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# OUR MONTHLY.

A

RELIGIOUS AND LITERARY MAGAZINE.

JANUARY--1871.

## THE MANTLE OF ELIJAH.

BY GEORGE LEE.

### FRONTISPIECE.

**S**NOW! Snow on the housetops, where it lies white and pure; snow in the streets, where it is soon converted into a muddy slush; snow on the trees, on the fences, on the meadows, and flying in big, damp flakes in the chilly air; snow on the hats and overcoats of hurrying pedestrians, and on the broad backs of the teamsters, who cower and shiver on their high seats as they impatiently urge on their steaming horses; snow lying white and untrodden in the narrow lane, leading whither nobody wants to go, on the wooden steps of a decayed and perishing house, in a mean little room of which is a woman and a boy. The boy is lame, and the woman is dying.

"Johnny, my darling," she says feebly, "is it snowing yet?"

"Yes, dear mamma, as hard as ever it can."

She draws a long, long sigh, then says again:

"Johnny, my darling!"

"Yes, dear mamma."

"Are you *sure* the minister said he would come to-day?"

"Real sure, mamma. He said he would be here by noon."

"What time is it now?"

The little boy climbs upon a chair, and after studying for a moment the face of the clock, which ticks on its unpainted wooden shelf, says slowly:

"Half-after 'leven; but I know he'll come."

She draws another long breath, like one who is wayworn and weary, and stretches out a pitifully thin, white hand.

He goes to her and puts his own small hand into that poor thin one.

"You will be seven years old to-morrow, Johnny."

"Yes, just seven, mamma."

"What do you think will become of you when I am dead?"

"I don't know, mamma," he says, clinging to her and beginning to weep.

"You have been a great comfort to me, my darling—a better son than your wicked mother has ever deserved. You are like your father, dear child," she continues, softly stroking his forehead. "You never saw him—not even his picture. I gave it to your sister. Poor little Maggie! I wonder if she is alive."

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ford us an immense number of representations, which communicate to us, with curious accuracy, the nature and form of a host of objects consecrated to various divinities, the most generally acknowledged attributes of those divinities, and the peculiarities of their worship, as well as a vast number of objects connected with the history, the sciences, and the arts of ancient nations."

In my collection, I greatly prize one of the large copper coins of the Ptolemies. These are of a very peculiar character, the piece being of large size, nearly three times as bulky as the large penny of the reign of George III, with which older readers are familiar. Upon the obverse it shows the horned head of Jupiter Ammon; on the reverse the Ptolemaic eagle. This Jove is one of the noblest human heads ever minted. There is a majesty in the expression that is quite sublime. The massive front is grand. I bought it as an *Alexander*, but on examination discover my error. The native vender, who had four of them, styled them *Scandeerous*, which is the sweeping title in the East

for everything connected with the great son of Philip. Mr. Samuel Halloch joined me in the purchase of the whole lot. The eagle on the reverse, grasping the thunderbolts in his talons, is also very spirited and fine.

I am aware that among the costly museums and collections of coins, those of copper and bronze are not so much valued as the gold and silver specimens. Yet they are equally worthy; they are perfectly authentic; they are far more numerous; the variations in their emblems are greater. Besides this, they are the only classes of coins available to the ordinary collector. He can not afford the outlay necessary to procure the other classes. Although Dionysius was scornfully styled the *brazen orator*, because he defended the necessity of a brazen coinage for Macedonia (B. C. 397) when the gold and silver had been too freely exported from the country, yet I invite all lovers of Bible history to join me in collecting up, each his little museum, of *bronze coinage*, as he can procure them, in sacred soil; and, if he will write me, I will easily put him in the way of it.

## THE LIFE OF THE PROPHET HOSEA.

BY PROF. W. HENRY GREEN, D. D.

### PART I.

HOSEA like Homer, Shakespeare, and many other great men, to whom the world does reverence, has no biography but that which is to be found in his own imperishable productions. No mention is made of him in contemporaneous history. There are notable characters in the Old Testament which afford ample materials for an extended biography. Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, Daniel—each of these names is suggestive of an epoch in the history of the chosen race, and one in which they came in contact with great empires and various forms of worldly culture. Each is associated with strik-

ing changes and important labors. The life of each is recorded in considerable detail. And about each of these, as a nucleus, there might be gathered a body of historical information and of illustrative and explanatory matter, which would rival in extent and interest those model volumes on the Life of St. Paul by Conybeare and Howson.

He who undertakes to prepare a life of Hosea, however, has no such ambitious task as this before him. Our prophet might be said rather to find a parallel in Sophocles, whose biography his translator and admirer Prof. Plumptre has managed so skillfully to con-

struct out of the few hints preserved respecting him.

We propose, as far as this is possible in a brief article, to interrogate the book of Hosea in respect to the state of things in which it was written, and in respect to the personality of its author. In so far as this attempt to reproduce his life and times may prove successful, not only will a natural curiosity be gratified to know something of so distinguished a man of God, whose writings are so familiar and have been so influential, but we may hope to gain some positive help in estimating and comprehending his inspired productions.

The time when Hosea prophesied, is fixed by the opening verse of his book, which declares that the word of the Lord came unto him "in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel." The united reigns of the kings of Judah named in this passage, if taken entire, amount to one hundred and thirteen years, or thereabouts. The length of this period of itself precludes the supposition that his ministry began with the beginning of the reign of Uzziah and continued to the end of the reign of Hezekiah. The narrowest assignable limits are from the death of Jeroboam II of Israel (whom Uzziah survived about twenty-eight years) to the accession of Hezekiah, which amounts to fifty-nine years, B. C. 784-725. Neither the probabilities of the case, nor the contents of the book, warrant us in extending his ministry much beyond these limits in either direction. A year or two under Jeroboam and the same under Hezekiah, answer all the requirements of the title, and yield a ministry of from sixty to sixty-five years, which is a protracted term of public life, but not of unexampled duration either in ancient or in modern times. Exercising the prophetic office for so many years, he must have entered upon it when quite young. We can scarcely suppose him less than twenty when intrusted

with so solemn a function; and it is not probable that he was more than twenty-five. This would make him attain an age of from eighty to ninety.

The revolution under Jehu had taken place just a century before. They looked back to it from about the same distance of time, as we to the American Revolution of 1776. And it was equally memorable. It was not a mere change of the reigning house, like other revolutions in Israel, which occurred with a frequency to remind us of Mexico and some of the South American states, and was the cause of like instability in the government and insecurity in the country. It was not the mere successful pronouncement of a general who had gained over the army, nor a conspiracy for the deposition or assassination of a weak and obnoxious ruler, but which was without effect upon the general policy of the kingdom, since the administration of affairs, though committed to new hands which might be more or less vigorous, pursued in the main the same course as before. The revolution which placed Jehu on the throne was for the preservation of law and liberty and religion.

The worship of the ten tribes, from the time of the schism, had been a debased form of the old national religion, a compound of heathenism and Mosaic institutions, in which, with all its corruptions, the service was still nominally paid to Jehovah. But Ahab's heathen wife Jezebel, who was anything but "chaste" and "pure," as her name denotes, sought to overthrow at once the Israelitish constitution and the Israelitish religion, introducing an irresponsible despotism on the one hand and the shameless orgies of avowed heathenism on the other. While endowing the worship of Baal, and interdicting that of Jehovah, there is, however, a singular proof that even Jezebel could not shake off all reverence for the God of Israel. The names of her children contain recognitions of his deity. Her sons, Ahaziah (upheld by Jehovah) and Jehoram (exalted by

Jehovah), are the first princes in the schismatical kingdom of Israel, who bear religious names. Her daughter Athaliah (Jehovah afflict) solicits the breaking down of foes from the same source that the others entreat power and elevation, mere worldly advantages in every case, such blessings as an ambitious pagan would be apt to implore. It is a curious instance of that syncretism, which presses all known deities into its service, and can at the same time defy and supplicate the occupants of the Pantheon.

The last remnants of freedom and of true religion were in danger of being trampled out by this bold and wicked woman. Israel seemed to be on the verge of being converted into a despotic heathen state. The worship of the golden calves, however degenerate, was still professedly paid to Jehovah under these symbols. Its suppression, to substitute that of Baal, was like the Japanese abolishing the Jesuit missions and trampling on the cross,—or like infidel France overturning the hierarchy, shutting up the churches and guillotining the priesthood in the name of the goddess of reason.

Seventy or eighty years had elapsed since the rebellion of Jehu, when Hosea was born. The actors in it must nearly all have passed away. A few possibly lingered still in extreme old age. There were more, who children then, but now with whitened locks and tottering limbs, survived the body of their contemporaries, and were often urged to repeat to their juniors stories of the revolution. We can imagine young Hosea eagerly drinking in these tales; with a group of his boyish companions besieging some aged relative, or the octogenarian of the village, and coaxing him to draw upon his early memories,—and kindling into animation as he heard of the venturesome errand of that son of the prophets whom Elisha sent to the camp to anoint Jehu king over Israel—and how furiously Jehu drove with his armed followers to Jezreel—and how completely the king and the city were taken by

surprise—and how the royal house of Israel was exterminated and that of Judah too almost destroyed—and how the son of Ahab lay weltering in his blood in the field of Naboth, and the queen's body was trampled by the mob and devoured by dogs in the very heart of the city—and of the stratagem by which Jehu secured all the priests of Baal and put them to death—and of all Jehu's reforms and his vigorous administration—and of the hopes which his early zeal awakened—and how the true servants of the Lord were disappointed by his failure to complete what he had undertaken, and his retaining still the worship of the golden calves.

There were numbers of his adult acquaintance doubtless, who could tell him of Elisha, who had known this distinguished man of God or at least had seen him in his later days. He was still living in the preceding reign, and could not have been dead more than thirty or thirty-five years at the utmost when Hosea was born. His own father and mother may have had personal reminiscences of this great prophet. At any rate, of the numbers who had companied with him, and heard his instructions and witnessed his miracles or beheld his venerable form as he journeyed from place to place, there must have been not a few, from whom Hosea could gather how Elisha looked, and what he said and did; and what they had heard him tell of his yet greater predecessor, from the day he summoned him from the plow until he was taken up to heaven in a chariot of fire. Such were the tales that awoke his interest in his early years and tended to form his youthful mind, to suggest models for his imitation and to inspire him with ideas of heroic devotion and persistent labor in the Lord's service, and of its ultimate glorious reward.

Hosea was, we may without violence conclude, of pious parentage and descended from a pious ancestry. The fire, which glows in his discourses, was most likely kindled at the domestic

hearth. This we may infer from his name Hosea, which means *salvation*. Since names were not then, as they are now, mere unmeaning appellations, this doubtless expressed the fervent prayer and the fond hope that the dear child so called might himself experience, and might convey to others, the blessing of salvation. And his father's name Beeri is equally significant. This is by Gesenius derived from *bēer*, "a well;" as also by Jerome, who with his characteristic love for mystical senses, expounds it of the wells which the patriarchs digged, but the Philistines labored to fill, that well-spring of life, namely, that fountain of living waters, which Israel had forsaken to hew out to themselves cisterns that could hold no water. Without mysticism, however, and without allegory an acceptable sense is yielded by the name, if we accord to it the meaning preferred by Furst and others, which is probably its real signification, "*interpreter*" or "*expounder*." Does it not sound like a name bestowed in the hope and the anticipation that he who bore it might expound and declare the truth of God? Unless indeed, as in the case of Chrysostom, it was assumed by himself or bestowed by others in later life, as descriptive of the function which he was actually engaged in discharging.

The citizens of the ten tribes were debarred from the privilege of access to the temple at Jerusalem by the stringent policy of their own government, and by the hostility of Judah. It is not impossible, indeed, that the youthful Hosea may once and again have been taken by his parents to the Holy City, amidst the concourse of worshippers at the annual feasts. But there are no known facts to render such a visit probable. In the first year of Hezekiah, when Hosea was nearly, if not quite, eighty years of age, and but two or three years before the final siege of Samaria, pains were taken to extend the invitation to the passover to all in the kingdom of Israel, as well as in that of Judah. And, although the messengers sent for the purpose were

laughed to scorn, and mocked in various places, great numbers went. 2 Chron. xxx: 11-18. But it is expressly stated (verse 26) that the like had not occurred since the time of Solomon, or in other words, since the period of the schism.

Some have fancied an allusion to annual pilgrimages from Israel, in Hosea 61, where the priests and others are charged with having "a snare on Mizpah and a net spread upon Tabor." This is interpreted of ambush laid for pilgrims, on their way to and from the festivals at Jerusalem. In all probability, however, it contains no such reference, but points rather to the seductive arts of idolatry practiced by them. It would be fairer to infer a modicum of religious intercourse between the two kingdoms, from the fact deprecated by Hosea, iv: 15, that Judah was enticed to visit the sanctuaries of Israel. If idolatrous pilgrimages were made from kingdom to kingdom in the one direction, may not the true worshippers of Jehovah have ventured in the opposite direction?

But, in the absence of the sanctuary there were other provisional centers of religious influence in the assemblages of sons of the prophets, founded and originally presided over by Elijah, and then by Elisha, and perpetuated, as it would appear, until the overthrow of the kingdom. These pious communities were established in Israel, as analogous institutions had been by Samuel in a like period of religious defection or decline. The adherents of the prophets were gathered together for mutual encouragement and support, that they might gain strength by combination, create radiating points or centers of influence, and more effectively counteract the prevailing idolatry. They were visited, as it would appear, 2 Kin. iv: 23, on Sabbaths and new moons. They received (verse 42) offerings of first fruits. They were resorted to for instruction, guidance, and worship.

Hosea and his parents may have been in the habit of going, as others did, to these hallowed spots on sacred seasons, or on special occasions when

inspired counsel or guidance was needed. Perhaps he may have stood in a closer relation to them still. We do not venture the affirmation, but we simply raise the question, whether Hosea may not have been himself one of the sons of the prophets, *i. e.*, their pupils, auditors, or adherents.

There is a strong antecedent presumption, as it seems to us, that the leading prophets of Israel would be selected from these prophetic communities. The reasons which led to their establishment, demanded that all who were engaged in the common cause should be banded together. With such opposition as they must encounter from the hostility of the government and the corruption of the masses, dispersion is weakness, concentration is strength. It might be supposed, too, that God would honor these institutions, in the view of the people, and give them fresh sanction and authority, by selecting his chosen and most valued instruments from among them, instead of depreciating and passing by this faithful and consecrated body, and raising up his servants in some other independent quarter? And this especially in the case of Hosea, who is the leading prophet of Israel in this period.

And Hosea's own fitness for his work would have been essentially promoted by such a connection, by being withdrawn from contact with the prevailing irreligion and ungodliness, and associated with these bodies of those who truly feared the Lord, and were under eminent and inspired superintendence.

Further, the piously inclined, and those who were by nature and by grace suited for the prophetic work, would be strongly drawn to this congenial companionship. The choice young men of the land, and the flower of its piety would spontaneously gather here; the ardent, devoted, consecrated, thoroughly attached to the service of Jehovah, and eager to labor in it, the very material needed for prophets, if God would but add the seal of his supernatural inspiration. That this seal was sometimes impressed upon sons

of the prophets we know. Repeated mention is made in the sacred history of their being sent upon prophetic errands, the spirit of the Lord coming upon them, and their speaking by the word of the Lord. May not Hosea have been another instance of this kind?

The efficiency of Hosea's ministry, when he was actually introduced into the prophetic office, would also be enhanced by his coming forth from the bosom of such a sympathizing and co-operative community, which could lend him support, hold up his hands, and by its effective organization multiply as it were his personality. Fixed at these foci of religious power, these reformatory centers, and working through them and outward from them in every direction, his own influence would be indefinitely increased, and he would have an active agency ever at hand, ready to be employed with advantage, as he might direct. That Hosea was thus assisted by considerable numbers of prophets, appears from such expressions as Hos. vi: 5; xii: 10. Comp. also Amos 2: 11.

It is not unlikely, also, that the personal safety of the prophets in Israel, and the toleration accorded to them was dependent on, or promoted by, their combination. This may, perhaps, be inferred from the attempt to expel Amos from the kingdom on account of his prophecies. Am. vii: 10-15. It appears from this passage that there was a recognized body of prophets in this apostate kingdom, which had such a position in the country, and such repute among the people that they could not be disturbed. But this intruder from Judah had no such claim, and he must not be allowed to prophesy. Else, why should Hosea have been permitted to utter the very same denunciations unmolested for sixty years, which brought upon Amos the open hostility of the king and the priesthood in his brief visit to Bethel?

And the reply of Amos seems to represent his case as exceptional. He was not, like God's other messengers,

to Israel a prophet, nor a prophet's son. He did not belong to this legalized and tolerated body. But he had, nevertheless, an immediate divine commission, which he was obliged to fulfill. The implication in this language might justify us in assuming, that Hosea and Jonah, the contemporary prophets of Israel, had sprung from these prophetic communities, or were connected with them.

In the case of Jonah, there is this remarkable corroboration, that he had plainly passed under the molding hand of Elijah and Elisha. Their personality had stamped itself upon his. They were his conscious or unconscious models. For almost everything in his character and work a parallel can be adduced from them. His very frailties were patterned after theirs. The most striking peculiarity of Jonah's was his mission to Nineveh, outside of the covenant people; the only analogous instance is that of Elisha, who was once sent to Damascus. And the errands upon which they were employed were similar. Elisha was sent to raise up a scourge to Israel, by anointing Hazael king of Syria; Jonah, for the sparing of Nineveh, to be Israel's destroyer.

The lesson underlying the mission of Jonah was the superior obduracy of Israel. Nineveh repented and shared God's mercy, while Israel continued to reject it to their own undoing. God's grace was given to the Gentiles and withheld from Israel, the very truth which was latent in Elijah's being sent to the widow of Sarepta and in Elisha's healing Naaman the Syrian, as their typical meaning was unfolded by our Lord, in the synagogue, at Nazareth. The stern severity of Elijah is seen by Jonah's bold summons to Nineveh to repent, on the penalty of speedy retribution, and the miracle of his life brings him into relation with that supernatural region in which Elijah and Elisha moved.

Even in his weaknesses, Jonah is still the echo of Elijah. His flight from duty resembles Elijah's fleeing in

his dejection to Beersheba and Horeb, to be met by the reproving question from the Lord, "What doest thou here?" His faint-hearted desire of death, when Nineveh was spared, while Israel was unrepentant, recalls Elijah's desponding petition, when the miracle of Carmel failed of lasting effect.

Such a pervading similitude can neither be fanciful nor casual. It is the power of a strong nature, a master admired and revered, impressing himself upon his pupil. Can we be far astray in inferring that Jonah was the pupil of these great masters, perhaps of Elisha personally, perhaps of some like-minded successor in charge of those establishments which Elijah and he had founded and watched over, and where their names were held in perpetual and pre-eminent veneration? And may not Jonah's relation to these prophets be esteemed illustrative or confirmatory of that sustained by his contemporary and colaborer Hosea?

One more consideration may add plausibility to our conjecture. It is drawn from the historical development of the prophetic order. A new phase of prophetic character, a new stage in prophetic labor is first represented in him, whence it passes over to all contemporary and succeeding prophets in both the kingdoms. The prophets passed first through the stage of occasional and fitful inspiration, as represented in Edad and Medad, and the seventy elders upon whom the spirit temporarily rested, Num. xi: 26, to a life-long permanent official character, as represented in Samuel. They advanced from revelations, given as they were consulted by individuals, respecting casual and secular matters, such as the lost asses of Kish, to announcements made of their own accord in matters of national concern; and beyond this, from the disclosure of specific events in special cases, to declaring the general principles of God's government in formal discourses, delivered on suitable occasions, and adapted not only to the needs of their contemporaries but of all future ages.

This last and highest form of prophecy, in which the lessons of God's providence in the present or the future are exhibited in a form instructive for all coming time, was first reached in Hosea, who leads the series of the books of prophecy recorded in the permanent canon of faith. And now, where would we most naturally look for this final stage of prophecy to be developed? By whom might we expect this highest mission of the prophets to be first fairly grasped, and the full conception of their work to be attained, if not by one who grew up as it were upon prophetic soil, and represents in himself the consummated movement of that prophetic community, of which he formed a part? Moreover, would we not expect the influence of these schools of the prophets to be felt in the code of a permanent revelation? May we not presume that we have their culmination, their ripened fruit, in the written prophecies of Hosea? Nothing has been preserved from Elijah himself, nothing from Elisha. May we not have the last results of their work and teaching in this disciple worthy of such noble masters?

And here we are tempted to pile conjectures upon conjecture. If the idea may be allowed that Hosea received his training in the prophetic schools, to which of them may we conceive him to have belonged? At the risk of unduly burdening the hypothesis, we venture to suggest that it was Gilgal. This seems to be hinted in some passages, relieves difficulties in others, gives a new and pleasing turn to others still, and is not contradicted by anything that the book contains.

The frequency with which Gilgal is referred to by Hosea is noticeable, as well as the prominence given to it among the chief seats of idolatry. xii: 11. The language of ix: 15, implies that the prophet was a personal witness of what was done there, and it roused his indignation more than their wickedness in other places. In warning Judah against taking part in Israel's idolatry, he says: iv: 15, "Come not

ye unto Gilgal, neither go ye up to Bethaven;" just the words which he would utter if he were himself at Gilgal, though they may not positively require the assumption that he was.

A further hint of the prophet's locality may, perhaps, be found in ix: 13, which should be rendered "Ephraim, as I saw unto Tyrus, is planted in a pleasant place." The whole location of the northern kingdom, reaching as far as Tyre, is a pleasant one. Now, from what point must the prophet have surveyed the country, that Tyre should be at its farther extremity. Tyre is at the north-west corner, Gilgal at the south-east.

"This shall be their derision in the land of Egypt," vii: 16, is language that naturally recalls Gilgal. It received this name because there the reproach of Egypt was rolled away in the days of Joshua. Josh. v: 9. The criminality of the people had brought it back again.

This too, was a point favorable for prophetic labor. It was not very remote from Bethel, the royal residence, and another seat of idolatry, and yet far enough to be somewhat out of the way of royal inspection and persecution; while at the same time near the Jordan, and near the border of the other kingdom, so that he could readily extend his influence on both sides of the river and into both kingdoms.

The places of idolatry referred to by Hosea are Gilgal and Bethel, which was not far distant. Amos, who came from the south of Judah, adds Beersheba with which he was familiar. Dan, in the north, is not mentioned by either.

The three prophets of the period in Israel would thus too be symmetrically located, with reference to the most economical and judicious expenditure of labor. Jonah, of Gath-hepher, was in the north, and his prophecy, reported in 2 Kin. xiv: 25, had prominent reference to the extension of the northern boundary of Israel. Amos labored at Bethel in a central position. And, if we assign Hosea to Gilgal, he will be in the south.

Some of the rabbins identify Beeri, the father of the prophet, with Beerah of the tribe of Reuben, who, 1 Chron. v: 6, was carried captive by Tiglath Pileser. If this can be considered reliable the prophet belonged to a tribe settled east of the Dead Sea and of the mouth of the Jordan, a region often ravaged, both by predatory tribes and by Assyria, before those west of the Jordan were carried captive. If the family forsook their home or were driven from it and took refuge west of the Jordan, Gilgal was just at hand.

The frequent figures in the book, from lions, bears, leopards, and other beasts of prey, suggest the banks of the Jordan, in whose rank vegetation, forming a dense jungle, they found shelter.

And the mention made of pillage and desolation may have had their occasion in the proximity of Gilgal to the scene of such ravages. And if he were born in the vicinity of Gilgal, or near the old crossing of the Jordan, his name may have been imposed with allusion to that of Joshua, whose original name Hosea actually was. Num. xiii: 8-16. He may have been called *salvation* with specific reference to the ancient deliverances wrought under that distinguished leader, and with the hope and prayer that these deliverances might be in him renewed; that he might be a fresh Joshua in the spiritual sense, and that through him God might revive his work and lead his people out of the wilderness into their promised rest.

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#### A SERENADE.

BY C. I. T.

GIRL of the shaded eyes,  
 I wake a song to thee;  
 Softly lay the hand upon the silver strings,  
 Tremulous the voice of singer while he sings,  
 Deep and tender as the skies,  
 This my song shall be.

Girl of the dewy eyes,  
 Look on this song for thee;  
 As stars upon night-blooming flowers shine,  
 So lift thy starlight on this song of mine,  
 And in a still and glad surprise,  
 'Twill show its heart to thee.

Girl of the soul-lit eyes,  
 List to this song to thee;  
 As sweeps the lonely wind through groaning pines,  
 So sobs my soul along these burdened lines,  
 And in its voicelessness it cries  
 For words to set it free.

Girl of the loving eyes,  
 What song shall be for thee?  
 My words to silence sink abashed and still;  
 Oh! lift those tender eyes, and they shall live and thrill;  
 One look will bid the song arise,  
 And give the harmony.

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### CHAPTER III.

IN WHICH LITTLE PROGRESS IS MADE.

THE fugitives from Troy, we are told, founded a second Ilium, and in their little town fondly endeavored to reproduce the loved features of the original. They even adopted a thirsty stream and called it Xanthus; and, while the unconscious rivulet babbled merrily along in its narrow channel, they paced sadly to and fro upon its banks, and sighed and sang, and wept and prayed, and built new altars and lit new fires thereon in honor of their gods. In the streets and halls of the mimic city their lives went on much as before the perfidious Greeks reduced their ancestral homes to ashes. They ate and drank, and made love and married and had children; they planted and watered and harvested; they bartered and got gain; they quarreled, worshiped, and died—all in the good old Trojan fashion.

So that forlorn little band of wanderers who, many centuries later, sought an asylum in the wilderness, brought with them the names, the customs, and the associations of the land they loved

in spite of her intolerance. They abandoned England old, only to found an England New, which they endeavored to make in the image of the mother country—differing in a few particulars obnoxious to their Puritan consciences. Thus it came to pass, that throughout the section originally occupied by the Pilgrim Fathers and their immediate descendants, are innumerable villages and towns bearing good old English names. They are pleasant places, often nestled cozily at the foot of a rugged hill, sometimes beside a river or creek, whose waters are seldom suffered to escape from the vicinity until they have done their share of useful work. It is generally understood that the inhabitants of these thrifty villages know a thing or two, and by the combined force of brain-power, water-power, and steam-power, contrive to keep the crank of industry moving pretty briskly, and to grind out in the course of the year enough to eat. They are believed to be shrewd financiers also, and to have an especial aptness for converting the produce of their soil, their looms, their shops, and, in short, of their industry in all its manifold departments, into currency.

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BY PROF. W. HENRY GREEN D. D.

## PART II.

THE controversy respecting Hosea's marriage is as old as the days of Jerome, and will, perhaps, never be satisfactorily settled. He is said, ch. i, to have married a woman by the name of Gomer, who proved unfaithful to him, and who became the mother of three children. As the conduct of Gomer and Hosea's treatment of her are emblematic of the relation of the Lord to Israel, the question has arisen whether the marriage was merely a parable or whether it was a real one. Could the Lord have required his servant to involve himself in the scandal and dishonor of such a connection? And would not the injury to the reputation and influence of the prophet have been greater than the force thus given to the lesson to be inculcated? Distinguished names are arrayed on both sides, and 't might be difficult to say to which the weight of authority inclines. The letter of Scripture is, however, in favor of the strict literality of the occurrence. So is also the stern simplicity of the prophets, and the rank which they accord to the spiritual and the divine above the sensible, and the outward. The former are to them the true realities, the latter its symbols and shadows. When they undertake to make in their own persons a spectacle of the truth to be taught, or the lesson to be conveyed, they do so with inflexible rigor, regardless of the toil it requires or the strange appearance it involves. Isaiah and his children, Isa. viii: 18, were for signs and wonders in Israel. The same prophet did not hesitate to go for three years in undress and barefoot as a standing

token of the fate of Egypt. Isa. xx: 3. Jeremiah twice made the journey to the distant Euphrates and back again to point the lesson of the ruined girdle. Jer. xiii: 1, etc. Ezekiel lay bound more than a year upon one side and more than a month on the other, Ezek. iv. 4, etc., to represent the miseries that were coming upon Jerusalem. He dug through the wall of his house and carried out his furniture, Ezek. xii: 3, etc., to indicate the exile of its inhabitants. Hosea would no more refuse to involve himself in a life-long domestic infelicity, if God required it, than Abraham did to sacrifice his son. It was enough to reconcile him to all the unhappiness and the mortification if it made him a fitter instrument for his work, if it made him a truer parable in his own person, if it enabled him to feel more keenly and exhibit more impressively the wrongs which the Lord had suffered from unfaithful Israel, the baseness and shamelessness of their desertion of him, and the marvels of his tenderness and forbearance and of his willingness to forgive and forget the guilty past and receive them once more to his embrace.

Notwithstanding the paucity of incidents preserved from the prophet's life, there are certain traits of character which we can not fail to recognize. Thus he was evidently a man of rare intrepidity and boldness. The rebukes and threatenings, which he freely utters, are of the most fearless and uncompromising character. He deals in the most vigorous and unsparing denunciations of national sins, chastising alike the general corruption and spe-

cific acts of iniquity, the individual crimes of rulers and of the people, and public measures enacted in defiance of the law of God. He scrupled not to attack the iniquitous foundation of the kingdom itself, viii: 4, built as it was upon apostasy and schism, and to contend for the unity of the people and the sole legitimacy of the royal house of David, iii: 5. And this explains the circumstance, which at first sight seems surprising, that Hosea, a native of the kingdom of Israel, residing there and exercising his ministry there, should yet date his prophecies from the monarchs of Judah, i: 1. It was because he considered theirs the only lawful authority; the rival government was a usurpation which had no right to exist, and whose claims he will not admit. Of the six so-called kings of Judah, under whom he prophesied, he names only the first, Jeroboam, the son of Joash, in order to fix more precisely the beginning of his ministry, and thus introduce his explicit prediction of the downfall of the house of Jehu, to which Jeroboam belonged, i; 4.

That Hosea could stand bravely up before the nation and their rulers, with these bold denunciations repeated through two generations, shows his undaunted heroism inspired by the conviction that he was in the right; that what he spoke was at God's bidding, and that God was upon his side. And that he was tolerated for such a length of time with or without molestation, reveals the power of a righteous cause, and proves that the people and their rulers felt in their consciences that he was indeed a messenger of God. It is as though a man in the late rebellion against this government, living in the Southern States, had persistently refused to recognize in any way the lawfulness of the Confederacy, or the authority of its officers, publicly denounced the sin of treason, foretold the speedy fate of the treasonable government, and dated the publications which he issued from the presidency of Abraham Lincoln.

But with all the severity and even sternness which this prophet is obliged to employ, tenderness is a no less marked feature of his character. From the nature of his message less room was given for the display of it, but it is on that account more conspicuous where it does appear. In his most vigorous periods and withering rebukes it is still plain that he speaks the truth in love. He wounds that he may heal, and smites with the view of binding up. The figure with which his book opens, and which underlies many of his harshest denunciations, is an index to the state of his heart. Israel was wedded to the Lord in holy love and has proved unfaithful to her covenant vows. The prophet makes the case his own, and represents the attitude of God to Israel as parallel to his own marriage to the woman who had shamelessly deserted him, but for whom he still yearned with all his early affection and whom he would win back to purity and faithful love. The baseness, the heartlessness, the shameful degradation, the enormity of Israel's sin are thus exhibited. But in all the reproaches and censures and vehement reproofs he utters, there burns a quenchless flame of affection, which is ready to obliterate the whole and receive the erring transgressor back. "I will betroth thee unto me forever," he cries; "yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord."

There is nothing more tender and affectionate in the whole range of prophetic expostulation and promise than the language of Hosea in those few passages, in which the yearnings of his heart are allowed to have vent. They are like the beams of the sun, struggling fitfully through the angry clouds, which they are ineffectual to disperse. They reveal the warmth and genial glow, which lies back of the tempest of judgment, and which only this intercepting medium that sin has interposed, prevents from bursting forth

in a flood of uninterrupted radiance.

Hosea also presents a singular instance of constancy, persistently maintained amid the most trying circumstances. The field of labor appointed him was the most difficult and least promising that could be selected. He was sent, not to the more hopeful kingdom of Judah, but to the apostate kingdom of Israel. To the former belonged the mass of the truly pious among the chosen people, upon whose countenance and support he might have counted. There was the body of the priests fulfilling in regular course the public service of God. There were pious kings to befriend and aid the prophets of the Lord and the holy cause which they represented. Among the ten tribes, however, it was sadly different. The pious had largely been driven from the kingdom, or had voluntarily forsaken it. The people had been restrained from attendance on the temple at Jerusalem, and the golden calves were set up as the symbols of their national religion, except when these were set aside by the undisguised heathenism of the worship of Baal. The sacred tribe of Levi and the priestly house of Aaron were deposed from their functions, and a base-born hierarchy established in the interest of idolatry. And the kings were uniformly wicked. When not scandalously flagitious, or avowed persecutors, they nevertheless resisted a return to the true service of Jehovah, as destructive of the separate existence of the northern kingdom. There were also periods of anarchy and civil dissension, resulting from the disturbed succession to the throne and frequent regicides, which tended still further not only to the ruin of the state, but to the debasement of public morals, and the multiplication of crimes, of violence, and rapacity, until the very guardians of peace and order, the rulers and the judges, prostituted their functions to ends of oppression and gain. The picture of the times, as shown upon the truthful pages of

Hosea, is gloomy indeed. And yet it was in the midst of this flagrant impiety and iniquity that he was stationed a sentinel of the Lord, not absolutely alone indeed, but with only a few scattered sympathizers and helpers in the entire nation. And here he persevered in warning, exhorting, entreating, instructing through many and weary years of hopeless discouragement and fruitless toil.

The ministry of Hosea is the longest that is recorded in the Old Testament. Throughout this protracted term he continued the messenger of God to that infatuated population. Through every stage of their downward progress he still repeated the messages which they obstinately refused to hear, and renewed the expostulations to which they would not listen, until the ruin of which he had been so long vainly warning them, but which he was through their impenitence powerless to prevent, broke in upon them, sealing at once the truth of his predictions and their irrevocable doom.

Hosea is also a notable example of faith. There is something truly marvelous in the power of that faith, which he in common with the rest of the Hebrew prophets exhibits. The impressiveness and moral grandeur of this spectacle are often lost upon us, because we do not image to ourselves distinctly the circumstances in which they were placed. The past crises in the kingdom of God cease to appear such after they have been successfully surmounted; and the anxieties and dismal forebodings which were natural to those who saw the approaching peril, but no earthly means of escape, can not now be reproduced. But if we could for a moment divest ourselves of our knowledge of what has since occurred, and place ourselves in the position of the prophet, we should feel that it was no easy thing to believe as he believed, without wavering or misgiving, and to hold firmly by the sole word of God when sense and reason appeared to combine against it.

The true religion is now established in the convictions of a large part of the civilized world. It numbers its adherents by hundreds of millions. The nations by whom it is acknowledged stand in the foremost rank for power, learning, wealth, and enterprise. And the rapid strides, which it is making towards universality, render it a comparatively easy thing to believe that it is destined to become the religion of the world. But in the days of the prophet the worshipers of Jehovah were limited to the narrow territory of Palestine—a spot scarcely discernible on the map of the earth. All beside was pagan, including the great empires of Egypt and Assyria, which then contested the sovereignty of the world. And more ominous still, this heaven-born religion seemed to be dying out in its ancient seats, and the nation which was its sole guardian and representative was threatened with extinction. Ten tribes were wholly given over to idolatry, which had made sad inroads even in Judah that alone remained nominally faithful. The measures employed to reclaim the transgressing people failed of their effect. Degeneracy was on the increase, and the avenging judgments of God were already at hand. First Israel, then, after a further period of forbearance and of provocation, Judah also was to be driven from the land the Lord had given them, and the land itself made utterly desolate.

Would it have been strange, if even believing hearts then trembled for the cause of God? if a gloom had covered the faithful few like that which settled upon the amazed and agitated disciples when the tomb of Joseph had closed upon the lifeless body of Jesus? "We trusted," they said, as they talked mournfully of the catastrophe which had befallen them, "we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel." Were there none to say in that dark hour, when the foundations of the theocracy were broken up and the chosen people given a prey into the hands of strangers, who de-

filed God's sanctuary and burned the holy city and despoiled the pleasant land, "We trusted that the seed of Abraham should have redeemed the world!"

Hosea foresaw it all with that keen prophetic gaze, by which he was enabled to look down along the vista of the future. He saw the gathering storm of coming wrath. He saw the dark and heavy shades roll over the destiny of Israel, till it was buried from his view. Is all then lost? All that he hoped and prized and prayed for, gone forever? Have Israel and the world sunk forever in an eternal night?

No! no! his trust in the ancient promises and in God's good word of grace, never wavered in all that night of gloom. The judgment must come. Israel must be overwhelmed. "Yet," he declares, i: 10, with unabated confidence, "the number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which can not be measured nor numbered; and it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God." The judgment, so far from defeating or annulling the promise, is the very means by which it shall be carried into effect. It is by this stern work of righteousness that God will violently cut short the process of deterioration, which no other means can avail to check. The seeming destruction is a necessary antecedent to the future glorious restoration; and all the blissful anticipations cherished from the beginning for Israel, and through them for all mankind, shall meet their complete and triumphant realization.

The liveliness of the prophetic fancy, his love of nature, and his careful observation of surrounding objects, appear from the varied and striking figures, with which his writings abound. Few portions of Scripture are more prolific in illustration or bolder in conception. The book of Hosea will well repay attentive study for the beauty and force of its imagery alone.

He makes his appeal to the dawning day, vi: 3; the rising sun, vi: 5; genial showers and the latter and former rain, vi: 3; the wings of the rushing wind, iv: 19; the parched east wind, the wind from the desert, xiii: 15; the cloud and dew, from whose evanescent character a double similitude is taken; it represents the vanishing promise of good in the people's purposes and lives, vi: 4, and, as a consequence, their own total disappearance before God's desolating judgment, xiii: 3. Then, when the work of judgment was past, God would himself be unto Israel as the dew with its quickening, refreshing influence, xiv: 5. He further finds emblems in flying birds, ix: 11; the migrations of birds of passage xi: 11; the silly, senseless dove running into the toils which are spread for it, vii: 11; the eagle pouncing on its prey, viii: 1, and in wild beasts, the roaring lion, xi: 10, rending, carrying away, v: 14, or devouring; the leopard stealthily watching by frequented paths, the fierce bear bereaved of her whelps, xiii: 7: 8, or the wild ass roving in solitude, viii: 9. He makes use of the green fir tree, xiv: 8; the lily, olive, corn, and vine, xiv: 5-7; wool and flax, ii: 5; nettles, thorns, ix: 6, and thistles, x: 8; grapes in the wilderness, early figs, ix: 10; Mount Lebanon striking deep its roots, xiv: 5; other mountains and hills, x: 8; the desolate wilderness, the dry and barren desert, ii: 3; chaff driven with the whirlwind, smoke out of the chimney, xiii: 3; the blazing oven, vii: 7; foam or a chip on dashing waves, x: 7; water poured out in profusion, v: 10; the moth and rotteness, v: 12; a worthless vessel tossed carelessly about, viii: 8; a cake not turned and spoiled in the baking, vii: 8; a disgraced and faithless wife driven out from her husband's house, ix: 15; a plant whose root is dried, ix: 16, or planted by a fountain and the very fountain dried, xiii: 15; the door of hope, ii: 15; the child learning to walk, xi: 3, and the hoary hairs of age, vii: 9.

Images are drawn from revellers, iv: 18; vii: 5; highway robbers, vi: 9; vii: 1, and other transgressors; also from the various occupations, such as the merchant, xii: 7, with his balances of fraud and his oppression—the original term implying that the operations of trade were chiefly carried on, not by native Israelites, but by foreigners, the Canaanites or Phœnicians; the baker, vii: 4; the physician with his medicines and bandages, v: 13; vi: 1; xi: 3; the fowler capturing birds in his snare, ix: 8, or his net, or bringing them down by shooting them on the wing, vii: 12; the hunter with his traps and toils in the forests or on the mountains, v: 1; the stone-cutter, or wood-chopper, vi: 5; the shepherd with his rich pasture, xiii: 6, or whose lamb escaped from the fold is feeding in an exposed place, iv: 16; the implements of warfare, the bow, i: 7; ii: 18; sword, xi: 6; the trumpet, viii: 1; the cornet, v: 8; horses, xiv: 3, and horsemen. Special prominence, however, as was natural in an agricultural community, is given to the operations of husbandry, e. g. breaking up the fallow ground, ploughing, harrowing, sowing, reaping, threshing by heifers treading out the grain, x: 11: 13; winnowing, xiii: the oxen unyoked and fed, xi: 4; the refractory heifer unsubmitive to the yoke, iv: 16; the wine-press with its gushing, ix: 2, and intoxicating product, iv: 11; the unfruitful vine, x: 1; the harvest of judgment, vi: 11; the weeds springing up in furrows of the field, x: 4. The profless and ruinous character of transgression is thus strikingly described by figures drawn from agriculture, vii: 7: "They have sown the wind and they shall reap the whirlwind: it hath no stalk: the bud shall yield no meal: if so be it yield, the strangers shall swallow it up." On the other hand, the blessings that await an obedient people are represented by a covenant, made on their behalf, with all that could damage the crop that it shall not harm them, ii: 18; while the corn, the wine, and the oil entreat the earth to put forth its

productive power; and the listening earth entreats the heavens to shed down their quickening influences; and the answering heavens entreat the Lord to make them channels of his almighty blessing, and all combine to do God's faithful and beloved people good, ii: 21, 22.

One fact of great interest and importance, which we learn from the incidental allusions in Hosea, concerns the religious and civil usages of the ten tribes. It appears that the regulations of the Pentateuch continued to be observed among them through all their apostasy. Its laws of sacrifice, its festivals, its prescriptions relating to these and other matters even in minute particulars were still adhered to, and the very terms and phrases technically employed in the books of Moses continued to be current. They did not abolish the old ritual and adopt a new one when they gave themselves to the worship of the golden calves. But all the rites and usages to which the people had been accustomed, and which they revered, were retained, only perverted to an idolatrous service, only those changes being made which the necessities of the idolatry required.

Thus, it seems, ii: 11; ix: 5, that the annual feasts, new moons, Sabbaths and festive assemblies were observed, and all kept their proper legal names. In xii: 9, specific mention is made of the feast of tabernacles. Jeroboam had changed the place of celebration, and in one instance at least the time, 1 Kings xii: 27, etc., but had not ventured to abolish the things themselves. And not only were the sacred seasons retained but the sacred actions, likewise the offerings, viii: 13; the drink-offerings, ix: 4, and the sin-offering, iv: 8, with the specific regulation that it must be eaten by the priest. According to the law, Deut. xvii: 8-13, the priest was the ultimate arbiter of questions in dispute, and to resist his decision was a capital offence; the existence of this regulation is implied, Hos. iv: 4, where "striving with the priest" is spoken of as the last degree

of contumacy. The laws of ceremonial purity were observed, as appears from ix: 4, which alludes to the defilement produced by contact with the dead. That the law of the unity of the sanctuary though violated, was well known and its obligation acknowledged, appears from iv: 13; viii: 11; xii: 11, where the prophet denounces the multiplication of altars as a sin. To any mind not instructed in the requirements of the Mosaic code the erection of numerous altars would have seemed to be a commendable act of devotion. The prophet besides makes the express statement that all these prescriptions were embodied in a written law, and this of great compass and extent: "I have written to him the *great things* (Heb. *multitudes* or *myriad*) of my law," viii: 12. And that this written law, with its myriad enactments, contained regulations about sacrifices is plain from the connection in which this verse stands. The drift of this passage is the following: Ephraim has sinned in multiplying altars, and this in spite of the ten thousand statutes of the written law which I gave him, but which he has disregarded; consequently his sacrifices so offered are but as so much flesh slain for ordinary food. The Lord does not accept them as possessing any sacrificial virtue.

Other specific regulations are also referred to as subsisting in full force, e. g. v: 10; the prohibition of removing landmarks, x: 11; "the fat heifer that loves to tread out the corn" is an allusion to Deut. xxv: 4, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn." So xiv: 3, alludes to God as the special patron of the fatherless. Ex. xxii: 22, 23.

It is very remarkable likewise that their places of idolatrous worship were not arbitrarily selected, nor chosen simply from motives of convenience, but had in every case been made sacred by cherished associations of ancient date. Thus Bethel, the principal seat of their idolatry, was the place where God had at three different times appeared to Jacob and spoken to him; and it re-

ceived from this fact its significant name, "house of God." The prophet refuses to call it by this honored title, but calls it instead "Beth-aven," *house of wickedness*, iv: 15. He mentions besides, xii: 11, Gilead and Gilgal as places of idolatrous worship—Gilead, where the heap of witness was erected by Jacob and Laban, Gen. xxxi: 48; and Gilgal, where was the heap of stones taken from the dry bed of the Jordan, Josh. iv: 20. To these heaps the prophet alludes in this same verse, when he adds "their altars are as heaps in the furrows of the fields." These places were named from heaps erected there by their pious ancestors; heaps abound there still, but of a very different nature.

This confessed authority of the Pentateuch, from whose binding force the ten tribes were unable to emancipate themselves in spite of their open and willful violation of its commands; this tenacity of customs introduced by the laws of Moses, which clung to them in spite of every attempt at their subversion, so that their very idolatry was but a mimicry of God's true worship; this familiarity with the language and ideas of the Mosaic writings, so that a simple allusion was sufficient to convey the prophet's meaning, which but for the illustration afforded by the Pentateuch would sometimes be quite obscure—all this is certainly very remarkable. And we may add, it is very difficult to be accounted for on any other hypothesis than that of the Mosaic origin and the divine authority of the Pentateuch.

The legends respecting Hosea are utterly frivolous and unreliable. Conflicting traditions represent him as born in Belemon, or Belemoth, or Bethshemeth, in the tribe of Issachar. The Talmud gives the following story in relation to his marriage: When Israel sinned, Hosea instead of entreating the mercy of God on their behalf as the children of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, besought the Ruler of the world to transfer his regard to another people.

The Lord in consequence directed Hosea to take an unworthy wife; and when two sons and a daughter had been born to him, he bid him separate from them. As Hosea's love for his children would not suffer him to do this, the Lord replied: How then can I put away Israel, my children?

The following miracle is ascribed to him: He predicted that the Lord would descend from heaven to earth, and gave as the sign of his appearing that the oak in Shiloh should of its own accord split into twelve and form twelve oaks; which it is declared took place accordingly.

On the ground of a fanciful combination of Hos. xiv: 9, with Rev. v: 2, the opinion has been gravely propounded that Hosea was the strong angel spoken of in the latter passage.

The Talmud relates the following respecting his death and burial: The decease of Hosea took place in Babylon. Before he died he directed that he should be buried in the land of Israel. And the distance being so great, he gave injunction that his body should immediately after death be put in a coffin and tied upon the back of a camel, which should then be loosed and suffered to go wherever it pleased; and that where the camel stopped he should be interred. This was consequently done, and the camel brought his burden safely to the burying ground of the town of Zapheth in upper Galilee. The residents perceiving from the inscription on the coffin that it contained the body of the prophet Hosea, gave it an honorable burial.

The Greek fathers say that he died at an advanced age in his own country, within the bounds of Issachar, and was buried there in peace. Arab writers speak of his remains as reposing under a costly marble monument in a cave near the Syrian town of Almenia, one or two miles distant from Tripoli. And to complete the confusion, his tomb was pointed out to Burckardt east of the Jordan near the site of Ramoth-Gilead.