

these three names have ever before been placed in comparison. Yet, guided by God's providence, their mission was, to a great extent, the same. They worked, each in his own way, each impelled by a power which he could hardly resist, for the civilization of the world. The efforts of all three were attended by wonderful success. The first was a poet; the second, a warrior; the third, an apostle. Literature, war, and religion, the three respective engines of their power, have ever been among the mightiest influences in the elevation of mankind to the level of civilized brotherhood. And the work which their hands found to do they did with all their might. They were all chosen instruments for the accomplishment of God's purposes on earth.

And here we trust the reader will not misunderstand us, as though we put these three men in the same relation with the Disposer of Events. On the contrary, between the first two and the third, there is, in a moral sense, no comparison at all. What we mean to shew is, that they took their stand upon the scene of the Troad, and upon the world's stage in regular sequence, according to the preordained arrangement of God's providence. The appearance of none of them was by chance. Each came just at the proper time; and each prepared the way for the arrival of his successor.

We are of those who believe that Homer was not a myth, nor a mere name representative of circumstances, or of a plurality of persons. We think that he was a *bona fide* individual, as Virgil, or Dante, or Milton; that he was a man who travelled and observed much; that, whatever else he may not have written, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were of his composition; that he was personally acquainted with most of the scenes which he describes; that he was especially well-acquainted with the scenery of Troas. He thus trod in the destined footsteps of Alexander of Macedon and of St. Paul.

It would not be easy to over-estimate the influence of the Homeric poems on the inhabitants of the Grecian States. It is not saying too much, we are sure, to assert that these poems conquered the Greeks—conquered them, renovated them, changed

them into a new nation—a nation of conquerors. They showed them the wealth and the power of literature. They roused the soul within them; they made them an intellectual, a spiritual people; they developed their artistic faculties; they made them able to discern the beauties of the natural world; they made them patriotic; they made them a race of heroes; they made them disdain a foreign joke; they enabled them to win Marathon and Thermopylae; they spread their fame over three continents; they gave the noblest language in the world to those who sat in almost speechless barbarism. For Homer was the creator of Greek literature, and so of all that sprang from it.

Well might Alexander offer sacrifice at the shrine of Homer's hero when he set foot on Trojan ground, though he little knew all the meaning of the act. His own mission was to carry Homer's fame and Homer's language into a land holier than Homer's. That language was to be a chosen agent in the conversion of the world to the Truth of God. Little did he know how, more than three centuries after, he should be rewarded for that act, not in his own person, but through his country, when another conqueror in Troas, going westward as he was going eastward, rapt in vision sublimer than that of Homer's, should hear a voice saying, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." And he was "the best, bravest conqueror of them all."

We do not think there is in all history a more beautiful record, one that more fully "justifies the ways of God to man," than that of these three men standing, ages apart, at the foot of Mount Ida, each listening to a mysterious voice which summoned him to the common work of spreading, by lyre and sword and burning word, the glad tidings of Salvation.

To put the matter more logically: The Greek language was destined to be the chief medium by which Christianity should be propagated, both orally and by writing. The conquests of Alexander the Great tended to introduce this language into countries where, in the ordinary routine of peace, it could have made but little progress. The poems of Homer, by rousing in the Greek mind an enthusiasm for literature,