

ere he die." "Let us have fame or death." Out of the fatalism naturally grew the dignity and much of the pathos of the poem. It is most poetical in the vivid character-drawing of men and women, and especially in the character of the hero, both in his youth and in his age; in the fateful pathos of the old man's last fight for his country against certain death, in the noble scene of the burial, in the versing of the grave and courteous interchange of human feeling between the personages. Moreover, the descriptions of the sea and the voyage, and of the savage places of the cliffs and the moor, are instinct with the spirit which is still alive among our poetry, and which makes dreadful and lonely wildernesses seem dwelt in — as if the places needed a king — by monstrous beings. In the creation of Grendel and his mother, the savage stalkers of the moor, that half-natural, half-supernatural world began, which, when men grew gentler and the country more cultivated, became so beautiful as fairyland. Here is the description of the dwelling-place of Grendel: —

There the land is hid in gloom,
Where they ward; wolf-haunted slopes, windy headlands
o'er the sea.
Fearful is the marish-path, where the mountain torrent
'Neath the Nesses' mist, nither makes its way.
Under earth the flood is, not afar from here it lies;
But the measure of a mile, where the mere is set.
Over it, outreaching, hang the ice-nipt trees:
Held by roots the holt is fast, and o'er-helms the water.