

Nevertheless, contradictory as it may seem, these warriors were of a restless temperament and detested tranquility. A call to arms was always welcome and seemed to bring new life to these sordid lives. In the intervals of peace the warriors gave way immoderately to deep gaming and excessive drinking, which for the time relieved them from their often painful thoughts. Unfortunately too, the blood of friends and relations often stained their drunken riots. They drank strong beer, when they had nothing better, but after their intercourse with the Romans was somewhat extended we learn that they sighed for the rich intoxicating wines of Italy. They never, however, attempted to cultivate the vine, preferring to ravish by force of arms rather than solicit by labour what they desired. We are not surprised then to note on History's pages where mention is made of these people ravaging the provinces which enjoyed these envied gifts. We read of how the German auxiliaries, invited into France during the civil wars of the sixteenth century, "were allured by the promise of plenteous quarters in the provinces of Champagne and Burgundy."

When the Germanic people became more numerous, the disregard for art and care in the cultivation of the soil manifested itself, but did not improve the condition. Instead of trying to produce the necessities of life when famine stared them in the face, they emigrated. These changes of place, however did not disturb these barbarians as we would expect, because as a general thing they carried their valuables with them and even cheerfully at times abandoned "the vast silence of their words for the unbounded hopes of plunder and conquest."

The far greater part of Germany, possessed a government which was a form of democracy. The individual felt himself obliged to submit his private opinion and his actions to the judgment of the greater number of his associates. The Germans were often hasty and violent in their decisions. Often an irregular multitude inflamed with faction and strong liquor made use of arms to enforce their furious resolves.

A general of the tribe was elected on occasion of danger, but his office and power expired with the war and in time of peace the German tribes acknowledged no supreme authority. This very fact is a strong proof of their love of independence.

They admired courage and flocked around a chief who had made himself renowned. To protect his person was one of their most sacred duties. The rude plenty of his hospitable board was the only pay that he could bestow or they would accept. This hero