

It may be here mentioned that only recently there has been a serious attempt made, by a competent historian, to produce a history of the drama from the earliest times. The first volume of this work has appeared; but, while it covers a vast period of time, it is little more than an outline, or sketch, of the subject. However, the author, Mr. Charles Hastings, late of University College, Bristol, has promised us another volume, and it is to be hoped that this one will deal with the subject from the standpoint of one who has interest in the matter other than the collection of bald historical facts, without regard to their relationship to the vital questions of social life.

The drama as an organized reality made its appearance about 500 B.C., and the name of Thespis has ever stood as father of the Greek tragedy. It will be seen, therefore, that the drama is of heathen origin, and the strain seems to have remained in the blood ever since.

It appears that the immediate object of those who were the creators of the Greek drama was political; but the instinct being strong in the nature of the Greek, the development along other and wider lines was rapid, so that many other elements of life were laid under tribute, to do duty to the object of the play-writer, and actor, of these early days.

It was true then, as perhaps it has never been since, that the drama at its birth had a serious purpose, and that purpose was of a national and patriotic character to a very great extent. To this