

of His choice from all trace of contact with their former haughty and luxurious masters? It matters not what answer is given to the question, but it is certainly not inconsistent with God's dealings, as recorded for us, to suppose that Egypt was the training school, for those who were to teach as well as for those who were to be taught, of that vast multitude that went forth so mysteriously. I think the hero and the people, the heroine and the women, who with timbrels and with dances sang that song which celebrated the overthrow of Pharaoh and his host, must have profited considerably by their sojourn in what was then the most civilized country in the world. What a noble outpouring of joyous and grateful feelings, what a striking portraiture of the majesty of Jehovah is that song:

"I will sing unto the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously;
The horse and the rider hath He thrown into the sea."

Of all the translations and paraphrases which have been written I prefer that of our own English Bible. Others there may be as fine. Certainly Moore's metrical version is a triumph of poetic art, and Dr. Milman and Dr. Stanley have both rendered it very effectively. But none of them can supply the *something* of wonder and delight and awe with which the stately march of ordered periods first struck upon my ear, read by one who was at heart a thorough poet. I am mistaken and disappointed if there are many who will welcome a new translation of the Bible.

On the subject of this song, I cannot forbear quoting in full the remarks of Dean Stanley:

"Whatever were the means employed by the Almighty—whatever the path which He made for Himself in the great waters, it was to Him and not to themselves that the Israelites were compelled to look as the source of their escape. 'Stand still and see the salvation of Jehovah' was their only duty. 'Jehovah hath triumphed gloriously!' was their only song of victory. It was a victory into which no feelings of pride or self-exaltation could enter. It was a fit opening of a history and of a character which was to be especially distinguish-

ed from that of other races by its constant and direct dependence on the Supreme Judge and Ruler of the world. Greece and Rome could look back with triumph to the glorious days when they had repulsed their invaders, had risen on their tyrants or driven out their kings; but the birthday of Israel—the birthday of the religion, of the liberty, of the nation of Israel—was the Passage of the Red Sea,—the likeness in this, as in so many other respects, of the yet greater events in the beginnings of the Christian Church, of which it has been long considered the anticipation and the emblem. It was the commemoration, not of what man has wrought for God, but of what God has wrought for man. No baser thoughts, no disturbing influences, could mar the overwhelming sense of thankfulness with which, as if after a hard-won battle, the nation found its voice in the first Hebrew melody, in the first burst of national poetry, when Moses and the children of Israel met on the Arabian shore, met 'Miriam, the Prophetess, the sister of Aaron,' the third member, the eldest born, of that noble family, whose name now first appears in the history of the Church, afterwards to become so renowned through its Grecian and European form of *Maria* or *Mary*. She came forth, as was the wont of the Hebrew women after some great victory, to meet the triumphant host, with her Egyptian timbrels, and with dances of her country women,—Miriam, who had watched her infant brother by the river side, and now greeted him as the deliverer of her people, or rather, if we may with reverence say so, greeted the Divine Deliverer by the new and awful name now first clearly proclaimed to her family and nation."

It would be impossible in any consideration of the poetry of the Pentateuch to pass over the sublime conceptions of the false prophet Balaam, but time does not permit me to do more than refer to his bold and lofty effusions, which are certainly as inspired as any in the Bible, being, indeed, uttered against his will.

"How can I curse whom God has not cursed?
How denounce whom God has not denounced?"

The song and blessing of Moses before his death form a glowing epitome, not only