

I admit that Jeremiah had not the hopefulness described in the opening lines; Jerusalem was a less promising field of work than, with all its faults, Florence was in the age of Lorenzo. But do not the closing lines give almost a reflexion of Jeremiah's attitude towards Jehoiakim? Savonarola had, I suppose, a richer nature than Jeremiah. In him several of the old Hebrew prophets seemed united. He had the scathing indignation of Amos, and the versatility of Isaiah, as well as the tenderness of Jeremiah. He differs most from the latter in two respects—in his emphatic reassertion of the principle of theocratic legislation, and in his ultra-supernaturalistic theory of prophecy, which disturbed the simplicity of his faith in his own inspiration. Again and again, however, in his latter days, his preaching reminds us of Jeremiah's. "Your sins," he cries to the Florentines, "make me a prophet. . . . And if ye will not hear my words, I say unto you that I will be the prophet Jeremiah, who foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, and bewailed it when destroyed." Like Jeremiah, he had many a sore inward struggle; "an inward fire," he says, "consumeth my bones (comp. Jer. xx. 9), and compelleth me to speak." Like Jeremiah, he was no respecter of persons; he fought bravely, and outwardly at least was defeated. Like Jeremiah, he foresaw the end of the struggle. "If you ask me in general"—so he said, shortly before he was burned at the stake, in the convent-church of St. Mark's—"as to the issue of this struggle, I reply, Victory. If you ask me in a particular sense, I reply, Death. For the master who wields the hammer, when he has used it, throws it away. *So He did with Jeremiah, whom He caused to be stoned at the end of his ministry.* But Rome will not put out this fire, and if this be put out, God will light another, and indeed it is already lighted everywhere, only they perceive it not."

It was winter both in Jeremiah's time and in Savonarola's. Which was the more favoured of these two heralds of spring? I think, Jeremiah, because his prophecy of spring was fulfilled, after a brief interval, to his own people. Not so fortunate was Savonarola. Germany, France, and England—not Italy—were the theatre of the promised Reformation. Italy still waits. Still Jeremiah's advantage was not so great as it might seem. Israel had indeed its bright spring (thanks to the Second Isaiah), and its disappointing but still brilliant summer

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