

tions of saints, blended together in heterogeneous confusion; but the marvellous achievements which its legends record, are of a nature totally distinct from the mythological fables of antiquity.

Some philosophers have asserted, that melancholy forms the characteristic feature of northern poetry; an opinion which our author seems inclined to adopt. Among the Greeks, the most aspiring were content with attaining to that degree of elevation which human nature is calculated to reach, fully satisfied with the triumph so gloriously obtained over the genius and exertions of their competitors; but the Christian is taught that the destiny of man does not terminate with this life; that in his present state of probation he is subjected to trials, which must finally decide his happiness, or misery for ever. The sensual religion of Greece offered only external and temporal blessings; to the believer in the gospel every object presents itself in a very different light; all earthly possessions diminish in value, when known to be transient and delusive.

Disgusted with the imperfect gratifications of this world, we delight to escape to another of the poet's creation, where the charms of nature are clothed in eternal bloom, and where sources of pleasure are opened to us, suited to the vast capacities of the human mind. It however presented itself under very different aspects to the Greek and the Scandinavian. The quick sensibility of the former attached him to the joys and glories of the present life; while the climate, the education, and the faith of the latter, all equally contributed to make him thirst after enjoyments, which his bleak mountains were little calculated to afford; and therefore tended to abstract his affections from what was actually within his grasp, and to unfold the dark and awful visions of the ideal world.

Greece appeared to its inhabitants in all the beauty and luxuriousness of uncontroled vegetation. A republican government called into action all the talents, and passions, and energies of the community. History, philosophy, and poetry combined to elevate the national character. The devotion of the Greeks rather assumed the form of gratitude, than the language of supplication. The grove which embellished, and the hill which bounded his landscape, suggested only the idea of the nymph, or faun, who tenanted their recesses, without raising their contemplation from nature, to nature's God.

Sæpe per autumnum, jam pubescente Lyæo,
Conscendit scopulos, noctisque occulta per umbram
Palmitæ maturo rorantia lumina tersit
Nereis, et dulces rapuit de collibus uvas.—*Statius Sylv. II.*

It was far otherwise with the speculative nations of the north. Their perpetual frosts, their boundless forests, their extensive plains; all suggested the idea of immensity; and even before the
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