THE ORATORY AND POETRY OF THE BIBLE

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649388226

The oratory and poetry of the Bible by Ferdinand S. Schenck

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd. Cover @ 2017

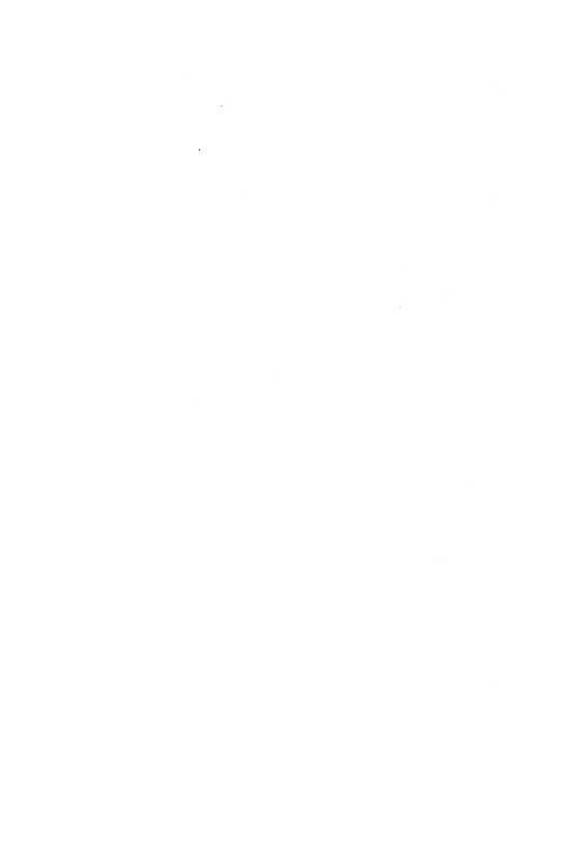
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The Oratory and Poetry of the Bible

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HODDER & STOUGHTON NEW YORK GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY Copyright, 1915 GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

PREFACE

For the past fifteen years I have tried to incite my students in New York University, in Rutgers College, and now in the Seminary, to read the Bible, not as a task, but as a pleasure, and have had fair success. The books of the Prophets look very dull simply as books but when we look at them as largely sketches of orations and exercise our historical imagination to hear the orators speak, they become intensely interesting. I have tried in the classroom to so describe the times, the questions of the day, and the men that we could imagine ourselves in the crowd facing Isaiah, for instance, as he held the multitude spell-bound by his eloquence.

In this book I make the same attempt, but now I am forced to adopt the device of "Short Stories of Great Orations," as told in letters supposed to have been written by those who heard them. Such letters describing orations by Webster, Beecher, or Gladstone are of much general interest and help us to hear them, so I would help all hear Moses, Amos and Paul.

As the best poetry is largely impersonal I have not tried to make the college students acquainted with the Poets nor have I tried to give technical lectures upon poetry; I have simply tried to show the strength and beauty of some of the great poems of the Bible in such a way that they would desire to read them and appreciate them. I send this book forth that it may do for all who read it what I have tried to do for the college students, quicken their interest in reading the Bible: my book is not an end in itself, only a means to an end.