

burden of the Lord" laid upon them, and woe be unto them if they refused to bear it! No wonder that, in such circumstances, their words are sometimes as battles—deep, earnest as death itself! No wonder that they reject the cold forms of calm speech, and find vent for their billowy emotions in the sublimest flights of imagination! With deep burning thoughts in their hearts, and dealing with the great realities of man's destiny, we could not conceive of their language being the quiet and measured speech of every-day life. Hence the gifts of poetry and prophecy were so often combined in the same person. The poet's imagination alone could body forth, in meet form, the glowing thought kindled by the inspiration of the Eternal in the prophet's breast. The prophets of the Bible are on this account so frequently endowed with the poetic faculty. Great thoughts must have an impressive utterance. Cold prose would have been but a poor vehicle for the surging thoughts of a fiery-eyed seer charged with heaven's commission, and full of glowing earnestness.

As an instance illustrative of the difference in power between prose and poetry as a mode of utterance, and at the same time of the fact that deep emotion seeks expression in the poetic form, we might refer to David's *Elegy over Saul* and *Jonathan*. Even as related by the historian, the story itself is most affecting. The moody, dark-souled Saul, so rash, daring, and full of fiery life and energy; passionate yet capable of much generosity and kindness; subject to the evil spirit of rage and revenge by turns, but swayed too by music's witching power into woman's gentleness and tenderness—is a man, on the whole, not entirely unlovely, and, with all his faults and sins, draws our regard and pity towards him. And then the generous, loving Jonathan, so unselfish and devoted in his attachment, perishing tragically but gloriously with his guilty parent, awakens even a deeper interest. Even in plain prose the tale touches the most insensible heart. But hark! a deeper, higher note is struck; the poet with his eye of melting pity and tenderness looks upon the scene; the chords of the soul are swept by a master's hand; and the soft wail breaks from David's harp over the good and brave who had fallen in battle. "The beauty of Israel is slain upon the high places;—how are the mighty

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