would engagement made in  
adventure early life.

40

Out on the ocean; it all we  
accomplished.

While swimming the sea-floods,  
sword-blade 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,

He *could* not excel me,  
and I *would* not excel  
him.

45

More swift on the waves, nor  
*would* I from him go.

Then we two companions stayed  
in the ocean

Five nights  
together, till the  
currents did part us,

After five days the  
currents separated us.

The weltering waters, weathers  
the bleakest,

And nethermost night, and the  
north-wind whistled

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,

A horrible sea-beast  
attacked me, but I slew  
him.

My obedient blade; battle  
offcarried

60

The mighty mere-creature by  
means of my hand-blow.

[1] It has been plausibly suggested that 'síð' (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.*).

## X.

### BOWULF 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;

*My dear sword always  
served me faithfully.*

They missed the pleasure of  
feasting abundantly,

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

I put a stop to the  
outrages of the sea-  
monsters.

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  
crag. Weir'd often  
saveth

Fortune helps the brave  
earl.

15

The undoomed hero if doughty  
his valor!

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. After that escape I drifted  
to Finland.  
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

I have never heard of  
your doing any such bold  
deeds.

Of deeds so daring done by thee,  
Unferth,

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 . . . . .

. . .

. . . . . I  
utter no boasting;

30

You are a slayer of  
brothers, and will suffer  
damnation, wise as you  
may be.

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,

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.

Had your acts been as  
brave as your words,  
Grendel had not ravaged  
your land so long.

He hath found out fully that the  
fierce-burning hatred,

The edge-battle eager, of all of  
your kindred,

40

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,

The monster is not afraid  
of the Danes,

Killeth and feasteth, no contest  
expecteth

From Spear-Danish people. But  
the prowess and valor

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

On the second day, any  
warrior may go  
unmolested to the mead-  
banquet.

sun in its ether-robés,

O'er children of men shines from  
the southward!"

50

Then the gray-haired, war-famed  
giver of treasure

Was blithesome  
and joyous, the  
Bright-Danish ruler

Hrothgar's spirits are  
revived.

Expected assistance; the people's  
protector

Heard from  
Beowulf his bold  
resolution.

The old king trusts  
Beowulf. The heroes are  
joyful.

There was laughter of heroes;  
loud was the clatter,

55

The words were winsome.

Wealhtheow  
advanced then,

Queen Wealhtheow plays  
the hostess.

Consort of  
Hrothgar, of courtesy mindful,

Gold-decked saluted the men in  
the building,

And the freeborn woman the  
beaker presented

To the lord of the  
kingdom, first of  
the East-Danes,

She offers the cup to her  
husband first.

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:

65

She gives presents to the  
heroes.

Treasure-cups  
tendered, till time was afforded

That the decorous-mooded,  
diademed folk-  
queen

Then she offers the cup to  
Beowulf, thanking God  
that aid has come.

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,

70

That in any of earlmen she ever  
should look for

Solace in sorrow. He accepted the  
beaker,

Battle-bold warrior, at  
Wealththeow's  
giving,

Then equipped for  
combat quoth he  
in measures,

Beowulf states to the  
queen the object of his  
visit.

Beowulf spake, offspring of  
Ecgtheow:

75

“I purposed in spirit when I  
mounted the ocean,

When I boarded I determined to do or die.  
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 Glee is high.  
yore was heard in the building

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>a</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      Hrothgar retires, leaving  
rose then. One      Beowulf in charge of the  
saluted the other,      hall.

Hrothgar Beowulf, in rhythmical  
measures,

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.

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.

Hrothgar retires.

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 God has provided a watch  
for the hall.

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 Beowulf is self-confident  
strength and the Wielder's  
protection.

10 He prepares for rest.

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,

Beowulf Geatman, ere his bed he  
upmounted:

“I hold me no meaner in matters  
of prowess,

Beowulf boasts of his  
ability to cope with  
Grendel.

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.

No battle-skill<sup>a</sup> has  
he, that blows he should strike  
me,

We will fight with  
nature's weapons only.

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.”

God may decide who  
shall conquer

Then the brave-mooded hero  
bent to his slumber,

The pillow received the cheek of  
the noble;

And many a  
martial mere-  
thane attending

The Geatish warriors lie  
down.

30

Sank to his slumber. Seemed it  
unlikely

That ever  
thereafter any  
should hope to

They thought it very  
unlikely that they should  
ever see their homes  
again.

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,

35

Had recently ravished, of the race  
of the Scyldings

Too many by far. But God raised up a  
deliverer.  
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,

God rules the world.

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 trav'ler-at- Grendel comes to Heorot.

twilight came tramping and  
striding.

The warriors were sleeping who  
should watch the horned-  
building,

45

Only one warrior is  
awake.

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>

[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, 'Þá.' (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.

## XII.

### GRENDEL AND BEOWULF.

Grendel comes from the  
fens.

'Neath the cloudy  
cliffs came from the moor then  
Grendel going, God's anger bare  
he.

The monster intended some one  
of earthmen

In the hall-building grand to  
entrap and make  
way with:

He goes towards the  
joyous building.

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 This was not his first visit  
there.  
manor of Hrothgar  
had sought:

Ne'er found he in life-days later  
nor earlier

10

Hardier hero, hall-thanes<sup>1</sup> more  
sturdy!

Then came to the building the  
warrior marching,

Bereft of his His horrid fingers tear  
the door open.  
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—

15

Open the entrance. Early  
thereafter

The foeman trod the shining hall-  
pavement,

Strode he angrily; He strides furiously into  
the hall.  
from the eyes of  
him glimmered

A lustre unlovely likest to fire.

He beheld in the hall the heroes  
in numbers,

20

A circle of kinsmen sleeping  
together,

A throng of He exults over his  
supposed prey.  
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

25

The prospect of  
plenty. Providence  
willed not

Fate has decreed that he  
shall devour no more  
heroes. Beowulf suffers  
from suspense.

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.

30

No thought had the monster of  
deferring the  
matter,

Grendel immediately  
seizes a sleeping warrior,  
and devours him.

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

35

Feet and hands, too, eaten  
entirely.

Nearer he strode then, the stout-  
hearted warrior

Snatched as he Beowulf and Grendel  
grapple.  
slumbered, seizing  
with hand-grip,

Forward the foeman foined with  
his hand;

Caught he quickly the cunning  
deviser,

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:

The monster is amazed at  
Beowulf's strength.

Fearful in spirit, faint-mooded  
waxed he,

45

Not off could betake him; death  
he was pondering,

Would fly to his  
covert, seek the devils' assembly:

He is anxious to flee.

His calling no more was the same  
he had followed

Long in his lifetime. The liege-  
kinsman worthy

Of Higelac minded  
his speech of the  
evening,

Beowulf recalls his boast  
of the evening, and  
determines to fulfil it.

50

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,

'Twas a luckless day for  
Grendel.

Harrying harmer to Heorot  
wandered:

The palace re-                    The hall groans.  
echoed; to all of the Danemen,

60

Dwellers in castles, to each of the  
bold ones,

Earlmen, 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

Grendel's cries terrify the  
Danes.

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.

[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.**

Beowulf has no idea of  
letting Grendel live.

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

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:

No weapon would harm  
Grendel; he bore a  
charmed life.

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.

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

Grendel is sorely  
wounded.

The direful demon, damage  
incurable

25

His body bursts.

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

30

Unwinsome and woful; he wist  
the more fully

The end of his  
earthly existence  
was nearing,

The monster flees away  
to hide in the moors.

His life-days' limits. At last for  
the Danemen,

When the slaughter was over,  
their wish was accomplished.

The comer-from-far-land had  
cleansed then of evil,

35

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

Beowulf suspends  
Grendel's hand and arm  
in Heorot.

suspended,

The arm and the shoulder (there  
was all of the claw

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*.



## XIV.

### REJOICING OF THE DANES.

At early dawn, warriors  
from far and near come  
together to hear of the  
night's adventures.

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,

5  
The footprints of the foeman.  
Few of the  
warriors

Few warriors lamented  
Grendel's destruction.

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,

10

Fated and flying, to the flood of  
the nickers.

There in bloody  
billows bubbled  
the currents,

Grendel's blood dyes the  
waters.

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

15

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,

20

Heroes on horses. There were  
heard very often

Beowulf's praises; Beowulf is the hero of the  
hour.  
many often

asserted

That neither south nor north, in  
the circuit of  
waters,

He is regarded as a  
probable successor to  
Hrothgar.

O'er outstretching  
earth-plain, none  
other was better

'Mid bearers of war-shields, more  
worthy to govern,

25

'Neath the arch of the ether. Not  
any, however,

'Gainst the friend-lord muttered,  
mocking-words  
uttered

But no word is uttered to  
derogate from the old  
king

Of Hrothgar the  
gracious (a good  
king he).

Oft the famed ones permitted  
their fallow-skinned horses

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>

The gleeman sings the  
deeds of heroes.

<sup>3</sup>A man of  
celebrity, mindful of rhythms,

Who ancient traditions treasured  
in memory,

New word-groups found properly  
bound:

35

The bard after 'gan then  
Beowulf's venture

Wisely to tell of,  
and words that  
were clever

He sings in alliterative  
measures of Beowulf's  
prowess.

To utter skilfully, earnestly  
speaking,

Everything told he that he heard  
as to Sigmund's

Mighty  
achievements,  
many things  
hidden,

Also of Sigemund, who  
has slain a great fire-  
dragon.

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

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 slaughtered.

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,

60

Kinsman of Wæls: the drake in  
heat melted.

He was farthest  
famed of fugitive  
pilgrims,

Sigemund was widely  
famed.

Mid wide-scattered world-folk,  
for works of great prowess,

War-troopers' shelter: hence  
waxed he in  
honor.<sup>4</sup>

Heremod, an unfortunate  
Danish king, is  
introduced by way of  
contrast.

Afterward  
Heremod's hero-

strength failed him,

65

His vigor and valor. 'Mid  
venomous haters

To the hands of foemen he was  
fouly delivered,

Offdriven early.

Agony-billows

Oppressed him too long, to his people  
he became then,

Unlike Sigemund and  
Beowulf, Heremod was a  
burden to his people.

To all the athelings, an ever-great  
burden;

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.

Beowulf is an honor to  
his race.

He to all men  
became then far more beloved,  
Higelac's kinsman, to kindreds  
and races,

To his friends much dearer; him  
malice assaulted.—

Oft running and  
racing on roadsters they  
measured

The dun-colored highways. Then  
the light of the morning

Was hurried and hastened. Went  
henchmen in numbers

To the beautiful building, bold  
ones in spirit,

To look at the wonder; the  
liegelord 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 ‘déað-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.*

## 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):

Hrothgar gives thanks for  
the overthrow of the  
monster.

“For the sight we  
behold now,  
thanks to the Wielder

5  
Early be offered! Much evil I  
bided,

Snaring from Grendel:<sup>2</sup> God can  
e'er 'complish

Wonder on wonder, Wielder of  
Glory!

But lately I  
reckoned ne'er  
under heaven

I had given up all hope,  
when this brave liegeman  
came to our aid.

Comfort to gain me for any of  
sorrows,

10

While the handsomest of houses  
horrid with bloodstain

Gory uptowered; grief had  
offfrightened<sup>3</sup>

Each of the wise ones who  
weened not that ever

The folk-troop's defences 'gainst  
foes they should strengthen,

'Gainst sprites and monsters.

Through the might of the Wielder

A doughty retainer hath a deed  
now accomplished

Which erstwhile we all with our  
excellent wisdom

Failed to perform. If his mother yet liveth,  
well may she thank God  
for this son.  
May affirm very  
truly

What woman soever in all of the  
nations

Gave birth to the child, if yet she  
surviveth,

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

Hero less hardy hoard-treasure  
precious,

To a weaker in  
war-strife. By  
works of distinction

Thou hast won immortal  
distinction.

Thou hast gained for thyself now  
that thy glory shall flourish

30

Forever and ever. The All-Ruler  
quite thee

With good from His hand as He  
hitherto did thee!”

Beowulf answered, Beowulf replies: I was  
most happy to render  
thee this service.  
Ecgtheow’s  
offspring:

“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,

Unferth has nothing  
more to say, for Beowulf's  
actions speak louder than  
words.

Since the princes beheld there  
the hand that depended

'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,

That not any  
excellent edges of  
brave ones

No sword will harm the  
monster.

Was willing to touch him, the  
terrible creature's

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 'gyrn,' 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.

Heorot is adorned with  
hands.

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 be geared. Gold-  
flashing sparkled

5

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

The hall is defaced,  
however.

Which all within with irons was  
fastened,

Its hinges torn off: only the roof  
was

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

[A vague passage of five  
verses.]

2

The place awaiting, as Wyrð hath  
appointed,

15

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

Hrothgar goes to the  
banquet.

That the son of Healfdene went  
to the building;

The excellent atheling would eat  
of the banquet.

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,

Many a cupful quaffing  
complaisantly),

25

Doughty of spirit in the high-  
tow'ring palace,

Hrothgar and  
Hrothulf. Heorot  
then inside

Hrothgar's nephew,  
Hrothulf, is present.

Was filled with friendly ones;  
falsehood and treachery

The Folk-Scyldings now nowise  
did practise.

Then the offspring of Healfdene  
offered to Beowulf

Hrothgar lavishes gifts  
upon Beowulf.

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

35

He needed not blush for in  
battle-men's presence.

Ne'er heard I that      Four handsomer gifts  
many men on the      were never presented.  
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

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

Hrothgar commands that  
eight finely caparisoned  
steeds be brought to  
Beowulf.

Commanded that eight steeds  
with bridles

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

Was pleased to take part in the  
play of the edges;

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,

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.

[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.

And the atheling      Each of Beowulf's  
of earlmen to each      companions receives a  
of the heroes      costly gift.

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      The warrior killed by  
With gold should      Grendel is to be paid for  
be paid for, whom      in gold.  
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

Useth the world in this woful  
existence.

There was music and merriment  
mingling together

15

Hrothgar's scop recalls  
events in the reign of his  
lord's father.

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:

Hnæf, the Danish  
general, is treacherously  
attacked while staying at  
Finn's castle.

“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,

Queen Hildeburg is not  
only wife of Finn, but a  
kinswoman of the  
murdered Hnæf.

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

Finn's force is almost  
exterminated.

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,

Hengest succeeds Hnæf  
as Danish general.

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,

Compact between the  
Frisians and the Danes.

A hall and a high-seat, that half  
they might rule with

The sons of the Jutemen, and  
that Folcwalda's son would

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

Equality of gifts agreed  
on.

On the bench of  
the beer-hall. On both sides they  
swore then

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 No one shall refer to old  
grudges.  
Frisians the  
quarrel should speak of

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

Danish warriors are  
burned on a funeral-pyre.

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

60

Fatally wounded; no few had  
been slaughtered.

Hildeburg bade then, at the  
burning of Hnæf,

The bairn of her  
bosom to bear to

Queen Hildeburg has her  
son burnt along with  
Hnæf.

the fire,

That his body be burned and  
borne to the pyre.

The woe-stricken woman wept on  
his shoulder,<sup>2</sup>

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.

“Then the warriors The survivors go to  
Friesland, the home of  
Finn.  
departed to go to  
their dwellings,

Reaved of their friends, Friesland  
to visit,

Their homes and high-city.  
Hengest continued

Biding with Finn Hengest remains there all  
winter, unable to get  
away.  
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 always  
regardeth,

World-cheering weathers. Then  
winter was gone,

Earth's bosom was lovely; the  
exile would get him,

The guest from the He devises schemes of  
vengeance.  
palace; on  
grewsomet 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 Guthlaf and Oslaf  
revenge Hnæf's  
slaughter.  
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>

Finn is slain.

With corpses of foemen, and  
Finn too was slaughtered,

The king with his comrades, and  
the queen made a  
prisoner.

The jewels of Finn, and  
his queen are carried  
away by the Danes.

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

The excellent woman on oversea  
journey,

35

The lay is concluded, and  
the main story is  
resumed.



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.

Skinkers carry round the  
beaker.

Wealththeo advanced then

Going ’neath gold-crown, where  
the good ones were seated

40

Uncle and  
nephew; their  
peace was yet mutual,

Queen Wealththeow  
greet Hrothgar, as he  
sits beside Hrothulf, his  
nephew.

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 Be generous to the Geats.

Geatmen with gracious  
responses!

So ought one to do. Be kind to  
the Geatmen,

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,

Have as much joy as  
possible in thy hall, once  
more purified.

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

I know that Hrothulf will  
prove faithful if he  
survive thee.

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,

Beowulf is sitting by the  
two royal sons.

The war-youth  
together; there the good one was  
sitting

'Twiht the brothers twain,  
Beowulf Geatman.

[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.

A beaker was  
borne him, and  
bidding to quaff it

More gifts are offered  
Beowulf.

Graciously given, and gold that  
was twisted

Pleasantly proffered, a pair of  
arm-jewels,

Rings and corslet, of collars the  
greatest

5

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,

A famous necklace is referred to, in comparison with the gems presented to Beowulf.

The bracteates and jewels, from  
the bright-shining city,<sup>1</sup>

Eormenric's cunning craftiness  
fled from,

10

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,

15

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:

20

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:

Queen Wealththeow  
magnifies Beowulf's  
achievements.

25

“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

May gifts never fail thee.

Jewels and  
treasure. Be kind to my son, thou

Living in joyance! Here each of  
the nobles

Is true unto other, gentle in  
spirit,

Loyal to leader. The liegemen are  
peaceful,

The war-troops ready: well-  
drunken heroes,<sup>3</sup>

40

Do as I bid ye.” Then she went to  
the settle.

There was choicest of banquets,  
wine drank the  
heroes:

They little know of the  
sorrow in store for them.

Weird they knew  
not, destiny cruel,

As to many an earlman early it  
happened,

When evening had come and  
Hrothgar had parted

Off to his manor, the mighty to  
slumber.

Warriors unnumbered warded  
the building

As erst they did often: the ale-  
settle bared they,

'Twas covered all over with beds  
and pillows.

Doomed unto  
death, down to his  
slumber

A doomed thane is there  
with them.

Bowed then a beer-thane. Their  
battle-shields placed they,

Bright-shining targets, up by  
their heads then;

O'er the atheling on ale-bench  
'twas easy to see there

Battle-high helmet, burnie of  
ring-mail,

And mighty war-  
spear. 'Twas the  
wont of that people

They were always ready  
for battle.

55

To constantly keep them  
equipped for the battle,<sup>4</sup>

At home or marching—in either  
condition—

At seasons just such as necessity  
ordered

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. 'Of' frequently means 'constantly,' 'continually,' not always 'often.'—Why 'an (on) wíg gearwe' should be written 'ánwíg-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.*

## XX.

### 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

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



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

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

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,

Lived in the desert. Thence  
 demons  
 unnumbered

The poet again magnifies  
 Beowulf's valor.

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;

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 Grendel's mother comes  
to avenge her son.  
was anxious to go  
on

Her mournful mission, mindful  
of vengeance

For the death of her son. She  
came then to Heorot

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,

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

She seizes a favorite  
liegemen of Hrothgar's.

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,

50

A broadly-famed battle-knight.  
Beowulf was  
absent,

Beowulf was asleep in  
another part of the  
palace.

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

She grasped in its gore;<sup>4</sup> grief was  
renewed then

55

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

Beowulf is sent for.

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,

He comes at Hrothgar's  
summons.

Came with comrades, where the  
clever one bided

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

Beowulf inquires how  
Hrothgar had enjoyed his  
night's rest.

70

## Fully refreshed him, as fain he would have it.

[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 [2015](#) 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, Hrothgar laments the  
death of Æschere, his  
shoulder-companion.  
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,

5

My true-hearted counsellor,  
trusty adviser,

Shoulder-companion, when  
fighting in battle

Our heads we protected, when  
troopers were  
clashing,

He was my ideal hero.

And heroes were dashing; such  
an earl should be ever,

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,

By cramming  
discovered.<sup>1</sup> The  
quarrel she

This horrible creature  
came to avenge Grendel's  
death.

wreaked then,

That last night igone Grendel  
thou killedst

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:

I have heard my vassals  
speak of these two  
uncanny monsters who  
lived in the moors.

One of them wore, as well they  
might notice,

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-

The inhabit the most  
desolate and horrible  
places.

coverts,

Lands inaccessible, wind-beaten  
nesses,

Fearfullest fen-deeps, where a  
flood from the mountains

'Neath mists of the nesses  
netherward rattles,

40

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,

Even the hounded deer  
will not seek refuge in  
these uncanny regions.

Fly to the forest,  
firm-antlered he-  
deer,

Spurred from afar, his spirit he  
yieldeth,

50

His life on the shore, ere in he  
will venture



To cover his head. Uncanny the  
place is:

Thence upward ascendeth the  
surging of waters,

Wan to the welkin, when the  
wind is stirring

The weathers unpleasing, till the  
air groweth  
gloomy,

To thee only can I look  
for assistance.

55

And the heavens lower. Now is  
help to be gotten

From thee and thee only! The  
abode thou know'st not,

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 ‘gefrægnod’ (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 Þe’ (1345) is an instance of masc. rel. with fem. antecedent. So v. 1888, where ‘sé Þe’ 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                    Beowulf exhorts the old  
wise one! for each                king to arouse himself for  
it is better,                        action.

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

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.

Practice thou now patient  
endurance

Of each of thy sorrows, as I hope  
for thee soothly!"

Hrothgar rouses himself.  
His horse is brought.

Then up sprang  
the old one, the All-Wielder  
thanked he,

Ruler Almighty, that the man had  
outspoken.

Then for Hrothgar a war-horse  
was decked with a bridle,

Curly-maned courser. The clever  
folk-leader

Stately proceeded: They start on the track of  
the female monster.  
stepped then an  
earl-troop

Of linden-wood bearers. Her  
footprints were seen then

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, The sight of Æschere's  
head causes them great  
sorrow.  
a sorrow unlittle

To each of the earlmen, when to  
Æschere's head they

Came on the cliff. The current  
was seething

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 filled with  
serpents and sea-  
dragons.

Trying the waters, nickers a-lying  
On the cliffs of the nesses, which  
at noonday full often

45



Go on the sea-deeps their  
sorrowful journey,

Wild-beasts and wormkind; away  
then they hastened

Hot-mooded, One of them is killed by  
Beowulf.  
hateful, they heard  
the great clamor,

The war-trumpet winding. One  
did the Geat-prince

Sunder from earth-joys, with  
arrow from bowstring,

50

From his sea-struggle tore him,  
that the trusty  
war-missile

The dead beast is a poor  
swimmer

Pierced to his  
vitals; he proved in the currents

Less doughty at swimming whom  
death had offcarried.

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 prepares for a  
struggle with the  
monster.

Beowulf donned  
then his battle-  
equipments,

Cared little for life; inlaid and  
most ample,

The hand-woven corslet which  
could cover his body,

60

Must the wave-deeps explore,  
that war might be 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

He has Unferth's sword  
in his hand.

That Hrothgar's  
spokesman had lent him when  
straitened;

And the hilted hand-sword was  
Hrunting entitled,

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

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.

Unferth has little use for  
 swords.

Ecglaf's kinsman  
 minded not soothly,

Exulting in strength, what erst he  
 had spoken

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,

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 makes a parting  
speech to Hrothgar.

Beowulf spake,  
Ecgtheow's son:

“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    If I fail, act as a kind  
Should I lay down                                liegelord to my thanes,  
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  
belovèd,

10

Send unto Higelac

and send Higelac the  
jewels thou hast given me

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

I should like my king to  
know how generous a  
lord I found thee to be.



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-edgèd weapon; with  
Hrunting to aid me,

I shall gain me glory, or grim-  
death shall take  
me.”

Beowulf is eager for the  
fray.

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 is a whole day  
reaching the bottom of  
the sea.

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

Some one of men  
from above was

Grendel's mother knows  
that some one has  
reached her domains.

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,

She grabs him, and bears  
him to her den.

The ring-prince  
homeward, that he after was  
powerless

(He had daring to do it) to deal  
with his weapons,

But many a mere-beast  
tormented him  
swimming,

Sea-monsters bite and  
strike him.

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

Where no water whatever  
anywise 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,

45

Beowulf attacks the  
mother of Grendel.

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 will not bite.

The sword would not bite, her life  
would not injure,

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,

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 Beowulf falls.  
requit<sup>3</sup>al early thereafter,

And stretched out to grab him;  
the strongest of warriors

Faint-mooded stumbled, till he  
fell in his traces,

70 The monster sits on him  
with drawn sword.

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 His armor saves his life.  
woven bode on his shoulder;

It guarded his life, the entrance  
defended

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 God arranged for his  
escape.  
holy not awarded  
the victory,

80

All-knowing Lord; easily did  
heaven's

Ruler most righteous arrange it  
with justice;<sup>4</sup>

Uprose he erect ready for battle.

[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 'eaxe' (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 Beowulf grasps a giant-  
sword,  
the war-gems a  
weapon of victory,

An ancient giant-sword, of edges  
a-doughty,

Glory of warriors: of weapons  
'twas choicest,

Only 'twas larger than any man  
else was

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 and fells the female  
monster.  
bone-joints, the  
bill fully pierced her

Fate-cursèd body, she fell to the  
ground then:

The hand-sword was bloody, the  
hero exulted.

The brand was brilliant, brightly  
it glimmered,

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

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 body of  
Grendel, and cuts off his  
head.

Grendel lying, of life-joys  
bereavèd,

30

As the battle at Heorot erstwhile  
had scathed him;

His body far bounded, a blow  
when he suffered,

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

The waters are gory.

35

Gazed on the sea-deeps, that the  
surging wave-currents

Were mightily mingled, the  
mere-flood was gory:

Of the good one the gray-haired  
together held  
converse,

Beowulf is given up for  
dead.

The hoary of head,

that they hoped not to see again

The atheling ever, that exulting  
in victory

40

He'd return there to visit the  
distinguished folk-ruler:

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

The giant-sword melts.

To see any more. The sword-  
blade began then,

The blood having touched it,  
contracting and 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;

The brand early melted, burnt  
was the weapon:<sup>2</sup>

So hot was the blood, the  
strange-spirit  
poisonous

The hero swims back to  
the realms of day.

That in it did  
perish. He early swam off then

60

Who had bided in combat the  
carnage of haters,

Went up through the ocean; the  
eddies were 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 It takes four men to carry  
Grendel's head on a  
spear.  
to carry with labor

The head of Grendel to the high  
towering gold-hall

80

Upstuck on the spear, till  
fourteen most-valiant

And battle-brave Geatmen came  
there going

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:

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] 'Ðæs 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.) 178<sub>7</sub>; 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 ‘þæs,’ 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:

Beowulf relates his last  
exploit.

“Lo! we blithely have brought  
thee, bairn of Healfdene,

Prince of the Scyldings, these  
presents from ocean

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

God was fighting with  
me.

Gave me willingly  
to see on the wall a

Heavy old hand-sword hanging  
in splendor

(He guided most often the lorn  
and the friendless),

That I swung as a weapon. The  
wards of the house then

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,

The murder of Danemen. I then  
make thee this  
promise,

Heorot is freed from  
monsters.

Thou'lt be able in  
Heorot careless to slumber

With thy throng of heroes and  
the thanes of thy 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,

End-day for earlmen." To the  
age-hoary man  
then,

The famous sword is  
presented to Hrothgar.

The gray-haired  
chieftain, the gold-fashioned  
sword-hilt,

Old-work of giants, was  
thereupon given;

Since the fall of the fiends, it fell  
to the keeping

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

Hrothgar looks closely at  
the old sword.

hilt he regarded,

The ancient heirloom where an  
old-time contention's

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

It had belonged to a race  
hateful to God.

The Lord  
everlasting, through lash of the  
billows

The Father gave them final  
requital.

So in letters of rune on the clasp  
of the handle

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

Hrothgar praises  
Beowulf.

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

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

60

Such to the Scyldings, successors  
of Ecgwela;

He grew not to please them, but  
grievous destruction,

And diresome 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

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

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,

Hrothgar moralizes.

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 debars  
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.

[1] Or rather, perhaps, '*the inlaid, or damaskeened  
weapon.*' Cf. [24.57](#) and note.

## XXVI.

### HROTHGAR MORALIZES.—REST AFTER LABOR.

“Then bruised in A wounded spirit.  
his bosom he with bitter-toothed  
missile

Is hurt 'neath his helmet: from  
harmful pollution

He is powerless to shield him by  
the wonderful mandates

Of the loath-cursèd spirit; what  
too long he hath holden

5  
Him seemeth too small, savage  
he hoardeth,

Nor boastfully giveth gold-plated  
rings,<sup>1</sup>

The fate of the future flouts and  
forgetteth

Since God had erst given him  
greatness no little,

Wielder of Glory. His end-day  
anear,

10

It afterward happens that the  
bodily-dwelling

Fleetingly fadeth, falls into ruins;

Another lays hold who doleth the  
ornaments,

The nobleman's jewels, nothing  
lamenting,

Heedeth no terror. Oh, Beowulf  
dear,

15

Best of the heroes, from bale-  
strife defend thee,

And choose thee the better,  
counsels eternal;

Beware of  
arrogance, world-  
famous champion!

Be not over proud: life is  
fleeting, and its strength  
soon wasteth away.

But a little-while lasts thy life-  
vigor's fulness;

'Twill after hap early, that illness  
or sword-edge

20

Shall part thee from strength, or  
the grasp of the fire,

Or the wave of the current, or  
clutch of the edges,

Or flight of the war-spear, or age  
with its horrors,

Or thine eyes' bright flashing  
shall fade into darkness:

'Twill happen full early, excellent  
hero,

25

Hrothgar gives an  
account of his reign.

That death shall  
subdue thee. So the Danes a half-  
century

I held under heaven, helped them  
in struggles

'Gainst many a race in middle-  
earth's regions,

With ash-wood and edges, that  
enemies none

On earth molested me. Lo!  
offsetting change, now,

30

Sorrow after joy.



Came to my manor, grief after  
joyance,

When Grendel became my  
constant visitor,

Inveterate hater: I from that  
malice

Continually travailed with  
trouble no little.

Thanks be to God that I gained in  
my lifetime,

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,

Beowulf is fagged, and  
seeks rest.

The champion

doughty, greatly, to rest him:

An earlman early outward did  
lead him,

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 Geats prepare to  
leave Dane-land.

The high-mooded  
farer would faraway thenceward

Look for his vessel. The valiant  
one bade then,<sup>3</sup>

Offspring of  
Ecglaf, off to bear  
Hrunting,

Unferth asks Beowulf to  
accept his sword as a gift.  
Beowulf thanks him.

To take his weapon, his well-  
beloved iron;

He him thanked for the gift,  
saying good he accounted

65

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

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.

[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 Grdvtg. 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's farewell.

Beowulf spake, Ecgtheow's  
offspring:

“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

I shall be ever ready to  
aid thee.

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

Learn I that neighbors alarm thee  
with terror,

As haters did whilom, I hither  
will bring thee

For help unto heroes henchmen  
by thousands.

My liegelord will  
encourage me in aiding  
thee.



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

15

Though young in years, he yet  
will permit me,

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,

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 O Beowulf, thou art wise  
beyond thy years.  
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

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

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

Find a more fitting folk-lord to  
choose them,

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,

40

To Geat-folk and  
Danemen, the  
strife be suspended,

Thou hast healed the  
ancient breach between  
our races.

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

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,

Kinsman of  
Healdfene, a dozen of jewels,

Bade him safely seek with the  
presents

His well-beloved people, early  
returning.

Then the noble-  
born king kissed  
the distinguished,

Hrothgar kisses Beowulf,  
and weeps.

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,

That bold in council they'd meet  
thereafter.

The man was so dear that he  
failed to suppress the

60

Emotions that moved him, but in  
mood-fetters  
fastened

The old king is deeply  
grieved to part with his  
benefactor.

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

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

Giving liberally is the true  
proof of kingship.

Was frequently  
referred to: a folk-king indeed  
that

Everyway blameless, till age did  
debar him

70

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 The coast-guard again.

burnies. The land-warder noticed

The return of the earlmen, as he  
erstwhile had seen them;

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,

10

With horses and jewels, the ring-  
stemmed sailer:

The mast uptowered o'er the  
treasure of  
Hrothgar.

Beowulf gives the guard a  
handsome sword.

To the boat-ward a  
gold-bound brand he presented,

That he was afterwards honored  
on the ale-bench more highly

As the heirloom's owner. <sup>2</sup>Set he  
out on his vessel,

15

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                   The Geats see their own  
within sight of the           land again.  
cliffs of the Geatmen,

The well-known headlands. The  
wave-goer hastened

Driven by breezes, stood on the  
shore.

25                                   The port-warden is  
Prompt at the                   anxiously looking for  
ocean, the port-               them.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

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:

Hrethel's son Higelac at home  
there remaineth,<sup>4</sup>

35

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

Hygd, the noble queen of  
Higelac, lavish of gifts.

That the daughter of Hæreth had  
dwelt in the borough;

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,

Offa's consort, Thrytho, is  
contrasted with Hygd.

Hot-burning hatred: no hero  
whatever

'Mong household companions,  
her husband  
excepted

She is a terror to all save  
her husband.

45

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 belovèd 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

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.

[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 dæges’ 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,

Beowulf and his party  
seek Higelac.

Seeking the sea-  
shore, the sea-marches treading,

The wide-stretching shores. The  
world-candle glimmered,

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.

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 Queen Hygd receives the  
heroes.  
formal. The  
daughter of Hæreth

Coursed through the building,  
carrying mead-cups:<sup>1</sup>

She loved the retainers, tendered  
the beakers

To the high-minded Geatmen.  
Higelac 'gan then

Pleasantly plying  
his companion  
with questions

Higelac is greatly  
interested in Beowulf's  
adventures.

In the high-towering palace. A  
curious interest

Tormented his spirit, what  
meaning to see in

25

The Sea-Geats' adventures:  
"Beowulf worthy,

How throve your  
journeying, when  
thou thoughtest  
suddenly

Give an account of thy  
adventures, Beowulf  
dear.

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

30

Any at all? In  
agony-billows

My suspense has been  
great.

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>

35

Grappling with Grendel. To God I  
am thankful

To be suffered to see thee safe  
from thy journey.”



Beowulf answered, Beowulf narrates his adventures.  
bairn of old

Ecgtheow:

“’Tis hidden by no means,  
Higelac chieftain,

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

Needeth not boast  
of that cry-in-the-morning,

Who longest liveth of the loth-  
going kindred,<sup>3</sup>

Encompassed by moorland. I  
came in my journey

To the royal ring-hall, Hrothgar  
to greet there:

Soon did the  
famous scion of  
Healfdene,

Hrothgar received me  
very cordially.

When he understood fully the  
spirit that led me,

Assign me a seat with the son of  
his bosom.

The troop was in joyance; mead-  
glee greater

'Neath arch of the ether not ever  
beheld I

'Mid hall-building The queen also showed  
up no little honor.  
holders. The  
highly-famed queen,

55

Peace-tie of peoples, oft passed  
through the building,

Cheered the young troopers; she  
oft tendered a hero

A beautiful ring-band, ere she  
went to her sitting.

Oft the daughter of Hrothgar's lovely  
daughter.  
Hrothgar in view  
of the courtiers

To the earls at the end the ale-  
vessel carried,

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 to  
Ingeld, in order to unite  
the Danes and  
Heathobards.

Her faith has been plighted; the  
friend of the Scyldings,

The guard of the kingdom, hath  
given his sanction,<sup>4</sup>

65

And counts it a vantage, for a  
part of the quarrels,

A portion of hatred, to pay with  
the woman.

5Somewhere 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 Grdtvg., 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, þeah 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.

“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:

Ingeld is stirred up to  
break the truce.



‘Art thou able, my friend, to  
know when thou seest it

The brand which thy father bare  
to the conflict

In his latest adventure, ’neath  
visor of helmet,

The dearly-loved iron, where  
Danemen did slay him,

And brave-mooded Scyldings, on  
the fall of the heroes,

(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

More about  
Grendel, that thou  
fully mayst hear,

Having made these  
preliminary statements, I  
will now tell thee of  
Grendel, the monster.

Ornament-giver, what afterward  
came from

The hand-rush of heroes. When  
heaven's bright jewel

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

*Hondscio fell first*

happened a hopeless contention,

Death to the doomed one, dead  
he fell foremost,

45

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-  
fettters 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

I reflected honor upon  
my people.

Thy land with my labors. He left  
and retreated,

He lived his life a little while  
longer:

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

King Hrothgar lavished  
gifts upon me.

The friend of the  
Scyldings, with gold that was  
plated,

With ornaments many, much  
requited me,

70

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;

75

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

The old king is sad over  
the loss of his youthful  
vigor.

Mourn for the might that marked  
him in youth-days;

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

85

Grendel's mother.

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 falls a prey to  
her vengeance.  
Æschere, agèd  
adviser,

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 She suffered not his body  
to be burned, but ate it.  
offcarried in the  
clutch of the foeman<sup>2</sup>

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,

100

Might-deeds accomplish; much  
did he promise.

I found then the  
famous flood-  
current's cruel,

I sought the creature in  
her den,

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

and hewed her head off.

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,

Jewels were freely  
bestowed upon me.

But the warden of  
earlmen afterward gave me

Jewels in quantity, kinsman of  
Healfdene.

[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.*

## XXXI.

### GIFT-GIVING IS MUTUAL.

“So the belovèd land-prince lived  
in decorum;

I had missed no rewards, no  
meeds of my prowess,

But he gave me jewels, regarding  
my wishes,

Healdfene his bairn; I’ll bring  
them to thee, then,

5 Atheling of All my gifts I lay at thy  
feet.  
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      This armor I have  
said: “This suit-      belonged of yore to  
for-the-battle      Heregar.

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,

Higelac loves his nephew  
Beowulf.

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,

Beowulf gives Hygd the  
necklace that  
Wealththeow had given  
him.

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, Beowulf is famous.  
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

He is requited for the  
slights suffered in earlier  
days.

Came requital for the cuts he had  
suffered.

45

The folk-troop's defender bade  
fetch to the building

The heirloom of Hrethel,  
embellished with  
gold,

Higelac overwhelms the  
conqueror with gifts.

So the brave one  
enjoined it; there was jewel no  
richer

In the form of a weapon 'mong  
Geats of that era;

In Beowulf's keeping he placed it  
and gave him

50

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

*After Heardred's death,  
Beowulf becomes king.*

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

Of Hereric in battle. To Beowulf's  
keeping

Turned there in time extensive  
dominions:

He fittingly ruled He rules the Geats fifty  
years.  
them a fifty of  
winters

(He a man-ruler wise was,  
manor-ward old) till

A certain one 'gan, on gloom-  
darkening nights,

a The fire-drake.

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;

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,

\*            \*            \*            \*            \*  
\*            \*  
\*            \*            \*            \*            \*  
\*            \*

\* \* \* \* \* when the onset  
surprised him,

10

The hoard.

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,

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

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 ring-giver bewails  
the loss of retainers.

The earnings of earlmen. Lo! erst  
in thy bosom

Worthy men won them; war-  
death hath ravished,

Perilous life-bale, all my  
warriors,

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

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 The fire-dragon  
spirit. Then the ancient dusk-  
scather

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 The dragon meets his  
match.  
winters the waster  
of peoples

Held upon earth that excellent  
hoard-hall,

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 liegelord. Then the  
hoard<sup>5</sup> was discovered,

The treasure was taken, his  
petition was  
granted

The hero plunders the  
dragon's den

The lorn-mooded  
liegeman. His lord regarded

65

The old-work of earth-folk—'twas  
the earliest occasion.

When the dragon awoke, the  
strife was renewed there;

He snuffed 'long the stone then,  
stout-hearted found he

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

The dragon perceives that  
some one has disturbed  
his treasure.

80

That some man or  
other had discovered the gold,

The famous folk-treasure. Not  
fain did the hoard-ward

Wait until evening; then the ward  
of the barrow

Was angry in spirit, the loathèd  
one wished to

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, The dragon is infuriated.  
flaming. Fearful the start was

To earls in the land, as it early  
thereafter

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 The dragon spits fire.

began then to vomit forth fire,

To burn the great manor; the  
blaze then glimmered

For anguish to earlmen, not  
anything living

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.

Beowulf hears of the  
havoc wrought by the  
dragon.

Then straight was  
the horror to  
Beowulf published,

Early forsooth, that his own  
native homestead,<sup>1</sup>

15

The best of buildings, was  
burning and melting,

Gift-seat of Geatmen. 'Twas a  
grief to the spirit

Of the good-mooded hero, the  
greatest of

SORROWS:

He fears that Heaven is  
punishing him for some  
crime.

The wise one  
weened then that  
wielding his kingdom

'Gainst the ancient  
commandments, he had bitterly  
angered

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,

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: He orders an iron shield  
fully he knew then to be made from him,  
wood is useless.

That wood from the forest was  
helpless to aid him,

30

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.

He determines to fight  
alone.

Then the ring-  
prince disdained to seek with a  
war-band,

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

Beowulf's early triumphs  
referred to

A heap of hostility,  
hazarded dangers,

40

War-thane, when Hrothgar's  
palace he cleansèd,

Conquering combatant, clutched  
in the battle

The kinsmen of Grendel, of  
kindred detested.<sup>2</sup>

'Twas of hand- Higelac's death recalled.  
fights not least where Higelac  
was slaughtered,

When the king of the Geatmen  
with clashings of battle,

45

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

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.

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,

Heardred's lack of  
capacity to rule.

To be able to keep the kingdom  
devised him

60

'Gainst alien races, on the death  
of King Higelac.

Yet the sad ones  
succeeded not in  
persuading the atheling

Beowulf's tact and  
delicacy recalled.

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,

65

Gracious, with honor, till he grew  
to be older,

Wielded the  
Weders. Wide-  
fleeing outlaws,

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

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

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.

[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,

Beowulf has been preserved through many perils.

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 comrades, he seeks 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.

A guide leads the way,  
but

That in the throng  
was thirteenth of heroes,

That caused the beginning of  
conflict so bitter,

Captive and wretched, must sad-  
mooded  
thenceward

very reluctantly.

Point out the place: he passed  
then unwillingly

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,

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:

Beowulf's retrospect.

35

"I survived in my youth-days  
many a conflict,

Hours of onset: that all I  
remember.

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

Hrethel took me when I  
was seven.

Gave me treasure  
and feasting, our kinship  
remembered;

Not ever was I *any* less dear to  
him

Knight in the                      He treated me as a son.  
boroughs, than the bairns of his  
household,

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

One of the brothers  
accidentally kills another.

His sheltering  
chieftain shot with an arrow,

Erred in his aim and injured his  
kinsman,

One brother the other, with  
blood-sprinkled  
spear:

No fee could compound  
for such a calamity.

'Twas a feeless  
fight, finished in malice,

50

Sad to his spirit; the folk-prince  
however

Had to part from existence with  
vengeance  
untaken.

[A parallel case is  
supposed.]

So to hoar-headed  
hero 'tis heavily crushing<sup>1</sup>

To live to see his son as he rideth  
Young on the gallows: then  
measures he chanteth,

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

Reaved of their roaring; the  
riders are sleeping,

65

The knights in the grave; there's  
no sound of the harp-wood,

Joy in the yards, as of yore were  
familiar.

[1] ‘Gomelum ceorle’ (2445).—H. takes these words as referring to Hrethel; but the translator here departs from his editor by understanding the poet to refer to a hypothetical old man, introduced as an illustration of a father’s sorrow.

Hrethrel had certainly never seen a son of his ride on the gallows to feed the crows.

The passage beginning ‘swá bið géomorlic’ seems to be an effort to reach a full simile, ‘as ... so.’ ‘As it is mournful for an old man, etc. ... so the defence of the Weders (2463) bore heart-sorrow, etc.’ The verses 2451 to 2463½ would be parenthetical, the poet’s feelings being so strong as to interrupt the simile. The punctuation of the fourth edition would be better—a comma after ‘galgan’ (2447). The translation may be indicated as follows: *(Just) as it is sad for an old man to see his son ride young on the gallows when he himself is uttering mournful measures, a sorrowful song, while his son hangs for a comfort to the raven, and he, old and infirm, cannot render him any kelp—(he is constantly reminded, etc., 2451-2463)—so the defence of the Weders, etc.*

## XXXV.

### REMINISCENCES (*CONTINUED*).—BEOWULF'S LAST BATTLE.

“He seeks then his chamber,  
singeth a woe-song

One for the other; all too  
extensive

Seemed homesteads and plains.  
So the helm of the  
Weders

Hrethel grieves for  
Herebald.

Mindful of  
Herebald heart-sorrow carried,

5  
Stirred with emotion, nowise was  
able

To wreak his ruin on the ruthless  
destroyer:

He was unable to follow the  
warrior with hatred,

With deeds that were direful,  
though dear he not held him.

Then pressed by the pang this  
pain occasioned him,

10

He gave up glee, God-light  
elected;

He left to his sons, as the man  
that is rich does,

His land and fortress, when from  
life he departed.

Then was crime                      Strife between Swedes  
and hostility 'twixt                and Geats.  
Swedes and Geatmen,

O'er wide-stretching water  
warring was mutual,

15

Burdensome hatred, when  
Hrethel had perished,

And Ongentheow's offspring  
were active and valiant,

Wished not to hold to peace  
oversea, but

Round Hreosna-beorh often  
accomplished

Cruelest 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

Hæthcyn's fall at  
Ravenswood.

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.

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

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

40

Beowulf refers to his  
having slain Dæghrefn.

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.



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;

He boasts of his youthful  
prowess, and declares  
himself still fearless.

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- His last salutations.  
liegemen—his last salutation:

“No brand would I bear, no blade  
for the dragon,

Wist I a way my word-boast to  
'com<sup>1</sup>plish

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,

65

Let Fate decide between  
us.

Each one's

Creator. I am eager in spirit,

With the wingèd war-hero to  
away with all boasting.

Bide on the barrow with burnies  
protected,

Earls in armor,  
which of *us* two  
may better

Wait ye here till the battle  
is over.

Bear his disaster, when 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!"

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,

The place of strife is  
described.

Stone-arches  
standing, stout-hearted  
champion,

Saw a brook from the barrow  
bubbling out thenceward:

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,

Beowulf calls out under  
the stone arches.

The hoard-ward  
distinguished the speech of a  
man;

Time was no longer to look out  
for friendship.

The breath of the monster issued  
forth first,

Vapory war-sweat, out of the  
stone-cave:

95

The terrible encounter.

The earth re-  
echoed. The earl 'neath the  
barrow

Lifted his shield, lord of the  
Geatmen,

Tow'rd the terrible stranger: the  
ring-twisted creature's

Heart was then ready to seek for  
a struggle.

The excellent Beowulf brandishes his  
sword,  
battle-king first  
brandished his weapon,

100

The ancient heirloom, of edges  
unblunted,<sup>3</sup>

To the death-planners twain was  
terror from other.

The lord of the and stands against his  
shield.  
troopers intrepidly  
stood then

'Gainst his high-rising shield,  
when the dragon  
coiled him

The dragon coils himself.



Quickly together: in corslet he  
bided.

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

The dragon rages

Gleamed then afar: the gold-  
friend of Weders

Boasted no  
conquests, his

Beowulf's sword fails  
him.

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                    The combat is renewed.  
other. Anew and afresh

The hoard-ward took heart  
(gasps heaved  
then his bosom):

The great hero is reduced  
to extremities.

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                    His comrades flee!  
spirit, but they sped to the forest,

Seeking for safety. The soul-  
deeps of one were

Ruffled by care:                    Blood is thicker than  
water.

# kin-love can never

135

Aught in him waver who well  
doth consider.

[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 ‘wiðgrípan,’ 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.

Wiglaf remains true—the  
ideal Teutonic liegeman.

The son of

Weohstan was Wiglaf entitled,

Shield-warrior precious, prince  
of the Scylfings,

Ælfhere's kinsman: he saw his  
dear liegelord

Enduring the heat 'neath helmet  
and visor.

5

Then he minded the holding that  
erst he had given  
him,

Wiglaf recalls Beowulf's  
generosity.

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,

10

Which was known among  
earthmen as the relic of  
Eanmund,

Ohthere'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

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,

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

This is Wiglaf's first  
battle as liegeman of  
Beowulf.

25

Aiding his liegelord; 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:

30

Wiglaf appeals to the  
pride of the cowards.

“I remember the  
time when, tasting the mead-cup,

We promised in the hall the lord  
of us all

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:

35

How we have forfeited  
our liegelord’s  
confidence!

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,

40

Ward of his people, for most of  
achievements,

Doings audacious, he did among  
earth-folk.

The day is now  
come when the  
ruler of earthmen

Our lord is in sore need  
of us.

Needeth the vigor of valiant  
heroes:

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 I would rather die than  
mickle the liefer go home with out my  
suzerain.

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,

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

Surely he does not  
deserve to die alone.

Earned by his exploits, he only of  
Geatmen

Sorrow should suffer, sink in the  
battle:

55

Brand and helmet to us both  
shall be common,

Shield-cover, burnie." Through  
the bale-smoke he stalked then,

Went under helmet to the help of  
his chieftain,

Briefly  
discoursing:

Wiglaf reminds Beowulf  
of his youthful boasts.

“Beowulf dear,

Perform thou all fully, as thou  
formerly saidst,

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,

The monster advances on  
them.

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

70

To the youthful spear-hero: but  
the young-aged stripling

Quickly advanced 'neath his  
kinsman's war-target,

Since his own had been ground  
in the grip of the fire.

Then the warrior- Beowulf strikes at the  
dragon.  
king was careful of  
glory,

He soundly smote with sword-  
for-the-battle,

75

That it stood in the head by  
hatred driven;

Nægling was shivered, the old  
and iron-made

Brand of Beowulf His sword fails him.  
in battle deceived him.

'Twas denied him that edges of  
irons were able

To help in the battle; the hand  
was too mighty

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.

The dragon advances on  
Beowulf again.

Then the people-  
despoiler—third of his onsets—

Fierce-raging fire-drake, of feud-  
hate was mindful,

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 ‘*Þonne*’ he reads ‘*Þone,*’ rel. pr.

## XXXVII.

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

Wiglaf defends Beowulf.

Then I heard that at need of the  
king of the people

The upstanding earlman  
exhibited prowess,

Vigor and courage, as suited his  
nature;

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.            Beowulf draws his knife,  
The liegelord himself then

10

Retained his consciousness,  
brandished his war-knife,

Battle-sharp, bitter, that he bare  
on his armor:

The Weder-lord            and cuts the dragon.  
cut the worm in the middle.

They had felled the enemy (life  
drove out then<sup>3</sup>

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,

The latest of  
world-deeds. The  
wound then began

Beowulf's wound swells  
and burns.

Which the earth-dwelling dragon  
erstwhile had wrought him

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 He sits down exhausted.  
wall, he prudent of spirit

Might sit on a settle; he saw the  
giant-work,

25

How arches of stone  
strengthened with pillars

The earth-hall eternal inward  
supported.

Then the long-worthy liegeman  
laved with his  
hand the

Wiglaf bathes his lord's  
head.

Far-famous  
chieftain, gory from sword-edge,

Refreshing the face of his friend-  
lord and ruler,

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

His measure of days, death very  
near):

“My son I would  
give now my  
battle-equipments,

Beowulf regrets that he  
has no son.

Had any of heirs been after me  
granted,

Along of my body. This people I  
governed

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. I can rejoice in a well-  
Joy over all this spent life.

45



I'm able to have, though ill with  
my death-wounds;

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,

Bring me the hoard,  
Wiglaf, that my dying  
eyes may be refreshed by  
a sight of it.

50

Well-lovèd Wiglaf, now the worm  
is a-lying,

Sore-wounded sleepeth,  
disseized of his treasure.

Go thou in haste that treasures of  
old I,

Gold-wealth may gaze on,  
together see lying

The ether-bright jewels, be easier  
able,

55

Having the heap of hoard-gems,  
to yield my

Life and the land-folk whom long  
I have governed.”

[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] ‘*Þæt þæt fýr*’ (2702), S. emends to ‘*þá þæt fýr*’ = *when the fire began to grow less intense afterward*. This emendation relieves the passage of a plethora of conjunctive *þæt*’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 Wiglaf fulfils his lord's  
behest.  
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, The dragon's den.  
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,

The dragon is not there.

20

To examine the jewels. Sight of  
the dragon

Not any was offered, but edge  
offcarried him.

Then I heard that      Wiglaf bears the hoard  
the hero the              away.  
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,

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

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),

The old one in  
sorrow: “For the  
jewels I look on

Beowulf is rejoiced to see  
the jewels.

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 aged life  
to me granted

For treasure of jewels, attend ye  
henceforward

The wants of the  
war-thanes; I can  
wait here no longer.

He desires to be held in  
memory by his people.

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,

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 hero's last gift

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:

“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

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.

[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 ‘gehwo<sup>n</sup>e,’ 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

Wiglaf is sorely grieved to  
see his lord look so un-  
warlike.

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,

5

Horrible earth-drake, harassed  
with sorrow:

The round-twisted  
monster was  
permitted no longer

The dragon has  
plundered his last hoard.

To govern the ring-hoards, but  
edges of war-swords

Mightily seized him, battle-  
sharp, sturdy

Leavings of hammers, that still  
from his wounds

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

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

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 The cowardly thanes  
come out of the thicket.  
returned from 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;

They are ashamed of  
their desertion.

But blushing with  
shame, with shields they betook  
them,

With arms and armor where the  
old one was lying:

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. Wiglaf is ready to  
excoriate them.

From the young  
one forthwith then

Could grim-worded greeting be  
got for him quickly

40

Whose courage had failed him.  
Wiglaf discoursed then,

Weohstan his son, sad-mooded  
hero,

Looked on the He begins to taunt them.

hated: "He who soothness will  
utter

Can say that the liegelord who  
gave you the jewels,

The ornament-armor wherein ye  
are standing,

45

When on ale-bench often he  
offered to hall-men

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

Surely our lord wasted  
his armor on poltroons.

When battle o'ertook him.<sup>2</sup> The  
troop-king no need had

50

To glory in comrades; yet God  
permitted him,

Victory-Wielder,      He, however, got along  
with weapon      without you  
unaided

Himself to avenge, when vigor  
was needed.

I life-protection but little was  
able

To give him in battle, and I 'gan,  
notwithstanding,

55      With some aid, I could  
have saved our liegelord  
Helping my  
kinsman (my strength  
overtaxing):

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.

60

Now must  
ornament-taking  
and weapon-bestowing,

Gift-giving is over with  
your people: the ring-lord  
is dead.

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

65

Shall learn of your leaving your  
lord so basely,

The dastardly  
deed. Death is  
more pleasant

What is life without  
honor?

To every earlman than infamous  
life is!”

[1] For ‘dædum rædan’ (2859) B. suggests ‘déað árædan,’ 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.

Wiglaf sends the news of  
Beowulf's death to  
liegemen near by.

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,

5

The end of his lifetime and the  
coming again of

The liegelord beloved. Little  
reserved he



Of news that was known, who the  
ness-cliff did travel,

But he truly discoursed to all that  
could hear him:

“Now the free-                      The messenger speaks.  
giving friend-lord of the folk of  
the Weders,

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

Wiglaf sits by our dead  
lord.

With bite of his  
sword-edge. Wiglaf is sitting,

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

Our lord's death will lead  
to attacks from our old  
foes.

20

A season of strife when the death  
of the folk-king

To Frankmen and Frisians in far-  
lands is published.

The war-hatred waxed warm  
'gainst the  
Hugmen,

Higelac's death recalled.

When Higelac came with an army  
of vessels

Faring to Friesland, where the  
Frankmen in battle

25

Humbled him and bravely with  
overnight '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

Hæthcyn's fall referred  
to.

Sundered

Hæthcyn the Hrethling from life-  
joys,

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,

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.

The messenger continues, and refers to the feuds of Swedes and Geats.

“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,

5

Old and dejected to go to the  
fastness,

Ongentho 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,

10

'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.

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:

Wulf wounds  
 Ongentheow.

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,

Ongentheow gives a stout  
blow in return.

25

When the king of the thane-troop  
thither did turn him:

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,

30

Fell to the earth; not fey was he  
yet then,

But up did he spring though an  
edge-wound had  
reached him.

Eofor smites Ongentheow  
fiercely.

Then Higelac's  
vassal, valiant and dauntless,

When his brother lay dead, made  
his broad-bladed weapon,

Giant-sword ancient, defence of  
the giants,

35

Bound o'er the shield-wall; the  
folk-prince  
succumbed then,

Ongentheow is slain.

Shepherd of people, was pierced  
to the vitals.

There were many attendants who  
bound up his kinsman,  
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.

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,

Higelac rewards the  
brothers.

To Eofor and Wulf  
with wide-lavished treasures,

To each of them granted a  
hundred of thousands

50

In land and rings wrought out of  
wire:

None upon mid-  
earth needed to  
twit him<sup>3</sup>

His gifts were beyond  
cavil.

With the gifts he gave them,  
when glory they  
conquered;

To Eofor he also gives his  
only daughter in  
marriage.

And to Eofor then  
gave he his one  
only daughter,

The honor of home, as an earnest  
of favor.

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,

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,

It is time for us to pay the  
last marks of respect to  
our lord.

That the lord of liegemen we look  
upon yonder,

65

And *that* 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,  
grewsomenely 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

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

They also see the dragon.

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>s</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 The hoard was under a  
magic spell.  
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

God alone could give  
access to it.  
Ⓜ(He is earth-folk's  
protector) to open the treasure,

# E'en to such among mortals as seemed to Him proper.

[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 'hwílum' (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—

That that man should be ever of  
ill-deeds convicted,

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 Wiglaf addresses his  
comrades.  
then, Wihstan his  
son:

“Oft many an earlman on one  
man's account must

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 He tells them of  
Beowulf's last moments.  
earth-wall. Hastily  
seized I

And held in my hands a huge-  
weighing burden

35

Of hoard-treasures costly, hither  
out bare them

To my liegelord beloved: life was  
yet in him,

And consciousness also; the old  
one discoursed then

Much and mournfully,  
commanded to  
greet you,

Beowulf's dying request.

Bade that remembering the  
deeds of your friend-lord

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,

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,

50

Well-beloved warrior, 'neath the  
Wielder's  
protection.”

Wiglaf charges them to  
build a funeral-pyre.

Then the son of  
Wihstan bade orders be given,  
Mood-valiant man, to many of  
heroes,

Holders of homesteads, that they  
 hither from far,

6 Leaders of liegemen, should look  
 for the good one

55

With wood for his pyre: “The  
 flame shall now swallow

(The wan fire shall wax<sup>z</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,

60

Furnished with feathers followed  
 the arrow.”



Now the wise-mooded son of  
Wihstan did summon

The best of the braves from the  
band of the ruler

Seven together;           He takes seven thanes,  
'neath the enemy's       and enters the den.  
roof he

Went with the seven; one of the  
heroes

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 They push the dragon  
over the wall.  
jewels; the dragon  
eke pushed they,

The worm o'er the wall, let the  
wave-currents take him,

The waters enwind the ward of  
the treasures.

There wounden The hoard is laid on a  
wain.  
gold on a wain was  
uploaded,

75

A mass unmeasured, the men-  
leader off then,

The hero hoary, to Whale's-Ness  
was carried.

[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 'wundur' 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.

Beowulf's pyre.

The folk of the Geatmen got him  
then ready

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

The funeral-flame.

then to make on the barrow

The largest of dead-fires: dark  
o'er the vapor

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

The Weders carry out  
their lord's last request.

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,

All such  
ornaments as erst  
in the treasure

Rings and gems are laid  
in the barrow.

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

They mourn for their  
lord, and sing his praises.

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 An ideal king.

kindest of kings under heaven,

Gentlest of men, most winning of  
manner,

45

Friendliest to folk-troops and  
fondest of honor.



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

**Þær 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.'

**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 'bewyrcan.'

**END**