

tions of poet, composer and singer were united in one person. The poem on being sung did not lose anything from that greater or less want of sympathy and mutual understanding which is certain to exist when the author and singer are different persons. The poet sang his own poem and found expression for his thoughts and emotions not merely in words but in tone of voice, in play of feature and in gesture. "Hierzu kommt aber noch eines was eine unaussprechliche Tragweite hatte: nämlich dass er selbst und persönlich seine Gesänge dem Volk singend vortrug" (Hammerich, *Christliche Epik*, p. 219).

The Scop's Rewards.

The singers, like the other members of the primitive court of the early Germanic chieftains, were dependent for their sustenance upon the gifts which the generosity or prudence of the chieftain prompted him to give. It is, therefore, but natural that the specimens of scop-poetry still preserved should contain frequent references to the generosity of the chiefs and the rewards received by singers. No mention is made in *Beowulf* of the bestowal of presents upon the scop. The only indications of the existence of such a custom are the abundant references to the king as a giver:—brytta, since hrytta, goldes brytta, gold-gifa, sinc-gifa, etc. In *Widsith*, on the other hand, where the singer himself is the subject of the poem, the references to the gifts received by him are very numerous. In the very first lines it is stated—

"oft he on flette geþah
mynelicne maþpum" (ll. 3-4).

And in the poem itself the scop in three different passages sings of the gifts which were given him.

The presents mentioned in the earliest texts were usually of gold. The word "maþpum" in the lines just quoted is used in *Beowulf* as a synonym for gold.

"Me þone wælræs wine Scildunga
fættan golde fela leanode,
manegum maþpum" (ll. 2102-2104).

Cynewulf in speaking of his experience as a wandering singer states that he received presents of gold.