

whole beauty. The historic style of the early books has an epic charm, relieved by outbursts of national poetry, by tender pastoral passages, by threnodies of unspeakable pathos. The poetic style of the Psalms and the Canticles has been the theme of students and critics throughout all time: "What," says Bishop Lowth, "is there in the whole compass of poetry or what can the human mind conceive more grand, more noble, or more animated,—what is there more beautiful or more interesting,—than the sacred writings of the Hebrew prophets? They equal the almost inexpressible greatness of their subjects by the splendor of their diction and the majesty of their poetry, and, as some of them are of higher antiquity than the Fables of the Greeks, so they excel the Greek compositions as much in sublimity as in age." Lastly, in the style of the New Testament, especially of the Gospels, we have a tenderness and a grace that can only be explained by the fact that in them Love speaks to the soul of the beloved.

The Bible and Homer

In an interesting study Chateaubriand shews the superiority of the Bible to Homer on many grounds. The Bible is more concise and solemn; the simplicity of Homer is more diffuse and more lively; the former is sententious; the latter fond of expatiating and repeating in the same phrases what has been said before. "The simplicity of the Bible is that of an ancient priest, who, imbued with all the sciences, human and divine, pronounces from the recess of the sanctuary the precise oracles of wisdom. The simplicity of the poet of Chios is that of an aged traveller, who, beside the hearth of his host, relates all he has learned in the course of a long life. The narrative in Homer is interrupted by digressions, harangues, descriptions of vessels, garments, arms, sceptres, and genealogies of men. Proper names are laden with adjectives and images: in the Bible the narrative is rapid, simple, clear, forcible, and natural. Homer's descriptions are long and involved: those of the Bible are brief and vivid, setting forth objects with a single stroke of the pen. The comparisons in Homer are drawn out by incidental remarks, over-ornate and over-burdened: the comparisons in the Bible are expressed in a striking phrase, with true artistic sense. A lion, a torrent in spate, a storm is invoked and the picture complete. The sublime in Homer is reached laboriously and as a result of the combination of parts: in the Bible it is as sudden as a sunrise or a shooting star, 'you are wounded by the thunderbolt before you know you were struck by it.'" In Homer the sublime is conveyed frequently by the magnificence of the language: in the Bible it is often brought before us like a shock by the triviality of the words. The soul is subjected to a surprise, as when, exalted by thought to the loftiest regions, all of a sudden, the expression, instead of supporting it, lets it drop from heaven to earth, precipitating it from the bosom of God into the mire of the world.

Images and Beauties of the Bible

No literature has such marvellous expressions as "the first-born of death" to imply cruel and terrible death, and "the king of terrors" to describe the death which comes on a man who clings fiercely to this world. What power is in the phrase which tells of the wicked man who "conceived sorrow, and brought forth iniquity," or in the words of Job which convey his ideas of the greatness of God:—"Hell is naked before him,"—"He withholdeth the waters of the clouds,"—"He taketh the scarf from the kings and girdeth their loins with a cord." And what could be more awful than the passage:—"In the horror of a vision by night, when deep sleep is wont to hold men, fear seized upon me, and trembling, and all my bones were affrighted; and when a spirit passed before me, the hair of my head stood up. There stood one whose countenance I knew not, an image before my eyes, and I heard the voice as it were of a gentle wind." Homer compares a youth slain by a javelin to a young olive tree covered

with flowers, planted in an orchard, screened from the intense heat of the sun, amid dews and zephyrs, but, suddenly overthrown by an impetuous wind upon its native soil, it falls on the brink of the nourishing waters that gave sap to its roots:—

*Kadon, telethaon, tode te, pioini doncusi
Pantoion anemon, kai trebrnei andei leuko.*

The whole beautiful picture is dashed off in a phrase in the Bible:—"The wicked shall be blasted as a vine when its grapes are in first flower, and as an olive that casteth its flowers." And what compact thought and vigor in the words of Isaiah:—"With shaking shall the earth be shaken as a drunken man, and shall be removed as the tent of one night." The sentence which tells of the destruction of the busy city of Tyre is unrivalled: "Now shall the ships be astonished in the day of thy terror: and the islands in the sea shall be troubled, because no one cometh out of thee." Only a great poet could adequately appreciate the force of these expressive words. Goethe wrote a beautiful passage to tell of his admiration for the history of Joseph, and we are told that the scoffer Voltaire was moved to tears by the ineffable pathos of the scene when, the cup having been discovered in the sack, the exile reveals himself in the simple words, *I am Joseph*. The wreckers of the home, the advocates of easy divorce, the light men and women who enter into marriage as they would put on a new hat might with profit go back to the Bible and there learn with what lasting, tender love marriages were made by God's people. Take this passage: "Isaac brought Rebecca into the tent of Sarah, his mother, and took her to wife, and he loved her so much that it moderated the sorrow which was occasioned by his mother's death." Search all our modern poets and novelists and you will not find anything so beautiful as this picture of the love of a woman for her spouse:

"Wheresoever thou shalt go I will go, and where thou shalt dwell I also will dwell. Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. The law that shall receive thee dying, in the same will I die." Since the hour when Adam looked on Eve and exclaimed that she should be henceforth bone of his bone, no woman ever professed her love in anything like the eloquence of these words—*Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God—Populus tuus populus meus, Deus tuus Deus meus.*

The moral of all this is plain: Read the Bible. The P.P.A. liars say that Catholics are not allowed to read it. But when did they ever tell the truth yet? And where did they get the Bible?

DIOCESE OF DUNEDIN

The annual meeting of St. Joseph's Catholic Men's Club will be held on next Monday evening in St. Joseph's Hall. The Catholic men, generally, of the city, are invited to be present, and it is hoped that the club's remarkable success of last year will be maintained this year, and if possible, exceeded.

A garden fete was opened on Wednesday afternoon in the grounds of the Sacred Heart School, North-East Valley, and is to be continued on each of the following evenings, and on Saturday afternoon. The proceeds are to benefit the funds of the local Catholic school, and the promoters, who have worked earnestly to ensure the success of the undertaking, hope their efforts will be supported by the whole Catholic community.

Mrs. M. A. Jackson, who for the past six years (three terms in succession) has been a representative on the Otago Hospital and Charitable Aid Board, will be a candidate for a seat on the board at the forthcoming elections. For the splendid social work Mrs. Jackson has, over so many years, accomplished in this city, she deserves well of her fellow-citizens, and it is hoped her useful services will be long retained for the benefit of the community.