

of foot, harmony of sound and voice, to the intense gladness of the moment. Miriam will lead the dance of maidens, and will smite from the timbrel the notes of triumph. David will seize his harp and dance mightily before the Lord. These are the familiar examples of this early ballad dance, in which foot and voice and musical instrument combined. The most popular and impressive of these among the Greeks was that in honor of Dionysius, better known to us as Bacchus. The corn harvest, the gathering of the vintage, the coming of the flowers, the assurance of the spring, were all welcomed with festivals in honor of Dionysius. Out of these festivals and appropriate ballad-dances sprang the dramatic art. The religious festival gave rise to the highest form of poetry. Dionysius, the bestower of the richest bounties of nature, was not a good god removed from the sympathy with human pain. He was not one who lived regardless of mankind. He could suffer, and his sufferings had a deep significance. There were germs of tragedy in the ballad dances in his honor. The highest form of drama rose out of a religious festival.

The same thought is more strikingly shown if we summon to our memory another god of the Greeks. Apollo stands higher in public esteem than Bacchus. Apollo is the god of art and science; he is pre-eminently in our thoughts the god of song; but by a noble insight he was the god of purity also. Delphi was the place of his oracle. Thither trooped the thousands of perplexed souls who sought light and guidance. They went not as the foolish and fashionable fribble of to-day goes to the palmist or the astrologer merely to hear some tale of future fortune. They went also for counsel in the perplexities of life.

The oracle might speak in dubious terms, but often the ambiguous answer veiled a great moral truth. The face of to-morrow depends on the conduct of to-day. When men are in perplexity they often stand at the parting of the ways of life, and the future is uncertain only because it lies in the hollow of the hand. Moreover, to the double-minded man even clear answers grow dim. The pure soul alone can read the oracle aright. The replies given at Delphi might sometimes be frivolous and evasively dextrous, but in its best times it bore witness to the existence of great governing principles of life. "The influence of Delphi," writes Professor Butcher, "was in no small measure akin to that of the Hebrew prophecy." There was the same attempt to bid men not to be content with surface views, but to look into the heart of things.

Religion in the presence of the prophet and the oracle was lifted into a higher region. It was no longer a matter of ceremony and sacrifice. It belonged in its essence to a higher place than ritual and liturgy. It demanded simplicity, singleness of aim, honesty of heart, consistency of life. What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God? Thinkest thou that I will eat bull's flesh? Such are the words which come to us from the poet-prophets of Israel. About the same time that Malachi was extolling righteous conduct in Israel, Greek writers were declaring "justice and goodness are the best of sacrifices, and prevail more with the gods than a hecatomb of victories," and in such teaching Professor Butcher tells us we hear the echo of the teaching of Delphi.

Thus religion and song were cradled together. Apollo was not