

ata.* The great physical picture of the universe by the Roman poet contrasts in its cold doctrine of atoms, and in its frequently visionary geognostic hypotheses, with his vivid and animated delineation of the advance of mankind from the recesses of the forest to the pursuit of agriculture, to the control of natural forces, the more elevated cultivation of mind and languages, and through the latter to social civilization.† When, in the midst of the active and busy life of the statesman, and in a mind excited by political passion, a keen susceptibility for the beauties of nature and an animated love of rural solitude still subsists, its source must be derived from the depths of a great and noble character. Cicero's writings testify to the truth of this assertion. As is generally known, many points in his book *De Legibus*, and in that *De Oratore*, are copied from Plato's *Phædrus*;‡ yet his delineations of Italian nature do not, on that account, lose any of their individuality. Plato extols in general terms "the dark shade of the thickly-leaved plane-tree; the luxuriance of plants and herbs in all the fragrance of their bloom; and the sweet summer breezes which fan the chirping swarms of grasshoppers." In Cicero's smaller sketches of nature we find, as has lately been remarked by an intelligent inquirer,§ all things described as they still exist in the actual landscape; we see the Liris shaded by lofty poplars; and as we descend from the steep

* "It may appear singular, but yet it is not the less correct, to attempt to connect poetry, which rejoices every where in variety of form, color, and character, with the simplest and most abstract ideas. Poetry, science, philosophy, and history are not necessarily and essentially divided; they are united wherever man is still in unison with the particular stage of his development, or whenever, from a truly poetic mood of mind, he can in imagination bring himself back to it." Wilhelm von Humboldt, *Gesammelte Werke*, bd. i., s. 98-102. (Compare, also, Bernhardt, *Röm. Litteratur*, s. 215-218, and Fried. Schlegel, *Sämmtliche Werke*, bd. i., s. 108-110.) Cicero (*ad Quint. fratrem*, ii., 11) ascribes, if not pettishly, at any rate very severely, more tact than creative talent (*ingenium*) to Lucretius, who has been so highly praised by Virgil, Ovid, and Quintilian.

† Lucret., lib. v., v. 930-1455.

‡ Plato, *Phædr.*, p. 230; Cicero, *de Leg.*, i., 5, 15; ii., 2, 1-3; ii., 3, 6. (Compare Wagner, *Comment. Perp.*, in *Cic., de Leg.*, 1814, p. 6;) Cic., *de Oratore*, i., 7, 28 (p. 15, Ellendt).

§ See s. 431-434 of the admirable work by Rudolph Abeken, rector of the Gymnasium at Osnabrück, which appeared in 1835 under the title of *Cicero in seinen Briefen*. The important addition relative to the birth-place of Cicero is by H. Abeken, the learned nephew of the author, who was formerly chaplain to the Prussian embassy at Rome, and is now taking part in the important Egyptian expedition of Professor Lepsius. See, also, on the birth-place of Cicero, Valery, *Voy. Hist. en Italie*, t. iii., p. 421.