Runic and heroic poems of the old Teutonic peoples

Dickins Bruce
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Author: Dickins Bruce

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PREFACE

In preparing this edition I have set before myself a threefold aim; in the first place, to supply a sound, conservative text with all the necessary apparatus, prolegomena, translation, bibliography and notes both critical and exegetical; in the second, to make use of the archæological method which Professor Ridgeway has applied so brilliantly to the study of the Homeric poems; and in the third, to emphasise the essential unity of the old Teutonic languages in 'matter' as in poetic diction. How far it has been accomplished I cannot say: I can at least plead with Marryat's nurse in Mr Midshipman Easy that my book is 'such a little one.'

It cannot be claimed that the Runic poems are of any great literary value; they are exactly parallel, indeed, to the old nursery rhyme:

'A was an Archer who shot at a frog;
B was a Butcher who had a big dog.'

But they are of certain interest to the student of social history and of supreme importance in the early history of the English language, a fact most unfortunately neglected in two of the most recent and otherwise the best of English historical grammars.

The Anglo-Saxon poem last appeared in England in 1840; the Norwegian is only available in Vigfússon and
Preface

Powell's *Icelandic Prose Reader* and *Corpus Poeticum Boreale*; the Icelandic has never before been published in this country.

The second part of this work contains the extant fragments of Anglo-Saxon heroic poetry outside *Beowulf* and *Widsith*, which have been so admirably treated by Dr Chambers (Cambridge, 1912 and 1914). *Finn* has, indeed, been edited by Dr Chambers as an appendix to *Beowulf*; but my notes were already complete when *Beowulf* appeared, and as I differ from him on various points—so much the worse for me in all probability—I have ventured to include it. It has been a labour of love: for *Finn*, mutilated and corrupt, is yet the fine flower of Anglo-Saxon heroic poetry. Full of rapid transitions and real poetic glow, the fight in Finn’s beleaguered hall, lighted by the flash of swords and echoing with the din of combat, is one of the most vivid battle-pieces in any language—a theme too often worn threadbare by dull mechanical prentice-work in later Anglo-Saxon poetry, when versifying the scriptures became a devastating industry and the school of Cynewulf anticipated by some eight centuries the school of Boyd.

*Waldhere* has not been edited in English since the *editio princeps* of 1860, and Dr W. W. Lawrence’s treatment of *Deor* is not very accessible in *Volume IX.* of the American journal *Modern Philology*.

The Old High German *Hildebrand* has never before been edited in English, and I must apologise to experts for my temerity. It is primarily intended for students of Anglo-Saxon and Old Norse; but it may, I hope, be useful to neophytes in German too.

It is now my pleasant duty to thank my many friends in Cambridge. I have received encouragement and help of the
most substantial kind from the Master, President, Librarian and Fellows of my own College; from the Disney Professor of Archæology and the Schröder Professor of German; from Miss A. C. Pauzes, of Newnham College, Mr E. C. Quiggin, of Gonville and Caius College, and Mr E. H. Minns, of Pembroke College. My friends and fellow students, Miss N. Kershaw, of St Andrews, and Mr W. F. W. Mortlock, Scholar of Trinity College, have read part of the MS. From the staff of the University Library and of the University Press I have received unfailing courtesy, however much I have tested their patience. But most of all I have to thank Mr H. M. Chadwick, Bosworth and Elrington Professor of Anglo-Saxon, who has rescued me from countless pits which I had digged for myself. Anyone who has had the good fortune to work with him will appreciate my debt; no one else can estimate it. If this volume does anything to lighten the burdens which he has piled upon himself, I shall not feel that I have toiled in vain.

B. D.

35 Brunswick Square, W.C.

October 15th, 1915.
ABBREVIATIONS

Aarb. f. n. O. Aarbøger for nordisk Oldkyndighed og Historie. Kjøbenhavn, 1866--.


Archiv f. n. S. Herrigs Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen. Braunschweig, 1846--.

Arkiv f. n. F. Arkiv för nordisk Filologi. Christiania, 1883-8; Lund, 1889--.

B. B. Bonner Beiträge zur Anglistik hrsg. v. M. Trautmann. Bonn, 1898--.

E. St. Englische Studien. Hellbronn, 1877-89; Leipzig, 1890--.


M. G. H. Monumenta Germaniae Historica edicit G. H. Pertz; Scriptorum Tomi xxix. Hannoverae, 1826--.

M. L. N. Modern Language Notes. Baltimore, 1886--.


Mod. Phil. Modern Philology. Chicago, 1903--.

P. B. B. Paul und Braunes Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Litteratur. Halle, 1874--.


Tidskrift. Tidskrift for Philologie og Pædagogik. Kjøbenhavn, 1860--.


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The Runic Alphabet figured x
THE RUNIC ALPHABET

1. From the earliest inscriptions:

\[ \text{F. N. P. F. R. C. X. P. : H. T. I. Z. W. Y. S.} \]
\[ \text{f. u. p. a. r. k. z. w. : h. n. i. j. : p. z. s.} \]
\[ \text{T. B. M. M. G. O. N. Q.} \]
\[ \text{t. b. e. m. l. n. o.} \]

2. Anglo-Saxon. (a) Runic Poem. (b) Salzburg Codex.

(a) \[ \text{F. N. P. N. R. H. X. P. : H. N. T. I. F. S. Z. H. Y. Y.} \]
\[ \text{f. u. p. o. r. c. z. w. : h. n. i. j. i. h. p. z. s.} \]

(b) \[ \text{T. B. M. M. G. X. R. H. : F. P. A. * Y} \]

\[ \text{[Y. h. O. X.]} \]
\[ \text{t. b. e. m. l. n. o. d. : a. s. y. i. o. e. a. [q. (e) s. t. g.]} \]


(a) \[ \text{F. N. P. F. R. Y. : * . T. I. T. Y. : T. B. T. F. A.} \]
\[ \text{f. u. p. a. r. k. : h. n. i. a. s. : t. b. l. m. r.} \]

(b) \[ \text{F. N. P. A. R. Y. : * . T. I. T. Y. : 1. B. T. Y. A. C.} \]
\[ \text{f. u. p. a. r. k. : h. n. i. a. s. : t. b. l. m. r.} \]