

her spirit is that of recoil, antagonism and hatred, but her outward demeanor is one of hypocritical adulation. Our first impression of her is that she is absolutely without feeling, implacable, the incarnation of the spirit of revenge. She feels little of the "compunctious visitings of nature" which haunted Lady Macbeth and drove her into gloom and the madness of despair. She fancies herself to some extent a minister from heaven in avenging upon her husband the sacrifice of their daughter Iphigenia. But even with the aids which outward relations and inward convictions supplied her, there are indications that Clytemnestra's mind was not unvisited with startling fears. Aegisthus is a character upon whom little honor is bestowed. Except in relation with Clytemnestra, he is on all sides regarded with hatred and contempt. He meets his death "unwept, unhonored and unsung."

A few concluding words on the active principles of Greek tragedy may not be amiss. The idea of doom as a legacy inherited from forefathers, stands as a dark background to the action, but across this, ever and anon moral ideas are being drawn, giving greater brilliance and diversity to the web of life, and deepening its meaning.

Aeschylus' treatment of the conception of fate is interesting. The idea handed down from old time is that a man having committed a crime not only subjected to punishment, but brought a curse upon, the family clinging inveterately to it, descending from father to son, and requiring only of a member of the family to commit an impious act to evoke its power. It was impossible to escape the curse; it haunted the houses. But the light dawns in the pages of Aeschylus, that the curse of heredity is not irredeemable. Even when it falls it gives scope for the display of moral grandeur, as in the case of Eteocles, who, although banned by his father's dying words, still undaunted, marshals his forces and dies fighting in defence of his native land. And though an eventually noble human being might be unfortunate or might err, he does not for that reason suffer hopelessly and for ever, but light at the last would dawn on his spirit. This thought receives a most interesting exemplification in the words of Orestes to Athena, just previous to his trial before the Areopagus:

"Sovereign Athena, sped by Phœbus' word
I am come. Do thou with clemency receive
The outcast, not red-handed nor unpurged
But mellowed by long time."

"Nor does the eye itself,
That most pure spirit of sense, behold itself,
Not going from itself; but eye to eye opposed
Salutes each other with each other's form;
For speculation turns not to itself,
Till it has travell'd and is mirror'd there
Where is may see itself."

POETRY.

PROLOGUE UP TO DATE.

WHAN that the yule tide was come agen
To bringen jolitee to alle men,
And everychon on whom you turned your eye
Of chicknes hadde he or a great turkeie,
Or els a goose was berying to his hoom
To maken glad who so that hider come;
So priketh him nature in her corages
That longen folk to gon on pilgrimages,
And specially the clerkes of Queene's wende
Their merie way to every schires ende,
Ne thinken not of al the wrathie faces
Of professours who gaze on empty places,
But thinken of her hoomes and friendes there,
Of fader purs and of here ladies faire.

Byfel that, in that sesoune on a day,
Upon a journey as I took mi way,
I chaunced upon a merie compaignie,
Mani thei were and eek right mottelie.
Anon I saw with whom I was i-falle,
For trewely clerkes of Queene's were thei alle;
And as thei rode lowd showted everychon
That to al nabour folk it mighte be known,
That he a student was learned and gay,
Who hoom for yule tide did take his way.
And sithens I have found me tyme enow,
I schal endeavour for to telle yow
Of eche of hem, so as it semede me,
And which they weren, and of what degre;
And eek in what arraye that thei were inne,
And at a Senior wol I first begynne.

This Senior was a very worthi man,
That from the tyme that he first bigan
To gon to schole loved philosophie;
Ful smerte he talked of teleologie,
Of Darwin and of evolution
He well cowde telle the condicioun;
And tho bitymes he seemed in wordes lost,
Unto that classe he was a noble post.

Of his stature he was of even lengthe,
But stout he was, I wis of mighti strengthe;
Short was his nose, and his moustache also,
His forheed overhung his face below.

In classes, sins his sight ne was not cleere,
Astryde his nose and hooked to each eere
Glasses he wore. To tellen his arraye—
His clothes were goode, but thei were not gaye,
But al i-kept in such condicioun
As semely was to his positoun.
Altho with mighti lernyng oft he spoke,
Ful shy he was and hadde mani a joke;
Slow did he speke, but wel debate and write
And sikerly towde voters' lists endyte.