

Forfatter: Grundtvig, N. F. S.

Titel: Udrag fra Bibliotheca Anglo-Saxonica. Prospectus, and Proposals of a Subscription, for the Publication of the Most Valuable Anglo-Saxon Manuscripts, Illustrative of the Early Poetry and Literature of Our Language. Most of Which Have Never Yet Been Printed

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PROSPECTUS,

&c.

If the only merit which the Anglo-Saxons could claim, rested upon their good fortune to be the ancestors of a nation so highly gifted, so renowned, and so wealthy as the English, we might expect, that in no country would the antiquities connected with such a people be more industriously and more zealously cultivated than in England. And yet nothing is more true, and at the same time more surprising, than that they have been nowhere more neglected throughout the civilized world. The slightest reflection will teach us, that, without a due attention to Anglo-Saxon literature, we can neither estimate nor understand the importance or the progress of that of the present day; since the first perceptible links in the long chain of improvements, both of the English language and its literature, are to be found in this neglected lore of their forefathers. But this seems to have been altogether overlooked, and this ancient treasury has been regarded as a dunghill, where, because the pearls did not lie exposed and obvious to every passing eye, they have been thought not worth seeking.

If, however, it should appear—as experience will clearly prove—that these very Anglo-Saxons have exercised a far greater influence over the modern civilized world, than even their illustrious descendants; and if the literary relics of this people form some of the most invaluable documents and records we possess for the Universal History of mankind—then, I say, it will be still more astonishing that a nation, so acute and so enlightened as the English, should have chanced to overlook a source from whence they might have derived both credit and profit to themselves. And if, again, this