

the god of men who worshipped art for art's sake. The religious and the practical elements in human nature were too closely allied to be cut asunder to suit any one sided theory. "Clean hands and a pure heart were required of all who would approach the holy hill either of Zion or Parnassus." The religious element in poetry is no meaningless expression for those who realize that religion herself is the parent of song, and that in early times poetry was conditioned by the same law of poetry and singleheartedness which are indispensable in religion. It is thus that the history of the dawn of the drama answers our question.

We turn now to facts which all can verify. We find that there is often a structural bond between religion and poetry. The framework of the greatest poems of the world depends upon certain current religious conceptions. Take away these and the whole structure would fall. The "Iliad" is built upon the Olympian theology. The "Æneid" not only shows us how the gods work in the affairs of men, but it introduces us to the great, untravelled region of the underworld of shades. The theological conception of his time supplies Dante with the structure of the "Divina Commedia," and Milton, in the "Paradise Lost," endeavors, with the aid of seventeenth century theology, to justify "the ways of God to men." The problems which arise out of the conflict between the experience of men and the conventional religious notions of the age are, in fact, the foundations of the greatest poems of the Hebrew, the Greek and the Teuton, of Job, Prometheus and Faust. We may form what theories we please about the essential relationship between religion and poetry, but it will remain for ever true that the imaginations of the poets who

have produced the great works of the world have so employed the religious thought of their age that no one can enter into the spirit or trace the significance of these poems without some acquaintance with the theology of Judæa, Greece and Rome, of the Middle Ages, and the Reformation.

But the connection of religion and poetry is even closer than that of the framework of the epic and the drama. As I have hinted, poetry reflects the religious problems which agitate men's minds from age to age. The questions, "What relation do the unseen powers bear to human life?" "What influence do they exercise upon human destiny?" reach the poet's soul and stir his genius. That the gods do occupy themselves with human affairs is taken for granted in the poems of a nation's infancy. The gods are introduced as sharing in conflicts upon which men's fortunes, hopes and affections hang. Over the battlefields, when heroes contend, flit the forms of the immortals. Zeus and Mars, Juno and Minerva, Woden and Thor mingle in the storm of war to protect their favorites, to strike down their foes, or to receive the parting spirit of the warrior when he falls. Venus will shelter Paris by enveloping him in a heaven sent mist. Pallas and Mars will put on armor and will mingle, disguised as combatants, in the fray.

With the progress of time men's thoughts are widened and their conception of the gods change. They put away the childish notion of the gods and goddesses; but the realization of the inscrutable power or powers which influence the currents of human life still remains. There are certain aims and purposes which are being achieved, and in the accomplishment of these, homes may be broken up and the happiness of