

Those who sang in this strain were only those whose emotions went out towards all things beautiful and tender. The Island of Leskos was its home. Alcaeus wrote in this strain, and Anacreon, famous for their lays. But greatest of all, the one who made the melos beautiful among other beautiful forms, was "burning Sappho," the greatest and almost only poetess of Greece. Like Homer, much about her is unknown, but her poems are living expressions of all the strong and deep and tender emotions of the human soul.

But Greece, wearying of these inactive declarations, looked for something in which material action took place. For centuries she had listened to her bards pouring forth their effusions, but now more was required, and to fill this need the drama was brought forward.

In Grecian, as in modern, drama there was the tragedy and comedy. The tragedy came forward first, and as the one who introduced it, Aeschylus can claim full honor. Perhaps no character has ever been made the subject of so many illustrations, nor has any furnished so many true pictures of life with its unsolved mysteries and the deep, dark secrets of the omnipotent power, as his Prometheus. Aeschylus was born in 525 B. C. Before this date Thespis, the first tragic poet, flourished.

Perhaps a greater than Aeschylus was Sophocles. Born 495 B. C. The language of Aeschylus was solemn, stately and grand. His successor varied from this by adopting a more commonplace manner of expression, but at the same time dealing with similar subjects. He, too, endeavors to solve the vast problems of life, and he, too, like all those who have gone before and all those who have followed after, has to leave to fate to clear the mystery. The Antigone is his greatest. The last of the great tragic dramatists was Euripides. More true to nature, still, than Sophocles, but at the same time depicting human life in its weakness and passion. The Medea is his finest work.

The comedy followed the tragedy. Like to the Iambic, it ridicules and jests at its

victims. Aristophanes was perhaps the greatest writer of this school. In his "Birds" and "Frogs" and "Wasps" all institutions and public characters in some way are ridiculed.

Menander and Possidippus were others who were famous for their comedies.

From the realm of poetry we turn to that of prose. Centuries had passed from the time of Homer till the first Grecian prose appeared. Nor is it strange. The Greeks were an aesthetic people. The harmony of poetry appealed to them, while the more uninteresting and less musical prose had no part in their natures.

The first Greek prose took the form of a history, and indeed much of prose writings of that country deal with the same subject.

The first was work on the founding of Miletus, written by Cadmus, a native of that city. Many others wrote chronicles and legends on inferior topics, but they were not preserved.

Herodotus — the father of history — was born 484 B. C. His great work was a history of the Persian war with his own land. Though he has handed down to us the history of his times, and though it is one of the works on which we base our knowledge of the past, yet Herodotus has failed, in confounding with actual facts unreal and mythical events.

Thucydides comes next the greatest historian of Greece. His work on the Peloponnesian war is free from the errors which Herodotus fell into. His style is pure and free from partiality.

Last of the historians was Xenophon. Like Caesar of Rome, he was a skilled general, and his style is much like that of Caesar's, but he does not equal Thucydides as a writer of history. His Anabasis and the Memorabilia of Socrates are distinguished by their pure Greek.

There is one class of prose writers yet to be mentioned — the writers of philosophy. Among these Plato stands pre-eminent, and into this class Lucian may be admitted.

The works of Plato deal exclusively