

venturous valour, is an object of our admiration: beyond contest and almost beyond compare is the beauty, spiritual as well as lyrical, of some of the Psalms; all must be touched by the beauty of the story of Joseph and the Book of Ruth. Hebrew law is an improvement on primitive law: its Sabbath was most beneficent; war was not encouraged nor exalted; the slave law was merciful. "From the social point of view, perhaps the most notable passages of the Old Testament are those rebuking the selfishness of wealth and the oppression of the poor in the prophetic writings and the Psalms, which have supplied weapons for the champions of social justice. *There is scarcely anything like these in Greek or Roman literature.* * * * We shall hardly find anywhere a moral force equal in intensity to that of the Hebrew prophets, narrowly local and national though their preaching is." Finally he makes this doubtful concession: "That which is not a supernatural revelation may still, so far as it is good, be a manifestation of the Divine. As a manifestation of the Divine the Hebrew books teaching righteousness and purity, may have their place in our love and admiration for ever."

It is the Semite who has accomplished this marvellous work, and among Semites, the Hebrew. He had no models like the Mahometan Arab. Egypt and Phœnicia, Babylonia and Assyria, were drawbacks rather than incentives to his religious life. No culture of Greece, of Persia, of India, had any share in moulding his thought and diction. He stood alone and advanced alone, the pioneer of the world's spirituality. Renan was at fault and begged the whole question when he characterized the Semitic race as spiritual. Syrian and Assyrian, ancient Arabian and Ethiopian, Chaldee and Phœnician, what have they done for the world's spiritual elevation? Nothing. Physical enjoyment and conquest, trade and commerce, cruelty and dark bloody rites, all that pertains to the lower forms of material prosperity on the one hand and ruthless superstition on the other, is characteristic of them, and such according to the flesh was the Hebrew, even as reflected in the uncultured average Jew of to-day. Who wrought this stupendous miracle, that will live while human hearts beat and minds think, the miracle that seats us among the morning stars to witness God's creation; that, amid the multiform gods of paganism, uplifts the holy grandeur and infinite long suffering affection of the One Living and True; that beggars the ethical systems of old with a law holy, just and good; that calls the children to the universal mother knee to hearken to simple, beautiful tales of wondrous lives; that swells the soul with rapture through prophets' fire, and soothes the heart of the weary seeker after divine rest with heavenly melodies; who wrought this miracle? Was it Moses, Samuel, David, Isaiah, Josiah? But who made them? There is but one answer,