

from these terrific forms of inanimate nature to celebrate Hiero of Syracuse, and the victorious combats of the Greeks with the mighty race of the Persians.

We must not forget that Grecian scenery presents the peculiar charm of an intimate association of land and sea, of shores adorned with vegetation, or picturesquely girt round by rocks gleaming in the light of aërial tints, and of an ocean beautiful in the play of the ever-changing brightness of its deep-toned moving waves.

Although to other nations, sea and land, in the different pursuits of life to which they give rise, appeared as two separate spheres of nature, the Greeks—not only those who inhabited the islands, but also those occupying the southern portion of the continent—enjoyed, almost every where, the aspect of the richness and sublime grandeur imparted to the scenery by the contact and mutual influence of the two elements. How can we suppose that so intellectual and highly-gifted a race should have remained insensible to the aspect of the forest-crowned cliffs on the deeply-indented shores of the Mediterranean, to the silent interchange of the influences affecting the surface of the earth, and the lower strata of the atmosphere at the recurrence of regular seasons and hours, or to the distribution of vegetable forms? How, in an age when the poetic feelings were the strongest, could this active state of the senses have failed to manifest itself in ideal contemplation? The Greek regarded the vegetable world as standing in a manifold and mythical relation to heroes and to the gods, who were supposed to avenge every injury inflicted on the trees and plants sacred to them. Imagination animated vegetable forms with life, but the types of poetry, to which the peculiar direction of mental activity among the ancient Greeks limited them, gave only a partial development to the descriptions of natural scenery. Occasionally, however, even in the writings of their tragic poets, a deep sense of the beauty of nature breaks forth in animated descriptions of scenery in the midst of the most excited passions or the deepest tones of sadness. Thus, when Œdipus is approaching the grove of the Eumenides, the chorus sings, “the noble resting-place of the illustrious Colonus, where the melodious nightingale loves to tarry and pour forth its clear but plaintive notes.” Again it sings, “the verdant gloom of the thickly-mantling ivy, the narcissus steeped in heavenly dew, the golden-beaming crocus, and the hardy and ever fresh-sprouting olive-tree.”* Sophocles strives

* *Œd. Colon.*, v. 668-719. Among delineations of scenery, indica-