

founders of pastoral life, and for the makers of music and of weapons. They have a sister called Naamah,—gracious, who is the mother of singing. Then follows a snatch of song, which takes the form of a burst of savage joy over the power given by all these forces. We see that the first result of civilization is to equip for hatred and to render revenge more deadly; and so this ancient lyric seems to mock us with some foreboding of our own time when all civilization only seems to make for war.

To pass on. Jacob is essentially Semitic with all the paradoxes of the Semite. He is forceful and foxy, but with a capacity for wearing well. He has his hours of wrestling with God; he can see visions, and cheat his master, and love his wife. His sons go down into Egypt, but when God appears to them it is in the desert. Moses saw first the glory of God not in the palm or obelisk of Egypt, but in the desert bush. There is only one poetical fragment of this time, preserved in Exodus xv., and of this the greater part is a late addition; but verses 2 and 3 are really ancient. We must imagine all these songs by no means depending for their rhythm on their sound alone. They were played and danced as well as sung; their rhythm was of force and gesture, of body as well as soul, of limb as well as voice. The singers themselves had just been actors in the events which they describe; all early poetry is a peroration of life. Other poems are found in Exodus xvii. 16, Num. xxi. 17, 18, and Deut. xxxii. 10. This last is interesting as knowing nothing of Egypt, the poet simply saying that God met Israel in the desert.

In the new and broken land to which Israel came the people lost their unity, and this was the beginning of Israel's polytheism. Division brought anarchy and wretchedness in its train, and it is the revolt against these divisions and in favor of national

unity that gives birth to the greatest of the early lyrics—the Song of Deborah. There is no reason to doubt that this song was written by Deborah, who was the great actor in the events which it describes. The exigencies of the time called all men to war; the women only were left to plan, to manage, to hope and to arrange. Deborah, permeated by the love of order and of settled rule, deploras the anarchy of the time and gives thanks to men who can govern. Her poem is a plea for national unity; we do not find in it much sense of the power of religion over individual character; to Deborah, God was the God of the nation as a whole. But the beauty of the poem lies in the spirit of self-sacrifice which breathes through it. Those tribes that did not respond to the call of Deborah, in saving their lives, lost them. They chose imprudently as well as irreligiously to hold aloof from their brethren, who came to the help of the Lord against the mighty. It was by the spirit of self-sacrifice which is the key note of this poem that Israel at last achieved her unity.

II.—THE BOOK OF JONAH.

On opening the Book of Jonah we are struck with the fact that, although it is pure narrative, it yet finds a place among the twelve Minor Prophets, all the rest of which consist of discourses. We have probably often wondered why it is not placed among the historical books, as its form would seem to indicate. The reason for this apparent anomaly is that it is not history at all, but as prophetic, or at least as didactic in spirit as any of the twelve, only that its teaching is couched in the form of an allegory instead of a discourse. This book is not one to be lightly passed over; it needs dwelling on reverently and lovingly; it is as full a revelation of God's will as prophecy ever achieved. In its bold declaration of the doctrine that God's grace is for the Gentile as well as for the Jew, it