

to extol his native Colonos by placing the lofty form of the fated and royal wanderer by the brink of the sleepless waters of Cephisus, surrounded by soft and bright scenery. The repose of nature heightens the impression of pain called forth by the image of the noble form of the blind sufferer, the victim of mysterious and fatal passion. Euripides* also delights in picturesque descriptions of "the pastures of Messenia and Laconia, which, under an ever-mild sky, are refreshed by a thousand fountains, and by the waters of the beautiful Pamisos."

Bucolic poetry, which originated in the plains of Sicily, and popularly inclined to the dramatic, has been justly termed a transitional form. Its pastoral epics describe on a small scale human beings rather than natural scenery; and in this form it appears in its greatest perfection in the writings of Theocritus. A soft elegiac element is peculiar to the idyl, as if it had emanated from "the longing for some lost idea;" as if, in the breast of mankind, a certain touch of melancholy was ever mingled with the deep feelings awakened by the aspect of nature.

True Hellenic poetry expired with the freedom of the Greeks, and became descriptive, didactic, and instructive. Astronomy, geography, hunting, and fishing were converted, in the time of Alexander, into objects of poetic consideration, and often adorned with a remarkable degree of metrical skill. The forms and habits of animals are depicted with grace, and not unfrequently with such accuracy that the particular genera or even species may be recognized by the classifying naturalist of the present day. All these compositions are, however, wholly wanting in that inner life—that inspired contemplation of nature—by which the external world becomes to the poet, almost unconsciously to himself, a subject of his imagin-

tive of a deep feeling of nature, I would here further mention the description of Cithæron in the *Bacchæ* of Euripides, v. 1045 (Leake, *North. Greece*, vol. ii., p. 370), where the messenger ascends from the Valley of Asopus, the reference to the sunrise in the Valley of Delphos, in the *Ion* of Euripides, v. 82, and the gloomy picture in the *Hymn on Delos*, v. 11, by Callimachus, in which the holy Delos is represented as surrounded by sea-gulls, and scourged by tempestuous waves.

* According to Strabo (lib. viii., p. 366, Casaub.), who accuses the tragedian of giving a geographically incorrect boundary to Elis. This beautiful passage of Euripides occurs in the *Cresphontes*. The description of the excellence of the district of Messenia is intimately connected with the exposition of its political relations, as, for instance, the division of the land among the Heraclidæ. The delineation of nature is, therefore, here too, as Böckh ingeniously remarks, associated with human interests.