

PREFACE

THIS study, in attempting to show the prevalence and significance of sententious verse throughout Anglo-Saxon poetry, falls into two chief divisions. The introduction, though incidentally drawing illustrations from North Germanic literature, deals mainly with gnomic lines in Anglo-Saxon epic, lyric, and didactic poetry, exclusive of the *Exeter Gnomes* and the *Cotton Gnomes*. The second part consists of the texts of these collections, prepared from the manuscripts, with analysis and notes.

One of the pleasures arising from the labor of putting together this little volume is the acknowledgment of aid and friendly criticism. To the Reverend Canon Walter Edmonds, of Exeter Cathedral, I am grateful for access to the unique Exeter Manuscript. To the authorities of the British Museum, to the librarians of Harvard University, and particularly to the librarians of Columbia University, I am indebted for unfailing courtesy and helpful coöperation. Professor Frederick Tupper, of the University of Vermont, has my hearty thanks for assistance in textual interpretation and for guidance of the work in the summer of 1912. To Professors G. P. Krapp, H. M. Ayres, and A. F. J. Remy I am indebted for reading the manuscript and offering valuable suggestions. To Professor W. W. Lawrence, however, I owe most.

He called the subject to my attention and from the beginning has generously given his time and scholarship to the progress of the investigation.

The bibliography consulted has of necessity been so voluminous and heterogeneous that it would be difficult to select a representative list of books. Works referred to in the introduction are designated in footnotes. For abbreviations in either part which are not self-explanatory, the table prefixed to the text may be consulted.

B. C. W.

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