

THE EARLY PRINTED VERSIONS OF MEDIEVAL GERMAN HEROIC LITERATURE

By K. C. KING, M.A., PH.D.

HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT OF GERMAN IN THE UNIVERSITY
OF NOTTINGHAM

THE period at the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries is not one of great creative activity in German literature, but it plays an important part in the study of that literature, on account of the interest it showed in the works of the earlier masters. This interest took several forms, not all of which are my concern in the present investigation; there are, for example, the works of those who were men of letters themselves, like Ulrich Füetrer, who turned their attention to the ancient stories and retold them. It is always difficult, sometimes impossible, to say to what extent these late adaptations conform to the original forms of the stories; as we are dealing with men who do lay claim to literary powers, modest as these powers sometimes undoubtedly were, we must be guided by caution and be very chary of seeing in these works an exact reproduction of the original. For my immediate purpose the significance of these writers is that they set the stage for the discussion of my particular problem, in that they introduce us to the antiquarian tastes of the period.

The other forms which this interest took, and which do concern us, are the strictly recording activities. Fundamentally it should, perhaps, be immaterial whether this recording activity took the form of recording by handwriting or by printing; and it would, indeed, be difficult to draw any distinct line of demarcation between the two, either on the basis of a distinction between the kinds of work which were written, or printed, or on the basis of the approach of scribes, or printers, to their models. In the earliest period of printing it would be even more difficult to set about making such a distinction than after the turn of the century, in fact it would scarcely occur to an investigator to do so, for

that was the time when a print ranked *pari passu* with a manuscript for text-critical purposes, and we have cases in the very field with which my present enquiry is concerned where these conditions apply. My enquiry is not, however, confined to the very earliest period of printing but extends to the first hundred years of the craft, in fact rather longer; and in this period problems arise which do put the printed recordings into a class with peculiarities of their own. I hasten to add that I have not arbitrarily chosen this extent of time in order to justify drawing this distinction; on the contrary, the grouping, and the problem, present themselves naturally, in that there issue from the printing presses from about 1480 to the end of the sixteenth century—with isolated examples from even later—a considerable number of works of fictional literature, belonging to a quite narrowly defined genre and sometimes even of similar subject-matter, which do present problems which are not shared with any of the manuscripts which have been preserved. This, in theory, would, I maintain, be enough to justify separate treatment; but in addition to that, in fact, the works which have been preserved to us in this way add considerably to our knowledge of German literature in the Middle Ages, and the questions of principle to which they give rise have never been adequately faced. I hope also that the investigation may throw some light on the printers themselves.

Before I deal with this central point I must say a few words about the recording activity of which there is manuscript evidence; I hope that what I say will make it clear that this is not a digression, but that an acquaintance with this phenomenon will help us to assess more accurately the significance of the printed counterparts. That some of the writings of the classical period of Middle High German literature have a continuous manuscript tradition from the time of their composition in the early thirteenth century until the invention of printing does not need to be stressed here: there is nothing very surprising about it and it does not raise any particular problems, for when there is such a continuous tradition it is comparatively easy to assess the value of the latest descendants, and it is not about these manuscripts that I have anything to say. What I am concerned with

is the collective manuscripts of the middle to end of the fifteenth century, which do not fit into any known tradition : where these manuscripts do contain works about which we have knowledge from earlier manuscript sources, the version which we have here in so many cases deviates more widely than is normally regarded as consonant with descent in the same line, and in other cases we have no other knowledge of the existence of the works so recorded, although the theme and treatment make it clear that these works are not entirely the creation of the period of the manuscript. I refer to the so-called " Books of Heroes " (Heldenbücher) ; this word has been used quite widely in modern times for collected editions, and translations, of medieval works, but there are also three medieval collections which go by this name. About their origin, how they came to be compiled and on what principle, if any, works were chosen for inclusion, we know little or nothing. The fact that the Emperor Maximilian gave the commission for one of them (completed in 1516) is known, and is interesting enough, but it does nothing to invalidate the previous sentence. This is the latest of the three, and it normally goes by the name of *Ambras Heldenbuch*. The earliest is that which was written in 1472 by Kaspar von der Roen of Münnerstadt in Franconia for Duke Balthasar of Mecklenburg ; it sometimes goes by the name of the scribe, sometimes by the name of the place where it was preserved, namely Dresden.¹ Slightly later, probably, is the Strassburg collection, which exists, or at least existed, in both manuscript and printed form, neither of which bears a date. The manuscript was formerly in the Seminar Library at Strassburg and was destroyed during the bombardment of that town in 1870, although not before a reliable copy had been made, which was deposited in what was then the Preussische Staatsbibliothek in Berlin. It used to be the view that this manuscript dated from the middle of the fifteenth century,² but the later researches of Carl Schorbach indicate that

¹ Reprinted in *Deutsche Gedichte des Mittelalters*, hrsg. F. H. von der Hagen und J. G. Büsching (Berlin, 1808-25).

² See, for example, *Der grosse Wolfdieterich*, hrsg. A. Holtzmann (Heidelberg, 1865), p. xvii, and *Laurin und der kleine Rosengarten*, hrsg. G. Holz (Halle, 1897), p. iii.

the scribe was not Diebolt von Hagenau but Diebolt Hanowe and that its date was about 1480.¹ A number of eminent scholars in the nineteenth century examined the original manuscript and knew it before the copy was made.

Of particular interest for the present study is the fact that this collection was also printed and also the way in which it was printed. The print bears no statement of date or place of printing, nor of the name of the printer; Schorbach (op. cit.) came to the conclusion that it was done by Johann Prüss of Strassburg about 1480. The relation of print to manuscript varies. In the case of one of the poems it contains, *Laurin*, the correspondence is exact (see Holz, ed. cit. p. xxviii); Holz is of the opinion that as the print on several occasions has the correct reading where the manuscript is faulty the priority must be given to the print, although I am not convinced that this is a cogent reason, especially as Holz himself remarks that the print is "naturally" more carefully done than the manuscript. The two copies are used by Holz for establishing the text.

In the case of the other three poems which constitute the collection the printed version—and I use the word version advisedly here—is of no value for textual purposes, for these poems have been recast to suit a different rhyming system: they are in the strophic form familiar from the heroic epics, such as *Nibelungenlied*, in which the rhymes occur, in pairs, at the end of the long lines. This was adhered to in the manuscript version, but the print has introduced "internal", or "caesura", rhyme, making additional rhymes, also in pairs, for the first half-lines in addition. An idea of what this involves in the way of recasting can be obtained by comparing the opening lines of *Wolfdietrich*, which are reprinted according to the manuscript by Holtzmann on pages xvii f. of his edition² and the text of the print, which is available in the edition of A. von Keller, on page 126.³ The

¹ For a detailed account see his *Seltene Drucke in Nachbildungen. IV. Laurin* (Halle, 1904), pp. 5 f.

² They can also be found in Von der Hagen und Büsching, *Literarischer Grundriss zur Geschichte der deutschen Poesie* (Berlin, 1812), pp. 8 f.

³ *Das deutsche Heldenbuch nach dem muthmasslich ältesten Drucke*, hrsg. Adelbert von Keller, Bibliothek des litterarischen Vereins in Stuttgart, vol. 87 (1867).

consequences of this for textual purposes are obvious, in general, although there are occasions when this version can be used, though not really for anything more than confirmatory purposes. Holtzmann¹ considered it of hardly any value at all for the edition of *Wolfdietrich*, and Amelung shared this view in respect of *Ortnit*:² the cases he quotes where he did find the print of some use are rather for helping in determining details of content and not for strictly questions of reading. In the case of the *Rosengarten* the situation is to that extent different that the print and the manuscript have two separate versions of the poem: the print follows the A version and the manuscript the D.³ In their respective contexts the two run true to type: the manuscript takes its place with the others of this version (all of them fifteenth century) and plays its part in the establishment of the text; the printed form is an adaptation, as above, and I can find no trace of Holz having used it for textual purposes.

To what extent the apparent difference in procedure in the case of *Rosengarten* on the one hand and the other three poems on the other is reconcilable with the print having used the same manuscript throughout (that same one being the Strassburg manuscript which we have been dealing with)—Holz, in the note on page xcvi, would appear to think that this was the case—is something which cannot be dealt with here. The very question of the nature of the manuscript itself is one which remains to be cleared up: the printed book is clearly circumscribed, and it contains, apart from the famous “Preface”, the four poems I have mentioned, and as all the subsequent editions (1509, 1545, 1560, 1590—and I take it in the absence of any statement to the contrary that the same applies to the 1491 edition, although I have never seen a copy of this) have the same content one may safely conclude that that really was how it was composed. In the case of the manuscript there is not the same clarity: it contains two further poems, *Dietrich von bernne und sigenott* and—not a

¹ Op. cit. p. xxxix.

² *Ortnit und die Wolfdietriche*, hrsg. von A. Amelung und O. Jänicke (Berlin, 1871), p. xv.

³ For details see *Die Gedichte vom Rosengarten zu Worms*, hrsg. G. Holz (Halle, 1893), pp. iii and v and xcvi ff.

“heroic” poem at all—*Pfaffe Amîs*, but it is now no longer possible to say with certainty how integral was their connection with the rest, or even how old, or “genuine”, the collection as a collection was. Schoener, writing in 1928, simply states that the manuscript (he still retains the old view that it was written by Diebolt von Hagenau in 1450) contained all the above-mentioned poems,¹ but Holtzmann in his edition of *Wolfdietrich*, (p. xvii) supplies the important details and states quite definitely that it is made up of what were originally separate codices. This is a most important statement and one which does not seem, as far as I can see, to have attracted any attention; it is, of course, of no particular significance to editors who are concerned with one particular poem whether the manuscript of this poem was a separate codex or whether it contained other poems, any more than it is of any particular significance to an editor concerned with an edition of the *Nibelungenlied* to know that one of the best manuscripts is part of a codex which contains Wolfram’s *Parzival*. For anyone concerned with the problems of relationship of print to manuscript, however, it is of the greatest importance, but an examination of it would take us far outside the scope of the present enquiry, and it is, I think, bound to be fraught with very considerable speculation; for the present we must be content with noting the situation in regard to the separate poems. In this connection the two things which are of greatest importance are that manuscript and print are the same in the case of *Laurin*, but that in the case of the others the printed version has the changed metrical form with the cæsura rhymes. That this is still reconcilable with the printer nevertheless having used the Strassburg manuscript and nothing else is shown by the fact that one of the printers of the *Lied vom hürnen Seyfrid* did the same thing. Such rhymes occur occasionally in all the prints of that poem and must therefore be regarded as original, but in that done by Thiebolt Berger of Strassburg in 1563 it is pursued as a policy; it is not carried through in all cases, and cannot therefore to that extent be equated with what occurs in the *Heldenbuch*, but it does show that such interference with the source is

¹ *Der jüngere Sigenot*, hrsg. A. Clemens Schoener (Heidelberg, 1928), pp. x f.

something which a printer thought was legitimate and which he found the ability to do.

The composition and origin of these "Books of Heroes" is a problem in itself: for the purpose of the present enquiry it will be sufficient to note that the three (regarding, at least provisionally, the printed and manuscript Strassburg collections as one) are united only by their similarity of purpose, in that they all contain narrative poems dealing with the heroic deeds of figures which occupied a central position in the literature of the thirteenth century, but the three collections differ greatly in their composition. Most of the poems are long—"epics"—but not all of them by any means. Further, they differ more widely than a mere list of the titles they contain would appear to indicate, for it repeatedly happens that where more than one of them contains a poem with the same title the versions of these poems are different, in a way which goes far beyond mere textual variation; the *Rosengarten* in the two Strassburg collections is a case in point. The Dresden and Ambras collections contain poems, different in each case, which are not known from earlier sources.

The situation in respect of the printed single works is similar in that here too we have works which have not been previously recorded, and works previously recorded but in deviating form, and it is this, and the problems it raises, which forms the central problem of this article. It is seldom that one finds one of the works of the Classical Period of Middle High German literature recorded in print in this period, the outstanding exception being, of course, *Parzival* and *Titurel* of Wolfram von Eschenbach, which were printed in 1477, and are now attributed to Mentelin of Strassburg. In this case the print is treated for textual purposes as if it were a manuscript and has been accorded its place in the family of manuscripts from the original edition of the poems by Lachmann in 1833 (p. xviii) to the latest revision of that standard edition by Ed. Hartl in 1952 (p. liii).

A word of explanation is called for in view of my remark in the previous paragraph that some of the works I shall be concerned with were not recorded before they appeared in print; what evidence is there that they did in fact exist before they were

committed to print and therefore claim a place in this enquiry? I hope to be able to show that the answer, in detail, is different in each individual case, but there is some common ground, and this common ground is the fact that the themes and actors are those that are associated with the medieval period (largely, but by no means entirely, with the thirteenth century) and that there are references in the preserved writings of authors of the thirteenth century, as well as later, to works no longer extant but with titles identical with, or similar to, those that we have in early prints. We therefore maintain that there is a *prima facie* case for regarding these fifteenth- and sixteenth-century printed poems as evidence of these works. It is for this reason that they can claim the attention of the historian of literature: their importance in the history of printing needs, I think, no stressing.

Apart from taking cognizance of their existence and drawing conclusions from this, which must of necessity be very tentative and provisional, on the continuing popularity of the genre which these poems represent, the first task of the scholar in dealing with them is to examine the text and, if he proposes to publish an edition of one or more of the works, to decide on what kind of edition it shall be: quite apart from publishing a facsimile, which is not infrequently done, the real choice is between whether the edition shall give a diplomatic reprint of one of the prints of the poem, or whether it shall be a critical text. Still more difficult is the division under the second heading: is the critical text to go back beyond the immediate source of the extant prints, perhaps itself a print, or shall it seek to reconstruct the text of the poem as it was originally composed? The latter alternative involves considerable textual changes, for the German language had undergone far-reaching changes (from Middle High German to Early New High German) which would have their repercussions on the language of the poem, the chief among these being drastic changes in the pronunciation of long vowels and diphthongs which would make it possible to rhyme in the later period words which could not have rhymed in the earlier, and vice versa.

The problem became acute for me when I had to decide on

how to proceed in my edition of just such a poem.¹ This is an example of the extreme mentioned above: it is preserved only in prints, of which the earliest (undated) would appear to be from about 1530, but there are allusions and references which show that the events related in the poem have a much greater antiquity—although they have not all the same antiquity. It has been, for example, stated that there existed in the middle of the thirteenth century an epic poem about Siegfried, the outline of which can still be traced in the strophes of our poem, which is described as an abbreviated extract.² There is no concrete evidence for this statement, and the full discussion of the problem in the Introduction to my edition of the poem shows that the evidence that exists indicates quite emphatically that that in fact is not the case. Supported by my confidence that the poem as it stands is not an abbreviation, but a comparatively recent creation, based on earlier, disparate, material, I have not attempted, in the establishment of the text, to go back beyond the archetype of the extant prints, even when this involves printing some obscurities, the presence of which in the archetype is adequately attested by their, sometimes unanimous, occurrence in the extant prints. I quite realize that perhaps not everybody will agree with my procedure, but I am satisfied that my method is correct for the case in point. I propose now to examine the policies of other editors to see whether any generally valid principles can be set up for the editing of works of this kind. The works I shall discuss are all comparable in kind to the *Hürnen Seyfrid*, in that they are all narrative, fictional, works dealing with deeds of heroism, and usually resulting in the hero overcoming, by his great strength and resourcefulness, the dangers which beset him. There again, this is not just an arbitrary distinction; there were many other works in Middle High German literature, and there were many other works printed, but there were not many other Middle High German works (of fictional, narrative, literature)

¹ *Der hürnen Seyfrid* or *Das Lied vom hürnen Seyfrid*. I reported on the problems of spelling in the BULLETIN, vol. 35, no. 1, 61 ff. My edition is now complete in manuscript.

² By D. von Kralik, in his Introduction to *Das Nibelungenlied*, übersetzt von Karl Simrock, Kröner (Stuttgart, 1954), p. xiv.

which were printed in our period—as far as we can judge by what has been preserved. I am aware that one must consider the possibility of loss, and that many other poems may have been printed about which we have no evidence; on the other hand there is very real evidence in what we have, and it falls together readily into an intelligible group, or unity—so much so that one is justified, while exercising due caution in view of the possibility of loss, in regarding what is preserved as some guide to the tastes of the reading public of the time and of the steps taken by contemporary printers to satisfy them. The observation by the Swiss antiquarian Melchior Goldast would tend to confirm that what is now preserved is not in fact much less than was then current: “hercle non magis quam vel Homeri poemata an Virgilij. Cuimodi sunt, quae sola ex media antiquitate circumferuntur, carmina de *Otnite Langobardo*, de *Woluftheodoricho Graeco*, de *Gibicho Vangione*, de *Laurino*, de *Theodorico Veronesi*, de *Hiltibrando Gottho*, de *Sigifrido Agrippinensi* cognomento *Corneo*, de *Eckio*, de *Eckardo Alsato*, de *Ernesto Austrio an Bavaro*, alia quae necdum in manus nostras pervenere.”¹

The works are: *Das Lied vom alten Hildebrant, Herr Dietrich von bern* . . . (normally now known as “Der jüngere Sigenot”), *Ecken Ausfahrt*, *Laurin*, *Wunderer* or *Etzels Hofhaltung*, *Herzog Ernst*. In all of these the printed versions are prominent, but in no case are we, as with the *Hürnen Seyfrid*, entirely without manuscript evidence; this evidence varies greatly in its reliability and in some cases it is of less value for textual—and even historical—purposes than some of the prints. I am concerned here with the assessment of the value of the printed evidence.

There is one other work which must be mentioned here, although so little is known about it that it scarcely can be said to present a problem: the poem about the death of King Ermanaric, *van Dirick van dem Berne*, normally now referred to under the title “Von Koninc Ermenrîkes Dôt”. In view of its special position I shall reserve the few comments I have to make on it until the end, and I shall not include it, unless otherwise stated, in any general remarks I may make in the meantime.

¹ *Paraeneticorum veterum Pars I* (1604), p. 346.

One thing immediately springs to mind, as a circumstance which unites all these, and that is that they all occur, or more accurately poems with all these titles occur, in Kaspar von der Roen's *Heldenbuch*. I have not made this circumstance a condition of my choice : these poems are, to the best of my knowledge, the only ones of their category which are preserved in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century prints, this category being that of "heroic" literature and consisting of poems which deal with the heroic deeds of figures from the period of the Migrations of the Peoples ; it is generally believed that such poems were composed at that time, and they certainly, in the form of epics, bulked large in the literature of the thirteenth century. The classification of *Herzog Ernst* has always caused some difficulty, but by the time it, and the others, appear in print, or even earlier in the Dresden *Heldenbuch*, they all fall without any difficulty into a group, and are united by standards of length, subject-matter and treatment, the two latter in that they deal with deeds of strength, rather than courage, of eminent men, concluding with the restoration of the happy *status quo*. It is to my mind significant that it was these poems that were printed in this period, and the fact that there are so many others of similar length and treatment convinces me that it is because these "heroic" poems lend themselves to this treatment that they were chosen. The circumstance that they are also contained in the Dresden *Heldenbuch* has, I think, nothing to do with this choice, except to the extent that it indicates that Kaspar von der Roen or his patron was similarly motivated ; and, in any case, *Das Lied vom hürnen Seyfrid* is not in the Dresden manuscript and yet it was as frequently printed as the others. I have stated in the Introduction to my edition that this poem belongs to the same literary climate. I shall discuss the poems in the order in which I listed them above : there is no particular significance about the order.

In the case of the *Lied von dem alten Hildebrant* the situation, historically, has some affinity with the *Hürnen Seyfrid* : a complete hiatus of several centuries between the proper heroic poem and the late medieval version, and the same lack of high seriousness when it does recur. The poem is preserved in numerous prints (rather more than in the case of *Hürnen Seyfrid* are

certainly attested),¹ and these fall readily into two groups: two main groups, of which the second, and poorer, can again be divided into two. One of these groups contains a print which, although undated, is of considerable antiquity: it still retains the undiphthongized long vowels of the Middle High German period, but which are usually superseded in prints. It is not perfect, however, nor is it the archetype of all the other prints, but it has the stamp of such greater reliability than the others that the editor (Steinmeyer) only deviates from it when an agreement between the second class and the other two prints in this class, or with manuscripts when applicable, shows that it has innovated. It is a Strassburg print, but the printer is unknown. How rarely it has been necessary, in fact, to deviate from it is revealed by a glance at the apparatus. The task of the editor is then to this extent simple, and the principle adopted by Steinmeyer is the same that I have adopted in the case of *Hürnen Seyfrid*—and which I adopted before I examined Steinmeyer's work on the *Hildebrandslied*. The result is a text which contains unsatisfactory readings and some things which are clearly "wrong", but it has the stamp of a genuine print. The great point of difference lies in the fact that Steinmeyer had also a manuscript tradition before him; this, however, deviated far too greatly for it to be permissible to use it—except in a case like line 4 of strophe 5 where the reading chosen is, although not that of the manuscript tradition, one which the editor would have been led to by the manuscript tradition, or by which he would have been strengthened in his conjecture if he had made it without reference to this tradition. It is clear from his remarks on page 23 that Steinmeyer is as clear as I am in the case of the *Hürnen Seyfrid* that much in the text as printed makes less than good sense, and that he regards the manuscript tradition as superior, but he prints that to which the prints themselves point.

In view of the importance which I attach to the two Nürnberg prints of *Hürnen Seyfrid*, I would draw particular attention to what Steinmeyer says about the grouping of the prints of the

¹ Details, as well as a critical text of the poem, are best found in *Denkmäler deutscher Poesie und Prosa aus dem VIII-XII Jahrhundert*, hrsg. K. Müllenhoff und W. Scherer, Dritte Ausgabe von E. Steinmeyer (Berlin, 1892), ii. 20-30.

Hildebrandslied: one of the sub-divisions of his second group is formed largely by the Nürnberg prints, and this group he characterizes as being distinguished by the freedom with which it proceeds. The Nürnberg print, known to Steinmeyer only from Weller's statement in the *Annalen*, by Kunegunde Hergotin, has since been found in the Ratsschulbibliothek in Zwickau and has been published as number 7 in the series Zwickauer Facsimiledrucke (Verlag F. Ullmann, 1912). It has no features to distinguish it from the Nürnberg prints which Steinmeyer did know. The freedom to which Steinmeyer refers will be adjudged more or less serious according to different people's views, but a drastically different text would not have resulted if there had been nothing better to work with, as is the case with *Hürnen Seyfrid*. In principle Steinmeyer has proceeded as I have, but he was able to call upon, and base his text on, an older and rather better print than I have been able to use. He concludes that the archetype which he thus reconstructs is based on a manuscript and that it may be used with other manuscripts for the reconstruction of the original poem; but as there is for two-thirds of the poem only one manuscript (fifteenth-sixteenth century) which could be used—the Dresden *Heldenbuch* being too unreliable and the Netherlandish one being only a translation, in addition to its containing many arbitrary alterations—he is not of the opinion that we can proceed any further.

The known facts about "Der jüngere Sigenot" are set out in the edition by Schoener (see above), but for all the massive Introduction it is still far from clear what is the position of the prints: in fact, as Schoener presents the evidence, the prints do not seem to have a separate existence. Briefly the situation seems to be as follows: the older poem, of the thirteenth century, underwent a drastic revision, increasing its length, at a date not specified, but thought to be c. 1350, and this poem, the "jüngere Sigenot", has been preserved in several manuscripts and more prints. None of these inspires full confidence, but the best would appear to be the Strassburg manuscript, the *Heldenbuch* mentioned above. Schoener puts this in a class by itself and uses it as the basis for his critical text; all the other witnesses (four manuscripts, including that of Kaspar von der Roen, and

the prints) he regards as representatives of a recast form of the poem (cf. his table on p. lxvi); of the numerous prints he considers that that by Bäumlcr of Augsburg of about 1480 is the source from which all the others are descended.

Our present concern is not with Schoener's methods except in so far as he uses the prints, and here there are two matters which do call for comment. The first of these is his use, in the apparatus, of the readings of *all* the prints: it is, indeed, most useful to have these readings, as well as the account of each print in the Introduction, for they enable us to form our own opinion of the family of prints, but it can be misleading for it can give the impression that each print whose reading is given is to be regarded as an independent witness. It would be most uncommon if this were so, and indeed the editor denies that by his claim that the Bäumlcr print is the parent of them all (p. lxiv).

The second point concerns just this claim. Schoener admits that the later prints do not simply copy the source (and in that they act in common with the printers of our other poems); but I am not yet convinced that the variant readings are in fact consonant with descent from Bäumlcr and Bäumlcr alone, and my chief reason for this doubt is that so many of these deviations from Bäumlcr coincide with readings of manuscripts other than the Strassburg: some with the Heidelberg manuscript (e.g. 93, 5 and 122, 1) and others with Kaspar von der Roen (e.g. 130, 12 and 10, 11; or 62, 2, and 174, 12, where the agreement is not exact). I have merely mentioned a few cases to illustrate my point: a perusal of the apparatus reveals a large number more.

One might perhaps be reminded at this point that before Schoener's edition, and before the Bäumlcr print was available complete, or nearly complete, the view was that the prints fell into three independent groups. Steinmeyer held this view (*Altdeutsche Studien*, p. 76) and it was followed by Schorbach.¹ A fragment corresponding to the Bäumlcr print was known, and Schorbach remarked that it contained many a reading which

¹ *Seltene Drucke in Nachbildungen. II. Dietrich von Bern (Sigenot)* (Leipzig, 1894), pp. 14 f.

savoured of the manuscript and which had been removed by later prints ; the other two groups (one consisting among others of two Heidelberg prints of 1490 and 1493, and the other headed by Gutknecht and Newber of Nürnberg and Schönigk of Augsburg) Steinmeyer maintained were independent of one another and descended from a common source.

I am not prepared at the moment to offer an explanation of the deviations of the later prints from the oldest : I cannot see how one can adequately explain the agreements with manuscripts against this one print if one accepts the view that this print is the parent of them all. On the other hand the fact that all the prints have the same number and arrangement of strophes (those, that is, that are complete enough for us to see what this arrangement is) argues in favour of their being all of one family. I cannot see on what evidence Schoener maintains (op. cit. p. lxiv) that a number of important deviations of these later prints is based on a now lost Strassburg print of before 1490 ; I am quite prepared to consider the possibility that there may have existed from the beginning a quite separate print (based, that is, on a different manuscript from that which Bäumler used) and that the use of this, combined with the Bäumler, might have caused the discrepancies, but one would need more evidence and it would mean a considerable alteration to Schoener's genealogical table on page lxvi. I do not think we are helped much by the reference to the " riesige Verbreitung " of the poem, for there are no more prints than there are of the *Hildebrandslied* and not many more than of the *Hürnen Seyfrid*. The claim that a copy of the poem could be found in every important printing house or scriptorium of the fifteenth century requires further substantiating : I should prefer to keep to a more sober list of attested prints and printers and compare the picture presented by other poems.

The really important thing for the present enquiry is that an examination of the apparatus—and here again one is grateful for having the variant readings so fully and clearly laid out—reveals the familiar picture of the printed version as a separate family, or at least a separate branch. This is not invalidated by the previous observation that there are readings in the later

prints which point to distinct manuscript traditions, nor by the fact that at times the whole printed branch shows what may be termed proper variant readings ; but the number of occasions when it shows a quite independent recasting, with different vocabulary, different syntax, and differing meaning only serves to stress once again what emerges from other similar poems, and that is that if we had only the printed version we should not be in a position to reconstruct the original text. A few examples such as the following will reveal my meaning.

In str. 17, 6 (numbering according to Schoener) the critical text reads *Die wîl ir hânt daz leben* and the prints (D) *Od ir kempt umb das leben*. 27, 11-13 critical text

Er reit entwerhes in dem tan.

Er kam ûf eine heide,

Als ich vernumen han.

and D

Von stund da kam der helde kôn

Vber ain prayte hayde

Wol auff ain wisen grôn.

In 3, 9-10 the critical text reads

Von der kam ich in grôzen pîn :

Siu brâcht mich nâ vom lîbe.

and in D

Sy het mir nach das leben mein

Geschayden von dem leibe.

There are many more such examples, and they can be readily seen from the apparatus ; it is such incalculable departures such as these which always shake my faith in the printed version. Other cases of very individual readings could be adduced which are less incalculable in that they occur at places where the archetype was clearly corrupt and in which every witness can claim to be considered, but in the cases I have just quoted there is not this excuse. The alteration in 61, 4 from *Der gie im vaste für diu knie* (to rhyme with *gie*) to D *Gar fast er im für sein knye hieng* (: *gieng*) could be ascribed to exigencies of rhyme, resulting from the substitution of *gieng* for the older *gie*. The fact that the printed branch omits strophes, reverses some, and combines two into one (cf. Schoener, esp. p. xxv) would add to the difficulty of reconstructing the original from the prints alone, but

this sort of thing is not something which is confined to prints alone.

To the list of prints in Schoener should be added: *Herr Dieterich von Bern / und sein treüwer Meister Hildebrandt / Wie sie wider Ryss Sygenoten gestritten haben / und zû letst von dem alten Hildebrand überwunden*, printed by Thiebolt Berger in Strassburg. This was discovered in the Bibliothèque du Consistoire Protestant at Colmar by Theodor Lindemann and was mentioned by him in his work on the *Hürnen Seyfrid*¹ but it would appear to have escaped Schoener's notice. Lindemann did not give the colophon, with the date: *Getruckt zû Strasburg bey Thiebolt Berger am Barfüsser platz. DMLX*. This print contains the normal printed text of 196 strophes, and it also has thirty-seven wood-cuts, most of which are apt, only a few being used more than once; its position in the family of prints can only be determined in the course of a study devoted especially to the prints, but from a first reading I see no reason to assign any special importance to it.

In the case of the *Eckenlied*, or *Ecken Ausfahrt* in the printed form, there is also no doubt that we are dealing with a poem of the thirteenth century, and part of the poem at least is contained in manuscripts of that time or a little later; the prints occupy a less isolated position. Julius Zupitza was the first scholar to concern himself with a critical edition: he first dealt with the poem in his doctoral dissertation *Prolegomena ad Alberti de Kemenaten Eckium* (Berlin, 1865) and later produced his critical edition in the fifth part of the *Deutsches Heldenbuch*.² He only knew four complete prints; his examination of them brought him to the conclusion that one of them was directly descended from another, but that this latter and the other two were not so closely related and that they consequently all had some independent value for textual purposes (op. cit. p. xxxvi). We must stop to consider for a moment what his purpose was: it was, briefly, to produce a critical text of the original poem of the thirteenth century, and he was able to use for part of the time

¹ *Versuch einer Formenlehre des Hürnen Seyfrid* (Halle, 1913), p. 2.

² *Dietrichs Abenteuer von Albrecht von Kemenaten*, hrsg. J. Zupitza (Berlin, 1870).

manuscripts which were near in time to that of the composition of the poem itself, but these manuscripts were incomplete ; to supplement them he had to have recourse to a branch of the tradition which was based on a codex which contained interpolations, and this branch then had its bifurcation : one side being the Dresden *Heldenbuch* and the other being represented by an incomplete manuscript and by the prints. The procedure he adopts is to base himself on the oldest and best manuscript (L) ; by the time this manuscript breaks off the “ interpolated ” branch is so independent that it cannot be used to fill the gap, but in the earlier part of the poem he does occasionally find himself in a position to fill in gaps from this source, in fact from the prints. The important thing to bear in mind, as I see it, is that the L manuscript is so obviously superior to anything else, and to be followed except when it is obviously corrupt, that there is not the same occasion as occurs elsewhere for meticulously weighing the merits of all branches : the practical consideration would appear to have been to use the Dresden manuscript and the prints only when it was quite inevitable (and if they promised some result) and to confine himself to considering each case on its merits—i.e. as a reading, and without going into the family relationship of each print and reading. The impression which one gains from looking at the textual apparatus is that discrepancies among the prints in these cases did not present a serious problem. One of these prints was from as early as 1491.

The question of principle, however, remains as to whether it is permissible to use all prints, regardless of age and before a thorough examination of their relationship. Experience from other poems is that the prints tend to be of one family and derived from a common printed source. It is quite true that the form of the original, parent, print may be reflected in the different readings of the different derivative prints, but experience seems to indicate that the proper way to proceed is first to establish the original printed form and to use only that for establishing the earlier form of the text ; later prints can have readings which look temptingly genuine but which can be demonstrated to be of later origin, as I have been able to show in some readings in the *Hürnen Seyfrid*.

Other prints came to light in the succeeding years, and when C. Schorbach edited the facsimile edition of the 1491 print,¹ he was able to give details of eight prints, and to postulate from indirect evidence the existence of two more—with the further addition of possibly yet another which may have been used by Melchior Goldast in the seventeenth century. It is not his purpose in these Introductions to examine in detail the textual tradition, and he confines himself to referring to the view expressed by Wilmanns in the *Altdeutsche Studien* that the prints, although neither directly nor indirectly based on the oldest tradition, nevertheless occasionally preserve the original reading better than the other branches, and then expressing his own view that the eight extant prints agree in general among themselves, although each has its own, unimportant, deviations, orthographical peculiarities, and small mistakes. Schorbach suggests a division into three groups, the first of which is formed by the two (to his knowledge) oldest prints: the 1491 one and that of Hüpfuff of Strassburg of 1503. By implication he regards the second, and largest, group as being descended, even if indirectly, from the first; I find no suggestion of a relative placing of the third group.

In the course of my enquiries, my attention was drawn by the Schweizerische Landesbibliothek in Bern to a further print, an incunable, the existence of which, as far as I can see, has not previously been announced; this was done at Augsburg in 1494 by Hans Froschauer. The copy of this print is in the Kantonsbibliothek in Frauenfeld. According to the *Gesamtkatalog der Wiegendrucke*, vol. 7, cols. 807-8, there is in the Kantonsbibliothek in Frauenfeld a second copy (not seen by a member of the Commission) of the 1491 Hans Schaur print: what in fact this library has is: *Das ist her Ecken ausfart . . . das gar kurzweilig zů lesen vñ zů hören auch zů singē ist*; the colophon reads: *Gedruckt zů Augspurg von hansen Froschauer vnnd vollendet auff mōntag vor Philippi vnd Jacobi jm .xciiij. jar* (i.e. 1494).

This print of Froschauer's is closely modelled on that of Schauer. The page arrangement is the same throughout, both for wood-cuts and text, apart from a very few cases where F has

¹ *Seltene Drucke in Nachbildungen. III. Ecken Auszfart* (Leipzig, 1897).

one line fewer on one page, which is made up on the next, or vice versa. In all cases except two the wood-cuts are very close copies of Schauer's, and in one or two may even be from the same block; ¹ the exceptions are No. 14 where Froschauer has used the same cut as occurs in both prints at 16, and no. 39. In strophe 46 ² (p. c iij) one line is omitted (l. 7): this occurs at the bottom of a page, and so one may conclude that F forgot to insert it at the top of the next. Textually, the differences between the two prints are orthographical, with here and there an emendation by Froschauer, and, on the other hand, a slip.

The Frauenfeld copy is defective and lacks five leaves: (1) containing str. 62-64; (2) containing str. 81 and 82 and the twelfth woodcut; (3) containing str. 105 and 106 and the fifteenth woodcut; (4) containing str. 122-124; (5) containing str. 274 and 275 and the thirty-eighth woodcut.

In the case of *Laurin* we stand on much firmer ground, if only by reason of its being a part of the printed *Heldenbuch*, and it is as part of the complete *Heldenbuch* that the largest number of prints has been preserved to us: the (presumably) original print of c. 1480, the Augsburg one of 1491, that by Gran of 1509, that of 1545, and the two Frankfurt prints of 1560 and 1590. We only know of four separate prints, the earliest of which is by Hüpfuff of Strassburg in 1500. The relationship of prints and manuscript is clear: ³ the manuscript and earliest print are closely related, although those who have examined both express the view that the print was not taken from the manuscript that was burned in Strassburg in 1870, and the later prints are in a direct line of descent from the *editio princeps*. Holz's task therefore in producing a critical text consists in assessing the relative value of the two, closely related, versions; or, to put it differently, of checking one against the other. An examination of the apparatus shows that there were not many cases where he

¹ I worked with the facsimile of the Schauer print and photographs of the Froschauer, and so I cannot be more definite about the using of the same blocks.

² Numbers of strophes and wood-cuts according to the Schauer print, as reproduced by Schorbach, *op. cit.*

³ See above (p. 100) and the edition of G. Holz; for details of prints see C. Schorbach, *Seltene Drucke in Nachbildungen. IV. Laurin.*

had to have recourse to a conjectural reading not found in one of his sources ; the substitution of the earlier long vowels for the more modern diphthongs (*wîp* for *weip*) gives the text a genuine Middle High German appearance and has been done—as far as I can see without exception—entirely mechanically and without any interference with the structure.

The revision of the text which is recorded from the second half of the sixteenth century is of no significance for purposes of textual criticism—in this particular case, where we are so fortunately provided with earlier sources. It is, however, of the utmost significance in the question of textual criticism in general, in the warning which it gives. Hitherto the poem had been in the normal form of rhyming couplets familiar from the court epics of the thirteenth century, with lines of four stresses if the final syllable is stressed, or of three stresses if the final syllable is not stressed. The new version is based on the counting of syllables (and not stresses): eight syllables if the last was stressed, nine if it was not, and with regular alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables ; at the same time the language was modernized. There is no change in the content. The first *dated* version containing this alteration is the complete *Heldenbuch* printed by Han and Feierabend of Frankfurt in 1560, and it occurs in the print of *Laurin* alone which was made in Nürnberg by Fr. Gutknecht : this is not dated but is usually thought to be of c. 1555. Schorbach, in his Introduction to the facsimile edition of the earliest print of the poem by itself, gives priority to this Gutknecht print and thus makes it the original of all the later modernized versions, although I have not seen any reason put forward why the “ c. 1555 ” might not be a few years later and thus allow the priority of Han and Feierabend. It would make but little difference to the textual history of this particular poem, but it would be interesting to know with as high a degree of certainty as is possible who were the printers who showed such enterprise, or allowed themselves such liberties.

From the point of view of the history of literature one can welcome this revision, for it gives us evidence that the printing of these Middle High German poems was more than just a

case of keeping forgotten literature alive: a publisher thought it worth the effort, and no doubt expense, of producing an outward form more in keeping with present requirements. From the point of view of textual criticism it is (again I repeat, in this case) no danger, or impediment, for the tradition is clear and we have plenty of earlier and untouched versions upon which to base a critical text; on the other hand we might not have had such good earlier evidence, and in other cases we certainly have not, and we could quite conceivably have been in a position of having to try to reconstruct the source upon which such a revision was based, and without knowing that it was a revision. The two opening lines will, I think, suffice in the way of illustration of how disastrous would have been any attempt which ventured any distance from what the preserved prints immediately indicated. In the *editio princeps* they read:

*Ir herren hie besunder
fernement grosse wunder*

(Holz's critical text has *icheliu* for *grosse*, based on *ichel* in the manuscript version) and in the revised version:

*Ihr lieben Herren hie besunder
Wölt jr vernemen grosse wunder.*

No doubt a lot of this could be made to look like Middle High German, but if it were it would be an artificial product: these lines (and the whole poem in this version) did not have a Middle High German source, an immediate source that is, but a late fifteenth-century one. This fifteenth-century poem did have such a source, but that is a very different matter.

Of all the poems we are considering, the *Wunderer* has appeared in the most recent edition: in fact it was not until this edition appeared¹ that the poem could properly be included in the present enquiry. The reason for this is that until the discovery in 1945 of the 1503 print we had no complete printed version to present us with a soluble problem; hitherto conjecture could only be made on the basis of the fragment which von der Hagen had published in 1855² under the title *Etzels Hofhaltung*,

¹ *Le Wunderer*, ed. G. Zinc (Paris, 1949).

² *Heldenbuch*, ii (Leipzig, 1855), 529 ff.

but the fragment is too short for a full comparison to be made. As is revealed by Zinc in the Introduction, the problems are two : the relation of the prints to one another and the determination of their immediate source, and, secondly, the ultimate origin of the poem. In principle there is nothing fresh in this, but in practice the situation is rather different. In the first place there is only the one complete print—the fragment is so close to this that their relationship presents no problem—and this printed version is very close indeed to the one and only complete manuscript version, that of the Dresden *Heldenbuch*. Hempel discussed this relationship on the basis of the fragment of the print of 1518,¹ and Zinc re-examines it in the light of the new evidence available with the complete print. It is clear that the manuscript and the print present the same poem : the number of strophes is the same, and with very few exceptions each strophe has the same content, and to that extent we have a situation with an affinity to the *Laurin*. Textually, however, the position is different : there is not one strophe which is identical in both versions (Zinc, ed. cit. p. 21). Hempel was of the opinion that the print has preserved the original version reasonably well, but that the Dresden version represents a thoroughgoing revision according to the prevailing stylistic principles of the time. Zinc, with the additional evidence of the complete poem at his disposal, does not share this view ; this is not to say that he regards the print as being based on the manuscript (the presence in the print of str. 172, which does not occur in the manuscript, and which restores the balance of numbers which had been disturbed by the omission of what is str. 9 in the manuscript, makes that untenable), but he postulates a common source for both and attributes the divergences not to any deliberate revision by either, but to the effect of oral tradition. This view I regard as eminently tenable in principle ; critics are perhaps still rather too inclined to demand evidence of a written source in all cases, and this is only a normal part of the reaction against the earlier too great readiness to regard all the “ popular ” poetry as confined to oral transmission. There is good evidence in the works of our period to support this view of oral transmission—the passages in

¹ H. Hempel, *Untersuchungen zum Wunderer* (Halle-Wittenberg, 1914).

the strophic version of *Herzog Ernst* where the reciter (author ?) interrupts the course of the plot, but not the rhythm or rhyme, to demand a drink of wine (13, 13 ; 61, 9 ff. ; 89, 12) are perhaps the best known, and there are plenty of others in the Dresden *Heldenbuch*, and the interposition of the author of the *Hürnen Seyfrid* (138, 7-8) might be included.

This very close relationship of the *Wunderer* in its printed version to the poem included in the Dresden *Heldenbuch* is, I think, one of the more important revelations resulting from the discovery and publication of the complete print.

The suggested solution of the second problem, of the ultimate origin of the poem, only concerns us indirectly. Our evidence for this purpose are the two fragments of the version in rhyming couplets, the one published by A. von Keller in *Erzählungen aus altdeutschen Handschriften*¹ and the other by K. Schiffmann, "Ein Bruchstück des Wunderers";² the manuscript of the former would appear to be from c. 1400, and the second, a print, is dated on typographical evidence at the end of the fifteenth century (Schönsperger of Augsburg). Zinc thinks, on the strength of vocabulary and language, that the original dates from the early fourteenth century and that this poem was used as the basis for the first strophic version. I know of no outside evidence for the existence of such a poem ; but what is interesting from our point of view is that there existed side by side at the end of the fifteenth century a version in rhyming couplets and one in strophic form, and that they were both printed. One thinks in particular of *Laurin*, which appears in the Dresden *Heldenbuch* in strophic form, whereas in all the other versions rhyming couplets are used.

The circumstances of the transmission are sufficient to explain why there is no critical edition of this poem (the Zinc edition is a facsimile, with a critical introduction).

*Herzog Ernst*³ is preserved in a variety of forms, dating also from different periods ; the earliest is placed in the twelfth century and the latest is from the period we are here concerned

¹ Bibliothek des litterarischen Vereins in Stuttgart, vol. 35 (1855).

² *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum*, 51 (1909), 416 ff.

³ *Herzog Ernst*, hrsg. K. Bartsch (Vienna, 1869).

with ; there are verse and prose versions, in Latin as well as in German. Of all these versions three are of immediate interest, in that they appear in print. First there is the German prose version which Bartsch calls the chapbook and which he reprints in his edition. The textual situation is straightforward and simple : there is a manuscript, of the second half of the fifteenth century, which had belonged to the monastery of St. Ulrich in Augsburg, and there are four prints. Three of these, including the earliest (Hain 6672), are from the Augsburg press of Anton Sorg, the fourth (Hain 6673) is thought to be from Strassburg. Bartsch examines the relationship of prints and manuscript (pp. lxxii ff.) and comes to the conclusion that the first is based on the manuscript (both are from the same town), and that the other prints are descended from the first : the Strassburg one and the second Augsburg separately and independently, and the third Augsburg direct from the second. There is therefore no textual problem and, from our present point of view, nothing but the interesting demonstration of the relationship of manuscript and prints : from Bartsch's comments it emerges that the prints are a close copy of the manuscript, so much so that, if necessary, one could attach reliance on the prints for establishing the original text.

There is a second prose version, much reduced in length and generally popularized in tone, which appeared much later. No manuscript is preserved, nor is there likely ever to have been one : I know of four prints (or five if one includes an eighteenth-century one), and I see no reason to suppose that these are anything other than later printers' efforts to supply reading material for a public which had no taste for the longer and more serious works, and one need look for no other source than the printed versions just referred to. Three of these later prints are dated : (1) 1568, printed by Martin Lechler in Frankfurt, (2) 1610, printed by Johann Schröter in Basel, and (3) 1621, by Marx von der Heyden in Strassburg ; the fourth, by Everaerts in Cologne, is not dated.

Of greatest interest in the present enquiry is the strophic poem. In general the situation remains the same as when Bartsch edited the poem (as part of the edition just mentioned) :

a manuscript version, in the Dresden *Heldenbuch*, consisting of fifty-five strophes (not fifty-four, as Bartsch thought¹), and a printed version of eighty-nine strophes. Bartsch came to the conclusion that neither of these versions represented the original form of the strophic poem, but that in general the manuscript version, as far as it went, was the better text. This of course presented him with considerable problems since there are thirty-four strophes which are not contained in this version. He was of the opinion that the authors of each of the two adaptations that we have had the original before them and made, independently, their alterations to suit their period, and, basing himself on those strophes which are common to both, and the rhymes and rhythms of them, he judged that this original poem is of considerably greater age than either of the preserved versions; he postulated as a possibility the beginning of the fourteenth century (see pp. lxxx f. of his Introduction). These conclusions decided his editorial policy, and that was to print a text in the language of that earlier period. This may appear to some a little bold and so I think it will be in place to consider very briefly Bartsch's reasoning. If one takes each text separately, he says, then one finds a number of rhymes which would have been impossible before the fifteenth century; so that if only one text had been preserved we would have had to regard the fifteenth century as the time of composition.

This, I might interpose at this point, is essentially the situation with which I was confronted with the *Hürnen Seyfrid*, for the prints are several in number but they all point conclusively to one print as the origin of them all and that a print not much earlier than 1520. In view of this, in spite of the undoubted antiquity of some of the lines, I decided in favour of caution and not to attempt to conjecture a thirteenth- or fourteenth-century text which may never have existed.

Bartsch proceeds by pointing out that nevertheless it never happens that both of the versions agree in having a rhyme which exceeds the liberties which could be regarded as acceptable in the earlier period, and which he indicates. Then comes the

¹ For the correction see R. Huegel, "Das Lied vom Herzog Ernst", *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur*, 4 (1877), p. 476.

real difficulty, and I suspect in Bartsch's statement of the position a certain uneasiness about the task he has set himself: the difficulty of reconstructing the original from the strophes contained only in the longer version owing to the absence of the check from the second, and textually better, source "allein an der Echtheit ihrer Grundlage zu zweifeln war kein Grund vorhanden, da b [the manuscript version] sich als eine verkürzte Bearbeitung bezeichnet. Der Versuch auch sie herzustellen lag demnach nahe; doch muss die Unsicherheit mancher Stellen eingeräumt werden. Ich habe mich darum entschlossen die zu sehr verderbten Verse nur durch Punkte im Texte zu bezeichnen und nur in den Anmerkungen Besserungsvorschläge gemacht."¹ The cases in which he had to do this are very few in number and on only one occasion exceed a line in length.

In certain particulars, however, there have been some important changes since Bartsch's edition appeared. He had available to him only one print, by Kunegunde Hergotin of Nürnberg, undated, but presumably of about 1530;² an earlier one, printed by Johannes Spörer of Erfurt in 1500, was only known to him by report—and still is only so known. He expressed doubt whether it would be possible, even if this print were available, to improve his own critical text. We now have further material: (a) a manuscript of the longer, printed, version³ and (b) additional prints: (1) Hans Froschauer, Augsburg, 1507; (2) by Thiebolt Berger, Strassburg, [c. 1560]; (3) by Arnt von Aich, Cologne, [between 1514 and 1526]; (4) by Eusebius Schmid, Frankfurt am Main, 1568; (5) an eighteenth-century print, a derivative, of Basel. Nos. 2, 3, and 4 have been known for some time,⁴ but no use would appear to have been made of them by subsequent writers on *Herzog Ernst*: there is no mention of them in the article (1955) in Stammler's *Verfasserlexikon*; 5 was dealt with in detail by Stickelberger in *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum*, 46.

¹ Ed. cit. p. lxxxii.

² Cf. BULLETIN, vol. 35, No. 1, p. 66 and n. 3, with references to specialist literature.

³ Reported on and reprinted by Huegel (see above).

⁴ That by Berger was mentioned by Lindemann, op. cit. p. 2; that by Aich has been referred to by Sonneborn and Hildebrand (see below); that by Schmid by C. Schorbach, *Seltene Drucke in Nachbildungen. III. Ecken Ausfahrt*, p. 35.

As far as I know, the print by Froschauer is referred to here for the first time ; it was brought to my attention by the University Library in Tübingen in answer to an enquiry I made. The copy there is defective : it contains str. 1-3, 12 ; 15, 9-18, 7 ; 25, 6-42, 12 ; 48, 11-66, 4 ; 69, 4 to the end : *Getruckt zu Augspurg in der kayserlichen stat von Hannsen Froschauer. Anno domini. M.ccccc. und. vij.* There are no wood-cuts or headings for wood-cuts.

The exact determination of the relationship of all the new material available would involve more detailed textual analysis than would be in place here, and I am preparing a separate account, giving full details of the textual position and of its impact on Bartsch's text. In anticipation of this I will state here—as relevant to my theme—the position in general terms. This is that the one print known to Bartsch, that of Hergotin (H), is by far the least satisfactory : once or twice it contains a better reading than the others (by better I mean approximating more nearly to strict Middle High German usage, and making better sense and giving better rhymes), but against this there are so many occasions where it stands out as the work of someone who is less concerned with such criteria. Those by Schmid (S) and Berger (B) share many peculiarities in a way which establishes their close relationship, and several times these readings (e.g. 2, 2 (*so* for *do*) ; 16, 9 (*sol* for *mag*)) are better than those of H. Although these two prints are certainly later than H they would have been a better guide for Bartsch than that print ; they probably had a common source which was older than H. By far the best witness is Froschauer (F), and it is the oldest : time and time again it has better (in the same sense as above) readings than the others. The Cologne print (A) is unequal in value and reliability ; the date suggested is on the basis of the information that Aich was printing in those years.¹ It was first mentioned by K. Sonneborn ;² it is referred to later by E. Hildebrand,³ who quotes Sonneborn as saying that it is of little or no value

¹ See J. Benzing, *Buchdruckerlexikon des 16. Jahrhunderts (deutsches Sprachgebiet)* (Frankfurt a/M., 1952).

² *Die Gestaltung der Sage vom Herzog Ernst* (Göttingen, 1914).

³ *Über die Stellung des Liedes vom Herzog Ernst* (Halle, 1937).

in view of its being an adaptation into Cologne dialect of a High German, probably Nürnberg, print which often does violence to the rhymes and sense by using local words. That is to an extent true—it does do such things—and it would therefore not be safe to trust it alone, but the presence of the Froschauer print makes all the difference, in that time and time again A shares the good readings which mark off F from all the rest. It is clear to me that A is based either on F or on a source very similar to F. Against the general trend, there are cases where F corrects errors and omissions which occur in the manuscript, and, less frequently, where the later prints supply deficiencies common to manuscript and F.

This account of the prints is based on the prints alone and was for the most part drawn up without reference to anything outside them. The outside evidence is the manuscript referred to above which was acquired in 1872 (three years after Bartsch's edition) by the Royal Library in Dresden; it bears the date 1451, and contains the first seventy-one strophes, breaking off in the middle of the last line of str. 71.¹ The really interesting feature for the present enquiry is the very close similarity of manuscript and F; the readings which characterized F as being superior to all the other prints are also the readings of the manuscript. The print is not an exact reprint from the manuscript, such as we should demand today—it would indeed be extraordinary if it were—but there can be no doubt that there was no other source for F than this manuscript. This is not necessarily the same thing as saying that Froschauer had this actual manuscript in his workshop: he may have had a copy of it or he may have copied from a print which had used it, perhaps even the lost Spörer print; the point I wish to make is only that the similarity of the two is so close as to preclude the likelihood of any other source, except in the modification here proposed.

My introduction of the Spörer print at this point is not purely a matter of fancy. We do not know the text of this print—except to a very limited extent, and by a lucky chance: Panzer

¹ Details and text in the article by Huegel (see above).

mentions the print ¹ *Herczog Ernsts ausfart || wirt hye geoffenbart. || Mit neunundachtzik gesetze || Ein keiszer ward er zu lecze* : and he quotes the last strophe, thus giving us a very important clue. There is only one important point where F (and A) differ from the other prints (in this strophe) and that is in the reading *was grosser* instead of *wann grosse* ; ² this is obviously the correct reading, it occurs in the Dresden *Heldenbuch*, and it is adopted by Bartsch for the text—and it is the reading of the Spörer print. This, of course, is not much evidence to go on—in quantity, although it is clear in quality—and I do not propose to make rash assertions on the basis of it, but it does present us with the following situation : throughout the seventy-one strophes preserved in the manuscript, the manuscript and F accord very closely, often to the point of identity, and there can be no doubt about their close connection. There is, however, a print of intermediate date ; of this we only have the one strophe, and that a strophe which is not included in the manuscript, but it does appear in the print F and—it accords with F as closely as F has hitherto accorded with the manuscript. I therefore put forward as a very real possibility that the Spörer print was made from the manuscript and that F was made from that print ; that there were no serious textual divergencies either between manuscript and prints or between the two prints ; and that the final strophes of the poem in F (from where the manuscript breaks off in the last line of 71) give us a very fair substitute for the missing part of the 1451 manuscript ; and that, further and finally, this manuscript and the Froschauer print make good the loss of the Spörer.

If this reasoning is correct, Bartsch's supposition that the Hergotin print was just a copy of Spörer's is wrong (Huegel had already seen that on the basis of the final strophe quoted by Panzer) ; his doubt whether the presence of it would have helped in the establishment of the critical text is to that extent

¹ *Zusätze zu den Annalen der älteren deutschen Literatur* (Leipzig, 1802), no. 508 b (pp. 92 f.).

² The statement in von der Hagen and Büsching's *Literarischer Grundriss*, p. 183, that the Dresden *Heldenbuch* and the print agree "substantially" would not, today, be regarded as consonant with the facts.

justified that so many of his conjectures have been confirmed and justified. If he had had the Spörer print he would not have had to conjecture, for he would have had the correct reading in front of him. In other cases, notably 2, 2, he would have been able to improve his text. In any case, we can say with certainty that the Froschauer print would have served these purposes.

Closely related to the foregoing, although in some respects unique, is the short poem discovered by Karl Goedeke and published by him under the title *Koninc Ermenríkes Dôt* (Hanover, 1851); he estimates that it was probably printed c. 1560 in either Hamburg or Magdeburg. Textually the situation is simple: there is no other branch, either print or manuscript, nor is anything known about any earlier form of the poem, and consequently one can do nothing but reprint it as it stands. Historically it belongs to the group of poems centred on Dietrich von Bern (*Van Dirick van dem Berne, wo he . . . den kōninck van Armentriken . . . vmmegebracht hefft* is the heading in the print itself), but it contains material not known from other sources, and there is not sufficient evidence from other sources to assess its age with any degree of accuracy. As Goedeke points out, other poems are preserved in prints from the Low German area and in the language of that area, but in these other cases we have the High German counterparts, and of earlier date, so that all the evidence points to their being High German works which were transcribed by the printers at the time of printing. This may, of course, have been the case with *Ermenríkes Dôt*, but in this case there is no trace of a High German version. The appendix shows how the printing of these poems in general was concentrated in the South German area.

I have tried to show in the foregoing remarks that there has been considerable variety in the practice adopted by editors, and that this variety is due as much to the disparity of the material as to the deliberate choice of the editors; this disparity makes it impossible to formulate any fixed rules of procedure which one could claim were valid in every case—unless one might say that it is a principle that every case should first be examined in the light of its special problems. A few things, however, do emerge, which may be said to be generally applicable.

The first of these is that printers can adhere very closely to their manuscript models—we know, of course, that they do this in larger and more serious works, but we are here concerned with comparatively ephemeral literature. We see examples of this in *Laurin* and *Herzog Ernst*. The prints that do this are, however, the earlier ones: incunabula or, if not, only just outside the period. In these cases we may not rely on the print to be an exact reproduction of the manuscript, for omissions and corrections do occur, but this is no more than one manuscript does to another, and so does not invalidate such prints as legitimate evidence for reconstructing a critical text. In these cases it can happen that a mechanical transcription (of the new diphthongs into the older long single vowels) will produce an acceptable Middle High German text.

On the other hand there are examples of later prints which are characterized by great unreliability, showing evidence of loss of touch with Middle High German usage and consequent alterations of words and syntax; some of the Nürnberg prints of c. 1530 come into this category. In the case of *Sigenot* we have a print as early as anything known in our group, and yet whole lines and even groups of lines show a form which is altered almost out of recognition from what is known in manuscript form, and in strophes which otherwise accord quite closely to the manuscript. We cannot say whether the print made the alterations or whether there was another, unknown, manuscript version which contained these alterations and from which the print copied. Be that as it may, it emphasizes again the need for extreme caution in handling a print, even an incunabulum.

One must beware throughout of alterations to the metrical structure; this phenomenon occurs late in the case of the Gutknecht print of *Laurin* (assuming that it really was the work of Gutknecht), where it took the form of a systematic recasting in a different metre, which caused considerable verbal differences. In the early period, with the print of the *Heldenbuch* (c. 1480), we have the introduction of caesura rhymes, involving in many cases more than a mere changing of the order of the words; the latter also occurred in the 1563 print of the *Hürnen Seyfrid*, also in Strassburg.

It is my opinion that one does greatest justice to the prints by recognizing their limitations ; they occur not only at a time when the craft was new, or relatively new, and still searching for standards of procedure, but also at a time when there was considerable fluidity in the literary tradition, with many people concerning themselves in not always very critical form with preserving what they found of the older, treasured, material. They help us considerably, if only in showing how interest in these subjects survived ; they may even be able to help us in textual problems, but one must beware of taking them for more than they are, or claim to be, and of always seeing in them exact replicas of older poems.

APPENDIX

Places of printing of the poems mentioned, with the printers.

I include only those prints where the name of the printer or a characteristic address, or if necessary only the name of the town, is either stated or established as likely on the usual typographical evidence. The information is obtained from the standard works mentioned in the article, supplemented in a few cases by additional items which have come to my notice ; in these latter cases I have stated where there is a copy of the print.

AUGSBURG

J. Bäumlcr, *Sigenot* [c. 1480].

H. Froschauer, *Ecken Ausfahrt* 1494 (in the Kantonsbibliothek, Frauenfeld) ;
Herzog Ernst (poem) 1507 (in the Universitätsbibliothek,
 Tübingen).

J. Schaur, *Ecken Ausfahrt* 1491.

V. Schönigk, *Sigenot* 1606.

H. Schönsperger, *Heldenbuch* 1491 ;

Wunderer (couplets version) [before 1500].

A. Sorg, *Herzog Ernst* (prose), three times (Hain 6672/4/5).

[H. Stainer, *Heldenbuch* 1545.]

H. Zimmermann, *Ecken Ausfahrt* [c. 1550].

BASEL

Samuel Apiarius, *Hildebrandslied* [c. 1572-3].

J. Schröter, *Hürnen Seyfrid* 1592 (or 1594) ;

Herzog Ernst (shortened prose) 1610.

BERN

Matthias Apiarius, *Hildebrandslied* [between 1530-51].

Sigfrid Apiarius, *Hürnen Seyfrid* 1561.

COLOGNE

- Arnd von Aich, *Herzog Ernst* (poem) [between 1514-26] (Germanisches National-Museum, Nürnberg).
 Everaerts, *Herzog Ernst* (shortened prose) N. D. (Deutsche Staatsbibliothek, Berlin).
 H. Nettessem, *Ecken Ausfahrt* [c. 1590].

CRACOW

- I. von Prostitz, *Sigenot* 1597.

ERFURT

- M. Maler, *Wunderer* 1518.
 J. Spörer, *Sigenot* 1499 ;
 Herzog Ernst (poem) 1500.

FRANKFURT am MAIN

- S. Feierabendt, *Heldenbuch* 1590.
 W. Han, *Hürnen Seyfrid* [after 1555].
 W. Han and S. Feierabendt, *Heldenbuch* 1560.
 M. Lechler (for W. Han's Heirs), *Herzog Ernst* (shortened prose) 1568
 (Universitätsbibliothek, Tübingen).
 Eusebius Schmid, *Herzog Ernst* (poem) 1568 (Stadtarchiv, Ulm).
 (In the Frankfurt *Liederbuch*) *Hildebrandslied* 1582.

HAMBURG

- J. Löw, *Sigenot, Hürnen Seyfrid, Laurin* [c. 1560]. (Printed together as "dre kortwilige Historien".)

HEIDELBERG

- H. Knoblochtzter, *Sigenot* 1490 and 1493.

LEIPZIG

- N. Nerlich, *Hürnen Seyfrid* 1611 ;
 Sigenot 1613.

MAGDEBURG

- W. Ross, *Hildebrandslied* [c. 1600-1605].

NÜRNBERG

- M. and J. Fr. Endter, *Sigenot* 1661 ;
 Hildebrandslied 1661.
 Chr. Gutknecht, *Hildebrandslied* [c. 1560].
 Fr. Gutknecht, *Hildebrandslied*, twice [c. 1560] ;
 Sigenot [c. 1560] ;
 Laurin [c. 1555].

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NÜRNBERG (*contd.*)

Jobst Gutknecht, *Hildebrandslied*, twice [between 1517-1539].

K. Hergotin, *Hildebrandslied* [c. 1530] ;

Hürnen Seyfrid [c. 1530] ;

Herzog Ernst (poem) [c. 1530].

W. Huber, *Ecken Ausfahrt* 1512.

V. Newber, *Sigenot* [c. 1565] ;

Hildebrandslied [between 1550-1574].

G. Wachter, *Hürnen Seyfrid* [c. 1530].

STRASSBURG

Th. Berger, *Sigenot* 1560 ;

Herzog Ernst (poem) [c. 1560] ;

Hürnen Seyfrid 1563.

Marx von der Heyden, *Herzog Ernst* (shortened prose) 1621 (Westdeutsche Bibliothek, Marburg).

M. Hüpfuff, *Laurin* 1500 ;

Ecken Ausfahrt 1503.

J. Knoblauch, Snr., *Laurin* 1509.

Chr. Müller, *Ecken Ausfahrt* 1559 and 1568 ;

Sigenot 1577.

Chr. Müller, Jr., *Ecken Ausfahrt* 1577.

Chr. Müller's Heirs, *Hürnen Seyfrid*.

[J. Prüss, *Heldenbuch* 1480.]

"uff Grüneck" (= B. Kistler), *Wunderer* 1503 ;

Sigenot 1510 (perhaps also in 1505).

Printer unknown, *Hildebrandslied* [c. 1500].

Printed at HAGENAU (about twenty miles from Strassburg) :

H. Gran (for Knoblauch), *Heldenbuch* 1509.