

That vision is inspired which beholds mountains, forest, and rocks as cathedrals and altars which enshrine the divine love and radiance ; every step is upon enchanted ground. By patient teachableness we realize not merely poetic beauty but real truth in the familiar lines :

" Find tongues in trees, books in running brooks,
Sermons in stones and good in everything."

Their different interpretations of nature measureably determine the character of governmental systems, institutions and literatures. Her function in shaping civilization and giving expression to art is vital. The response of the intelligence and imagination of nations and races to her appeal has determined their relative positions as factors in the world's progress. Nature to the primitive Aryan was an inspiration, the vigor of which was long perceptible during his migrations and changing conditions. Arcadian simplicity always has been a saving force, an instinctive feeling after the divine type.

The Hebrew regarded nature as the physical manifestation of the deity, and looking behind external phenomena he found a God. The poetry of Job brings to view some of the most vivid and sublime aspects of nature as a theophany that are found in any literature. The wonderful 104th Psalm is an inspiring artistic picture of the universe, which interprets the profound intimacy with nature, which characterized the spirit of Hebrew Psalmody :

" Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment ;
Who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain."

" He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth :
He toucheth the hills, and they smoke."

To the glowing vision of the Hebrew prophets nature was but a transparent medium through which they had a near view of the infinite. The fervid imagery of Isaiah finds expression :

" Break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest
and every tree therein,"

and

" Sing O heavens and be joyful O earth,"

thus making of all visible things a divine symphony.