

strongest contrast to the Arian or Indo-Germanic races, or, in other words, to the Indians and Persians.

The Semitic or Aramæic nations afford evidence of a profound sentiment of love for nature in the most ancient and venerable monuments of their poetic feeling and creative fancy. This sentiment is nobly and vividly manifested in their pastoral effusions, in their hymns and choral songs, in all the splendor of lyric poetry in the Psalms of David, and in the schools of the seers and prophets, whose exalted inspiration, almost wholly removed from the past, turns its prophetic aspirations to the future.

The Hebraic poetry, besides all its innate exalted sublimity, presents the nations of the West with the special attraction of being interwoven with numerous reminiscences connected with the local seat of the religion professed by the followers of the three most widely-diffused forms of belief, Judaism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism. Thus missions, favored by the spirit of commerce, and the thirst for conquest evinced by maritime nations, have combined to bear the geographical names and natural descriptions of the East as they are preserved to us in the books of the Old Testament, far into the forests of the New World, and to the remote islands of the Pacific.

It is a characteristic of the poetry of the Hebrews, that, as a reflex of monotheism, it always embraces the universe in its unity, comprising both terrestrial life and the luminous realms of space. It dwells but rarely on the individuality of phenomena, preferring the contemplation of great masses. The Hebrew poet does not depict nature as a self-dependent object, glorious in its individual beauty, but always as in relation and subjection to a higher spiritual power. Nature is to him a work of creation and order, the living expression of the omnipresence of the Divinity in the visible world. Hence the lyrical poetry of the Hebrews, from the very nature of its subject, is grand and solemn, and when it treats of the earthly condition of mankind, is full of sad and pensive longing. It is worthy of remark, that Hebrew poetry, notwithstanding its grandeur, and the lofty tone of exaltation to which it is often elevated by the charm of music, scarcely ever loses the restraint of measure, as does the poetry of India. Devoted to the pure contemplation of the Divinity, it remains clear and simple in the midst of the most figurative forms of expression, delighting in comparisons which recur with almost rhythmic al regularity.

As descriptions of nature, the writings of the Old Testa