

peatedly expressed, that the love of nature evinced by northern nations is to be referred to an innate longing for the pleasant fields of Italy and Greece, and for the wonderful luxuriance of tropical vegetation, when contrasted with their own prolonged deprivation of the enjoyment of nature during the dreary season of winter. We do not deny that this longing for the land of palms diminishes as we approach Southern France or the Spanish peninsula, but the now generally adopted and ethnologically correct term of *Indo-Germanic* nations should remind us that too general an influence ought not to be ascribed to northern winters. The luxuriant poetic literature of the Indians teaches us that within and near the tropics, south of the chain of the Himalaya, ever-verdant and ever-blooming forests have at all times powerfully excited the imaginations of the East Arian nations, and that they have always been more inclined toward poetic delineations of nature than the true Germanic races who have spread themselves over the inhospitable north as far as Iceland. The happier climates of Southern Asia are not, however, exempt from a certain deprivation, or, at least, an interruption of the enjoyment of nature; for the seasons are abruptly divided from each other by an alternation of fructifying rain and arid destructive drought. In the West Arian plateaux of Persia, the barren wilderness penetrates in many parts in the form of bays into the surrounding highly fruitful lands. A margin of forest land often constitutes the boundary of these far-extending seas of steppe in Central and Western Asia. In this manner the relations of the soil present the inhabitants of these torrid regions with the same contrast of barrenness and vegetable abundance in a horizontal plane as is manifested in a vertical direction by the snow-covered mountain chains of India and of Afghanistan. Great contrasts in seasons, vegetation, and elevation are always found to be exciting elements of poetic fancy, where an animated love for the contemplation of nature is closely interwoven with the mental culture and the religious aspirations of a people.

Pleasure in the contemplation of nature, which is consonant with the characteristic bent of mind of the Germanic nations, is in the highest degree apparent in the earliest poems of the Middle Ages, as may be proved by many examples from the chivalric poetry of the Minnesingers, in the period of the Hohenstauffen dynasty. However numerous may be the historical points of contact connecting it with the romanesque songs of the Provençals, we can not overlook the genuine Germanic