The Diction of William Morris.

A Discussion of his Translations from the Old Norse with Particular Reference to his ‘Pseudo-English’ Vocabulary.

With Some Remarks on the Theory of Translating from the Old Norse.

I.

The language of William Morris is a literary medium vastly different from that of Victorian literature in general, decidedly unlike the normal vocabulary of the nineteenth century. His critics have universally found that the language in which he wrote constitutes one of the many affections which Morris perpetrated upon his readers. But the abuse which the poet has suffered because of his ‘linguistic quaintness’, or because of his ‘philological inaccuracy’, does not render his language any less worthy of linguistic analysis. The present study attempts such an analysis, and pretends to apply the historical method to a vocabulary which has been faintly praised and roundly damned.

In a detailed examination of Morris’s language, it is apparent that the language differences, that is, the differences between his English and that of his Victorian contemporaries, are largely in vocabulary. It is also true, however, that incidental to his archaized vocabulary, he employed a syntax which is, in some of its features, definitely reminiscent of Middle English writers. In answer to a German student who had written to him regarding the similarity between his works and Chaucer’s, Morris wrote:

I quite agree as to the resemblance of my work to Chaucer ... I may say that I am fairly steeped in mediaevalism generally; but the Icelandic Sagas, our own Border Ballads, and Froissart (through Berners’ translation ...) have had as much influence over me (or more than) anything else.¹

The present writer has tried to ascertain how far the poet’s reading in Middle English writers, such as Chaucer, Malory, and others, affected his style. The usual assumption with regard to Morris’s vocabulary is that it is a conglomerate mass of linguistic quackery; that in forming it, Morris ‘made up’ a host of forms which might give the impression that they came from documents written in what one of his critics called ‘the fabulous age of chivalry’. So far as the present writer is aware, no one has made

a scientific investigation to determine how much of this language the poet took from earlier writers, and how much he actually invented. The purpose of this monograph, then, is not to add another opinion to the many already expressed regarding the wisdom of employing archaism, real or imaginary, in modern English writings; but rather to show that the archaisms which Morris did employ were legitimate English forms; — to destroy, in other words, the rather prevalent idea that Morris was the neologist supreme of the nineteenth century.

From Morris's earliest poems to his late Prose Romances, we find evidence of his predilection for the archaic word. But if in the *Ballad*, circa 1856, he merely toyed with words which he thought sounded 'ancient', in making his saga translations between 1869 and 1872 he acquired (and consistently thereafter used) a whole literary language composed of obsolete, obsolescent, and archaic words which he intermixed with modern forms. The vocabulary in question was gradually developed, as the poet took his materials from English words no longer in common use, — evidence of which is presented below. The language thus compounded during the work on the sagas, became Morris's general medium of translation, not for the Norse alone, but for the Old English, the Greek, the Latin, and the Old French. It also became his medium of expression in many works which were not translations, — notably the Prose Romances of his declining years.

Dr. Arthur Biber has summarized many of the critical commentaries on the language Morris used in his Prose Romances, and has made certain general remarks regarding its relation to Middle English. But the fact that the creator of this language was supposed to be a Middle English scholar, and the wisdom of using such a language are two matters in which we are not primarily interested. Since the critics have especially challenged the wisdom and propriety of writing mixed English, it might be well, however, to mention typical comments. A reviewer for *The Athenæum*, speaking of *The House of the Wolfings*, said:

There is an inexpressible charm and pathos in the words that were actually spoken by foregone generations of men. This charm is, of course, lacking in all imitations of those words, however beautiful, and though the literary artist be Mr. William Morris.

---

1 Arthur Biber, *Studien zu William Morris' Prose Romances* (Greifswald, 1907), *Einleitung, passim*.

2 *Athenæum*, July—Dec., 1889, pp. 347—348. [The various volumes of the *Athenæum* used in connection with this paper are not numbered.]
Of *The Roots of the Mountains*, another critic wrote: "From beginning to end, the story is written in what one critic has happily called 'Wardour Street English'."

There was even some feeling on the part of the reviewers that this archaized language was legitimate for poetry, but not for prose. Consequently, where its use is praised in *The Earthly Paradise*, where it produces "A thorough purity of thought and language", or is spoken of as "Unadorned simplicity of language", it still was subject to censure for both the late Prose Romances and the saga translations.

An attitude which sums up many like opinions is to be found in the *Spectator’s* review of the *Völsunga* translation:

The name of the author of *The Earthly Paradise* is a guarantee of the beauty of the language into which the *Völsunga Saga* has been translated. One observation, however, it seems time to make on his diction, which it would not have been fair to do [in *The Earthly Paradise*] ... There are certain archaisms which become intolerable when made a practice of. ‘Maid’ or ‘maiden’ is as good and honest an English word as ‘may’, and we warn Mr. Morris that of his ‘mays’ we are heartily tired. ‘Adrad’ may pass muster in verse; but when we find it wilfully inserted in prose, we long for the simpler ‘afeared’, or even ‘afraid’.

It has been stated about that Morris had begun writing in this unorthodox diction in his earliest works. The language of the pieces published in the *Oxford and Cambridge Magazine*, in 1856, is certainly not pure modern English, while in *The Defence of Guenevere* such forms as ‘earle’, ‘Easterlings’, ‘flatlings’, ‘glaive’, ‘shoon’, ‘sun-litten’, give evidence, in a small way, of the vocabulary which was later to become so apparent in nearly all of Morris’s

---

1 *Spectator*, LXIV (1890), 208.
2 *Saturday Review*, XXV (May 30, 1868), 730; and XXVI (Dec. 11, 1869), 772. This critic has a strange definition for 'unadorned simplicity'.
3 But even the language of Morris’s poetry did not entirely escape adverse criticism: “Mr. Morris... while trying above all things to tell his stories [of *The Earthly Paradise*] in the language of romance, often misses the romantic spirit... The failure of the literary poets [here Morris, Rossetti, Swinburne, Tennyson, et al] to appreciate the active life of their time, as well as the affectation of thought and language that are such blemishes in their poetry are due... to the exaggerated estimate which the poets have formed of their function, and the arbitrary standard of diction which they affect.” *Quarterly Review*, CXXXII (Jan. 1872), 40, 42.
4 *Spectator*, XLIII (Aug. 13, 1870), 984.
compositions. In general, it may be said that the language of the works which were written before *The Earthly Paradise* is not consistently archaic. Certain poems in *The Defence of Guenevere*, for example, contain many non-modern forms, while others are completely free from the archaic element. The quality of the mixed language is not so good in the earlier works as it is in the later. When Morris wrote the *Ballad* [circa 1856], he had not developed an accurate system for creating the archaic effect:

Yon was an evil maggot-pie,
He bodeth us treie and tene,
I would I had seen some other bird
Betwixt the greves green. [stanza 5]

O whatten a light is yon great light? [stanza 9]

O whatten staves are yon great staves? [stanza 11]

The false forms: 'maggot-pie' and 'whatten', are immediately recognizable.

In *The Earthly Paradise*, however, Morris commenced what one might call the «standardization of unstandardized English». A few of the words taken at random from this work and which again appear in the Old Norse translations are listed here: 'abode' (verb) [*Atlanta's Race*]; 'adown' [*The Man Born to Be King*]; 'adrad' [*The Wanderers*]; 'afeard' [*W.*]; 'agon' [*The Proud King*]; 'alow' [*At.R.*]; 'anear' [*The Doom of King Acrisius*]; 'anigh' [*W.*]; 'hane' [*At.R.*]; 'bare', preterit of bear [*Cupid and Psyche*]; 'begat' [*Cup.*]; 'betwixt' [*M.B.K.*]; 'carle' [*At.R.*]; 'chaffer' [*Pygmalion and the Image*]; 'chaffering' [*At.R.*]; 'clomb' [*W.*]; 'do off', to take off [*P.K.*]; 'drave' [*Doom.*]; 'eld' [*W.*]; 'erst' [*Doom.*]; 'flatling' [*P.K.*]; 'forgot' [*At.R.*]; 'guestenchamber' [*April*]; 'holpen' [*At.R.*]; 'mesemeth' [*The Love of Alcestis*]; 'midmost' [*Pyg.*]; 'most' adjective, greatest [*W.*]; 'of', used with meaning of agency, for, or by [*P.K.*]; 'spake' [*Doom.*]; 'therewithal' [*Doom.*]; 'unholpen' [*W.*]; 'unwares' [*W.*]; 'waxen', past participle of wax [*Cupid.*]; 'wert' [*At.R.*]; 'whereas', adverb, meaning where [*Pyg.*]; 'whiles' [*W.*]; 'wot' [*Cupid.*]; 'youngling' [*At.R.*].

When Morris finished *The Earthly Paradise* he had had sufficient practice in the use of an archaized diction; he was now able to spread it fluently and profusely throughout the saga translations. It was in these translations, contemporary in composition with the last part of *The Earthly Paradise* [circa 1870], that the 'Morris Language' was finally and completely developed. To study this language in the Old Norse translations, therefore, is quite fitting;

---

for the investigator finds these to be the earliest compositions in which the evidence is sufficient for a linguistic analysis. In making the saga translations it was Morris's practice to rewrite the literal English versions given him by his collaborator, Eiríkur Magnússon. And if the sense be often Magnússon's, the style is always Morris's; for the Icelander provided grammatical structure and word-meanings upon which the Englishman built his final versions.

II

We have indicated that it is in the Old Norse translations that Morris's language receives its final development; and here, — if ever, — it has its most legitimate use. For in the saga translations Morris was for the first time not trying simply to approximate a medieval or an antique spirit in his language, as he did when he adapted The Earthly Paradise tales; but he was attempting in translation to preserve the medieval spirit which the documents already had. But when Morris did not translate, and made his story on the basis of another (his practice in composing Lindenburg Pool), complete success was not his; for he had upon his hands the problem of creating a milieu and an atmosphere for his story, which the original was already prepared to give him if he merely translated it. But he did not read the Lindenburg Pool Story in the original; instead, he 'Scandinavianized' it from Thorpe's English version. The same fault hardly exists in Sigurd the Volsung, for when Morris wrote that poem, he knew so much about the sources from which he took his materials that the creation of a proper atmosphere was almost as easy for him as re-telling the story itself. In translating the Old Norse documents 'in order to maintain the spirit of the original, Morris apparently tried to give the reader the feeling of the English Language which was contemporary with the Old Norse from which he was translating. The project has usually been designated as a failure so far as the language is concerned, for in attempting to create a language which was like that of a by-gone age. Morris reproduced only a small share of the medieval spirit, and detracted greatly from the comprehensibility of his translation. It was inevitable that Morris's language should prove a disappointment even in the sagas where its alleged impropriety is at least debatable, for he had to stop »betwixt and between» Middle English and Modern English. If he had recreated a complete syntax and vocabulary, and had made it exactly Middle English in all respects, his works would not have been read; if he had used a diction which was entirely modern, he could not have

1 Or in any translation from a medieval document.
satisfied himself that his translations were in keeping with their originals. He did the next best thing; and the critics of his time and ours have never forgiven him for it.¹

There was not a definite controversy, like the Newman-Arnold Homeric-translation-dispute, over the Icelandic translations of Morris. He and Magnússon did not write a vulnerable Preface such as Newman’s;² hence the adverse criticism they received was directed at their practice in translating, not, first, at their theory, and afterwards at their adherence to it. Because Newman’s attempts to produce an artificial antique feeling in his language met with little success and much opposition, and because his Iliad was published little more than a decade before Morris began translating the Old Icelandic, it may be well here to recall the Greek scholar’s ideas on translating. With regard to language, Newman says:

Our real old ballad-writers are too poor and mean to represent Homer, and are too remote in diction from our times to be popularly intelligible. It is requisite for a translator to form his own style. I generally adhere to the principle which Aristotle commended ... to use little strange diction, but impart elevation by the mode of combining known words.³

Newman did form his own style, and to what consequent effect the lectures of Matthew Arnold testify! Morris, too, formed his own translating style. He did it, to be sure, with different combinations of ‘known words’,⁴ but more particularly, with a vocabulary which, unlike that of Newman, is often actually as old as the Ballads. The difference between the translators, Newman and Morris, is that Newman thought he should invent an English medium for the reproduction of Homeric language; whereas Morris was thoroughly convinced that he had to imitate, in English, the language of a past (and foreign) literature.⁵ It is within the scope and

¹ Concerning the theory of Old Norse translation, see conclusions below, Sections V and VI.
³ Ibid., p. 7.
⁴ See Morris’s compound words, Part B of Section III, below.
⁵ Of some interest here should be the vocabulary likenesses of Newman and Morris. The words in the following list are those of a non-modern character which occur in Newman’s glossary, op. cit., Preface, pp. xxii—xxiii, and which Morris also employed: bale (severe harm); eld (old age); crst (originally, formerly); eyen (plural of eyes); hight (named); lieb (willing); list (to wish); rieve (plunder); seathe (to do harm); sitthence (ever since); syne (lang syne, long ago); wit (know). Certain other words which Newman considered necessary for his reader to have ‘under his eye’ in the Glossary are listed in
objective of this study to show that Morris was more of an imitator than an inventor in language.

Newman was interested in developing his new style from old words, but he always stopped this side of obscurity. If a word was too ‘archaic’ to be understood by the reader, he preferred not to use it.¹ We cannot says as much for Morris; one often wishes for a glossary in reading his Old Norse translations.²

the New English Dictionary as having good modern usage at the present time.

¹ Newman even went so far as to say, however, in his answer to Arnold’s Essay, On Translating Homer, that he might have used such forms as mon, for man; londis, for lands; nesties, for nests, without risking unintelligibility. Arnold’s three Lectures, Newman’s reply, Homeric Translation, and Arnold’s On Translating Homer, Last Words, may be found in the Oxford Essays by Matthew Arnold (Oxford, 1914), Lecture I, pp. 245—263; II, pp. 264—286; III, pp. 287—312; Newman’s reply, pp. 315—376; Arnold’s Last Words, pp. 379—424.

² While on the subject of Homeric translation, it might be well to compare a passage from Morris with one from an Iliad translation of acknowledged greatness, such as that of Lang, Leaf, and Myers. It is difficult to choose such passages, but one from each concerning armour will perhaps do as well as any.

Homer [the ‘lame God’ speaks of making Achilles’ armour]:

Be of good courage, let not these things trouble thy heart. Would that so I might avail to hide him far from dolorous death, when dread fate cometh upon him, and surely shall good armour be at his need, such as all men shall afterward marvel at, whoever may behold.


Morris [Regin speaks to Sigurd]:

I was the third and least of them [the sons of Hreidmar] both for prowess and good conditions, but I was cunning to work in iron, and silver, and gold, whereof I could make matters that availed somewhat.

— The Völsunga Saga, Collected Works, VII, 332.

The last phrase of Morris (and this is a representative selection) sounds artificial and ‘literary’ compared with the austere prose of Lang, Leaf, and Myers, which reminds one of the ageless style used in the Authorized Version.
Syntax and inflection are not without importance in the study of Morris's language; but since we are primarily concerned with words rather than with the frame-work in which they are set, these other matters must be left out of consideration in the work at hand.

Even a causal reading of Morris's Old Norse translations will disclose the fact that his archaic language is partially Chaucerian. But whether Morris's archaism is Chaucerian, whether these words are Middle English, has not been investigated. Acting upon Morris's statement concerning Chaucer, the Ballads, and Lord Berners, and recalling the fact that Malory was one of the poet's favorite authors while he was at Oxford, his saga translations were read, for the present undertaking, and their (apparently) non-modern words were listed; the words thus obtained were subjected to the following treatment: (1) their non-modern character was established by the New English Dictionary; (2) all words found in the Chaucer Concordance and the Glossary to Skeat's Complete Chaucer were segregated; (3) from the remaining words, those that were found in Sommer's Malory Glossary were also separated;

1 A non-modern diction put together with the syntactic and inflectional forms of present-day English would be even more incongruous than is the complete language-structure which Morris built. In verbal inflection, anomalous verbs, preteritive-present verbs, impersonal verbs, reflexive verbs, Morris employed forms which were definitely influenced by corresponding forms in Chaucer and Malory. He also used many archaic preterites and past-participles for strong verbs. Obsolete and archaic prepositions, adverbs, -en-plural nouns, and pronouns are found in abundance in the construction of Morris's language. It should be understood, of course, that the usual syntax and inflection of Morrisian English is modern; the Chaucer and Malory syntax and inflection are intermixed with like constructions and inflections from modern English in the same way that archaic vocabulary is sprinkled throughout a language which is, for the most part, modern. The present writer hopes to complete this study in a second paper dealing with Morris's syntax.

2 As is also, of course, the frame-work form of The Earthly Paradise.


(4) from those remaining were taken the words which could be found in Child's Ballad Glossary;¹ (5) a few words were discovered in a reading of the first two volumes of Lord Berners' Froissart,² and these were segregated; (6) the words still unaccounted for in Chaucer, Malory, the Ballads, and Lord Berners, were arranged according to the classifications explained below. The Authorized Versions of the Bible would doubtless yield a goodly number of words which Morris used. But since the present writer wishes merely to prove that Morris's language is English, — not a manufactured product, as has frequently been alleged, — and since most of the vocabulary is accounted for in Malory and Chaucer (with whose works Morris was better acquainted than with any others in his own language), it has hardly seemed necessary to cater to the theory that all archaic English has its source in the 1611 Bible. The important matter is not whether this language came from the Canterbury Tales, the King James Bible, or the Iliad of Chapman; but rather that it did not come merely out of Morris's imagination. The attempt has not been to establish the 'source' of any or all single words which Morris used; but to examine the possibilities of ascertaining the source of the bulk of his non-modern vocabulary; and to show that the language used by the translator was not made of linguistic whole-cloth. It will be seen, in the results of this examination, that over three-quarters of the non-modern, or apparently non-modern, words in Morris's Old Norse translations were used by Chaucer, Malory, the Ballad writers, and Lord Berners. This fact bears out (with regard to language) what Morris said about the general influence of these writers upon his works. The Old Icelandic also contributes to Morris's vocabulary through the mediums of direct translation, and word-formation by adaptation. Only eighteen actual neologisms have been found in Morris's Old Norse translations during the course of the present study, — which, it may be added, is quite contrary to the rather widely-current notion that Morris coined words to the right and left! And many of these neologisms are adaptations of Norse words rather than freshly-coined English forms.

It may be well, before presenting the evidence, to repeat that in no case does the writer of this monograph attempt to prove that a particular word used by Morris in the process of translation comes from a particular Middle English or Early Modern English

document. It seems logical, however, that a person well acquainted with the English literature of the Middle Ages and Renaissance should take his archaisms (since we find that he invented very few of them) from writers whose works he had admired, studied, — and conned. In Morris’s case, two such writers (according to a legend well known at Oxford in 1853) were Chaucer and Malory.

The remaining parts of this study, in Sections III and IV, are given over to the materials for studying the language of Morris’s translations, and to the conclusions drawn from these materials. The evidence tends to show that the language is not ‘pseudo-’, or ‘quasi-’, or ‘bastard-’, Middle English; in other words, that it is not made up of pseudo-archaic forms. Rather, it is ‘belated’-Middle English, super-imposed upon the literary English of the nineteenth century. Section III is divided into parts A to C: (A) Middle English words classified according to the segregations mentioned above; (B) Morris’s use of the compound and a-prefix; (C) Morris’s neologisms. Convenient subdivisions have also been made within the chief headings. Part IV carries the conclusions, as well as a short history of the various theories concerning translating from the Old Norse.

All the non-modern words found in Morris’s Old Norse translations [1869—1872] are compiled alphabetically in the following lists, and are grouped according to the scheme set forth above. It is essential to inform the reader that all the usages here recorded are not always found for the first time in the translations. It is interesting, in light of the fact that such words as ‘alund’, and ‘eld’, are common in The Earthly Paradise, to observe the words for which they stand in the Old Norse text when they are again used in the translations. Etymological considerations are not a part of this study, but Morris’s ‘alund’ for O. N. a land, his ‘eld’ for O. N. elli, will give a good indication of his thought-processes in revising Magnusson’s manuscript. Whenever a word used in a Morris translation is cognate to the Old Norse word from which it is translated, or, more accurately, whenever Morris’s word looks or sounds like its Old Norse prototype, the Norse will be found directly beneath the Morris word, enclosed in brackets. The reader will discover from such like words, Morris’s occasionally phenomenal approximation of the foreign word in archaic English. He will also unfortunately discover several English coinages which are phonetically or orthographically close to the Old Norse, but which mean little or nothing in Modern English.

Beside the saga translations, the Eddic Lay and Ballad translations of circa 1870 have been included here.
Abbreviations:

Atli: The Song of Atli,
Bal: Baldur's Dream,
Bryn. Lay: The Lay of Brynhild,
Chris: Lay of Christine,
Frit: Frithiof the Bold,
Gr: Grettir the Strong,
Gud: The Ancient Lay of Gudrun,
Gun: Gunnlaug the Wormtongue,
Ham: The Lay of Hamdir,
Hel.B: The Hell-ride of Brynhild,
Helgi: The Second Lay of Helgi-Hundings-Bane,
Hog: Hogni and Hedin,
Hroi: Roy the Fool,
Oddr: The Lament of Oddrun,
S.H: Snorri's Short Hogni,
Sig: The Lay of Sigdrifa,
Sig Lay: The Short Lay of Sigurd,
Son: The Son's Sorrow,
Thor: Thorsteinn the Staff-Smitten,
Thrym: The Lay of Thrym,
Vig: Viglund the Fair,
Vol: Völsunga Saga,
Whet: The Whetting of Gudrun,

Works, Volume VII.
Works, Volume VII.
Works, Volume VII.
Works, Volume IX.
Works, Volume X.
Works, Volume VII.
Works, Volume VII.
Works, Volume X.
Works, Volume VII.
Works, Volume VII.
Works, Volume VII.
Works, Volume VII.
Works, Volume X.
Works, Volume X.
Works, Volume VII.
Works, Volume VII.
Works, Volume VII.
Works, Volume VII.
Works, Volume VII.
Works, Volume VII.
Works, Volume X.
Works, Volume VII.
Works, Volume VII.
Works, Volume VII.

Morris references, in prose, are to page only; thus, Vig. 93, refers to Viglund the Fair (Collected Works, Vol. VII), p. 93. References in poetry are to page also; thus, Sig. Lay. 410, refers to The Short Lay of Sigurd (Vol. VII), p. 410.

Chaucer: All references to the Canterbury Tales are by group-letter and line. Thus, A 2234, refers to group A, line 2234 (Knights Tale, 1376). Other poems are indicated by title and line number, according to the Skeat edition.

Malory: All Malory references are to Oskar Sommer's edition of Le Morte D'Arthur; the pagination is continuous throughout the two volumes of the text, for which reason only page and line numbers are given. Thus, 193. 25, refers to page 193, line 25 (Volume I, Book VI, Chapter vii, line 25 [page 193]).

Ballads: Ballad references are given to volume, page, and stanza-number in the Child (1882—1898) edition. Thus, III, 26, 11, refers to stanza 11 on page 26 of Volume III.

Berner: The Berner's reference are to volume and page in the Ker (Tudor translation Series) edition.
A. Vocabulary.

I. Words found in Morris and Chaucer.

A (Preposition: in, or on).
Morris: There he dwelt a many nights.\(^1\) Gr. 127.
Chaucer: A 854 (A for «in»).

ABIDE (Verb: await, endure).
Morris: In this wise shall the Host of Hedinn abide the Doom of the Gods. S.H. 160.
Chaucer: Troilus, IV, 156 (pret., abood).

A-COLD (Adjective: becoming cold, cold).
Morris: He fast began to grow a-cold. Hog. 128.
Chaucer: Romaunt of the Rose, 2658 (a-colde).

A-DRAD (Participial-adjective: afraid).
Morris: They waxed somewhat adrad of the man. Vig. 93.
(Also Vol. 328, 329, 342, etc.)
Chaucer: A 605.

AFEARD (Verbal adjective: afraid).
[Consistently translated from hræðdr]
(Also Gr. 83.)
Chaucer: A 628; Troilus, I, 974 (a-fered).

AFTER (Preposition: according to).
Chaucer: Chaucer's Wordes Unto Adam, 4.

ALAND (Adverb: on land).
Morris: All men got a-land alive. Vig. 110.
[Usually translated from a land, vit land, etc.]
(Also Frit. 63; Gr. 57; Hog., Hroi., Vol., etc.)
Chaucer: Legende of Good Women, 2166 (a-londe).

ANIGHT (Adjective: at night, in the night).
Morris: O'er ice-fields and ice-hills She fared a-night time. Sig. Lay. 409.
(Also Gr. 28.) (See Anighttime group V, below.)
Chaucer: A 1042 (a-night).

APAYD (Past participle: paid, rewarded).
Morris: Evil am I apaid that nineteen of my champions are slain. Vol. 386.
(Also Gr. 37.)
Chaucer: Troilus, III, 421; V, 1249 (apayed).

AREDE (Verb: to counsel, divine, prophesy).
Morris: Aright must we arede us. Vig. 120. (Skaldic verse).
[rétt til rada]
(Also Vol. 348.)
Chaucer: Troilus, II, 1505.

ASTONIED (Verbal adjective: astonished, stunned).
Morris: She may well be astonied at hearing of their fall. Vig. 108.
(Also Gr. 191, etc.)
Chaucer: House of Fame, 1174, etc. (astonieth).

\(^1\) The phrases used to indicate word-meanings are either quoted or paraphrased, depending upon which method gives the meaning more expeditiously; hence no quotation marks have been used.
TWAIN (Adverb: asunder).
(Also Vol. 305. [Skaldic verse].)
Chaucer: The Book of the Duchesse, 1193 (a-tweyn).

ATWIXT (Preposition: between).
Morris: Drive the axe ... atwixt his shoulders. Gr. 117.
Chaucer: Rom. Rose, 854 (atwixe).

BALE (Noun: disaster, sorrow, fire).
Morris: Let make a great bale on the plain meads. Vol. 375.
[bd]\nChaucer: Tr., IV, 746.

BARE (Verb: preterit of bear; bore).
Morris: Viglund bare away the prize from them all. Vig. 116.
They bare no weapon against him. Gr. 145.
Then Thorstein bare in hay. Thor. 152.
[... bar inn he\y]
[Consistently translated from bar.]
(Also Vig. 117; Thor. 155; Vol. 295, etc.)
Chaucer: A 105; D 575, etc. (bar).

BEGAT (Verb: preterit of get, beget: referred to child-bearing).
Morris: The earl begat a woman-child on his wife. Vig. 81.
Chaucer: Leg. Wom., 1562.

BESTEAD (Verbal-adjective: aggrieved, beset, afflicted).
Morris: If thou wert so grievously bestead as he is. Hroi. 145.
Chaucer: B 649 (bistad).

BETAKE (Verb: to take oneself; with reflexive use).
Morris: King Sigmund betakes himself to the due ruling of the realm. Vol. 318.
Chaucer: A 3750.

BETHINK (Verb: to think; with reflexive use).
Chaucer: Rom. Rose, 521 (bithoughte).

BETID (Verb: to happen, occur).
Morris: When these things betid. Hog. 130.
(Also Gr. 22; Vol. 299, etc.)
Chaucer: Tr., II, 623 (bityden).

BEWRAY (Verb: to betray, to trick).
Morris: Wilt thou bewray Sigurd for his wealth's sake? Sig. Lay. 411.
(Also Bryn. 430, etc.)
Chaucer: H 352 (biwreyd).

BID (Verb: offer).
Morris: Why dost thou not bid me what I will take? Gun. 17.
Chaucer: House of Fame, 32 (Chaucer confuses bede and bidde).

BIDE (Verb: to wait).
Morris: (I) would rather bide ... with thee. Vol. 307.
She had bidden at home and learned handicraft. Ibid., 342.
(Also preterit, bode, Lay. Chris. 201.)
Chaucer: Tr., I, 1067 (byde). (Preterit, Tr., V, 29 [bood].)

BOOT (Noun: reward, pay, requital, remedy, atonement).
Morris: Ufeigh was atoned with a great sum, Thorfin was unatoned and
boot was given to Thorgeir for the attack on his life. Gr. 21.
Litzenberg: The Dictionary of William Morris.

Oseigr var bættir miklu fæ, porfinnr var ögviðr höger
bætt lýrir fjorðáð
Chaucer: Bk. Duch., 227.

BOREL (Adjective: lowly, ill-bred).
Morris: For him shall follow
My five bondmaids,
My eight bondsmen,
No borel folk. Sig. Lay. 425.
Chaucer: F 716 (burel).

BOUNDEN (Verbal adjective: bound, sworn).
Morris: (And) ye have broken your bounden oaths. Vol. 371.
(Interpolated Skaldic verse.)
(The hall) with bucklers well bounden. Atli. 449.
Chaucer: B 270; D 681.

BRAKE (Verb: preterit of break).
(Also Frit. 70; Gr. 39, etc.)
Chaucer: Bk. Duch., 71 (brak).

BRIDAL (Noun: wedding-draught, bride-ale).
Morris: (He) drank his bridal with Ingibiorg. Frit. 66.
[drakk brullaup]
Chaucer: A 4375 (brydale).

BROIDERY (Noun: embroidery).
Morris: Brynhild in bower
Sewed at her broidery. Oddr. 476.
[borda rakdi]
Chaucer: A 3238 (Verb and participial adjective, brouded: broyden

BURSTEN: (Verbal adjective: burst).
Morris: The gem of the Brisingas
[brustu]
(Also Frit. 61. Skaldic verse.)
Chaucer: Tr., II, 976 (bresten).

CAN (Verb: to know, to know how).
(She) could more skill in handycraft than other women. Vol
[kun kunni meirra hagleik]
Chaucer: C 332.

CARLE (Noun: fellow, churl, old man).
Morris: Ketilrid her carle bade
Quail not mid swift sailing. Vig. 118. (Skaldic verse).
(Consistently used for karl, karlmann, and sometimes m
(Also Thor. 157; Hog. 128; Gr. 25, etc.)
Chaucer: A 3469 (carl).

CARVEN (Verbal adjective: carved, decorated).
Morris: (It) was carven and fretted. Vig. 82.
Chaucer: A 2696 (corven).

CHAFFER (Noun: trade, bartering, buying).
Morris: Roi deemed it a good chaffer. Hroi. 142.
[øk syndizst Hroa sem alkaupmannliga munde]
Chaucer: I 851 (in chaffere).
CHAFFER (Verb: to trade, to barter, to buy).
Morris: Roi was ever agoing chaffering. Hroi. 140.
[\textit{jarnan i kaupferdum}]
Chaucer: B 139 (to chaffare).

CLAVE (Verb: preterit of cleave; also clove).
Morris: They clave each other down to the shoulder. Hog. 137.
[\textit{Consistently used for \textit{klauf}.}]
(Also Vol. 327; Gun. 45. [\textit{Skaldic verse}.])
(Clove: Gud. 443.)
Chaucer: \textit{Rom. Rose}, 550 (Past participle, use as adjective; clove; also preterit singular, cleft). 

CLOUT (Noun: small piece of cloth).
Morris: So Thorstein tore a clout from his shirt. Thor. 151.
Chaucer: C 736.

COVETISE (Noun: covetousness). (One of a very few French words.)
Morris: When (he) saw the dragon \textit{[ship]} so great covetise ran into his heart that he must needs have it. Hog. 130.
\[\textit{aegyngirnnd}\]
Chaucer: A 3884 (coveyssye).

DIGHT (Adjective: ready, prepared, adorned).
Morris: Dight am I to hie me (hence). Gun. 37. (Skaldic verse).
The hall was dight with gold. Vol. 347.
[\textit{Used for \textit{buin}, \textit{albuenn}, etc.}]
(Also Hog. 153; Atl. 449, etc.)
Chaucer: \textit{Leg. Wom.}, 1288 (dighte: prepare); \textit{Tr.}, III, 1773 (decorated).

DISPORT (Noun: pleasure, entertainment).
Morris: Come with us for our disport out into the woods. Frit. 76.
Chaucer: A 137, 775, etc.

DO (Verb: to put, used with \textit{\textsc{on}}, i.e., to put on).
Morris: So he did on the old gear and came to the Thing. Gr. 176.
Chaucer: \textit{Bk. Duck.}, 316 (dide of: removed).

DRAVE (Verb: preterit of drive).
Morris: he drave away the king. Vol. 306.
(The waters) drave about like grains of salt. Vig. 98.
[\textit{Chiefly used for \textit{rak}}.]
(Also Gr. 31; 169; Vol. 305; Whet. 458, etc.)
Chaucer: \textit{Tr.}, V, 475 (drqf).

DURED (Verb: endured, lasted).
Morris: The battle had dured a while. Vol. 314.
(Also Vol. 327, etc.)
Chaucer: A 2770.

EGG (Verb: to incite; obsolete without \textit{\textsc{on}}).
[\textit{Consistently used for \textit{eggjadi}}]
(Also Vig. 105.)
Chaucer: E 2135 (egging).

ELD (Noun: old age).
Morris: unless eld is deep in my eyes now. Frit. 75.
[\textit{ell i augu mér}]
Asmund was growing very feeble with eld. Gr. 93.
[\textit{af elli}]
[\textit{Used for \textit{ell}\textsc{i} (old age) as well as \textit{aldr} (lifetime)}]
(Also Gr. 172, 189, 224; Gud. 442, etc.)
Chaucer: \textit{Tr.}, II, 393, 399 (elde).
ELDERS (Noun: parents).
Morris: There was not strife betwixt these while their elders were ali
Gr. 17.
[ellri menn]
Chaucer: B 3388 (eldres: ancestors).
ENDLONG (Adverb: lengthwise, along).
Morris: Great fires were made endlong in the hall. Vol. 294.
[endilangri eftir höllini]
ERST (Adverb: before, previously).
Morris: The sword which Iron Shield ... had owned erst. Hog. 137.
[Usually translated from fyrr]
(Also Frit. 79; Gr. 51, etc.)
Chaucer: Rom. Rose, 692, etc.
EYNE (Noun: plural of eye).
Morris: Salt are our eyne. Frit. 59.
(Also eyen: Sig. Lay. 417; Vig. 98.)
Chaucer: B 3260 (yën); D 2060 (eyen sight: eye-sight).
FEE (Noun: possessions, money, cattle).
Morris: (He was) rich of fee. Gun. 7.
[aubigr mapr at fé]\n(Used throughout Gun. for money.)
Chaucer: Rom. Rose, 6044.
FLIT (Verb: carry away).
Morris: Helgi came down with many men and beasts and let flit aw
the lading. Hrol. 148.
[laeti flytja i brøtt varninginn]
Chaucer: Rom. Rose, 1812.
FOREDONE (Verbal adjective: destroyed).
Morris: As ferry-boat all foredone
Amid the Skerries floating. Vig. 122. (Skaldic verse).
Chaucer: Tr., I, 525 (fordoon: vanquished); Leg. Wom., 939 (fordon:
slain).
FORGAT (Verb: preterit of forget).
(Also Hog. 134, etc.)
Chaucer: C 919.
FOREWEARIED (Verbal adjective: worn out, exhausted).
Morris: Then the damsel, foreweared,
The word took up .... Oddr. 474.
Chaucer: Rom. Rose, 235 (forwered: worn out: applied to clothes).
FRANKLIN (Noun: freeholder).
Morris: The king bade Ketil take a higher dignity ... but Ketil wou
not and said he had liefer be just a very franklin. Vig. 83.
[einfaldr bondi]
Chaucer: A 231 (Frankeleyrn).
FULFILLED (Verbal adjective: filled up, overloaded).
Morris: Our hall is fulfilled of lamentation. Vol. 359.
[höll er full af harmi]
Now the Gods rode with the treasure to Hreidmar and fulfill
[tradu upp otrbelginn]
(Also Gr. 162, etc.)
Chaucer: Leg. Wom., B 54.
CAT (Verb: preterit of get).
Morris: The ship Ellidi he gat. (took) Frit. 50.
[tók hann]
A chance blow I gat from thee. (received) Thor. 152.
[ek fekk af þér]
(He) gat him gone. Gr. 9.
[för á brott]
(Also many other similar uses.) (See also forgat, begat, above.)
Chaucer: B 715.

GLADDENED (Participial adjective: made glad, glad).
Morris: Thou laughest not because the heart-roots are gladdened. Vol. 366.
Chaucer: E 1174; Tr., I, 116 (glade, gladed: verbal forms).

GOODMAN (Noun: master, householder).
Am I to number these among bonders and goodmen? Gr. 44.
[Used variously for bonda, godr bondi, godum monnum, etc.]
Chaucer: C 361 (master); Leg. Wom., 1391 (freeholder).

GRAME (Noun: harm, grief, injury).
Morris: More to me is Ingibjorg's grace than Baldur's grame (anger). Frit. 53.
[reiðt Baldrs]
May the high gallows and all things of grame have me if I lie one word. (harm) Vol. 384.
[ok allir gramir]
Chaucer: Anelida and Arcite, 276 (harm).

GRAVEN (Verbal adjective: engraved, carved).
Morris: Red shields we did,

... ...

And prows fair graven. Gud. 438.
Chaucer: House of Fame, 193.

HALED (Verb: preterit of O. E. hale, to haul).
Morris: He had tied a line to the treasure, and therewith haled it up.
Gr. 40.
Chaucer: Parliament of Foules, 151.

HAP (Noun: chance, luck, circumstance).
Morris: Asdis wished him all good hap. Gr. 33.
It was a chance hap, rather. Thor. 152.
Chaucer: E 2057 (chance); B 3928 (luck); Bk. Duch., 1279 (occurrence).

HAP (Verb: to happen, to chance).
Morris: Whatsoe'er might hap to this. Gr. 87.
(Also Gr. 18, 108, etc.)
Chaucer: A 585.

HIGHT (Verb: called, named).
Morris: The king asked what they hight. Vig. 84.
A son he had hight Thorsteinn. Thor. 151.
[Almost entirely used for hét.]
(Also S. H. 159; Gr. 22; Vol. 307.)
Chaucer: Leg. Wom., 423; Rom. Rose, 745, etc. (highten, highte).

HIM-SEEMED (Verb: it seemed to him; used reflexively).
Morris: Him-seemed he had never seen a fairer woman. Hroi. 145.
[pottizst hann]
Chaucer: B 3361 (him semed).
SITHENCE (Adverb: since, afterwards).
Morris: This deer we were all fain to take, but I alone got him
but sitence thou, Brynhild, didst shoot and slay my d
Vol. 348.
(Also Atli. 457; Chris. 201, etc.)
Chaucer: A 1521, etc. (sithen).

SMITHYING (Verbal noun: the act of forging).
Morris: Roi took to smithying, and gat goods thus. Hog. 140.
\[tok Hroi at smida\]
Chaucer: A 3762 (Preterit singular: smithed).

SOOTH (Noun: truth).
Morris: So she found that he spake but the sooth. Vol. 353.
(Also Hog. 136, etc.)
Chaucer: A 284.

SOOTHLY (Adverb: truly, truthfully).
Morris: And soothly ye will need it. Vig. 111.
(Also Hroi. 143; Hog. 137, etc.)
Chaucer: A 117.

SORE (Adverb: sorely).
Chaucer: A 148.

SPAKE (Verb: preterit of speak).
Morris: So she found that he spake but the sooth. Vol. 353.
[Used for \(kved, kevi, mæti, sagdi\), etc.]
(Also Gr. 13; Vol. 297, etc.)
Chaucer: Leg. Wom., 97; Bk. Duch., 503, etc. (spak).

SPURN (Verb: to hit, strike, kick).
Morris: Then Grettir spurned two of them so hard ... that they
stunned. Gr. 127.
[\(þþ spyrndi Grettir\]
Chaucer: F 616 (spurne: kick).

SYNE (Adverbial conjunction: since, afterwards).
Morris: Three sons my true love bore me there
And syne she died who was so dear. Son. 207.
Chaucer: Mars, 273 (sin).

THITHERWARD (Adverb: thither, toward which).
Morris: Thitherward will we turn if it seem good to thee. Gr. 5.
Chaucer: A 2530 (thider-ward).

THEREWTHAL (Conjunction: as a consequence of, for that reason).
Morris: He hath not [kept the bargain] ... and therewithal I claim I
as mine own. Hroi. 147.
(Also Gun. 17; Vol. 328, etc.)
Chaucer: A 566, 1078, etc. (ther-with-al).

THRALDOM (Noun: servdom, bondage).
Morris: Rather would they forego the free lands their fathers own\(\)n
than lie under ... thraldom. Vig. 81.
\[prækkan\]
Chaucer: B 286, 338.

TWINNED (Verb: separated).
Morris: Yea, and my life
Will I lay down
Ere I am twinned
From that woman’s treasure. Sig. Lay. 411.
[an þeirar mejar meidmum týna]
Chaucer: Tr., IV, 1197 (twinne).

UNWARE (Adjective: unaware).
Morris: Atli unware
Was a-weary with drink. Atli. 456.
Chaucer: Tr., I, 304; B 427 (unwar).

WARE (Adjective: aware).
Morris: Frithiof was ware of this. Frit. 79.
[Used consistently for varr, vör, etc.]
(Also Vig. 106; Hroi. 148; Gr. 12, etc.)
Chaucer: A 157, 896, 3604, etc. (war).

WHEREAS (Adverb: where).
Morris: We are of Streitaland whereas the King Dwelleth. Frit. 72.
(Also Vig. 99; Vol. 293, etc.)
Chaucer: Tr., III, 516 (wher-as).

WHERETO (Conjunction: for what reason, to what end).
Morris: Whereeto came our fathers forth, so that my father was the
little boat towed behind? Gun. 27.
Chaucer: Tr., I, 409 (wher-to).

WHILES (Adverb and conjunction: while, sometimes, alternatingly).
Morris: And now she would whiles run up and look, and whiles run
back. Gr. 185.
Chaucer: Bk. Duch., 151 (whyles).

WILL (Verb: to wish, to will, to desire).
Morris: Now will I that thou take thy share. Hroi. 141.
[nu vil ek]
[Consistently translated from vil.]
(Also Hog. 136; Gr. 125; Vol. 358, etc.)
Chaucer: E 721, etc.

WIT (Verb: to know).
Morris: Now will I ... go to ... the sons of Hunding, and do them
to wit that the Volsungs are not all dead. Vol. 324.
If I wist that all went well with thee. Vig. 101.
[translated from vissa]
(Also Vig. 109 [wist]; Frit. 54, 55; Vig. 114 [wot]; Gun. 11
[wotted]; Frit. 73 [wottest]; etc.)
Chaucer: Tr., I, 687 (wit-eth); E 814 (wiste); B 195 (wot), etc.

II. Words in Morris and Malory, but not in Chaucer.

ADOWN (Adverb: down, indicating condition and direction).
Morris: They no sooner fall adown than they stand up again. Hog. 129.
(Also Gr. 102 [Skaldic verse]; Hel. 429; Atli. 456, etc.)
Malory: 404.4 (adoune).

AFORE (Adverb: before).
Morris: (The weapon) which thou hast borne all day afore. Thor. 157.
Malory: 97.2; 135.5

AGONE (Adverb: ago, before).
Morris: Time agone it was a sport to me. Gr. 177.
Malory: 435.14; 526.25; 634.4, etc. (agon, agone).
Beseems (Verb: becomes, is fitting).
Morris: Naught it beseems me
With the sons of Budli
Kin to bring forth. Gud. 441.
(Also Gun. 30, etc.)
Malory: 222.14; 76.19, etc. (besemeth, besemeth).

Boot (Verb: to pay for, to requite).
Morris: If there has been (trouble between us) I will boot for it. Gr. 56.
[þá víl ek bæta]
Malory: 130.12, etc. (bote).

Drunken (Verb: past participle of drink).
Morris: He was ensnared by evil heart ... because of the drink he had drunken. Ihog. 134.
(Also Bryn. 432, etc.)
Malory: 15.35 (dronken; preterit): 574.13 (dronken: past participle).

Enow (Adjective and adverb: enough).
Morris: I am old enow to know. Frit. 74.
(Also Bryn. 432; Oddr. 476; Vig. 114, etc.)
Malory: 101.1; 71.6 (ynow).

Flatlings (Adverb: flat, sidewise, prone or supine [as referred to persons]).
Morris: As soon as it (the axe) bit the wood, it turned flatlings. Gr. 194.
[sneriz hon flýfl]
Malory: 736.7 (flatlynge).

Forthwidual (Conjunction: therewith, forthright).
Morris: And forthwidual both sides caught up their weapons and fought. Gr. 64.
Malory: 46.22 (forth with alle).

Glaive (Noun: war-weapon).
Morris: The glaive’s edges played. Ham. 467.
(Also Gud. 439; Gr. 165, etc.)
Malory: 110.26; 807.18 (glayve).

Handsel (Noun: gift, reward, requital).
Morris: He who taketh handsel from such a man ... may be content. Thor. 158.
Thorkel gave handsel, and paid all fines. Gr. 32.
[Consistently translated from handsöl]
Malory: 297.30 (Used ironically for reward).

Helm (Noun: helmet, head-armour).
(Also Vol. 308, etc. Very common.)
[Used invariably for hjálm]
Malory: 195.18, etc. (helme).

Let (Verb: command, allow).
Morris: They let bring Ingibiorg. Frit. 52.
Helgi ... let flít away the lading. Hroi. 413.
[Consistently used for forms of látan]
(Also Gr. 190; Vol. 314; Vig. 81, 82, etc.)
Malory: 168.24; 846.30; 754.10, etc. (late, lete).

Meseems (Verb: it seems to me).
Morris: Then meesemeth the woman is mine. Vig. 89.
[Used for pyksumst ek, pykki mér, pætti mér, etc.]
(Also Thor. 154; Frit. 49, 55; Hroi. 142; Gr. 33, etc.)
Malory: 66.37, etc. (me semeth).
RIVEN (Verbal adjective: past participle of rive).
Morris: All was riven asunder. Vol. 299.
\[rifnadi\]
(Also Vol. 324, etc.)
Malory: 75.18, etc. (ryven).

SWARE (Verb: preterit of swear).
Morris: The oaths that to Helgi
Once thou swarest. Helgi. 397.
(Also Hel. 427.)
Malory: 275.31, etc.

THERETO (Conjunction: for this purpose).
Morris: As soon as she was of age thereto [for marriage]. Vig. 82.
Malory: 69.25 (therto).

TOMORN (Noun: tomorrow).
Morris: Tomorn will I ask her concerning this. Vol. 355.
\[a\ morgin\]
Malory: 39.30 (to morne).

WASHEN (Verb: past participle of wash).
Morris: ... from thy hands
Thou dost ...
The blood of men washen. Hel. 426.
(Also Vol. 326, interpolated Eddie Lay [past participle].)
Malory: 49.28 (past participle: washen).

WITHAL (Adverbial conjunction: moreover, wholly, etc.).
(Also Vol. 294, etc.)
Malory: 73.8; 57.3, etc. (with all).

YOUNGLING (Noun: youth, »youngster», stripling).
Morris: He thought much of that youngling. Vig. 84.
[Used for unga mann, bann, ungom, sveinn, etc.]
(Also Vol. 300, 341; Gun. 22, etc.)
Malory: 276.31 (yongthe).

III. Words found in Morris and the Ballads but not in Chaucer or Malory.

ATWEEN (Adverb and preposition: meanwhile, between, before, prior to).
Morris: He had no words to make atwixt and atween of his going thence.
Gr. 190.
\[mid/\text{unarmal}: \text{»between-words»}\]
Ballads: I, 466, 11; II, 139, 6.

CARLINE (Noun: old woman; female of carle).
Morris: He had to wife a carline called Laufey. Hog. 128.
[Used generally for kerling]
(Also Gr. 128, 189, etc.)
Ballads: V, 26, 24, etc.

FEY (FEIGH) (Adjective: doomed to die).
Morris: Ne'er shall I flee
[Usually translated from feigr]
(Also Ham. 466; Sig. -Lay. 415; Gr. 94, etc.)
Ballads: I, 245, 6; IV, 430, 2, etc.
GOODWIFE (Noun: mistress, good woman, matron).
Morris: Goodwife Asdís abode at home at Biarg. Gr. 209.
[Used like Goodman, and consistently translated from: husfry]
Ballads: III, 274, 33; V, 91, 6, etc.

GUESTING (Noun: lodging).
Morris: Have you thanks for the gisting. Frit. 77.
[ gistig]
(Also Sig. 405, etc.)
Ballads: I, 284, 17—18, etc. (ghesting).

HANDSEL (Verb: to give reward, to promise, to requite).
Morris: Ye must handsel me peace. Gr. 178.
[handsala]
Ballads: III, 284, 10 (hansell).

SACKLESS (Adjective: guiltless, innocent).
Morris: But thou wilt slay his sons sackless. Vig. 115.
[Consistently translated from saklaus.]
(Also Vig. 108; Thor. 155, etc.)
Ballads: II, 145, 22, etc.

UNFRIENDS (Noun: enemies).
Morris: His sport and pleasure was to ... take wealth from his unfrier
Vol. 342.
Ballads: III, 470, 2.

IV. Words found in Morris and Berners, but not in Chaucer, Malory or the Ballads.

A-HORSEBACK (Adverb: on horse-back).
Morris: Thorsteinn bindeth them both a-horseback. Thor. 154.
[Used generally for á bak]
(Also Vig. 104; Frit. 52, etc.)
Berners: I, 49.

MINISH (Verb: lessen, diminish, detract).
Morris: He shall work many a great work ... even such as eld sl
(Also Hog. 134; Ham. 467, etc.)
Berners: I, 156.

REIVER (Noun: robber).
Morris: (He is) the greatest robber and reiver. (jun. 22.
Berners: II, xxiii (nor robbers nor reavers) [Reference in NED to 152-
1525 edition].

V. Words not found in Chaucer, Malory, the Ballads, or Lord Berners.
The earliest Middle- or Early Modern English usage mentioned in the N.
is given below each word; and since most of these words had considera
use before the nineteenth century (but are considered archaic or obsol
after circa 1800), the latest non-archaic or non-obsolete use of each
given. In a few cases, nineteenth century (archaic) usages are also list

A-DOORS (Adverb: 'of doors).
Morris: They came out a-doors. Vig. 105.
1526: Tindale, John, XII, 31.
1777: Sheridan: Trip. to Scarb. III. 111. 504.

A-GATHERED (Verbal adjective: gather).
Morris: As in the hall there a-gathered,
The huns fell a-talking. Atl. 454.
1393: Compl. Ploughman, Pol. Songs, Rolls Series, T, 244.
A-MORNINGS (Adverb: in, or on mornings).

A-NIGH (Adverb and preposition: nigh, near to, near).
Morris: I was anigh. Gun. 32.
None durst come a-nigh me. Vol. 330.
Preposition: Gentleman's Mag., 1773, xliii, 339.
1860: Reade, Cloist. and H. IV, 173.
(Obiously a conscious pseudo-archaism).

Morris: This was anighttime [that it happened]. Vtg. 95.
1583: Golding, Calvin on Deut., VII, 40 a. (anighttimes).

ARVEL (Noun: funeral drink).
Morris: That one arvel mayst thou
For all of us drink. Whet. 460.
[erfí]
1860: Mrs. Gaskell, C. Brontë, 17.

BEARSERK (Noun: berserk, baresark, fierce warrior).
Morris: Thorir was the greatest bearserk, and the stoutest of men.
Gr. 2.
1822: Scott, Pirate, Note B. (berserk).
1840: Carlyle, Heroes, VI. (baresark).
(The word, though commonly used, is not yet accepted as good
English by the NED.)

BE-PAINTED (Verbal adjective: painted).
Morris: The dwelling [was] fair bepainted within. Vtg. 82.
1592: Shakespeare, Ven. and Ad. 901.
1858: Carlyle, Fredk. Gt. II, VI, vi, 96.

BONDER (Noun: farmer).
Morris: He was the son of a good bonder. Hroi. 140.
[used throughout for bóndt]
1848: Fraser's Mag., xxxviii, 182.
1856: Emerson, Eng. Traits, iv, 63.

BOOSE (Noun: cow-stall).
Morris: He had his head in one boose. Gr. 85.
[bási]
1440: Promp. Parv. 41.
1808: Jamieson.
(The word is explained in Collected Works [VII, 85] by a foot-
note.)

DOOM (Verb: to judge, to given judgment, to decide).
Morris: Now shall the king doom hereover. Hroi. 143.
[konuus dómr vera]
1450: Chester Pl. (EETS) XXI, 354.
1591: Greene, Maiden's Dreame, xlii, 2.

GANGREL (Adjective: lowly, wretched, base).
Morris: She ... said that ever would evil come from wretched gangrel
churls. Gr. 221.
1538: Aberdeen Reg., V, 15 (Jum.).
1815: Scott, Guy M., iii.
(Morris uses the adjective attributively from the noun which the more usual form found. The adjective properly means 'gawky', 'slender', 'awkward'.)

GETTINGS (Noun: things obtained).
(Morris's use, 'things obtained', is not the usual one, which 'accomplishment'.)

GOOD-HAP (Noun: good fortune, good luck).
Morris: I would rather of thee the help of thy money and good-
Hroi. 141.
1603: Knolles, Hist Turkus, 1033.

GUEST (Verb: to lodge, to provide lodging for).
Morris: We bid you thither to guest with us. Vig. 100.
[Usually translated from gista, but also from vista]
(Also Gr. 15, 22, etc.)
1330: R. Brunne, Chron. (1810) 160.
1839: Bailey, Festus xix (1848) 48/1.

HOLMGANG (Noun: a trip to the holm for a death-duel).
Morris: Henceforth all holmgangs should be forbidden. Gun. 38.
[hölmöngur]
(The word is not accepted as good English usage.)

LITTEN (Verbal adjective: lighted, bathed in light).
Morris: Leek-bearer bright, the looking
Over the heaths sun-litten. Vig. 118 (Skaldic verse).
1849: Poe, Haunted Palace, VI.
1861: Lytton and Fane, Tannhäuser, 72.
(Also an obvious pseudo-archaism.)

MISDOUBT (Verb: to have forebodings, to doubt; chiefly reflexive).
Morris: It misdoubts me that Grim will come upon one or other of
Gr. 10.
[en grunar mik]
(Also Vol. 316, 355; Gr. 76, etc.)
1862: Trollope, Orley F. xxvii.

SAX (Noun: short-sword).
sax
(Beowulf, 1545.)
1300—1400: R. Glouc. (Rolls) App. 9, 40.

SCAT (Noun: money, tax, tribute).
Morris: Thou art sent after scat. Frit. 66.
skatt
(1122: O. E. Chron. [money].)
1481: Caxton (treasure).
1863: Longfellow, Wayside Inn, K. Olaf XVI, xii (tribute).
STACKGARTH (Noun: wooded place).
Morris: They came to a certain stackgarth. Vig. 104.
[stakkgarth]
(1293: Durham Chapt. Mss.)

STARVELING[S] (Noun: a low person; distinctly a term of contempt).
Morris: Good luck, scurvies starvelings, if I should behold each finger ye have double up with the cold. Gr. 34. (Skaldic verse.)
[kyrpingom (‘weakling’? — Zoega)]
1596: Shakespeare: I H. IV, II, i, 76.
1854: Mrs. Gaskell, North and S., xxii.
(‘A starved person or animal ... one stunted of food ... one emaciated for lack of nutriment.’ — NED. Morris does not use the word in this sense.)

SWEETLING (Noun: a term of endearment).
Morris: I shall never love any save thee alone, O sweetling. Vig. 101.
(Skaldic verse).
(Also Vol. 333 [Interpolated Eddic Lay].)
1789: Conway, False Appearances, Epil. 74.

THEREUNTO (Adverb: in addition to).
Morris: For ten days we baled, And eight thereunto. Frit. 66. (Skaldic verse).
1567: Drant, Horace Epist. V.
(Chaucer uses ‘thereto’ in the same sense [D 1251].)

TIRE (Verb: to dress the head).
Morris: Tire his head
1539: Great Bible, 2 Kings, IX, 30.
(‘Tiring’ [used as adjective, ‘tiring-may’,] is probably analogous to the verb.)

TROUBLOUS (Adjective: troublesome, grievous).
1840: Carlyle, Heroes, IV (1858) 274.
(Chaucer uses ‘trouby’ [Boethius, IV, Metrics, 5, 35].)

UNHOLPEN (Verbal adjective: without aid, unaided).
Morris: Get a-horseback unholpen. Frit. 52.
1382: Wyclif. I Esdras IX, 11.
1864: Swinburne, Atalanta, 1674.

UNWISDOM (Noun: unwise counsel).
Morris: Great unwisdom is there in such fearful redes. Vol. 390.
[ovispa]
(Vespanian Psalter, XXI.
Common till 1390.
1839: Carlyle: Chartism, IV, 27.
(The word was fairly common as an archaism after Carlyle revived it, 1839—1843 [NED].)
UNWONT (Adjective: unused, unaccustomed to).
Morris: I am more unwont to the work than thou. Thor. 156.
(Three nineteenth century uses are listed by the NED, two of
which are from Scott: 1810, 1829.)

WAST (Verb: preterit of be).
Morris: Thou wast holpen by thy father. Gun. 18.
1534: Tindale (And subsequent Bibles).

WHENAS (Adverbial conjunction: when).
Morris: Whenas the Kings were gone away, Frithiof took away his
raiment of state. Frit. 53.
[consistently translated from pá and er]
(Also Vig. 91, 92; Vol. 296, etc.)
1423: James I, Kingis Q. II.
1808: Scott, Marm., I, xxvii.

WHENSO (Adverbial conjunction: whenever).
Morris: And that shall I have whenso I have need thereof. Vol. 318.
(Also Gr. 189, etc.)
(1175: Lamb. Hom. 85 [used for ‘when’].)
(1200: Ormin. 1466 [used for ‘whenever’].)
1866: Neale, Sequences, Hymns, etc., 216.

WHEREUNDER (Adverbial conjunction: under which).
Morris: Behold the hill whereunder
My bond of love, high-hearted,
My well-beloved one sitteth. Vig. 118. (Skaldic verse).
1300: Cursor Mundi, M, 1348.
1836: Landor, Pericles and Aspasia, I, xxiv, 49.

WHEREUNTO (Adverbial conjunction: unto which).
Morris: Thereafter the king made a noble feast, whereunto his folk
came. Frit. 79.
1490: Caxton, Encylodes, XXIX.
1846: Trench, Mirac., xxxiii (1862) 464.

WITHINWARDS (Adverb: within, inside, toward the inside).
Morris: Until from the world
Of the giants he was gotten
And withinwards was come
1611: Florio, Adintra.

B. The Compounded words and a-prefixes.

In order to translate certain Old Norse words which are generally made
up of two nouns forming one noun, or of a noun and an adjective forming
one adjective, Morris often employed the simple method of hyphenating
the two English words which stand for the component parts of the Norse
word. Although both parts of most of Morris’s compounds are well known,
common English words, the effect of their combination, especially when it
occurs to the reader that he has never before seen such a compound, is
similar to the effect of the archaisms. Both lend a strangeness, a sense of the
foreign which heightens rather than lessens the feeling that these documents
are translations. A selective list of such compounds is given below, with
the Old Norse words from which they are translated in cases where the
original helps to explain the English forms.
BEST-WROUGHT: [He was] the best-wrought of men. Gun. 13.
COWL-BEARER: (A fellow who has pulled his cowl over his head.)
    Well, said the cowl-bearer, Thief is my name. Frit. 72.
FELL-COMMON: The fell-common whereas dwelt Viglund’s light-dun horse.
    Vig. 94.
HOME-WOMAN: So the home-woman was ware of their coming. Vig. 92.
    [heimakona]
    [kverpsiælanum]
MIDDLING-MIGHTY: Bade I the middling-mighty
    To have a mark of the wave’s flame. Gun. 16. (Skaldic verse).
    [mundangi sterkiom]
OUT-SKERRIES: They searched the out-skerries. Frit. 71.
    [útser]
SELF-DOOM: Then I had to give self-doom to Raven. Gun. 32.
    [sjældæmi]
    [skjældmær]
SPOKESMAN-AT-LAW: Skapti ... was then spokesman-at-law in Iceland.
    Gun. 15.
    [læggægumskip]
SUN-LITTEN: Leek-bearer, bright, the looking
    Over the heaths, sun-litten ... Vig. 118. (Skaldic verse).
UGLY-NOSED: He was somewhat ugly-nosed. Gun. 13.

A few such compounds are formed with proper-nouns:
    [englandsfar]
ENGLAND-FARER: They soon saw that it [the ship] was an England-farer.
    Gr. 56.
    [englandsfar]
    [Gunnlaugsnout]
ICELAND-MAN: He said he was an Iceland-man. Gun. 27.
    [Iselinæskr mapr]

The a-prefix, always used by Morris with the present-participle, or
noul, is very common in the saga translations. The reasons for Morris’s
use of some of these forms are inexplicable, but certainly the analogues
which he may have discovered in Chaucer and Malory could have suggested
to him the possibility of employing such words to enhance the archaic aspects
of his language. The Chaucerian a-prefixes are attached to either the present
or the past participle: ‘a-blakeberyed’ (C 406); ‘a-werke’ (D 215); ‘a-cater-
wawed’ (D 354); ‘a-begged’ (F 1580); ‘a-swone’ (Anetida, 354); ‘a-begging’
(Rom. Rose, 6726), etc. An analogous use of the (prepositional) a-prefix
occurs in Malory, more frequently with the present participle: ‘on bledynge’
(95.25); ‘a doyng’ (84.12); ‘in swounynge’ (587.11); ‘on hunyng’ (65.16), etc.

Occasionally Morris uses the a-prefix for no more reason than that
he was fond of it, but he apparently had discovered its practicability and
accuracy in rendering certain phrases from the Old Norse which were written
in grammatical structures that modern English does not possess. The ‘a-
...ing’ form is often found in Morris’s translations where a simple infinitive
preceded by at stands in the original, or where a noun in the dative is preceded by a preposition. Such a translation is, it appears, as close as possible to the original, especially since the syntactic prototypes of the Old Norse forms have long since dropped out of English. Examples of verbal forms are: 'a-smithying' [at smida]; 'a-baling' [at ausa] of the dat with preposition: 'a-chaffering' [in kaupferdum]; 'a-baling' [standi i aus "a-guesting" [at veizulum], etc. A selected group of Morris's various a-prefix appears in the following list.

A-BALING: [They were] ever a-baling the ship. Frit. 57.

A-BLEEDING: Sig. Lay. 415.


A-BURNING: Frit. 69 (Skaldic verse).

A-CROAKING: The eres high screaming
   The ravens a-croaking. Gud. 436.

A-DAWNING: Helgi. 401.

A-DOOMING: Nor sit a-dooming. Gud. 435.

A-DRINKING: Frit. 68.

A-FEASTING: Frit. 77.

A-FIGHTING: Thor. 156.

A-FISHING: He would ever be a-fishing. Gr. 17.


A-GUESTING: The king went a-guesting. Vig. 85.

A-HEEDING: Thord was a-heeding the horses. Thor. 152.


A-ROWING: Frit. 64 (Skaldic verse).

A-SEARCHING: Gr. 64.

A-SEEKING: S. H. 159.

A-SERVING: Thorgrim went a-serving [at table]. Vig. 86.


A-SMITHYING: Therein were the dwarfs a-smithying. Hog. 127.

A-STANDING: Frit. 58 (Skaldic verse).

A-SWELLING: Now is the sea a-swellling. Frit. 57.
A-TALKING: Vig. 89.
[at tala]
A-TRADING: Ingiald went a-trading. Vig. 90.
A-WAITING: Frit. 60.
A-WARMING: The wives ... sat thereby, a-warming the Gods. Frit. 68.
A-WARRING: I will ... sail a-warring. Frit. 70.
[fara i viking]
So he went a-warring. Vig. 87.
[før hann nú i hernad]
A-WAXING: Ham. 464.
A-WOOING: Ketil fell a-wooing Olof. Vig. 87.
[bíd r Olof star geislæ ser til handa]
A-WORKING: Frit. 59 (Skaldic verse).
[at vinna]
A-WRESTLING: Gr. 163.

C. Neologisms in Morris's language.

The neologic forms created by Morris in the Old Norse translations may be divided into three classes, differentiated according to the method by which they were constructed. The first group, I, is made up of words formed by analogy with well-known English words. 'Blithesomely', for instance, is a perfectly logical adverbial-form made upon a comparatively common adjective; 'wraithings' is simply a diminutive of 'wraith', and 'wrongsome' is analogous to any number of adjectives containing the suffix, '-some'. This class of neologisms could also be called »neologisms by accident», for the fact that there are no uses of them listed in The New English Dictionary before Morris's time merely indicates that no one before Morris perceived the possibility of expanding English analogy (in these particular cases) and of using the results of such expansion at random. If Morris had not been what he was, a fairly well-trained linguist, his additions to the vocabulary of our language might be classed as blunders, along with the late Mr. Harding's 'normacle'; but there can be no doubt that Morris knew what he was doing when he made the words in the present group.

The second and third groups of Morris's neologisms, however, cannot be questioned upon the same grounds as the first (if objections are to be raised to new words which are merely analogues to words already existing in the language). These groups are, II, those words which are directly translated from the Old Norse, and, III, those which are directly adapted from the Old Norse, and in which analogy with existing English forms plays no part.

I. Neologisms by Analogy.

AMIDMOST (Preposition: amidst, into, into the center of).

Morris: Thou cravest, O King,
For the coming of us,
The sons of one mother,
Amidmost thine hall. Ham. 469.

Analogues: Amidst (meaning).
Foremost, hindmost, inmost (form).
ASTONIMENT (Noun: astonishment, petrification [?]).
Morris: Now when the thrall had thus said, the astoniment fell Grettir. Gr. 90.
Analogue: Astony (verb), astonishment (meaning).
Predicament, infringement, excitement (forms).
(Cf. 'Astonied', in Chaucer list above).

BEDRIFTED (Verb: spattered, sprayed).
Morris: Bold, with blood be-drifted. Gun. 43 (Skaldic verse).
[drifenn blæpe]
Analogue: Besprinkled, bespattered (meaning and form).
[See the note in NED on 'Be-' as a living form]

BEGUILTED (Verb: accused, condemned).
Morris: And he beguiled the sons of Thorgrim. Vig. 109.
Analogue: Beguilty (past participle: beguiltyed) (meaning and form).
Aggeted is used in Guild Letter Book, F, f, cxev, v.
[See NED on 'Be-']

BEWASH (Verb: wash).
Morris: In ashen bath bewash me. Vig. 117 (Skaldic verse).
[asklaugar mér vaska]
Analogue: Wash (meaning).
[See a-prefixes (form), and 'Be-' in NED].

BLITHESOMELY (Adverb: blithely).
Analogue: Blithely, blithesome (meaning).
Wistsomely, handsomely, etc. (form).

HEREOVER (Preposition: concerning this, over this).
Morris: Now shall the king doom hereover. Hroi. 143.
Analogue: Thereover, moreover (meaning and form).

UMPIREDOM (Noun: umpireship, umpirage).
Morris: The case was settled by umpiredom. Gr. 16.
[sidan væru málin logd i gørd]
Then were these matters laid into umpiredom. Gr. 124.
Analogue: Umpireship, umpirage (meaning).
Kingdom, martyrdom, officialdom, etc. (form).

UNSOOTHLY (Adverb: untruly).
Morris: Unsoothly it is said of me. Hroi. 149.
[úsætt]
Analogue: [un] sooth, [un] soothely (meaning).
Truly, kindly, etc. (form).
[See the NED note on 'Un-' as a living form]

WOTTEN (Verb: preterit of wit).
Morris: Way-wearer art thou not,
Analogue: The analogy is false here, for Morris's preterit is formed of such analogical past-participle forms as 'taken', 'gotten'.
This is one of the few examples of what may properly called, in Vigfusson's terminology, pseudo-Middle-English (Corpus Poeticum Boreale, I, Introduction, p. cxv.)

WRAITHLINGS (Noun: little wraiths).
Morris: I deem myself not given up, though I should see such wraithlings. Gr. 83.
[smáváfur]
Analogue: Ghosts, spectres (meaning).
Nursetlings, ducklings, princelings (form).
WRONGSOME (Adjective: harmful, wrongful, false).
[rangæn eind]
Analogues: Wrongful, wrongous (meaning).
Darksome, winsome, lithesome (form).

II. Neologisms by Translation.
BANESMAN (Noun: murderer).
Morris: He had slain all his father’s banesmen. Vol. 292.
[drepet all fedrbana sina]
Analogues: Baner.
SPAÉ-WRIGHTS (Noun: guardians, prophetesses).
Morris: His spaé-wrights wrought for him that he got no wound.
Vol. 314.
[enn sva hilfdu honum hans spádisir ...]
Analogues: Spaewoman, spaewife.

III. Neologisms by Adaptation.
BERSERKSGANG (Noun: Berserker’s rage, berskerk’s deeds).
Morris: Ten ... who often wrought berserksgang. Frit. 65.
[gegu opt berserksgang]
DRAPA (Noun: laudatory poem).
Morris: This meeting Thormod tells of in that drapa that he made on Thorgeir dead. Gr. 65.
[erfdrápu]
Drapu-measure (praise-verse), Gun. 24 (Skaldic verse).
[dropha lag]
HEFT-SAX (Noun: a kind of dagger).
Morris: For with that glaive might a man both cut and thrust ... [the]
weapon men called then, heft-sax. Gr. 165.
[hepti sax]
HERSIR (Noun: local chieftain [in Norway]).
Morris: A mere hersir’s son should have her to wife. Frit. 79.
[herisson]

IV

It is perhaps unfortunate that Morris’s medievalism should have carried him to that critical extreme of which his language gives evidence: that the English of his days was too formal for him, too greatly lacking in purity. Practically all of his works are written in this language which he devised for himself, — and which he seemed to prefer to the more normal language of his contemporaries. But even if this strange combination of the old and new in vocabulary, of the archaic and modern in syntax, has produced a literary medium which is all that Morris’s unsympathetic contemporary critics thought it was, — a useless, unstandardized diction which resulted from combining the literary English of his own day with words dug from the depths of English literary history, or words he created, — it nevertheless must not be described, as it often has been, as »pseudo-Middle English.»
It may be any kind of English the critics please, but it is not "pseudo", it is not coined, and it is not inaccurate. If Gudbrand Vigfusson had been as thorough a scholar of the English Language as he was of the Icelandic, he would never have made his now famous (and too often believed) statement concerning the justification of translating the Icelandic sagas into an unheard-of kind of English. No form can be "pseudo-Middle English" if Chaucer, Malory, and a host of other Medieval and Early Modern English writers considered it to be a usable, hence, a good form. And the majority of out-of-date words which Morris used are to be found in just such writers as Chaucer and Malory. There are individual words in Morris's vocabulary which are "pseudo-", which show their user's definite and false attempts to create the archaic effect; but they are certainly present in no greater numbers than in the works of any writer whose production was as tremendous as his.

It has been the purpose of this monograph to show (with relation to the Norse translations) what use Morris made of the English language, and to demonstrate, by means of the lists above, that Morris's process in language-use was largely one of 'reviving' old forms rather than 'creating' or 'archaizing' new or modern ones. But before we conclude, let us attempt to evaluate Morris's specialized diction as a translator's medium, and turn, for a moment, to the various theories and problems of translation which others who have rendered the sagas into English have propounded and discussed. Almost every Old Norse translator, from Sir Edmund Head to E. R. Eddison, has commented upon the difficulties which faced him as he attempted to turn the Old Icelandic into English. Head apologized for what he considered his own faults as a translator, and theorized at the same time, when he said:

In the prose narrative I have adhered to the original as closely as was consistent with my desire of presenting to the English reader a translation that could be read without being very stiff and tiresome, but I am by no means sure that I attained this object.\(^1\)

\(^1\) Gudbrand Vigfusson and F. York Powell, *Corpus Poeticum Boreale* (Oxford, 1883), I, Introduction, p. cxv:

There is one grave error into which too many English translators of old Northern and Icelandic writings have fallen, to wit, the affectation of archaisms, and the abuse of archaic, Scottish, pseudo-Middle-English words. This abominable fault makes a Saga, for instance, sound unreal, unfamiliar, false; it conceals all diversities of style and tone beneath a fictitious mask of monotonous uniformity, and slurs over the real difficulties by a specious nullity of false phrasing.

Although Head’s translation is certainly one of the most readable of those we have in English, its excellence is in no measure due to the fact that its maker possessed a theory of translation. Indeed, to assume that adherence to the original necessitates the production of stiff and tiresome reading is to confuse the aims of translation and paraphrase, and to assume at the same time that the style of the original must be improved upon by the translator.\footnote{Head’s translation was admired by Vigfússon. See \textit{Corpus Poeticum Boreale}, I, Introduction, p. cxv, note.}

It would seem more logical to formulate a rule of quite another nature: that if the original is in itself worth translating, it is deserving of an \textit{accurate} rendering. W. C. Green, the first translator of \textit{Egla}, had quite a different idea from Head. He found no problems in translating, hence he proposed no theory; but followed the rule that as long as the Old Norse was put into the obvious English which it suggested to the translator, the English version would succeed.\footnote{For an excellent critical résumé of the various translations from Old Norse to English, see E. R. Eddison, \textit{Egil’s Saga} (Cambridge [Eng.], 1930), “Terminal Essay: On Some Principles of Translation,” pp. 229—242.} The theory developed by Vigfússon and Powell was perhaps the most complicated, as well as the most contradictory, of any which was put into extensive practice. They insisted upon the employment of the Modern English idiom, and yet in translating proper names, they invariably used what were (or what they thought were) their Old-English equivalents. Their indices, as a consequence, are quite confusing, and often useless. In general, Vigfússon and Powell were opposed, in the practice of translation, to any diction adopted by Morris. His style they considered an abomination because it was inaccurate; yet even the most prejudiced of the anti-Morris critics will find that the strange verbal strictness and the almost mathematical precision of the prose translations which stand beneath the verses in the bi-lingual \textit{Corpus Poeticum Boreale}, are not only difficult but often unintelligible. George Webbe Dasent also strove for faithful translation. He was not sure that he accomplished it; but if accuracy be a virtue in the translator’s scholarship, and if readability be the aim of his art, we can scarcely say that Dasent failed in \textit{Gisla} and \textit{Njála}.

We must admit, however, that there has never been a real dispute over the language of translation used by any of these men, — Head, Green, Vigfússon and Powell, Dasent; nor over the pioneering efforts of Samuel Laing. Morris’s language, on the contrary, has always been the object of criticism, generally derog-
atory. The question which the commentator on his language asks himself, after evidence has proved to him that Morris did not create it out of linguistic wholecloth, is: where shall he stand, with the critics, or with Morris? But here, as in the case of so many other things, he must appeal to an old logic, and say de gustibus... with good reason. It may be fairly stated that one will like Morris's language of translation only if he likes Morris's writings in general, that the Morris admirer will give no middle-ground, and the detractor (like Æggi) will likewise give none. To the one it is all good, to the other, all bad. A hearty defender of Morris, E. R. Eddison, has recently published his views upon the subject. In his »Terminal Essay: On Some Principles of Translation«, he says that the first difficulty facing any Old Norse translator is the problem of presenting to the English reader the living word. This difficulty, he maintains, Morris has overcome. In comparing a passage from the Heimskringla in the version of Samuel Laing with that of Morris, he concludes that:

The capital difference is that Laing's version is heavy and lifeless, while Morris's is, by comparison, living human speech.¹

To say that it is »living human speech«, however, is not to declare it matchless, nor faultless. In fact, in a previous page Eddison has compared the work of Dasent and Morris (»Two translators of the sagas [that] stand above the rest...«) and has discovered that where the one fails in language by falling into colloquialism, the other does so by allowing the poetry of words to run away with him.

Perhaps the translations of William Morris do not stand above those of Dasent and Laing »as the spear-leek grown above the grass«, but they do tower over the rest, like »Sigurd over Gjuki's sons« in at least one respect. They have strength and life; and for this they may be justly admired even if the language into which they are cast cannot be universally accepted.

As we look back upon the evidence presented in the sections above, we find it of course unnecessary to conclude finally upon evidence which proves that Morris knew a great deal about the English language. We have found that in trying to retain the language-flavor of his originals, Morris employed the only method known to him: the use of archaisms, and like words, probably taken largely from Middle English writers with whose works he was acquainted. His success or failure cannot concern us too greatly, for as long as he cherished the belief that such a preservation of

spirit was necessary (which was, in effect, his theory of translation), he exposed himself to the criticism of those who saw no advantage in reviving forms long out of date. It is probable that the critical barbs of Morris’s contemporaries will not affect his lasting reputation; it is certain that they did not change his literary style. He started to archaize his diction in his earliest poems, and he developed and completed what was almost a language of his own by practising its use in the Old Norse translations. When he turned his hand toward the writing of *Sigurd the Volsung*, and the eight Prose Romances which followed it, his language consisted no more of miscellaneous archaic words reproduced from earlier writers. He had now a diction of his own, and he continued to use it in all the writings which he thought demanded, because of the times in which he set them, a vocabulary distinctly non-modern.

Karl Litzenberg.

---


Nærværende bog er en redegørelse for runeskriften, dens opståen, udvikling og anvendelse. Forf. indleder med ordene: »Ein zusammenfassendes Werk über die Runen ist bitter nötig», og det fremgår af forordet, at det har været forf.’s hensigt at levere den bog, der kunde afløse Ludvig F. A. Wimmers for det moderne runestudium grundlæggende værk: Runeskriftens Oprindelse 1874, i stærkt forøget tysk udgave: Runenschrift 1887. Om den læsekrede, til hvilken bogen henvender sig, oplyser følgende ord: »Hoffen wir doch die Runologie in Deutschland wieder zum allgemeinen Gegenstand der Forschung zu machen und ihr an allen Universitäten Lebensrecht und Lebensraum zu verschaffen. Dem soll in erster Linie das vorliegende Buch dienen».

Det er en glæde strax at konstatere, at forf. med skarphed vender sig mod den pseudo-videnskab, der vil gøre Tyskland til verdens navle og runerne til jordens ældste skrift, og som en tid stod i kurs i vort sydlige naboland under ledelse af Hermann Wirth, en mand, der har gjort Tysklands videnskabelige anseelse ubedødelig skade, så meget mere som ansete lærde blev smittet af hans teorier under den almindelige gryende begejstring for germansk og germanerne. Den ængstelse, man derfor naturligt må nære, når man åbner en bog om runer fra en iøvrigt ukendt tysk forfatters hånd,