

marvelous mixture of savagery and sentiment, of rough feeling and of deep emotion, of splendid courage and the profound melancholy of men who know their limitations and have faced the unanswered problem of death. In all their fighting the love of an untarnished glory was uppermost; and under the warrior's savage exterior was hidden a great love of home and homely virtues and a reverence for the one woman to whom he would presently return in triumph. So when the wolf hunt was over, or the desperate fight was won, these mighty men would gather together, lay their weapons aside and listen to the songs of Scop and Gleeman—men who could put into adequate words the emotions and aspirations that all men feel but that only a few can express. The great hidden life of the Germanic people may be summed up in five great principles,—their love of personal freedom, their responsiveness to nature, their religion, their reverence for womanhood and their struggle for glory as a ruling motive in every noble life. It was not then the love of fighting but rather the love of honour resulting from fighting well, which animated our forefathers in every campaign. The whole secret of Beowulf's mighty life is summed up in the last line, "Ever yearning for his people's praise." Again when we read,

"Now hath the man

O'ercome his troubles. No pleasure does he lack,  
Nor steeds, nor jewels, nor the joys of mead,  
Nor any treasure that the earth can give,  
O royal woman if he have but thee."

we know we are dealing with an essentially noble man, not a savage; we are face to face with that profound reverence for womanhood which inspires the noblest deeds and we honour the old Teutonic hero. And so we have these people. Outwardly their life was a constant hardship, a perpetual struggle against savage nature and savage men. Behind them were gloomy quests inhabited by wild beasts and still wilder men and peopled in their imagination with dragons and evil shapes. In front of them, thundering at the very dikes for entrance was the treacherous North Sea, with its fog and storms and ice. Here they lived, a big, blond powerful race, and hunted and fought and sailed and drank and feasted when their labour was done. A man's life is more than his work; his dream is ever greater than his achievement, and history reflects not so much man's deed as the spirit which animates him; not the poor thing that he does but rather the splendid achievements that follow. Out of the falling Roman Empire, these people carved the destiny of modern Europe.

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