

tion of sentences. The 'rush of speech' which belongs to oratory is in this book seen in perfection; yet it is always held in perfect command. The speaker will begin in the simple style of historic survey, entirely free from the straining after effect which makes a speech all peroration. But when the feeling rises — when Moses tells of all the way the Lord has led the people in the wilderness, or depicts the bright prosperity of life in the good land, or contrasts with recurrent rebellions the simple requirements of service and love — then the musical poise of his sentences lays hold of the reader with great emotional affection.... no one can read Deuteronomy through without the swing of its sentences being felt even when there are no words to fill them out. And when the orator's passion rises to a climax, we have a breathless torrent of woes sustained to a length without precedent in the literature of denunciation. When I was a beginner in literary study, I recollect a resolution I made for myself in the form of an exercise, which was to read through on three successive days, each at a single setting, an oration of Demosthenes, one of Burke, and the book of Deuteronomy. I would not be understood as recommending such comparisons of merit, but I well recollect the feeling I had at the time that neither of the other two rose to the oratorical level of the speeches of Moses.

“But oratory does not consist merely in sentences. It is a soul as well as a body. In the thought of Deuteronomy, the characteristic which is most impressive is the strange clash between opposing tides of feeling. On the one hand, Deuteronomy has been well described as the most spiritual book in the Old Testament. In common with a few of the Psalms, and the loftier parts of prophecy, it breathes an ardent love to the invisible God, a spiritual awe of the unseen I AM, a heart religion penetrating through the surface of duties to the springs of holy motives. The speaker may well have been in the mount forty days and forty nights: his speech shines as well as his face. All this is true, but on the other hand it is true that nowhere else in Scripture does the practical side of religion appear so vividly stated or so urgently pressed. When a proverb declares the way of wicked is stumbling or that the way of righteousness is the way of light in which all good things can be enjoyed, we come to a general principle. But Moses boldly points out direct consequences in all their details. When he threatens, he almost catalogs the plagues and diseases that will follow disobedience; and