

of a plain-speaking prophecy delivered upwards of three thousand years ago" ("Antitheism," p. 183). And Mr. Adams, in the first of his five appendices, states what sounds strange (only we have learnt to expect what is strange when reading about the Jews), that "the number of the Jews at the present time appears to be rather less than seven millions, the very number which, so far as it is possible to determine, was that of the Jewish people when our Lord was born at Bethlehem." So far as we can judge of the future, it is likely, in an age where the commercial spirit has in a great degree taken the place of enthusiasm and religious partizanship, that the number of the Hebrews will increase rather than diminish. We are told that in France their influence has considerably increased of late.

There are five useful appendices attached to the book, remarkable, as is the whole book, for their clearness and fairness. The account of the Talmuds, the Targums, and the Massora is distinct and readable; the appendix on the attempt under Julian to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem is judicious and sensible. In the last appendix, on the Blood Accusation, as also in p. 73, Mr. Adams has suggested the probable source of the oft-repeated charge of the crucifixion of boys by the Jews, namely, that at the Feast of Purim, "the most mirthful, or rather the most riotous of all the Israelite festivals, when they were wont to drink until they could not distinguish between the blessings pronounced on Mordecai and the curses imprecated on Haman, it was their practice to erect a gibbet, to which a figure representing Haman was fastened, and whenever his name occurred in the service they broke out into furious execrations against him." The Temple may fail, but Purim never; the Prophets may fail, but not Megillah—that is, the roll in which was written the Book of Esther.¹ Then did the children hiss, spring rattles, strike the wall with hammers; presents were sent, alms bestowed even on Christians; plays and masquerades followed.²

JAMES G. LONSDALE.



ART. III.—SIMILES AND METAPHORS OF THE BIBLE.

THERE are two books in my library to which (read long ago) I often recur with pleasure, Bishop Lowth's *De Sacra Poesi Hebræorum*, and Bishop Jebb's "Sacred Literature."

¹ Smith's "Dictionary of the Bible."

² Kitto's "Encyclopædia of Biblical Literature."

The latter was confessedly suggested by the former; and applies to the New Testament the principles of Lowth in interpreting the Old.

Bishop Jebb expresses a "regret that scholars rarely approach the Scriptures with a view to recreation and enjoyment," that "a reverence very sincere but not very enlightened induces even those who have received a liberal education to shrink back, as though it were a kind of sacrilege, from an examination of Scripture with respect to the excellences of its style and manner." He vindicates the truth that the Bible may be read, while chiefly for spiritual guidance and instruction, yet also for pleasure: our "delight may be in the law of the Lord, not merely as spiritually excellent, but also as pre-eminently beautiful and sublime." And he gives (with justice) to Bishop Lowth the chief credit for calling attention to the *poetry* of the Bible.

Lowth, in his lectures at Oxford some 140 years ago, "seated Isaiah and his compeers in the assembly of the poets;" and he also pointed out plainly the leading characteristics of Hebrew poetry. Others have followed in the same lines; and Hebrew scholarship has of course been much advanced since Lowth's time. Yet his book remains (as far as I know) the one clearest and best book on the subject. He showed that in Hebrew poetry not metre but "parallelism" (as he terms it) is the main rule—a correspondence of ideas and things, not of words and syllables in exact measure.

Lowth devotes several lectures to the figurative language of the Hebrew poets: Metaphor, Allegory, Simile. It has been said somewhere, "Metaphor is not argument." Though not mathematically so, yet metaphors, figures, similes, analogies, parables, etc., are often the plainest way of expressing to some minds what is meant—are the plainest way of teaching a truth. And so they are in some sense "argument." Certainly figurative language is not only ornamental, but useful, necessary, and unavoidable. Undoubtedly it is natural: older writers use it more than later; indeed, dry abstract terms are a more modern elaboration of language. How often for force and effect a comparison or metaphor is better than a mere statement mathematically precise and philosophical, an example or two will show. A philosopher might describe something sudden and swift in the most careful words, precisely defining a velocity of so many thousand miles per minute; but where would this be for force and effect compared with "As the lightning cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west, so . . ." Again: "Judah is a lion's whelp," "Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf," "Be ye not like to horse and mule," are sentences whose force and clearness would be the reverse

of improved if for the comparisons to animals were substituted adjectives such as "strong, savage, stubborn." In fact figurative language, though most abundant in the childhood of language, is no childish weakness.

Lowth defines figurative language thus: "Figurative language is that in which one or more terms or images are put in the place of others, or serve to illustrate others, by reason of some likeness which they have to them. If this likeness is merely hinted, and only by one or two words, we call it *Metaphor*; if by a long passage, *Allegory*; if the likeness is openly stated by putting side by side both *images*, *Comparison* or *Simile*." These different kinds of figure are sometimes mixed; but in our illustrations from the Bible we will take them in this order.

Of Metaphor Quintilian says, "While a moderate and suitable use of metaphor lends brightness to diction, frequent use of it produces obscurity, and is wearisome; and constant use makes what is said an enigma, or puzzle." Probably the Hebrew writers do go beyond what the classical critic would have deemed moderation; for in some of their poems metaphor is frequent, nay, constant: image follows image, and the figures used are very bold. But, we must remember, Eastern and Western ideas differ: what Greek or Latin ears hardly endured, what their writers do not venture on, this the Hebrews did venture on, and loved. Yet, on the whole, it is wonderful—considering the antiquity of their writings, and that they are known to most of us through translation—how clearly their meaning shines out. One chief reason of this Lowth gives: "The Hebrew poets took images from things known to all, things familiar." And however frequent, curious, harsh, and mixed be the metaphors, the language will be clear if they be not far-fetched nor taken from things unfamiliar. And, further, the Hebrew poets follow a certain rule or method: the same things are repeatedly used in the same figurative way.

In all poetry the commonest imagery is *from nature*; and so it is in the Bible poets. No image, perhaps, is more frequent than Light and Darkness, to express prosperity and adversity, deliverance and destruction. In Homer, a hero "brake the Trojan line and showed light to his comrades;" and this metaphor occurs six times more in the "Iliad." Horace gives us "*Lucem redde tuæ, dux bone, patriæ.*" But the Hebrews, with loftier themes, rise to a loftier strain. Not to dwell on many passages like "God hath showed us light," "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light," let us hear Isaiah describing the renewed favour of God to His people (ch. xxx. 26):

“The light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun,
And the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days.”
And (ch. lx. 20):

“Thy sun shall no more go down,
Neither shall thy moon withdraw itself:
For Jehovah shall be thine everlasting light,
And the days of thy mourning shall be ended.”

Again, with what force does the same prophet (ch. xxiv. 23) speak of God's deliverance of His people, and of the brightness of His face:

“Then the moon shall blush, and the sun shall be ashamed,
For the Lord of Hosts shall reign, in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem,
And before His ancients gloriously.”

The reverse of the picture we find in Ezekiel xxxii. 7, where he thus speaks of the threatened destruction of Egypt:

“When I shall extinguish thee, I will cover the heaven,
And make the stars thereof dark:
I will cover the sun with a cloud,
And the moon shall not give her light.
All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee,
And set darkness upon thy land.”

Another frequent image is water-floods. A most familiar and intelligible one must this have been to the dwellers in Palestine, from the nature of their country: it was a thing constantly before their eyes. Jordan was seen overflowing his banks every spring, swollen by the melting snows of Lebanon. Their streams were not large, but torrent-like, running among the hills. The beauty of the Bible descriptions of water-floods will be best appreciated by those who have rambled in the mountains of Scotland, Wales, or other high-land country, who have seen streams rushing down in “spate,” “every pelting (paltry) river made so proud that they have overborne their continents;” who have suffered delay, if not danger, by intercepting burns in a bridgeless tract, and have read, or even heard from eye-witnesses, of the terrible loss at times from flood on such rivers as the Findhorn. So to the Palestinian shepherd the dread and danger of the flood was a very real one. Hence we find the oncoming of calamities imaged as a flood: “Save me, O God, for the waters are come in;” “Let not the floods drown me, nor the deep swallow me up;” “Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of Thy water-spouts; all Thy waves and Thy billows are gone over me.” Of course, such metaphors are common to all poets—“waves of adversity,” “sea of troubles,” etc. Especially does Homer delight in flood-similes. In many noble passages (*e.g.*, “Iliad,” *E* 85, *A* 492, *II* 384) a hero's conquering force, an army's onset or flight, is compared to a torrent. But for

frequent and bold use of this image by metaphor the Hebrew poets go beyond all. Nor can we forget that our blessed Lord Himself used this image, contrasting the two houses upon which "the rains descended and the floods came," in a passage of which Bishop Jebb points out the beauty, and shows how it is constructed with Hebrew parallelism.

There is one image almost peculiar, as they use it, to the Hebrew poets. Powerful, proud, and mighty men are spoken of as mountains or trees: not merely compared in their fall to falling or fallen trees, or in act and appearance and bulk to mountains (a comparison to be found in Homer and Virgil, etc.), but simply by metaphor. One example may be given: "The day of the Lord shall be upon all that is proud and haughty . . . upon all the cedars of Lebanon, and upon all the oaks of Bashan, and upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up" (Isa. ii. 12). In other passages we find Lebanon put by bold metaphor for the whole Hebrew state, or for its capital, and for the proud King of Assyria; Carmel for all that is fruitful.

Very numerous are images from animals. Tyrants and oppressors are "bulls of Bashan," rams, lions, dogs, and that, too, briefly and boldly, by metaphor, not simile. But the Bible, and the Bible more than any other book, uses imagery from *common life*. Homer and Dante (as far as I know) are the only poets who dare to use such homely images, and Homer and Dante use them mostly by simile. Ploughing, sowing, reaping, all the acts of outdoor country life, supply images. So do common arts and manufactures—nay, even the most ordinary household work. Take the following image from threshing, an operation performed in those times on some high wind-swept floor by driving over the grain either cattle or a heavy instrument for the purpose. The prophet Isaiah (xli. 15), promising that Israel shall crush their foes, says:

"Behold I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth:

Thou shalt thresh the mountains and beat them small,
And shalt make the hills as chaff.
Thou shalt fan them, and the wind shall carry them away,
And the whirlwind shall scatter them."

Destructive vengeance is here imaged by corn-threshing. And note that different Hebrew prophets seem constant to this use of the image (Isa. xvii. 13; Ps. lxxxiii. 13; Hos. xii. 3). From the threshing-floor Homer has several similes, one of which it is interesting to compare with this passage of Isaiah:

"As, when a man hath yoked the broad-browed steers
To thresh white barley on an open floor,

The grain beneath the bellowing oxen's feet
Swift crumbles out, so now with solid hoof
The steeds of mighty-souled Achilles trode
Bodies and bucklers down in mingled heap." ("Iliad," r 495.)

Here is the same image to express the same thing. The Homeric simile is fine, but the prophet's metaphor is grander and bolder. It is not horses' trampling compared to oxen's trampling, which is perhaps rather too obvious, but the conquering foe are themselves the threshing-wain. And the idea of force is heightened by putting in place of the grain the very mountains and hills as pounded and crushed.

An image akin to this is that from the wine-press—the treading of the grapes, instances of which occur in Isa. lxiii. 1, Lam. i. 15, and elsewhere. But of metaphors enough has been said. We shall agree in Lowth's conclusion, that "the sacred poets use bold metaphors with great clearness of meaning, and homely metaphors with great dignity and brilliancy."

Allegory, our second kind of figurative language, has been defined as "extended metaphor" or "continuation of metaphors." Instances are Solomon's description of old age (Eccles. xii. 2); Isaiah's description of God's wise providence suiting means to ends, under the figure of the husbandman (xxviii. 23). A rather different kind of allegory is the fable or parable, of which the most noteworthy examples are Jotham's parable of the trees choosing them a king, and two from the vine in Ps. lxxx. and Isa. v. This way of teaching has always been a favourite one with Eastern sages, and for us has the deepest interest, because adopted by our Lord, in Whose mouth we see its power as a vehicle for deep moral and spiritual lessons. But parables are a subject by themselves, and they have been ably treated of by several writers. Let us pass on to Bible Similes.

The simile is where the illustration is introduced by a word of comparison "as," often followed by "so," or is nearly in that form. Lowth distinguishes similes as used for three purposes, "to make clearer, to make grander, or to adorn the subject for variety and pleasure." In the first kind the illustration need not be by anything grand, rather by something apt; and in the Hebrew poets very homely and familiar images are frequent. For an example, take Isa. x. 14:

"My hand hath found as a nest the riches of the peoples;
And as one gathereth eggs that are forsaken, have I gathered all the earth:
And there was none that moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or chirped."

It is the boast of the Assyrian King: the ease with which he spoils the helpless victims could not be more strikingly pictured. Nahum (ch. iii. 12) speaks of Nineveh falling an easy prey:

“All thy fortresses shall be like fig-trees with the first ripe figs:
If they be shaken, they fall into the mouth of the eater.”

2 Kings xxi. 13:

“I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish;
He wipeth it and turneth it upside down.”

Of such homely similes the Bible will supply any number: few other poets venture on them save Homer and Dante, especially the latter, who has some very curious ones (*e.g.*, *Purg.* xix. 42; *Inf.* xxii. 55; xv. 20), being bold to call up any image that will make his reader realize vividly the picture he means to draw.

And yet similes to amplify or lend grandeur are by no means wanting. The sacred poets use with great force images from nature. A grand passage is the following (Isa. xvii. 12), to picture gathering multitudes, and then their dispersion:

“Ah, the uproar of many peoples which roar like the roaring of the seas;
And the rushing of nations that rush like the rushing of mighty waters!
The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters:
But he shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off,
And shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind,
And like the whirling dust before the storm.”

Similes there are, also, for ornament and poetic variety: take this short one occurring in narrative (Isa. vii. 2): “His heart was moved, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the wood are moved by the wind.” And a more extended and balanced one in Isa. lv. 10:

“For as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven,
And returneth not thither, but watereth the earth,
And maketh it bring forth and bud, and giveth seed to the sower and
bread to the eater:
So shall My word be that goeth forth out of My mouth;
It shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I
please,
And it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.”

Of such similes for grandeur and ornament one might gather many from psalmist and prophets, and the lover of Homer or Dante would be able to bring parallels and illustrations to not a few from those two poets. But I would here rather call attention to a point of unlikeness between the Bible similes and the classical ones, Homer's especially. I cannot describe it better than in Lowth's words: “The Hebrew poets use comparisons far more frequently than any, but they compensate their frequency by their brevity. Where others are copious, full, and luxuriant, there the Hebrews are rather brief, terse, and quick; and are forcible not by long flow of language, but,

as it were, by repeated blows." And "they do not often enlarge copiously a single comparison, but rather heap together several, each one brief and plain." This is so true that the exceptions to the rule may be counted on the fingers of one hand—Ps. cxxix. 6; Isa. xxxi. 4; Job vi. 15. The last passage I quote, with an attempt to illustrate its Homeric character by a Greek version (reproduced from work of my own elsewhere):

"My brethren have dealt deceitfully as a torrent,
As the stream of torrents they have passed away;
Which are black by reason of the ice,
Wherein the snow melts and is hid;
Yet what time they wax warm, they vanish,
When it is hot they are extinguished out of their place.
The caravans turn from their way,
They go up into the desert and perish:
The caravans of Tema look for them,
The companies of Sheba rest their hope on them;
They are ashamed of their trust, they come thither and blush."

ἢ ἂν νύ μ' ἐξέλιπόν τε καὶ ἐξαπάτησαν ἑταῖροι,
χειμάρροις ποταμοῖσιν εοικότες· ὦν τε χαράδραι
ἄλλοτε μὲν πλήθουσι, μέλαν δ' ἐπιμίσηται ὕδωρ
κρυστάλλω θολερὸν νιφάδεσσι τε τηκομέναισιν.
ἄλλοτε δ', ἡελίου καὶ καύματος ὄρνυμένοιο,
ἔρρει ἄφαντα ἕέθρα καὶ ἐξαπολωλὸτ' ἀπέσβη.
τῶν μὲν θ' ἰμείροντες ἀποκλίνουσι κελεύθους,
εἴτε που ἐκ Τήμης εἴτ' ἐξ Ἀράβων πολυχρύσων,
διψάλεοι ποταμοῖσι πεποιθότες ἔμποροι ἄνδρες·
νήπιοι, ἐλπώσης δὲ μέγ' ἡμβροτον, ὡκα δ' ἐρήμοις
μὰ ἄ αὐτῶς πλαγχθέντες ἐν οὐρεσὶ πότμον ἐπέσπον.

As Professor Blackie well puts it, "Homer (as also his followers in simile) seldom rests contented with flashing out the one point of analogy required for the occasion, but generally indulges in painting out the picture." So does Dante very often; so does Milton; so, too, others of our poets. But the Hebrews not so. Of their repetition or stringing together of comparisons here are two examples. One from Moses' song (Deut. xxxii. 2):

"My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew;
As the small rain upon the tender grass, and as the showers upon the herb."

One from Ps. lxxxiii. 13, impetuous with a rush of images:

"O my God, make them like the whirling dust,
As stubble before the wind.
As the fire that burneth the forest,
And as the flame that consumeth the mountains,
So pursue them with Thy tempest, and terrify them with Thy storm."

In Balaam's prophecy (Numb. xxiii.) the chosen people is, within the compass of two verses, an unicorn, a lion, a great

lion, a young lion. In one breath, as it were, David calls Jehovah his Rock, Defence, Saviour, Redeemer, Shield, Fortress, Refuge. There is no economy of images, no making as much as possible of each, no elaboration of each, but a lavish accumulation of many.

Of examples, however, enough have been given. Let us now look into the reason of this distinguishing characteristic of Hebrew similes; of this impetuous plainness, this absence of intentional ornament. It will not be far to seek. It appears to be this. The Hebrew poets wrote in seriousness, on serious and divine themes. Their main end was not beauty of diction, or mere pleasure to their hearers or readers. They call in, by way of illustration, all nature, art, common life, anything that would be effective, but not with the beauty of their own composition as their chief aim. The result is that they have a beauty as well as a force—a beauty second to none, but a sterner beauty than belongs to most poetry—a beauty of their own. David was a true poet, with a deep appreciation of natural scenery, of the wonders of the world around him. Proof of this is abundant in his Psalms. One may instance Ps. xxiii., in a soft pastoral strain; xxix., describing grandly a tempest in the mountains; civ., unequalled as a hymn of praise and comprehensive description of the wonders of creation. All and each of these breathe poetic beauty. But they do more. They breathe fervent piety; trust in God as the world's creator and upholder, and as man's true stay and support. In Ps. civ. the writer was not thinking of writing a beautiful poem on the wonders of creation, their interdependence and connection, though he has done so. He was rather speaking from the fulness of a heart that in all this saw God and God's provision for man. So the thunder is "God's voice;" "He sitteth above the water-floods," gives "the blessing of peace." And Ps. xxiii., with its peaceful imagery from green pastures and still waters, breathes devout rest in the Lord, the Good Shepherd.

So is it also with the prophets and their imagery. They have to deliver a solemn, often a stern, message. They are prophets, not only poets; they are the mouthpieces and speakers for God (*προφήται*), not merely "makers" (*ποιηται*) of what may please man. Such men would not and could not deliberately strive after mere ornament and beauty, though incidentally they exhibit it. They think not of self. They are men of God, giving God's message; following doubtless certain forms and rules of composition such as were traditional and natural to them, and such as they knew would work most strongly on their hearers, but speaking because they were full of their great theme and could not but speak.

And as they, men of real poetic fire and imagination, were plainly possessed with "what they were to say" far more than with "how to say it," so we in reading them can hardly lose sight of this. Here is a safeguard (if any be needed) against our thinking too much as critics of the beauties of Scripture, too little of its moral lessons, too much of the manner, too little of the matter. And so we may end, as we began, with Bishop Jebb's remark (applicable more widely than to the limited field we have been considering), that "the Bible may safely be read for pleasure," and that it is a worthy task to study its beauties.

W. C. GREEN.



ART. IV.—MODERN PALESTINE.

II.

WE have now to consider (II.) *the inhabitants* of Palestine. They are a very mixed multitude. Probably no other country has so many aliens among its settled residents, who carry on their business whilst owning no allegiance to the rulers of the country, and in every difficulty claiming the "protection" of some foreign power. In Jerusalem especially, and in the large mercantile towns, this foreign element is very conspicuous, and the occasion of no small difficulty and embarrassment to local governors and even to the sublime Porte itself. The Turks are very few in number, and almost confined to the military and higher civil officials, their position being not unlike that of the English in India. They have little real sympathy with the natives, although of the same religion, seldom intermarry with them, and are more feared than loved. It is an aspiration of the young Moslems of Syria, and of all Arab races, to throw off the yoke of the Turk, and restore the Caliphate to its early home in Arabia; and it is the knowledge of this aspiration that renders the Ottoman Government so extremely jealous of the intrusion of Europeans into the trans-Jordanic country. It occasioned the expulsion of Captain Conder's Survey party, and probably the murder of Professor Palmer.

The *natives* of Palestine are of three very distinct classes—the fellaheen, or cultivators of the soil; the dwellers in the larger towns; and the wandering Arabs. The fellaheen are a handsome, sturdy race, capable of undergoing great fatigue upon very meagre diet, simple in their habits, brave, good-natured, but easily excited and revengeful. They are the