

**STUDIES AND NOTES
IN PHILOLOGY AND
LITERATURE; VOL. IX**

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Studies and Notes in Philology and Literature; Vol. IX by Frank Edgar Farley

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FRANK EDGAR FARLEY

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VOL. IX

SCANDINAVIAN INFLUENCES IN THE
ENGLISH ROMANTIC MOVEMENT

BY

FRANK EDGAR FARLEY

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PREFACE

EVERY student of English literature in the eighteenth century understands, of course, how conspicuous a part was played by Macpherson's Ossianic fragments, Evans's *Welsh Bards*, and Percy's *Reliques* in the so-called Romantic Revival; but not every one has appreciated the fact that this enthusiasm over Gaelic, Welsh, and English mediæval poetry was accompanied by a widespread interest in the literature of the Scandinavian North. The credit of first pointing out specifically the significance of the Norse element in the Romantic Revival belongs, I believe, to Professor Phelps, whose *Beginnings of the English Romantic Movement* appeared at Boston in 1893, though Mr. Frederick Metcalfe had called attention in 1880 (*The Englishman and the Scandinavian*) to a very few English men of letters of the eighteenth century who interested themselves in Norse literature, and in 1891 Jon Stefansson contributed to the *Nordisk Tidskrift för Vetenskap, Konst och Industri* an article on *Oldnordisk Indvirkning på Engelsk Litteratur i det Attende og Nittende Århundrede* (based in good part upon Southey's review of Sayers's *Poetical Works*, *Quarterly Review*, January, 1827), which devotes half a dozen pages to the matter.

The subject was first examined in detail, however, by Professor Kittredge (*Gray's Knowledge of Old Norse*, appended to the *Introduction* to Phelps's *Selections from the Poetry and Prose of Thomas Gray*, Boston, 1894), who clearly indicated the lines on which further research must be conducted. At Professor Kittredge's suggestion and under his direction I undertook the following investigation,

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which was submitted in 1897, in a modified form, to the Faculty of Arts and Sciences of Harvard University in fulfilment of a requirement made of candidates for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. These pages represent the results of a systematic examination of a considerable body of English literature of the eighteenth and early part of the nineteenth centuries, undertaken for the purpose of determining as accurately as possible, first, the sources of information with regard to Scandinavian literature and mythology accessible to Englishmen of that time and the extent to which they were actually studied; secondly, the character of the translations and imitations of Scandinavian literature made by English men of letters; thirdly, the spirit in which these adaptations were received by English readers. These results make no pretension to completeness. Anybody who takes the trouble to look over the indexes to the critical reviews of the eighteenth century will realize how much of the literature of that time has perished, or at least is no longer accessible. My conclusions, therefore, are necessarily only approximate, but the evidence I have been able to collect makes it clear, I believe, that Northern influences were a much more important factor in the English Romantic movement than students of romanticism have hitherto suspected.

Since the completion of this dissertation in its original form, three or four books have been published to which I have acknowledged indebtedness at appropriate places in the following pages. In 1897 there appeared at Halle a monograph entitled *William Taylor von Norwich, Eine Studie über den Einfluss der neueren Deutschen Litteratur in England*, by Georg Herzfeld, with an appendix, *Bemerkungen über die Nordischen Stoffe in der Englischen Poesie des vorigen Jahrhunderts*, to which I owe, among other things, the reference to Stefansson's article mentioned above. Mr. D. C. Tovey's edition of *Gray's English Poems* (Cambridge, 1898) contributes further evidence of Scott's interest in Norse literature. Professor Beers's *History of English*

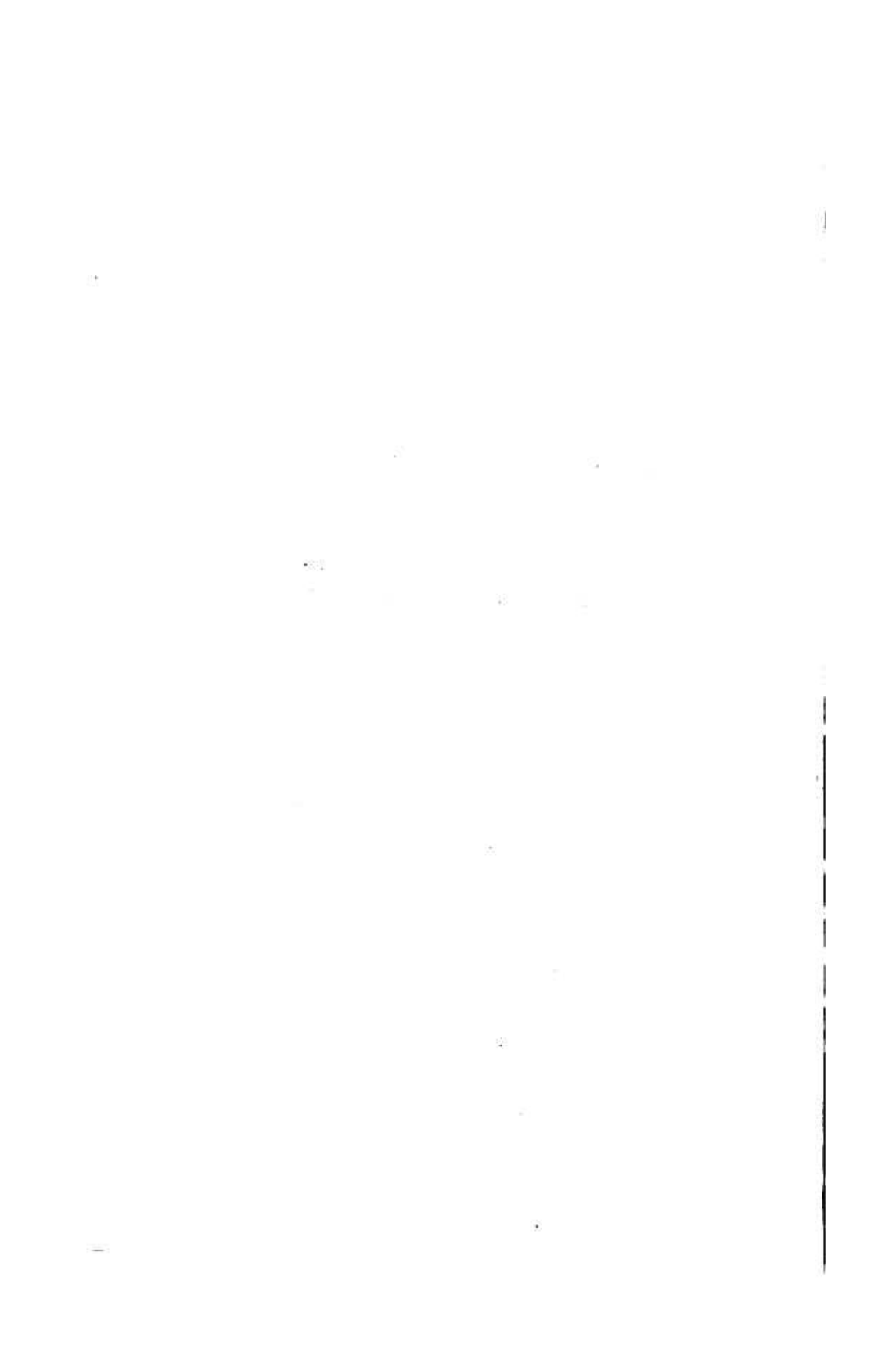
Romanticism in the Eighteenth Century (New York, 1899) adds some items to Professor Phelps's treatment of Norse influences. *The Influence of Old Norse Literature upon English Literature*, by Conrad Hjalmar Nordby (Columbia University Press, 1901) reviews briefly some of the authors discussed in my dissertation, but the greater part of his monograph concerns itself with a later period.

I wish to record here my grateful appreciation of various services rendered me by Professor Leo Wiener, Professor A. E. Hancock, Professor William Lyon Phelps, and Mr. William Coolidge Lane. To Professor Sheldon, Professor Robinson, and Professor Kittredge, of Harvard University, who have been kind enough to read this entire volume in proof, I am indebted for a great many valuable suggestions and corrections. To Professor Kittredge in particular I am under obligations for which I cannot possibly make adequate acknowledgment. Almost every page owes something to the care with which he has supervised the writing and printing of this book. How great an advantage this help has been to me every student of English will instantly appreciate.

F. E. F.

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS,

July 3, 1903.



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