

But that which, as has already been frequently remarked, has rendered the geographical position of the Mediterranean most beneficial in its influence on the intercourse of nations, is the proximity of the eastern continent, where it projects into the peninsula of Asia Minor; the number of islands in the Ægean Sea, which have served as a means for facilitating the spread of civilization;\* and the fissure between Arabia, Egypt, and Abyssinia, through which the great Indian Ocean penetrates under the name of the Arabian Gulf or the Red Sea, and which is separated by a narrow isthmus from the Delta of the Nile and the southeastern coasts of the Mediterranean. By means of all these geographical relations, the influence of the sea as a connecting element was speedily manifested in the growing power of the Phœnicians, and subsequently in that of the Hellenic nations, and in the rapid extension of the sphere of general ideas. Civilization, in its early seats in Egypt, on the Euphrates, and the Tigris, in Indian Pentapotamia and China, had been limited to lands rich in navigable rivers; the case was different, however, in Phœnicia and Hellas. The active life of the Greeks, especially of the Ionian race, and their early predilection for maritime expeditions, found a rich field for its development in the remarkable configuration of the Mediterranean, and in its relative position to the oceans situated to the south and west.

curs in Greek poetry, is by no means to be ascribed to actual experience, which may have been invested, from credulity and love of the marvelous, with a fabulous character, as has been conjectured especially with respect to the Phœnician maritime legends, but rather that it was to be traced to the roots of the images which lie in certain ideal presuppositions and requirements of the feelings, on which a *true geographical knowledge has only gradually begun to work*. From this fact there has often resulted the interesting phenomenon that purely subjective creations of a fancy guided by certain ideas become almost imperceptibly blended with actual countries and well-known objects of scientific geography. From these considerations, it may be inferred that all genuine or artificially mythical pictures of the imagination belong, in their proper ground-work, to an ideal world, and have no original connection with the actual extension of the knowledge of the earth, or of navigation beyond the Pillars of Hercules." The opinion expressed by me in the French work agreed more fully with the earlier views of Otfried Müller, for, in the *Prolegomenon zu einer wissenschaftlichen Mythologie*, s. 68 und 109, he said very distinctly that, "in mythical narratives of that which is done and that which is imagined, the real and the ideal are most closely connected together." See, also, on the Atlantis and Lyktonia, Martin, *Etudes sur le Timée de Platon*, t. i. p. 293-326.

\* *Naxos*, by Ernst Curtius, 1846, s. 11; Droysen, *Geschichte der Bildung des Hellenistischen Staatensystems*, 1843, s. 4-9.