

yet disclose an unknown world which it then kept concealed. To the ancients, Elysium ever lay beyond the setting sun; and the Hesperia of the Greeks, as their geographical knowledge increased, continued to recede before them into the unexplored west.

~ In the youth of all nations, the poet and historian are one; and, according to the tale of the elder Critias, the legend of Atlantis was derived from a poetic chronicle of Solon, whom he pronounced to have been one of the best of poets, as well as the wisest of men. The elements of oral tradition are aptly set forth in the dialogue which Plato puts into the mouth of Timæus of Locris, a Pythagorean philosopher. Solon is affirmed to have told the tale to his personal friend, Dropidas, the great-grandfather of Critias, who repeated it to his son; and he, eighty years thereafter, in extreme old age, told it to his grandson, a boy of ten, whose narrative, reproduced in mature years, we are supposed to read in the dialogue of the *Timæus*. Even those are but the later links in the traditional catena. Solon himself visited Sais, a city of the Egyptian delta, under the protection of the goddess, Neith or Athene. There, when in converse with the Egyptian priests, he learned, for the first time, rightly to appreciate how ignorant of antiquity he and his countrymen were. "O Solon, Solon," said an aged priest to him, "you Hellenes are ever young, and there is no old man who is a Hellene; there is no opinion or tradition of knowledge among you which is white with age." Solon had told them the mythical tales of Phoroneus and Niobe, and of Deucalion and Pyrrha, and had attempted to reckon the interval by generations since the great deluge. But the priest of Sais replied to this that such Hellenic annals were children's stories. Their memory went back but a little way, and recalled only the latest of the great convulsions of nature, by which revolutions in past ages had been wrought: "The memory of them is lost, because there was no written voice among you." And so the venerable priest undertook to tell him of the social life and condition of the primitive Athenians 9000 years before. It is among the events of this older era that the overthrow of Atlantis is told: a story already "white with age" in the time of Socrates, 3400 years ago. The warriors of Athens, in that elder time, were