

one nation, but to mankind. I think you will also find a charm, heroic, plaintive, pathetic, in these cadences, and be at once set on searching for the words that can rightly fill these vacant beats. Young people like rhyme, drum-beat, tune, things in pairs and alternatives; and, in higher degrees, we know the instant power of music upon our temperament to change our mood and give us its own: and human passion, seizing these constitutional tunes, aims to fill them with appropriate words, or marry music to thought, believing, as we believe of all marriage, that matches are made in heaven, and that for every thought its proper melody or rhyme exists, though the odds are immense against our finding it, and only genius can rightly say the banns."<sup>1</sup>

The best division of the several forms of poetry (*i.e.* poetry in verse) is that adopted by the Greeks. Under this system of classification the following chief forms are distinguished—Epic or Narrative, Lyric, Elegiac and Dramatic.

The first of these, Epic, or Story-telling in verse (*ἔπος*, word; *ἔπη*, word-poetry), is the longest form of composition in metre. In addition to the narrative in which the poet speaks in his own person, telling the story to the reader—or to the audience to whom such works were originally recited, or chanted with a musical accompaniment—it has a large element of dialogue, in which the poet speaks through the persons of his characters. As compared with a drama an epic possesses two advantages. In the first place, the period of the action is practically unlimited, and, besides the fact that the main action can cover more time, it admits of a greater number of episodes, or subsidiary stories, and of the treatment of these episodes at greater length; and in the second, a greater element of marvel can be introduced, since the actors or events represented are not subjected to the scrutiny of the sense of sight, as is the case when the scenes and actors are before us on the stage. In other words, the poet can use his imagination with greater freedom in an epic than in a drama; and, in point of fact, many of the subjects

<sup>1</sup> *Poetry and Imagination.*