

Teutonic race. The religious belief of our remote ancestors, and very many of their primitive legal and social customs, some of which still influence the daily life of the people, find their clearest and often their only elucidation in the so-called *Eddic* and *Skaldic* lays, and in the Sagas. The same writings form the sole sources of Scandinavian history before the fourteenth century, and they not infrequently shed a welcome ray on the obscure annals of the British Islands, and of several continental nations. They furnish, moreover, an almost unique example of a modern literature which is completely indigenous. The old Icelandic literature, which MÖBIUS truly characterizes as 'ein Phänomen vom Standpunkte der allgemeinen Cultur und Literaturgeschichte,' and beside which the literatures of all the other early Teutonic dialects—Gothic, Old High German, Saxon, Frisian, and Anglo-Saxon—are as a drop to a bucket of water, developed itself out of the actual life of the people under little or no extraneous influence. In this respect it deserves the careful study of every student of letters. For the English-speaking races especially there is nowhere, so near home, a field promising to the scholar so rich a harvest. The few translations, or attempted translations, which are to be found in English, give merely a faint idea of the treasures of antique wisdom and sublime poetry which exist in the *Eddic* lays, or of the quaint simplicity, dramatic action, and striking realism which characterize the historical Sagas. Nor is the modern literature of the language, with its rich and abundant stores of folk-lore, unworthy of regard."

BENJAMIN LOSSING says: "It is back to the Norwegian Vikings we must look for the hardiest elements of progress in the United States."