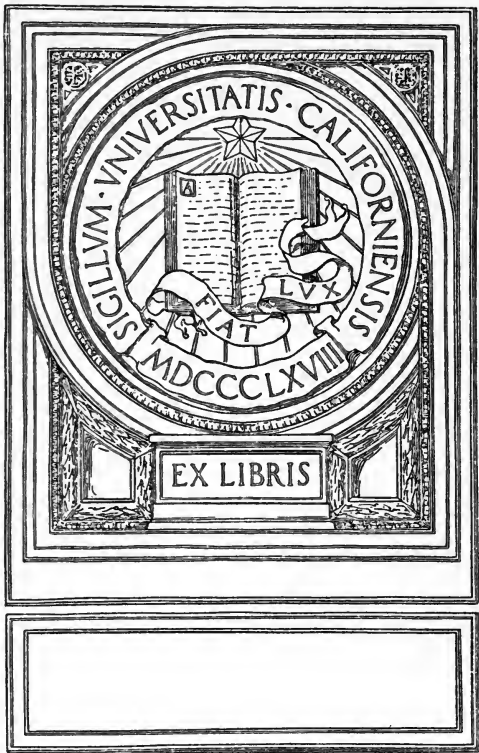


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The Testing of a Nation's Ideals

Israel's History from the Settlement
to the Assyrian Period

BY

CHARLES FOSTER KENT, PH.D., LITT.D.,

Woolsey Professor of Biblical Literature in Yale University

JEREMIAH WHIPPLE JENKS, PH.D., LL.D.,

*Professor of Government and Director of the Division of Public Affairs in
New York University*

UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA

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INTRODUCTION.

THE TESTING OF ISRAEL'S IDEALS.

The Hebrews received from their early ancestors, and above all from Moses, the prophet and founder of their nation, certain unique sentiments and ideals. The first was the deep sense of gratitude and loyalty to the God who, they felt, had delivered them from cruel industrial oppression in Egypt and from the many perils of the Wilderness. It was loyalty expressed chiefly through ceremonial observations; but from the first it appears also to have guided the moral acts and to have shaped the characters of these early Israelites. A personal feeling of fellowship with Jehovah and with members of their race was the essence of the religious faith which Moses transmitted to his followers. Gradually also the conscious belief in a divine destiny for their race dawned upon them.

From their ancient communistic tribal life they inherited many democratic ideals. Each man had a voice in deciding questions of common interest. Their leaders and rulers were the choice of the people and ruled as the servants rather than as the masters of their nation. Israel's ideal of government from the beginning was the rule "of the people, by the people, for the people."

The family was the cornerstone of the Hebrew commonwealth, and its rights and purity were jealously guarded. Each individual enjoyed great political and religious liberty; but, at the same time, he recognized his solemn obligations to serve even at the cost of his life, if need be, the social unity of which he was a part and the one God who was recognized by that group.

These and kindred ideals alone distinguished the Hebrews from the hundreds of ancient tribes and peoples that have long since passed into oblivion without creating even a ripple upon the boundless sea of history. Many of these ideals were still in the process of development when the Hebrew clans emerged from the Wilderness and entered the thickly populated, much contested land of Canaan. The period from the settlement to the advent of the Assyrian conquerors was pre-

eminently the era when their inherited political, social, moral, and religious ideals were tested. Then began that age-long contest between the strongly entrenched Canaanite cults and the simpler, more austere religion of Jehovah. In the end the religion of Moses and the prophets emerged victorious, but the process of testing was so severe and prolonged that Israel's ideals were crystallized into such an imperishable form that they abide centuries after the Hebrew people has ceased to be a nation, and today they constitute its supreme gift to humanity.

PLAN OF WORK AND BOOKS OF REFERENCE.

This book and the other volumes in this series are primarily planned to meet the needs of college students, general readers, and adult Bible classes. Those who are able to command more time and wish to do thorough work will find in the list of *Parallel Readings* at the beginning of each chapter carefully selected references to the best authorities on the subject treated. For their guidance *Subjects for Further Study* are also provided.

The books suggested in connection with this course have been selected in order that each reader may have for his individual use a practical working library covering the field which it represents. The following books and also some standard work on American history should be at hand for constant reference:

Kent, C. F., *The Historical Bible*, Vols. II and III. They contain the important biblical passages arranged in chronological order and are provided with the historical, geographical, and archæological notes required for their clear understanding. The translation is based on the oldest sources and embodies the constructive results of modern biblical research. New York, \$1.00 each.

Croly, Herbert, *The Promise of American Life*. Gives an interesting and instructive account of the leading political problems of American history and of the forces and men that have contributed to their solution. Many of the questions before the rulers of ancient Israel are paralleled in American history, and this volume gives the American answers. New York, \$2.00.

Lowell, A. Lawrence, *Public Opinion and Popular Government*. Prepared as a volume of the American Citizen Series

to show the functions of public opinion in modern governments. As the Hebrew commonwealth gives the best illustration among the early peoples of the power and modes of expression of public opinion in ancient times the comparative study is especially helpful. New York, \$2.25.

For further parallel study the following books are suggested: *American Statesmen Series*. An excellent series written by authorities, containing recognized concise biographies of several of the greatest American statesmen referred to in the *Subjects for Further Study*.

Hazen, Charles Downer, *Europe since 1815*. One of the latest and best of the brief histories of Europe, which lays emphasis upon political movements and forces. New York, \$3.75.

Guizot, M., *History of Civilization in Europe*. A standard work on the development of modern civilized states. New York, \$1.50.

Kent, C. F., *Israel's Historical and Biographical Narratives*. (Vol. II of *Students' Old Testament*), New York, \$2.75. Presents in a clear modern translation the original sources incorporated in the historical books of the Old Testament, the origin and literary history of these books, and the important parallel Babylonian and Assyrian literature.

Kent, C. F., *Biblical Geography and History*, New York, \$1.50. Portrays the physical characteristics of Palestine and the potent influences which that land has exerted throughout the ages upon its inhabitants.

Lippmann, Walter, *A Preface to Politics; Drift and Mastery*. Two suggestive stimulating books indicating the subtle forces that determine political action and results; a sketch of many of our social ills, a criticism of many remedies, and suggestions of hopeful change.

Note also references in Volume I, *The Making of a Nation*.



CHAPTER I.

THE NECESSITY OF POLITICAL UNITY.

THE UNION OF THE HEBREW TRIBES UNDER SAUL.— I Sam. 4—14.

Parallel Readings.

Kent, *Historical Bible*, Vol. II (*The Founders and Rulers of United Israel*), pp. 63-83.

Croly, *The Promise of American Life*, Chaps. I, II; Lowell, *Public Opinion*, Chaps. I, II.

Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, Rule over us, both you and your son, and your son's son also; for you have saved us from the hand of Midian.—*Judg. 8: 22.*

Then Samuel took the vial of oil, and poured it on Saul's head, and kissed him and said, Hath not Jehovah anointed you to be a prince over his people Israel? And you shall reign over the people of Jehovah and deliver them from the power of their enemies around about . . . and you shall do as the occasion offers; for God is with you.—*1 Sam. 10: 1, 7b.*

When in Innocency, or when by intellectual perception, he attains to say: I love the Right; Truth is beautiful within and without, forever more. Virtue, I am thine; save me; use me; thee will I serve, day and night, in great, in small, that I may be not virtuous, but virtue; then is the end of the Creation answered, and God is well pleased.—*Emerson.*

Democracy is more than the absence of czars, more than freedom, more than equal opportunity. It is a way of life, a use of freedom, an embrace of opportunity.—*Lippmann.*

Unity of sentiment and of ideals is what, more than anything else, binds a people together.—*Albert Shaw.*

No one can be perfectly free till all are free.—*Spencer.*

I.

THE FAILURE OF THE FIRST HEBREW FEDERATION.

Israel's pioneer period illustrates the well-known homely but significant utterance in connection with the signing of the Declaration of Independence: "Unless we hang together, we shall all hang separately." Notwithstanding their brilliant victory on the Plain of Esdraelon under the leadership of Deborah and Barak, the Hebrews soon fell a prey to their hostile neighbors, for the forces making for division were stronger than those binding them together. The tribal instincts which they had brought from the desert led them to regard with suspicion any centralized authority. The dividing hills and valleys of

Palestine intensified this tendency toward disunion. The result was that each tribe under its individual leaders maintained its independence, fought its own battles, and struggled to work out its own problems. The so-called judges of this period were simply local chieftains, who, as needs required, rallied their tribesmen and delivered them from the bondage of invaders. The prestige thus won gave to these deliverers a local authority. In the ancient East the judges were the civil and religious officials. To them were referred questions of dispute between individuals and clans, even as they are today to the sheiks of the Arab tribes. Among all Semitic peoples civil and judicial duties were so closely connected that among the Phœnicians, for example, the common designation of a governor or ruler came from the same root as the Hebrew word for judge.

The rule of the tribal deliverers or judges was local; none ruled over all Israel. Thus Samson was the great hero of the southern, Jephthah of the east-Jordan, and Gideon of the central tribes. Several of these deliverers were probably contemporary. The impression that they ruled in succession over all Israel is due to the additions of the latest editor of the book of Judges.

The most significant of these petty rulers was Gideon, for his rule represented the beginning of the kingship among the Hebrews. The oldest narrative gives a vivid picture of the origin of his little kingdom. Owing to the lack of political unity among the Israelites the Midianites, the early representatives of the modern Arab hordes, seeing their opportunity for plunder, came pressing in from the eastern desert. The action of the elders of Succoth and Penuel implies that most if not all of the east-Jordan towns paid tribute to these desert marauders in order to secure immunity from their attacks. Emboldened by their successes the Midianites crossed the Jordan and followed the valleys that led westward to the uplands occupied by the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh. Here they met with resistance. In one of these skirmishes the brothers of Gideon the Ophrahite were slain. Thus devolved upon Gideon the sacred and social responsibility of avenging his brothers' blood. Promptly he rallied three hundred of his tribesmen and set out in pursuit of the Midianites, who were already retiring to the desert.

Gideon's home was probably at the present Ain el-Farah, about ten miles northeast of the Shechem, at the head of the valley which leads southeastward to the Jordan. Down this valley, then, he followed the Midianites with his warriors, crossing the Jordan either at the present Damiah ford or a little further north, opposite the point where the Jabbok comes down from the hills of Gilead. The Hebrew town of Succoth guarded the entrance to this valley and Penuel was probably a little further eastward along the bank of the Jabbok. Breathing vengeance upon the elders of these towns, which refused to give him food, Gideon continued his pursuit until he overtook the Midianites encamped on the borders of the eastern desert. His method of attack was typical of border warfare. While the Midianites were sleeping without suspicion of danger, Gideon's followers with torches concealed in earthen jars stealthily surrounded the hostile camp. At a given signal the Hebrews sounded the battle cry, "For Jehovah and Gideon," and broke their jars. The Midianites, awakened suddenly, thinking that they were surrounded by a mighty host, fled in wild panic. Gideon was left in possession of their camp and with a reputation for valor and prowess that made a profound impression upon the Hebrew tribesmen both east and west of the Jordan. This impression was deepened by the bloody vengeance which he visited upon the elders of Succoth and Penuel. Hence when he returned to Ophrah, his clansmen and those of the tribes immediately adjacent asked him not merely to rule over them but also to transmit his power to his descendant.

Thus as a result of the needs of the situation certain of the Hebrew tribes made this valiant deliverer their hereditary king.

The first Hebrew kingdom thus established by prowess suddenly collapsed because Gideon's successor Abimelech was incapable and brutal. He secured the succession by the murder of his brothers and ruled as a tyrant rather than as a protector of his people. The fact that he was the son of a Canaanite mother undoubtedly contributed to his downfall, for through her he inherited the despotic Canaanite ideal of rulership rather than the democratic ideal of the Hebrews. His ignominious death at the hands of a woman was popularly regarded as a divine judgment for his crime. Thus the first

attempt to unite the local tribes under a central government proved a disastrous failure.

Was the assassination of a ruler's rivals looked upon then with the horror now felt for such a crime? Compare this natural and important step in the development of the Hebrew nation, by which Gideon became king, with similar acts in the history of other peoples, *e.g.*, England. What was the difference between the other so-called judges and Gideon?

II.

THE INFLUENCES THAT BROUGHT THE TRIBES TOGETHER.

Powerful influences were required to overcome the deep-seated antipathy and suspicion with which the Hebrews regarded all centralized authority. These influences were supplied by the political situation. The pressure from the desert, which Gideon's victory for the moment relieved, became after his death even stronger than before. The Ammonites, the near neighbors of the Hebrews on the east, also took advantage of the lack of unity among the tribes to extend their suzerainty, until in the days of Saul it extended even to the Jordan. The tribes of southern as well as of eastern Palestine felt the same pressure from the desert. The foes, however, who at last compelled the Hebrews to unite were the Philistines.

A little before the Hebrews entered Palestine from the east, the Philistines, moving eastward and southward by land and sea from their homes in southern Asia Minor and the islands of the eastern Mediterranean, had occupied the broad, fertile coast plains west of the uplands of Judah. The productive fields of Philistia furnished the background for a rich agricultural civilization. This centered about five great cities, surrounded by strong walls and ruled by petty kings. Through this territory ran the great coast road which brought to the Philistines the civilization, the products and the arts of Egypt, Phœnicia and Babylonia. Under the pressure of common danger and their ambitions for conquest the Philistine cities formed a coalition which enabled them to act as a political unit. Hence, in the richness of their territory, in the development of their resources and civilization, and in their political unity, the Philistines far outstripped the Israelites.

Conflict between these rapidly increasing, ambitious peoples was inevitable. The picturesque stories told of Samson reflect

the beginnings of that conflict. Born in one of the villages that guarded the entrance to a broad valley leading down from the Judean hills to the Philistine plains, Samson was the incarnation of the spirit manifested in this border warfare. The relation between the Hebrews and Philistines was still so close that intermarriage was common. Their hostilities took the form of forays rather than definite campaigns. It is possible and probable that popular tradition magnified Samson's strength and achievements.

Was he in every sense a popular hero? How do the qualities which he possessed appeal to the small boy of today? In what respects was he a prototype of the modern athlete? How do you estimate his moral character? Was his patriotism of a broad, constructive type? What was the total effect of his activity? How far should Samson's character be held up as a type to be emulated today?

The real crisis came to the Hebrews when the Philistines at last massed their forces and marched northward along the coast plains, until they came to one of the broader passes that opened into central Palestine. The result of the initial engagement was an overwhelming defeat for the Hebrews. Lacking organization and a leader prominent and strong enough to unite them, they brought from the northern sanctuary of Shiloh the ark, which symbolized the presence of Jehovah. Placing it in the forefront of battle, they hoped that Jehovah would perform a miracle in their defense, even as the sudden storm had brought them victory on the memorable battlefield beside the River Kishon. The ancient Hebrew narrative states that even the Philistines, familiar with the traditions that gathered about the ark, were terrified, but bravely faced the issue. In vain the Hebrews strove to force their Deity to intercede in their behalf. They had yet to learn in the hard school of experience the lessons necessary to prepare them for the appreciation of ultimate national unity and independence. Not only were the Hebrews defeated, but their ark was captured and the Philistines were left masters of all of the west-Jordan territory.

Do the stories regarding the fortunes of the ark among the Philistines suggest that those who bore it were infected by the bubonic plague? Were the Hebrews to whom the ark was returned immune from this infection? Do the golden

tumors or boils with which the Philistines thought to appease the god of the Hebrews suggest the nature of the contagion? How far is the popular belief that calamity or misfortune is an evidence of wrong doing and a sign of divine displeasure still prevalent? What is the real foundation for this belief in a great majority of cases? How far and how are great afflictions, like those suffered by the Hebrews at this period, but the open door to larger and nobler experiences? Do all seeming misfortunes, if rightly met and interpreted, offer opportunities for real progress? Illustrate in the history of the United States. In your own experience.

III.

SAMUEL'S WORK AS A STATESMAN.

The Philistine armies followed up the repeated victories over the Hebrews and apparently subjugated all of southern Palestine. To make this subjugation complete they established garrisons at strategic points, and as far as possible disarmed the Hebrews, so as to render an uprising impossible. The defeat of their armies and the capture of the ark undoubtedly struck a severe blow at their faith in Jehovah, for like children they still depended upon the visible evidence of his power and presence. It was natural for the common people to think of the god of the conquerors as the stronger. The next step was to worship the stronger deity. Not only Israel's future as a nation, but also Israel's faith was in peril.

The one man who appears to have appreciated the significance of the crisis was Samuel, a seer of Ramah in southwestern Ephraim. The later account, preserved in chapters 1 to 3, 7, and 12 of I Samuel, represents him as a judge ruling over all Israel, and this naturally reflects the tendency of later generations to idealize the personality and work of the great prophet. The oldest narrative, preserved in chapters 9 and 10, as well as the subsequent development of Israel's history, gives a luminous picture of Samuel's work as a statesman. It was a work done not in public, but in private.

Like many of the great events in the world's history the setting was exceedingly simple. As tradition says that the cackling of geese saved Rome, even so the straying of a drove of young she-asses, belonging to a wealthy Benjamite by the

name of Kish, led his son Saul in their quest far up among the hills of Ephraim. Not finding the asses and being near the town of Ramah, the name of which means height and suggests that it was one of the many hill towns that are to be found in southwestern Ephraim, Saul at the advice of his servant went to consult the seer who dwelt there. The narrative indicates that Saul had not before that time heard of Samuel, though it appears that Saul was already known to the seer. At the high place in the upper part of the town he found the seer seated in the midst of the elders, presiding over a sacrificial feast. At once the young Benjamite was given the seat of honor and then remained as Samuel's guest. In a sense it was on the housetop in the hill town of Ramah that the Hebrew kingdom was born. The nature of the conversation between the patriot warrior of Benjamin and the seer of Ramah may be inferred from the manner in which they parted. On the outskirts of the town, as they bade each other farewell in the early morning, Samuel poured upon the head of Saul the oil that made him Jehovah's anointed and symbolized his call to a great mission. The words of the prophet made clear the meaning of the symbol. Saul was to be Israel's champion and ruler. With the exhortation to act as the occasion offered, Saul went forth inspired by a new and noble patriotic impulse. Even with the fanatical religious enthusiasts, the sons of the prophets, whom he had probably hitherto despised, he shared the wild enthusiasm to be God's man and to go forth and fight in the name of Jehovah against his foes.

The event confirmed the wisdom of Samuel's insight. The young giant Saul, with his courage and prowess and patriotic enthusiasm, was the man supremely fitted to rally the disorganized, dispirited Hebrews, and to lead them successfully against the many foes who preyed upon them. Coming from the little tribe of Benjamin, that had settled among the limestone hills between the larger tribes of Ephraim and Judah, Saul was able to overcome the bitter jealousies between the north and the south and to bind together the Hebrew clans of southern and central Palestine. In inspiring Saul to act as occasion offered, Samuel launched the Hebrew kingdom, and in so doing prepared for its subsequent success and achievements. Later traditions, influenced by the memory of the

disastrous reigns of such kings as Solomon and Ahaz, represented the great prophet as opposed to the establishment of the kingdom; but in the light of the oldest records Samuel was the real king-maker, for he was the true statesman, who appreciated the needs of the situation, found the man fitted to guide his people, and inspired him to act effectively.

Do you recall any other great king-makers in the world's history? Why could Samuel himself not have done the work which Saul accomplished? Which is the greater character, Samuel or Saul? Why? Which is the nobler goal for which to strive, public recognition or actual achievement? Note the different goals of achievement sought by the two men. Could either have reached the other's goal? How far is the desire for public recognition useful in the development of the individual? In the progress of humanity?

IV.

THE SUCCESSFUL STRUGGLE WITH THE PHILISTINES.

The occasion for which Samuel had told Saul to wait came quickly. The Ammonites advanced against the Hebrew town of Jabesh in Gilead, situated on the heights east of the Jordan.

Vaunting their strength and trusting to the defenseless condition of the Israelites, they threatened to mutilate the submissive men of Jabesh by boring out each man's right eye. It was an insult well calculated to stir the hot indignation of the Israelites, but in vain the Gileadite messengers went from town to town until at last they came to Gibeah of Saul. Their message kindled into a fierce flame Saul's smoldering patriotism. In the vivid words of the ancient narrative, "The spirit of Jehovah rushed upon him, when he heard these words." Cutting in pieces the oxen that had been drawing his plow, he sent them to the chieftains of Israel with the significant statement: "Whoever does not come forth after Saul and after Samuel, so shall it be done to his oxen." It is not strange that "terror fell upon the people and they rallied as one man," for they realized that the spirit of Barak and Deborah was again in their midst. In attacking the Ammonites Saul employed the tactics of Gideon, dividing the people into three divisions and making the attack in the early morning watch. The result was the same as in the early

battle against the Midianites. The Ammonites were completely scattered, and the Hebrews who followed Saul recognized that at last they had found a man worthy to be their king. Returning to the northern sanctuary of Gilgal, the modern Jiljilia, a few miles to the southwest of the ancient sanctuary of Shiloh, the glories of which it has inherited, the Israelites solemnly elected Saul to be their king. The ruins of an ancient rock-cut altar and two sacred trees, as well as the shrine of a Mohammedan saint, now mark the historic spot. Standing on the rocky terrace, surrounded by deep encircling valleys, one can readily picture the assembled Israelites clad in the spoils of the conquered Ammonites, proud and grateful in the memory of the recent victory, fearful of the Philistine conflict that still impended, yet exultant as they proclaimed their victorious champion king.

The details of the succeeding war with the Philistines are recounted with unusual fullness in the early narrative of I Samuel 13, 14. With their wonted energy, the Philistines quickly invaded southern Ephraim and Benjamin with a large army. Its advance was evidently over the pass of Bethhoron, directly eastward across the central plateau. By this movement they cut off the Israelites on the north from those on the south. Many of the Hebrews laid down their arms at once. Others fled to the caves. Saul's victorious army quickly vanished, and he was left with only a few hundred men. Meeting no organized opposition, the Philistines left a garrison at the strategic fortress of Michmash, that guarded the main highway from north to south. The remainder began to plunder the Hebrew towns.

It was at this crisis that Saul's valiant son Jonathan turned an ignominious rout into victory. Today one may still find along the little valley of Michmash the rock-cut entrances to the caves in which the frightened Hebrews probably took refuge. It is possible also to identify the jutting spurs of rock, which stand as sentinels on the northern and southern sides of the valley, and to follow the footsteps of Jonathan, as he with his armorbearer crossed the deep ravine and assailed the Philistine fortresses.

The son of the giant Saul was probably himself of heroic stature. It is not strange that a man, who thus emerged from the ranks of the hiding Hebrews, was regarded by the

Philistines as almost divine, as he scaled the rocky heights and all but alone faced the hostile garrison. Fear completed what his courage and prowess had begun, and the Philistines were quickly in mad flight. The panic was communicated to the plundering warriors. Soon Saul heard the commotion and with his usual impetuosity, without waiting for the response of the divine oracle that he was consulting, he rallied his followers in pursuit of the Philistines. Over the rocky heights of central Israel they drove their fleeing foes, until by nightfall the last surviving Philistines had escaped down the steep pass of Bethhoron out into the plain. Saul was left free for the moment to organize his kingdom.

In what departments of public life today are the qualities which Saul possessed especially effective? Without Jonathan's co-operation would Saul's kingdom have collapsed? Was Saul justified in pursuing the Philistines without waiting for the confirmation of the priestly oracle?

V.

CENTRALIZATION OF AUTHORITY UNDER SAUL.

From beginning to end Saul's task was supremely difficult. Throughout his tempestuous reign there was almost constant war with his hostile neighbors. The well-organized Philistines made repeated attempts to re-establish their authority over the Hebrews. The distance between upland and plain was so short that a rapid night march enabled the Philistines to penetrate to the hills through the western valleys, attack an outlying Hebrew village, and retire laden with spoils and followed by captives. On the south the Amalekites maintained an almost constant guerrilla warfare. On the east the Ammonites lost no opportunity to avenge the defeat which they had suffered at the hands of Saul. Perforce Saul's court was a military camp, and his advisers were the commanders of his army. Israel was still in the pioneer stage. The first task of the Hebrews was to cultivate the soil and care for their flocks. Hence Saul had no standing army but was dependent almost entirely upon the militia. Under able leaders and with constant training warriors of this type developed great efficiency. The hills and vales of Palestine were also favorable to the cause of Saul. It is to his glory that in

the face of many obstacles, Israel's first great warrior king not only succeeded in organizing the fighting resources of his kingdom but also in holding his enemies at bay, even as David sang to the daughters of Israel in his lament over Saul:

Who clothed you daintily in finest linen?
Golden ornaments he placed on your garments.

Saul's reign marks the beginning of permanent centralization of authority among the Hebrews. This process was necessarily slow and beset by many obstacles. The problems were very similar to those that characterized the beginnings of the revolutionary period in American history. Each tribe or group of tribes was jealous of its rights and submitted to the central authority only as it was compelled by sheer necessity. There is no evidence that more distant tribes, as for example the Asherites and Danites, recognized Saul's rule any more than they did the obligation in the days of Deborah to join with their kinsmen against the Canaanites. Similarly the southern tribes of Judah and its allies, the Calebites and other Arab tribes, showed themselves very ready at the slightest provocation to withdraw from the Hebrew confederacy. The term federation or united states, rather than kingdom, is the more exact designation of the political organization at the head of which stood Saul. At first he was elected simply by the common consent of the warriors who had followed him in the campaign against the Ammonites. Later other tribes, realizing their need of the protection which his standard afforded, joined the federation. Saul's authority, therefore, depended on the one hand on his personal ability and achievement and on the other on the consent of those governed. In many ways the closest modern analogy is the American federation (1776 to 1789) with its distribution of authority between the weak federal and the strong state governments.

Saul does not appear to have taken any steps to extend his power or to organize his kingdom. His capital was his native town of Gibeah. His court was probably either held in his home or, as in one memorable instance, out of doors beneath the tamarisk tree near the high place. His own kinsman Abner was his prime minister, as well as general. Judicial cases were doubtless referred to the king, but the primary and

apparently almost the sole aim of the Hebrew federation was military defense. Undoubtedly the different tribes sent presents to their chief, but there is no evidence that Saul instituted a regular system of taxation. While this type of organization lacked coherence, it possessed the virtue of being adjusted to existing conditions and of preserving Israel's priceless democratic ideals. In the days of Saul and his successors democratic precedents were established which kings like Solomon and Ahab were powerless permanently to overthrow. Israel, therefore, from the beginnings of its national life, illustrated to all the world the characteristics, strong and weak, of a rule of the people by the people for the people.

Picture in imagination what a Philistine attack meant to the inhabitants of an outlying Hebrew town. What did Saul do for the Hebrew people? Why were the Hebrews in Saul's day so averse to recognizing centralized authority?

VI.

THE BALANCE BETWEEN FEDERAL AND LOCAL AUTHORITY.

John Fiske, in one of his admirable books, puts forward as one of the three most important American political ideas, that of federation. It is perhaps true, as Fiske intimates, that in the American Union we find first the example, on a great scale, of the advantages of a federal system of government. But, after all, did not Israel in its early history give us in this respect, as in so many others, the fundamental principles?

The essential advantage of federation, as a form of political organization, is that it maintains a local self-government in which each man may take his part in public affairs and thereby may get a real training as a political thinker and doer, while, on all great questions touching international affairs or matters reaching in their influence far beyond the neighborhood which he knows, he delegates his power to a representative, in order thereby to secure unity of action. Only through federation can we have thus combined the advantages of a strongly centralized government with those of a democracy which trains the individual.

In the early days of the Hebrew kingdom under Saul the need for centralization came largely from war and dealings

with the surrounding tribes and nations. There was little centralization of government, although doubtless there were certain common rules and at times there were levies of troops, if not of taxes, upon the different tribes. Probably, except in times of war, the king did not deal with the individual members of a tribe, as does our central government in collecting federal taxes, but his suggestions and commands went to the elders of the separate tribes. In individual instances, as when he slaughtered the priests of Nob, his personal authority was recognized, but this control was, after all, rather the discipline of a military leader than the authority of a ruling king. Later, as we know, David and Solomon went much farther toward centralization, taking a census, levying taxes, interfering directly with local affairs. Although the system was never fully worked out, the rule under Solomon became despotic and in consequence the desire for democracy, or at any rate for local recognition and hence for the federal type of rule, brought about eventually the fall of the united kingdom.

As we have already seen, the unifying force that brought about unity under Saul was the need of self-defense against warlike aggression. The chief advantage of unity was greater power in war. The unifying sentiment, however, that made this unity possible then, as it did from time to time, both in earlier and later days, was religion, the common worship of Jehovah. Until long after the days of Saul each tribe had still its own shrine, each family, probably, its own household god. But there was, after all, the universal worship of Jehovah and the universal belief that the Israelites were the chosen people of the most powerful God and that their prosperity was dependent upon loyalty to him. Nowhere else in history do we find so clearly imprinted upon its pages the unifying power of a common religious belief, and nowhere else is so apparent the uplifting, vivifying and revivifying power of pure religious feeling.

Questions for Further Consideration.

What is the centralizing force which keeps together the separate States of the American Union?

Mention ten acts commonly performed by ordinary American citizens. How many of these are under the protection or control of laws passed by our State governments? How many under the federal government? Under which are our regulations regarding marriage? Business contracts? Crimes? Customs duties? The post office?

Is it more important for a father, with growing children, to have the school teacher in his home town a person of high character and attainments, or to have such characteristics in the President of the United States? Give your reasons.

Why are we ordinarily more interested in the selection of the President than in that of a school teacher?

Is there any person or group of persons in the United States today performing the political functions of the prophet Samuel, especially those of selecting the chief ruler and furnishing the leading political ideas? How far is it today in the power of a private citizen of high ability and character to play the rôle of that ancient Hebrew prophet? Have any of our ex-Presidents occupied such a position? Washington, Cleveland, Roosevelt, Taft?

Subjects for Further Study.

(1) The Literary Structure and History of the Books of Samuel. Kent, *Israel's Historical and Biographical Narratives*, pp. 10-14.

(2) Study and criticize Alexander Hamilton's plans regarding the centralization of federal power in the United States. Croly, *Promise of American Life*, Chap. II; Lodge, *Alexander Hamilton*.

CHAPTER II.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A GREAT LEADER.

DAVID'S TRAINING FOR THE KINGSHIP.—I Sam. 16:1—18:30;
20—30.

Parallel Readings.

Kent, *Historical Bible*, Vol. II, pp. 84-87, 92-114.

Croly, *Promise of American Life*, cf. Index: Lincoln, Roosevelt, Bryan.

Lowell, *Public Opinion*, Chaps. III, IV.

Thereupon one of the young men answered and said, Behold, I have seen a son of Jesse the Bethlehemite who is skillful in playing and a valiant man, a soldier, judicious in speech, a man of good appearance, and Jehovah is with him.—*I Sam. 16: 18.*

Then Abishai said to David, God has delivered your enemy into your hand today. Now therefore let me smite him with his spear to the earth at one stroke, and I will not need to smite him twice! But David said to Abishai, Destroy him not; for who can lay his hand upon Jehovah's anointed and be innocent?—*I Sam. 26: 8, 9.*

Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.—*Heb. 12: 6.*

'Tis much he dares;
And, to that dauntless temper of his mind,
He hath a wisdom that doth guide his valor
To act in safety.—*Shakespeare.*

The future works out great men's destinies;
The present is enough for common souls,

Who, never looking forward, are indeed
Mere clay wherein the footprints of their age
Are petrified forever.—*Lowell*.

That each thing, both in small and great, fulfilleth a task which destiny hath set down.—*Hippocrates*.

I.

DAVID'S PERSONAL CHARM.

In all the history of art probably no better example can be found of youthful beauty and strength, combined with intelligence, alertness and skill, than the wonderful statue of David by Michael Angelo in the City of Florence. It represents David standing erect and watchful with his sling in his hand, just as he is about to engage in conflict with the giant Goliath. Perhaps no other sculptor has ever equalled Michael Angelo in the ability to give life-like character to his artistic creations. But there also has rarely been a subject so well adapted to the depiction of youthful beauty, heroism, and skill as David at this initial moment in his public career. Before considering his religious experiences it is well to note his personal characteristics and his training.

All the accounts of David's life and activities show that he was a young man of unusual charm. He was a skilled warrior, even when he was introduced to Saul's court, for he very soon became the king's armorbearer and before long the leader of his warriors in their most desperate forays. The fact that he had been first brought to Saul's court as a musician in order to quiet the nerves of the king when he was ill, by his skillful playing on the lyre, proves his pre-eminence in that art. We know also that he must have been a youth of unusual facility in conversation and of pleasing address. His popularity among all classes at the court, not only with warriors, but also with the malcontents of every kind, who joined him when he later left the court, and with Jonathan, the king's son, demonstrates this fact. Moreover, he had been at the court but a short time when the younger daughter of King Saul, Michal, declared her love for him and her wish to become his wife. His relations with Saul and Jonathan reveal a man of most unusual tact; his experiences among the Philistines show not only his bravery in war but later, as we shall see, his diplomatic skill in dealing with those who might well have been the cause of his final

ruin. His treatment of Saul, when the king later came into his power, illustrates the generosity of his spirit and the kindness of his disposition, as well as his reverential attitude toward the man who, he felt, had been chosen as the Lord's anointed to be the king of the Hebrew people.

There is every reason to believe that his generous, eloquent words in his poetic lament over the death of Saul were perfectly sincere, and that he was lamenting not merely his friend Jonathan, but also the king who had been his enemy and who had sought his life, but whom, nevertheless, he looked upon as the great leader of his people.

With his discriminating judgment of men David was able to appreciate genuinely the bravery and the unselfishness that Saul revealed in many of his acts and to excuse his mad impulsiveness when he felt that his position as king was threatened by the popularity of his young son-in-law, who he feared would become his rival.

David's far-sighted diplomatic skill is shown in the way in which he treated Saul's son and successor, Ishbaal, after the death of Saul; in the way in which he punished with death the slayers of the young king who had been holding part of the kingdom that he hoped later to make his own, and by the acts of tact and judgment by which he brought together the different separated factions of the Hebrew people into one great kingdom. Nowhere else in ancient history do we find a better example of real personal greatness. He was a man of remarkable intelligence, he was a poet of the first rank, a musician of unusual skill, a warrior of invincible courage and ability, a diplomat of the first order and a statesman with such far-reaching plans that from a scattered group of jealous tribes and in a territory that was distinctly unfavorable to political unity, he was able to weld together one of the great nations of his day. Not merely did circumstances favor his purpose. His own personal qualities, more than all other forces, enabled him to achieve this remarkable success which has made him since that far-off day one of the few greatest heroes of mankind.

In these days of scientific study people are inclined to think that the elements determining success are not primarily the individuality of a person but external circumstances. Any one, however, who has looked carefully into the forces that

determine success in public life can see that as the years and centuries go by, personality is a more, rather than a less, important factor in deciding the course of the world's history. It is true that physical skill and power, perhaps, signify less; possibly even mental strength means no more than in the earlier days; but beyond a doubt moral uprightness counts continually more and more with each succeeding generation. The increasing complexity of modern society makes it all the more essential that in our dealings one with the other, we can rely absolutely upon the word and upon the acts of the men with whom we are associated. There can be no successful statesman, nor business man of the larger type, unless his personal character is such that he can win the confidence of his fellowmen.

What were some of the personal characteristics of Napoleon Bonaparte that contributed to his success (1) as a soldier? (2) as a statesman? What were some of his personal qualities that contributed to his failure in both these rôles? How much of the success or failure of the teachers under whom you studied at different periods depended upon their personality? Mention some of the personal qualities of a man that contribute to his success in business or in politics, or mention the qualities of a woman that are in the end largely contributory to her success in home life, in society, or in business.

II.

DAVID'S TRAINING IN THE COURT OF SAUL.

The remarkable success of David, as leader of his people, as king, and as the man who consolidated the different tribes into one great kingdom, was due very largely to the training that he received at the court of Saul.

Two different accounts are given of the way in which he first came to court. The earliest, and probably on the whole the most trustworthy, is that which brings him first to the attention of the court attendants as a skillful musician whose playing upon the lyre might soothe the king when he was seized with one of his strange attacks. The king was probably a high-strung man who, on account of his failure to unite all the varied elements in his kingdom, and the isolation which was his lot as king and also, probably on account of some

natural or inherited tendency, was afflicted with a severe nervous malady. Some medical authorities consider it epilepsy, others acute melancholia. But whatever the disease may have been, he was subject to attacks under the influence of which he became morose and jealous and inclined to turn upon those about him. This disastrous tendency was manifested not only in the case of David, but also in that of the priests of Nob when he mistakenly thought it possible that they had been conspiring with David against him.

Whatever the malady may have been, it seems perfectly clear that David, even at his first appearance in Saul's court, was not the stripling shepherd who was merely keeping his sheep in the fields, as is indicated in the later account, but that he already had won a reputation on the battlefield and was in the prime of his youth. His close personal relationship with Saul gave him an opportunity to win the king's affection. The king's delight in him is shown by the fact that he soon made him his armorbearer. From his daily association with Saul, hearing the cases that came before the king to judge, and participating in all his intimate domestic life (for we know that he sat at the king's table), he was in a position to see how the affairs of state were managed.

Of course at this time Saul was little more than the leader of the tribes in time of war. David had, nevertheless, from this association, the opportunity to learn all that could be learned from probably the most skillful warrior of his race, and thus to acquire a kind of training that was to prove of great importance in the near future. As we have seen, this close relationship, combined with David's personal qualities, gave him also the opportunity of becoming a close friend of the king's son Jonathan—a man of the noblest type—an association that must have been in many ways of the greatest benefit.

When, at the time of the attacks of the Philistines, the giant Goliath called for a champion from the ranks of the Hebrews and David volunteered, he doubtless felt that from his position as armorbearer and as leader of the king's troops it was fitting that he should be the volunteer. Moreover, as we have already seen, David was a far-sighted youth, and he must have recognized that a victory over the champion of the Philistines would aid him greatly in his advancement at

court. Such a conflict, of course, required bravery, and David's courage has never been questioned; but, as we know from the account given of the conflict, he was never at any time in great personal danger. The giant Goliath had equipped himself for a hand-to-hand conflict with spear and sword. Saul had offered to fit out David with the same weapons, but David then was not accustomed to that mode of fighting. He had been trained as a shepherd. He had fought lions and bears with sling and bow and club, and he preferred to meet his warrior antagonist with these familiar weapons. The event showed that through his skill with the sling he was easily the conqueror, and that with little personal risk to himself. In the flight of the Philistines that followed, as they were chased by the Israelites, David doubtless came into hand-to-hand conflict many times over with his foes, and his success as warrior led the maidens of Israel to sing his praises even more loudly than they sang those of their great king and chieftain Saul:

Saul has slain his thousands,
But David his ten thousands.

Naturally the popularity of this rising warrior led King Saul, who was after all merely a military king, not only to feel jealous of David, but also to question whether David might not conspire against him and become his successor. In those days conspiracy against the ruler was common. Assassination was a not unusual method of removing a rival. And Saul, judging David, not by the generous spirit that he had seen, but by the customs of his day and by what had befallen many another ruler, might well have had good excuse for feeling that it was desirable that David be put out of the way.

When his daughter Michal expressed her desire to marry David, the king, with apparent generosity toward a poor young man, said that he would not ask a money marriage portion but rather the foreskins of one hundred Philistines, thinking that in the attempt to secure them by the slaughter of his enemies David would probably lose his life. David's popularity, however, as a soldier soon enabled him to gather about him a fearless band of followers, so that this bloody marriage portion was quickly secured, and he became the king's son-in-law. This relationship gave him the social position

that fitted him for assuming the responsibilities which came in later years. It is probable that he did not as yet entertain the ambition to become Saul's successor. Jonathan was his dearest friend and the natural heir to the throne. All that David looked forward to at that time was to become the king's right-hand adviser and best friend and to prove himself a loyal servant of Jehovah by rendering great service to his people; for, from the time of his conflict with Goliath to the end of his life, we find religious zeal and reverence for Jehovah a prominent trait in David's character.

Here then at the court of Saul we find David securing the training for his later success. He was instructed in the best that could be taught in the way of military skill, both in personal conflict and in commanding troops; he learned the ways of the court and the most effective methods of dealing with court officials. He saw and learned to avoid the many mistakes made by the impulsive Saul, and realized how necessary it is to have cool judgment and tact in dealing with the conflicting elements that surround every court. He was likewise making friends of the various military leaders and of the heads of the different tribes, as he came in contact with them in their service at court. Perhaps most of all his close friendship with Jonathan was giving him higher and nobler ideas of not only bravery and military skill, but of personal generosity, of love for the noble and the true, and the desire to prove faithful in all engagements. There is, perhaps, no character in Biblical story that stands forth more prominently than Jonathan as the ideal of manly virtue. When he might well have been jealous of the rising David, we see no signs of jealousy, but throughout his life only a noble, generous spirit, combined with bravery and skill of the highest type. From him, as well as from the others with whom he was associated, David was acquiring the trained nature which later was to prove of so great advantage.

How far does a pleasing personality contribute to a man's success? Good manners? Is there a distinction between good manners and courtesy? Is it right and wise to strive for popularity? What qualities or acts insure genuine popularity? How far and in what ways did David's religious sentiments contribute to his success?

III.

DAVID AS A FUGITIVE IN THE WILDERNESS.

Saul's half-insane jealousy led him to adopt open measures to take David's life. At first, in a fit of anger, he attempted to pin him to the wall with his javelin, but David escaped. Then the king made a vain attempt to capture David in his house, but Michal deceived the royal messengers. Afterward Saul thought that at the monthly feast he would have an opportunity of securing David's assassination, or probably of killing him with his own hand. But David, with his native insight into character, and probably also prompted by the warnings of his friends at court, was convinced of Saul's persistent hostility. Guided eventually by the advice of his friend Jonathan, he left the court and went into the wilderness to remain until it was safe for him to return, whenever conditions were favorable.

It was natural that as a fugitive he should first turn his steps southward toward his own kinsmen of the tribe of Judah. As he was fleeing thither, he stopped with the priests at the little village of Nob, a short distance north of Jebus. When they inquired regarding his mission, he deceived them, pretending that he was on some special mission for the king; and he succeeded in persuading them to give him and his followers some of the show bread, although that was ordinarily eaten only by priests. Above all he secured there the sword of Goliath which he had earlier won from that Philistine champion. Afterward, as we know, when Saul learned that David had been welcomed by Ahimelech, the chief of the priests, he summoned them, and, contrary to all the dictates of humanity and justice, he had them slain by the hand of Doeg the Edomite, the man who had betrayed them.

David did not leave the Hebrew kingdom entirely, but took up a position at Adullam, a rocky region filled with caves on the western borders of the land next to the Philistines, where he could easily protect himself from attack and where also in case of need he could turn to the Philistines to whom, as enemies of Saul, he felt that he could go, should it prove necessary.

There gathered about him, as might be expected, not merely some of his own friends and kinsmen, whose hearts he had

won when at the court of the king, but also, as the narrative tells us, "every one who was in distress and every one who was in debt and every one who was embittered gathered about him and he became their leader, and there were with him about four hundred men." It is usually the case that in any such circumstances as those of David, a fugitive leader is followed by the criminals and outcasts or by those who do not wish to remain by the court. On the other hand, it is an evidence of his power of leadership. It also gave him an opportunity to acquire skill in dealing with all classes of men. That he was successful we know.

Soon after he had found refuge among the western headlands of Judah, word came to him that the old enemies of the Israelites, the Philistines, had attacked a village, Keilah, and were robbing the threshing floors and carrying off the people. David was still a Hebrew. He retained all his natural hereditary hatred of the Philistines. Inquiring of Jehovah in the usual manner whether he should attack them or not, he went down, fought them, drove away their cattle, slew many of them and thus delivered the inhabitants of Keilah.

When Saul heard that David was in this walled town, he thought it was a good opportunity to surround and conquer him. So he summoned his people to war and went down against him. David, however, was watchful, expecting attack, and in consequence being forewarned, he left Keilah, betook himself into the hill country to the south of Judah, and waited there. When Saul encamped in the hill country of Hachilah near him, David at night stealthily approached Saul's camp. Finding him, his chief guard Abner, and all his men asleep, David, followed by one of his intimate bodyguards, Abishai, went into Saul's camp. A tempting opportunity to kill the king and rid himself of his enemy was thus offered, and Abishai urged that this be done at once. But David's sense of justice, his spirit, which was too noble to kill an enemy unawares, his religion, which led him to respect the person of the Lord's anointed and, possibly, also the far-sighted statesmanship which led him to know that, if he were to kill Saul in these circumstances, he would arouse perhaps forever the hostility of the northern tribes and especially of Benjamin the tribe of Saul, led him to stay his hand. He, therefore, took Saul's spear and the jug of water by his head, went to a neighboring

hillside, then called out to Abner, the chief of Saul's guard, and gibed him for not having kept better watch. When Saul heard the well-known voice that had so often eased his malady, and when he realized that his life had been spared, his own generous spirit led him to speak contritely to David, to call him his son and to ask that he return and be again on friendly terms. Knowing, however, the king's real temper, and feeling that, although his heart was softened then by this act of mercy, he would turn again, David thought it best not to trust him. So, speaking friendly words, he went on to a safer place in the wilderness.

His life in the wilderness was, of course, that of an outlaw of his day, but an outlaw of the generous, noble type of which we sometimes read in stories. He protected the flocks and herds of the Hebrew shepherds against the attack of other marauders. He kept his men about him and trained himself in the arts of war by attacking the Amalekites and the other hostile tribes to the south, so that he could support his men, distribute the plunder among them, and still retain the friendship of the southern tribes and of the law-abiding people of his district.

One noteworthy case is preserved in the biblical account. Nabal, a wealthy man of the South Country whose flocks and herds David had protected throughout the grazing season, refused at the feast of the sheep shearing to give him and his young men the welcome and plentiful supplies that, according to the well-known customs of the day, were richly their due.

Not only did he refuse, but his refusal was couched in terms that, to David, seemed insulting. With the hot temper of youth, he was about to take revenge upon Nabal by killing him and his people and by seizing all his property. Nabal's wife Abigail, however, was a person of tact and judgment, as well as a woman of great beauty and personal charm. Realizing at once the risk that her husband was taking, she set forth with her servants, bearing magnificent presents from the herd and fruits to satisfy the hunger of David's men. When she met him, she bowed to the earth and in terms most flattering to the young chieftain she admitted that her husband was at fault, offered to David the presents, warned him that he ought not to shed the blood of the Hebrew people, and led

him to rejoice that she had saved him from the commission of so great a crime.

David was at once touched by the suggestion, accepted the presents, and agreed not to harm Nabal. Shortly afterward, on the sudden death of Nabal, which came, according to the views of the time as a divine punishment for his meanness and violation of the sacred laws of hospitality, David sought the hand of the beautiful and tactful Abigail in marriage.

After David's expulsion from the court of Saul, the king had given his wife Michal to another man. David had later married Ahinoam, a Jezreelitess. After his marriage to Abigail he had two wives living with him, and later he recovered Michal, after the death of Saul.

Among the Hebrews of that day it was not customary for the ordinary poor man to have more than one wife. The kings and rulers, however, in many cases had several wives, and often as in the case of Solomon, numerous concubines.

Polygamy was an inheritance from Israel's nomadic period. It had been retained in the case of tribal chieftains and kings, because it was a natural and easy way to cement close relationship between tribes and nations. When treaties of peace and friendship were made, in the past, as well as today, they were frequently sealed by a marriage between the relatives of the heads of the tribes or the nations making the treaty. David by his marriage with Abigail extended his influence among the Calebites, one of the strongest of the southern tribes. By this marriage and by the care which he had taken of the flocks and herds of the southern tribes while an outlaw, he was laying the foundations for his future popularity.

Under what social conditions has polygamy usually appeared? Was it justified in the case of David? Was he justified in plundering hostile tribes, while protecting the flocks of friendly tribes? Can we excuse Saul for his brutal attack on David? Can we excuse David for his deception of Ahimelech? Do you find in your study of David's life that all his acts of deception were prompted by what seemed to him military necessity? Does military necessity always or ever justify deception?

IV.

DAVID AMONG THE PHILISTINES.

The constant efforts which Saul made to destroy David and the inadequacy of the food supply among the barren rock hills of the South Country, finally led the outlaw leader to turn his back upon the land of Israel and to go over to the Philistines. Taking with him the six hundred men who were his chosen followers, he went to Achish, the king of Gath, and he dwelt there with his two wives and with all his followers. As soon as Saul learned that David had gone to Gath he no longer attempted to follow him, apparently deciding that he was himself safe from further molestation.

In thus going over to the Philistines, David was not acting contrary to the custom of that time. It was frequently the case that refugees of one tribe fled to another. The law of hospitality, which obtained everywhere, protected the stranger, even though he came from a hostile tribe. The Philistines, of course, had known David as one of the ablest warriors who had fought against them, and David himself from his military experiences had great respect for many of the leaders of the Philistines. In consequence, it was by no means strange that when he became a refugee, he turned to them for safety. Nor was it in the least unnatural that they, knowing that he was an outlaw from his own country, should receive him with open arms and be glad to welcome him as an ally and friend. As soon as David's position with the king of Gath seemed assured, he asked for permission to dwell in one of the towns in the open country instead of remaining in the royal city with the king. He was, therefore, assigned to the town of Ziklag and remained there for a year and four months. In order that he might still support his tribesmen he made frequent raids against the Amalekites, the Geshurites, and other tribes which dwelt south of the Philistines toward the land of Egypt. In order that the king might not learn that he was making raids upon these southern tribes, he killed, as a rule, both men and women, returning with the plunder, which he gave to his men and from which also he paid tribute to the king of Gath. He, however, pretended to the king that he was continually making attacks against the South Country of Judah, or against the country of the Kenites, or

other of the Hebrew tribes, so that the king would feel that he had turned completely against the Hebrews and that he would always remain faithful to him.

The Philistines, probably feeling that as they had won the strongest warrior of the Israelites, they might more readily succeed in their attacks, decided to make war against the Hebrews. David and his men were summoned by Achish. Naturally the young Hebrew chieftain found himself in a painful position. He had not before attacked the Hebrews. He clearly did not wish to do so now. But, seeing no way of avoiding the issue, he agreed to go with the king against the Israelites. When, however, the other kings of the Philistines learned that he was with them, they objected strongly, saying that if he were to go down with them to battle and was in the camp with them, he might wish to ingratiate himself with his former leader and thus, in the battle itself, might turn against them. He, therefore, was directed not to go into the battle, but to return to his home at Ziklag.

When he drew near his home, he learned that during his absence the Amalekites had made a raid upon his country, had carried away captive all the people who were in it, including David's wives and children, and had destroyed the town with fire.

After consulting the oracle of Jehovah, David pursued the raiders with his six hundred men. At the Brook Besor he left two hundred, who had become wearied, in charge of the baggage, while he went hastily on with four hundred men. Overtaking the Amalekites while they were eating and drinking and dancing on account of the spoils they had taken, he routed them completely, killing all the men excepting four hundred young men who rode upon camels, and recovering his wives and all who had been captured, together with all the plunder. On his return, he decided that the spoils should be divided not only among the warriors themselves but that those who had remained behind in charge of the baggage should also have their share, thus establishing an entirely new custom which henceforth obtained among the Hebrews.

Again in the final division of the spoils David's hopes and plans for the future are disclosed, for he sent portions to his friends among the elders of Judah. He also sent gifts to the leaders of the tribes in southern Palestine, in Hebron, in the

cities of the Kenites and in all of the other places where he and his men had earlier dwelt. In this way he secured and held the friendship, not only of his own people of Judah, but also of all of the stronger tribes of southern Canaan. It was already beginning to appear that Saul's strength was waning and that a change in the political situation might soon arise which would open the way for David to become one of the great leaders of his race. As soon as the place should open for him, it was beyond question that he would be ready for it. If there came a conflict between the different tribes, he, as a friend to many, would be far more likely to succeed. David was showing himself here again, as so many times before, not merely the warrior, but also the man of tact and the diplomat.

As we shall see, the Philistines were completely successful in their attacks upon the Hebrews, and Saul and his sons were slain. When, however, the victorious Philistines returned home, David already having heard the news, had abandoned the town of Ziklag and had gone up to Hebron, where in the midst of his Hebrew kinsmen, he began to strengthen his hold upon all the other tribes. His tact and progress in winning friends were such that within a very few years he had succeeded in uniting all of Israel into one kingdom.

Would David have been justified under the circumstances, in killing Saul, when the king was in his power? Aside from the moral issue, would it have been good policy for David to have taken Saul's life? Did David do right in going to the Philistines and taking up his residence among them on friendly terms? Was David justified in deceiving the king of Gath regarding the plundering expeditions that he was making against the Amalekites and in pretending that he was plundering the southern Hebrew tribes? When the Philistines were about to attack Saul and his followers, was David justified in going with them and pretending that he would himself join in the attack upon the Hebrews? Indicate the different ways in which his experiences in the wilderness and afterward among the Philistines, were tending to fit him for the position of king of the Hebrews. Had he any reason for believing that he would be able to unite all the various tribes of the Hebrews into one great kingdom?

V.

DAVID'S RELIGIOUS SPIRIT AND PATRIOTISM.

David attributed his success not at all to his personal charm, or to his ability, or even to his bravery. In the case of most of his battles he waited until after he had consulted the priests regarding the wishes of Jehovah, and after the contests were over, he gave the praise to the Lord of hosts who, he believed, was protecting Israel. In all of his battles we find likewise no evidence of personal self-seeking, but a spirit of loyalty and love for his country and his followers.

When urging upon Saul the desirability of letting him fight with the Philistine giant, David said that Jehovah, who had delivered him from the claw of the lion and the claw of the bear would deliver him also from the hand of this Philistine. As Goliath in his boastings cursed David by his god, David responded: "You come to me with a sword and a spear and a shield, but I come to you in the name of Jehovah of hosts and the God of the ranks of Israel whom you have insulted. Today Jehovah will deliver you into my hands that I may smite you and cut off your head, and I will this day give the head of the army of the Philistines to the birds of the heavens and to the wild beasts of the earth, that all the world may know that there is a God in Israel. For the battle is Jehovah's and he will give you into our hands."

After he had been banished from the court and Saul by his own rashness and through carelessness of his guards, had come into David's hands so that his life might easily have been taken, the knightly warrior withheld his hand, saying: "Jehovah liveth. Either Jehovah shall smite him or his day shall come to die, or he shall go down into battle and be destroyed. Jehovah forbid that I should put forth my hand against Jehovah's anointed." In his response to Saul's invitation to come over to him in a friendly spirit, he said: "Jehovah will reward each man's righteousness and fidelity; for Jehovah delivered you into my hand today, but I would not raise my hand against Jehovah's anointed."

Again, when, owing to the entreaties of Abigail, he decided to spare the life of Nabal, he looked upon that also as in accordance with the will of Jehovah, saying: "Blessed be Jehovah, the God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me. Blessed

be your discretion, and blessed be you yourself who have kept me this day from committing an act of bloodshed and from delivering myself by my own hand."

His patriotism is shown no less by the fact that when he was living among the Philistines and even leading the king of Gath to believe that he was frequently plundering the Hebrews and treating them as enemies, he continually spared them but turned his hand rather against the Amalekites and others who were their enemies.

We, of course, do not know when there came to David the vision of the greater Israel which should unite all of the different tribes into one nation with himself as king. There is, however, reason to believe that this vision had come to him early, for nowhere in his history do we find any appearance of jealousy; nowhere do we find it recorded that he, being of Judah, looked down in contempt upon the tribes of Benjamin or any of the tribes of the northern Israelites. Always the Hebrews were the people of the chosen nation, always Jehovah was the one King and Lord of them all. Even after the death of Saul we find that his son Ishbaal, who had succeeded to his position, was looked upon by David as the rightful king of the northern Hebrews. And when with the purpose of winning David's favor, possibly with some desire of uniting the kingdom but, at any rate, with the thought of becoming his followers, the guerrilla captains, Baanah and Rechab, killed the young king and brought his head to David, he had them promptly killed for their act of treachery, and also because they had "slain a righteous person in his own house upon his own bed."

Although as a private individual David committed many sins, and he himself realized his own weakness, he always placed his reliance on Jehovah. Although not all, if any of the psalms that have been attributed to David were written by him, there can be no doubt that he was one of the great singers of Israel and one whose soul was kindled with true poetic fire.

No less insistent throughout all the records of David's activity is the spirit of patriotism, of absolute devotion to the welfare of his people, of a readiness to do all, to be anything, to suffer anything, if only through the favor of Jehovah as he believed and in accordance with his will, the nation may be brought to its highest estate and the people of Jehovah be

exalted. There can be little doubt that in his day and nation, this spirit of religion and this trust in the power and special favor of Jehovah had much to do with securing for David the confidence and trust and love of his people. They were no small part of that equipment which enabled him to become the great king who should unify his race.

Is there any essential difference between doing the will of God and living conscientiously, doing from day to day what one believes to be his duty?

Should any less credit be given to David for unselfish patriotism because he realized that by cultivating the favor of the different tribes of Israel he could best succeed in holding their friendship and bringing them into a single kingdom? Was his treatment of Saul right and just throughout? Was his treatment of Abner right and just? In the light of the age and the ideas of the ancient East, were David's religious professions mere hypocrisy?

VI.

THE SPIRIT AND STANDARDS OF AN AGE.

In these modern days we hear much about the "spirit of the age" in which we live. It has been shown by many historians and writers on political questions that men are to a great extent the product of their time, and often too little credit seems to be given to individuals for the originality of their own thoughts or of their own plans of work and of success. And it is largely true that we are all the product of our times, and that our acts are determined largely by the customs under which we live. And yet the great individual counts.

In those ancient days it would scarcely have been possible for either Saul or David to have become the great leaders of their people, had they not been men of remarkable physical power, men who were successful in battle and in hand-to-hand conflicts. Combined with this physical strength and skill was also of necessity found a bold and brave spirit which did not shrink from danger. But at the present day, though we do admire physical courage and prowess, those qualities are not necessary to success. Among the great statesmen of modern times, such as Mr. Gladstone or Disraeli of England, the question of physical courage is rarely raised, and still less often does one speak of their feats of strength and endurance.

Mental accomplishment, real brain power, originality in developing new plans, oratory, and the power to persuade the multitude — these traits are more often looked upon as elements of success than mere physical courage. Doubtless even in David's day these also played their parts; but they, at that time, were of less importance than physical power and personal prowess.

The leaders of men at that time, however, adopted means to accomplish their ends that now would be sharply condemned. David, fleeing from the wrath of Saul, lied to the priests of Nob regarding his purposes and the reasons for his leaving the court. In such circumstances many people would deceive today; but now such deceptions would hardly be recorded without some indication that the act was wrong. Beyond doubt, the conscience of the average man today is much more sensitive on the question of truth-telling than in the ancient days.

David also for many months adopted a regular course of deception toward the king of Gath in whose city he was living. In order that his deception might not be discovered, in all of his regular forays he slew all persons, men, women and children, who might report where his attacks were made. No such practices today would be tolerated in any civilized country. And yet, in the words of the ancient narrative not only is no word of condemnation uttered, but his act seems to be silently justified.

Of even greater importance are some personal characteristics of temper and cruelty toward those who opposed their will. Saul, in fits of anger, which are looked upon in the narrative really as the consequence of a mental malady, attempted repeatedly to kill David. He also slew the priests of Nob, because he thought they had been favoring David. David himself in many instances showed anger and committed deeds that at the present time would in no country of the world be tolerated. Had it not been for the intervention of Abigail, he would doubtless have slain Nabal and many of his followers, simply because he had not been properly recognized and had been refused food for himself and his men when he felt that he had a right to expect friendly hospitality.

He also condemned without hearing, but properly enough, the treacherous slayers of the young king Ishbaal. On the other

hand we can see no justification from the modern point of view for his killing out of hand the man who came to bring him news of the death of Saul and his two sons in the fatal battle of Mount Gilboa. We know that modern times would not justify his various marriages, although probably they would justify his refusal to receive Abner and his friends when they wished to make peace with him after the death of Saul, unless they brought with them Michal, his first wife, whom Saul, after David's expulsion from the kingdom, had given to another husband. These various actions that have been mentioned, and many others that might be cited, call attention most vividly to the great difference in customs between those days and these. And yet, throughout all the narratives, we find clearly brought before us the noble qualities of magnanimity, uprightness, bravery, and, perhaps above all, the spirit of righteous devotion to an ideal and the unselfish readiness to do one's duty even though one is not to receive an immediate reward. There can be no question that some of the most fundamental principles of success are substantially unchangeable at all periods of human history and in all stages of civilization. Personal bravery, trustworthiness, fidelity to one's friends, the ability to stand for a principle and to sacrifice, if necessary, for that principle, and a spirit which looks up to one's God as the guide of one's life—these characteristics have always been fundamental; they have always been admired and loved. They have always been among the leading contributors to success in any stage of civilization and in any department of human activity.

Do the customs of David's day excuse him for cruelty? It has sometimes been said that a man's stage of civilization can be judged by his willingness to break with the customs of his day for the sake of accomplishing his end. How far is this opinion right? How far ought a man to follow the customs of his day, and in what circumstances ought he to violate those customs?

Subjects for Further Study.

(1) Origin and Character of the Philistines. *Encyclopedia Biblica*, III, pp. 3713-3721; Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible*, III, pp. 844-848.

(2) Select the American public man (soldier or statesman) whose character in your judgment most resembles the strong, good qualities in David's character. Study carefully his life and career; then judge the relative greatness and service to the world of the two men.

CHAPTER III.

THE NEED OF BREADTH AND SELF-CONTROL IN STATESMANSHIP.

SAUL'S CHARACTER AND FATE.—I Sam. 19; 31; II Sam. 1.

Parallel Readings.

Kent, *Historical Bible*, Vol. II, pp. 87-91, 114-120.

Croly, Chap. III; Lowell, Chaps. V, VI.

And the women sang to each other as they danced, and said,

Saul has slain his thousands,
But David his ten thousands.

And it made Saul very angry, and this saying displeased him, and he said, They ascribed to David ten thousands, while to me they ascribed but thousands, and what can he have more but the kingdom? And Saul kept his eye on David from that day forward. And Saul was afraid of David.—*I Sam. 18: 7, 8.*

Daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,
Who clothed you daintily in finest linen,
Golden ornaments he placed on your garments,
How the mighty have fallen in the midst of battle!—*II Sam. 1: 24.*

He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty;
And he that ruleth his spirit, than he that taketh a city.—*Prov. 16: 32.*

I have touched the highest point of all my greatness:
And, from that full meridian of my glory,
I haste now to my setting.—*Shakespeare.*

Of all the passions, jealousy is that which exacts the hardest service, and pays the bitterest wages. Its service is: to watch the success of our enemy; its wages: to be sure of it.—*Colton.*

I.

THE WEAKENING POWER OF JEALOUSY.

There are few more pathetic figures in biblical history than Saul. He was possessed of many heroic characteristics. He was the man who founded the kingdom, and was probably the only leader in Israel at that time who could have established it; and yet, on account of his personal weaknesses, he eventually failed.

The most noteworthy of his weaknesses, perhaps, was that of jealousy—one of the most natural, common, and yet unpleasant and injurious characteristics of human nature. When, on account of the military success of David, Saul's subjects

began to praise him, the king felt that he had reason to fear for his throne. In those early days of warfare, when personal prowess was the chief element of success in a warrior, this fear was not unnatural. Only a man confident in his own power, generous of heart, and a reader of other men's souls, would have been able without such fear to listen to the praises of one who might well become a rival. We know enough of the personal characteristics of David to be confident that Saul had no real cause for fear, but he was not a good judge of human nature. He did not understand the nobility of David's character, and as we see from many other instances in his life, he did not have full confidence in his own strength and ability. It is a great man who will put an enemy or one whom he believes to be opposed to himself into a position of authority. A well-known university president recently invited into his faculty and promoted a man whom he believed to be his personal enemy, because, as he said, "this great scholar can bring credit and strength to the university, and why should I place my own comfort before the welfare of the university?" But this university president had confidence in his own strength and was a man far above the narrow weakness of any petty jealousy.

Besides suspicion, another element of jealousy that causes the greatest unhappiness to its victim is envy. Saul not merely feared David, he envied him his popularity; and, as we see, every sign of affection toward David on the part of Jonathan or of the people caused King Saul the greatest personal suffering because of his despicable envy.

Any exhibition of jealousy is at once recognized by those who see it as a weakness, and most persons despise it intensely. We may readily note how Saul lost the favor and friendship of his followers by this feeling toward David. When the maidens of Israel, on David's return from battle, sang that Saul had slain his thousands and David his ten thousands, it is quite probable that at first they had no thought of disloyalty to Saul. They naturally wanted to praise the returning champion, and in the exuberance of generous feeling toward him and of patriotic love for their country, which they thought his victory had saved, they exaggerated the relative merit of the youthful warrior. Saul's resentment, however, of the song must have cooled their loyalty to the king, and would

certainly tend to strengthen rather than to weaken their preference for David.

Moreover, when Saul in his jealous hatred, after David had been compelled to flee from court, ordered the assassination of the priests of Nob, because in all innocence Ahimelech had welcomed David, whom he supposed to be on an important errand for the king, the king not only alienated all the friends of these priests of Nob, but he also lost the confidence and affection of his right-minded followers.

Saul's persistent pursuit of David could not fail to have had an ill effect upon all the soldiers engaged in the chase. They knew that on one occasion at least David had spared Saul's life, when he might readily have taken it. David had, moreover, been a popular comrade of theirs in earlier days, and for them to see Saul, goaded on by his groundless fear and jealousy, attempting to take the life of their friend and favorite must have detracted greatly from their loyalty toward him.

Jealousy tends also to prevent success not only in warfare, but also in all fields of activity. How often, for example, a young surgeon or teacher or engineer, because he is jealous of the rising reputation of another member of his own profession, fails to learn from the man whom he fears to be a rival the special points of superiority which that rival possesses. The more modest man, too broad-minded to be tinged with jealousy, seeks information from every source; and this breadth of view and readiness to gain strength from all persons, even those who may be rivals, leads perhaps more than anything else to success. The scientific men who advance most rapidly are those who are modestly glad to learn from any source, however humble.

It is perhaps scarcely too much to say that this weakness of Saul's eventually cost him his kingdom. David was not, as a matter of fact, Saul's rival, as his subsequent history showed. He was beyond all question a loyal friend of Saul's son and presumptive successor, Jonathan. Had he remained at Saul's court as a member of his military staff, as one of his chief leaders in war, he would have brought to Saul's side his friends and kinsmen of Judah and of the southern tribes, who afterwards became David's allies in his contests with Saul's successors. Had Saul retained the friendship of David, it is

more than probable that the fatal battle of Gilboa would never have been fought; that either the Philistines, knowing the strength of Israel, would not have attacked, or had they attacked the Israelites, Saul, with the aid of David and with the united strength that would thus have been at his side, would have won a victory instead of suffering fatal defeat. It is not too much to say that this weakening power of jealousy cost Saul his happiness for years, and eventually his life.

Are you willing to see any rival in business or in sport pass you? In any contest does the strife itself or the victory improve you most personally? As our years increase or we attain to higher positions in business or society or work, are our rivals in all fields of activity of a higher class and more worthy as contestants? Is the contest for the presidency more interesting and enjoyable to the contestant than that for governor, or the contest for the governorship more exciting and enjoyable than that for alderman? Enumerate certain major advantages that come from rivalry in business or scholarship or moral excellence. Can any advantage come from yielding to jealousy?

II.

THE CONTRAST BETWEEN SAUL AND DAVID.

The lives of Saul and David were so interwoven that one naturally thinks of the two men together, and one finds himself even unconsciously contrasting their strong and weak points. It should not be forgotten, however, that David was the favorite character with almost all of the writers—certainly all of the later writers of Hebrew history. We must, therefore, expect that when he is contrasted with Saul, the narrators are unconsciously prejudiced in his favor. In spite of this fact, however, there are definite enough statements regarding the acts of each to enable us to form a positive judgment of the personal characteristics of the two men.

In that earlier day when leadership meant primarily leadership in battle, it was, of course, essential that both of these great military leaders be brave, and at no time do we find the personal courage of either hero questioned.

David was, beyond doubt, by far the more pleasing personality. Men turned to him, not only because they trusted him and needed his assistance, but also because they liked

him. From the beginning he was popular at the court of Saul. There can be little doubt that the songs of the women in praise of David that aroused Saul's jealousy were phrased in so complimentary terms because the singers liked the hero, and they sang gladly the praises of the man whom they personally admired and whom every one loved. Moreover, when David was driven from Saul's court and gathered about him a band of the discontented, it was clear from their later achievements that many of his followers, if not all, were men who came to him not for the sake of plunder or for the love of fighting, but because he had aroused in them a feeling of personal loyalty which made them wish to serve him. Nowhere in the records do we find any intimation of this personal attractiveness in Saul. David was loyal to him because he was the king, the Lord's anointed, and from all the records we derive the impression that he was chosen king in the first place because of his mighty deeds in war and his promise of becoming a great warrior king. Saul's method of gathering about him the Israelites for their attack upon the cruel Ammonites east of the Jordan, by slaying the oxen with which he had been ploughing and sending the gory pieces about among the chieftains, summoning them to follow him for vengeance, shows indeed the characteristics of a leader in kindling the spirit of patriotism and fight, but does not show any ability to arouse personal affection.

David, although a man of marked ability and one who met with pronounced success in practically all of his undertakings, was, nevertheless, one whose manner at least was modest and who never thrust himself forward into positions to which he was not called. When the suggestion was first made that he become the king's son-in-law, his reply was modest, but when the opportunity was clearly before him, his action was prompt, decisive, and successful. Although Saul, after his anointing by Samuel, went quietly back to his home and waited for the opportunity to come before he assumed the rôle of leader, his jealousy of David and his readiness to put out of the way his chief supporter and warrior, show a touch of personal vanity, as well as doubt of his own capacity to control a difficult situation, which is a sure sign of weakness.

Saul also seemed to lack the feeling of faithful loyalty to a friend which David possessed. David had given him no

real cause for hatred when he attempted to slay him. In his rash jealousy at one time he threatened to strike his loyal son Jonathan. His unjustifiable slaying of the priests of Nob reveals a lack of loyalty to his followers and to those who had been faithful to him that is a decided blemish on his character, although of his general patriotism and devotion to Israel as a whole there is no question. David, on the other hand, shows the quintessence of faithful loyalty in his relations not only to Saul himself, whose life he spared on at least one memorable occasion, but also later in the care which he took for the welfare of the descendants of his tried friend of the olden days, Jonathan.

Entirely aside from the question of any mental derangement, Saul was evidently impulsive, and at times generous, as when, in the earlier days, he showered favors upon the young David, and also later, when on the occasion of David's sparing his life, he called David his son and besought him to return again to court. There is no reason for questioning his sincerity in this declaration of friendship and affection for David. It is probable that in that mood, he felt all that he said, but David, knowing his changeable characteristics, was naturally unwilling to trust him. David had a quick temper as we see in his dealings with Nabal. He had in him much of the cruelty of the outlaw of those early days. There can be little question that, if the shrewd, far-seeing, charming Abigail had not intervened, the punishment of Nabal would have been as bloody and the plunder of his goods as ruthless as any act committed by Saul. And yet there was this difference. In accordance with the customs of the day and with the ordinary rules of human action of that time and country, Nabal deserved the fate that would have been meted out to him. Nowhere in David's life do we find an instance of an action from impulse without thought of the consequences. Even in the commission of his worst sins, that brought him eventually misfortune and unhappiness, there is no reason for thinking that his acts were not the results of a deliberate plan for the attainment of his desires.

Saul's heedless rashness led him at times to commit acts that threatened to alienate his people. Perhaps the most striking example was his foolish resolve in the midst of the battle of Michmash to curse all of his followers who should

eat before the evening, by which time he thought he would have avenged himself upon the enemy. Such a command, accompanied by a vow of destruction upon any who disobeyed, although doubtless founded upon a good religious motive, showed the impulsive foolishness of a man who, when his followers needed to put forth their most strenuous efforts, would deprive them of food for many hours. And when, not knowing of this command, the beloved Jonathan had tasted honey, Saul stood ready to carry out his vow by taking his son's life, and doubtless Jonathan would have been sacrificed, had it not been for the intervention of the people, who would not endure to see the real winner of the battle slain to fulfil a rash and foolish promise of a reckless king.

In no case in David's own life do we find such fatal folly. Rather do we note far-sighted plans to win over to his side those who would otherwise be hostile, in order to clear his way of enemies, to persuade the hesitant that it would pay them to become his friends. His acts reveal a cool-headed, not to say wily master of diplomacy, whose every deed tended to further his well-thought-out plans.

Even in their religious life we see the same characteristics. Both were sincere worshipers and followers of Jehovah, but Saul was fanatical, while David's religion accorded with good judgment and was reasonable. We have already noted the rash vow of Saul. We may likewise recall that on his first summons to the kingship, he was found dancing with the sons of the prophets. Historians are not fully agreed regarding the practices of the sons of the prophets, but there seems every reason to believe that they were similar to the whirling dervishes of modern Egypt and to other religious enthusiasts, some of whom have even been found in modern times among the uncultivated frontiersmen at their camp meetings, or among negroes in their revival services where religious enthusiasm amounts at times to hysterical frenzy.

Contrast these hysterical manifestations of the sons of the prophets with David's dancing and leaping before the ark of the covenant, when, in later years, this was brought to the temple in his new capital at Jerusalem. To be sure, his wife Michal, Saul's daughter, was greatly offended at his acts, which she thought unworthy the dignity of a king. But David had reason to believe that the coming of the ark

of the covenant to his new capital would make that capital the religious center of all Israel. No one knew better than did he what an important influence this would have toward uniting his kingdom and promoting its success. No one else, perhaps, so well realized how important it was that all the people should be impressed with the profound significance of the occasion. For the king thus to take the lead in the public rejoicing emphasized this thought, and in all probability the emphasis was decidedly strengthened by the fact that his action was unwonted. We have no evidence that any one else saw anything grotesque or improper in the king's acts excepting Michal, and there is perhaps good reason to believe that she, moved by personal jealousy and quite possibly also by a feeling that she had been neglected, was disposed to find fault with this husband, who, since the earlier days, when she had cared for him and saved him from her father's vengeance, had apparently found others who pleased him more. David's religious observances, as well as his political acts, appear to have all been guided by a cool judgment that did not lose sight of an ultimate beneficent purpose.

Is a person less sincere when he is clear-headed enough to see the personal advantage to himself from a patriotic action? Did Lincoln foresee that he would probably attain to the presidency as a result of his patriotic fight against the extension of slavery into the territories? If so, was his action any the less praiseworthy? Ought a ruler in his official capacity to follow always the same rules of morality as a man in private life? If David had really been trying to supplant Saul, would Saul have been justified in executing him? What constitutes treason in a monarchy? What is the usual punishment for treason?

III.

MEANING OF RELIGION IN A CRISIS.

In all ages and countries men in time of extreme peril have been wont to call upon their gods. Men who do not possess a religious nature, and who are not accustomed to religious worship, call in tones of despair, hoping unreasonably for some miraculous rescue. On the other hand, those of a religious nature, accustomed to worship and to thought upon matters

beyond this life, find in times of peril their religion a source of comfort and courage. Such persons are not so likely to call in accents of despair for a miraculous rescue as to ask for courage and strength to accept the divine will, whatever it may be.

In the different periods of history and in different countries we naturally find various manifestations of the effects of religious belief, for religion itself assumes widely varying meanings. Primitive peoples, whose idea of the relations of men to the gods are merely superstitious fears of the unseen and of the to them supernatural forces of nature, often in times of peril make pledges to their deities to offer sacrifices, provided their safety is secured. They attempt by these sacrifices or promises of gifts at the altars to buy the favor of their deities. Homer, in the Iliad, sings of the hecatombs offered in prayer, or perhaps even more often in thanksgiving for a great victory, or for the repose of the soul of a hero slain in battle. In those early days questions of right and wrong, of sin and guiltlessness, are rarely raised, even in the minds of the worshippers. The question is rather one of a sufficiency of offerings to buy the favor of the gods.

In later times, of course, after the conception of the deity has changed, God, or the gods, have been recognized as powerful intelligences who judge men in terms of human justice, and offerings are accompanied with prayers for mercy in case of acknowledged sin, or with thanksgiving for the escape from pain that would have been reckoned as justice. Sins are recognized as acts contrary to the will of God, as shown by a man's conscience, and are therefore subject to penalties imposed either indirectly by obscure or miraculous means, or by the direct working of natural laws. Wherever men have believed in the mighty intervention of God in changing the effects of his natural laws, certain religious leaders, priests or medicine men have claimed the power of influencing the gods directly; and from this has come the sale of indulgences, by the purchase of which a man might in advance secure exemption from the consequences of acts that were generally believed to be contrary to the will of God.

Closely related to these various beliefs come naturally the wish to learn in advance the will of the gods or to foresee the future. All of these different beliefs have been, at different

times and in different countries, influences that affected materially the significance of religion in times of crisis.

It is interesting and important to note the ways in which their religious beliefs affected men of so different temperaments as Saul and David in the days of ancient Israel. Both were profound believers in Jehovah; both believed that they were servants of Jehovah and were anxious to carry out his will. Before entering upon acts of great importance, such as beginning a battle, both were accustomed to seek to ascertain the divine will by consulting, through their priests, the ephod. Scholars have been unable to determine exactly what is meant by the ephod and how it was consulted, but it seems reasonably clear from the results that the judgment of the priests, at times quite possibly influenced by the wishes of the king, determined the form of the decision.

We have already seen how Saul, at the battle of Michmash, in his rash way cursed the man who would eat food before evening, and how this rash vow came near costing the Israelites the life of the hero Jonathan. When, after this vow, Saul, through the priest, asked of God, "Shall I go down after the Philistines? Wilt thou deliver them into the hand of Israel?" no answer was received. The priest probably knew that Jonathan had unwittingly taken food that day, though Saul had not yet learned of it, and not caring to make a decision in a matter of so grave importance to the king and the people, the decision was left to the sacred lot. Saul, as we know, stood ready to sacrifice his son, carrying out what, at the present time, would be considered a mere heathen superstition; but although they were unable to prevent the disclosure of Jonathan's act, and although Jonathan, hero as he was, was prepared to accept the decision and be put to death, the people were ready, in a case of so great emergency, to sweep aside what must have seemed even to them the decision of God and to apply the principles of common sense. "But the people said to Saul, 'Shall Jonathan die who has wrought this great deliverance in Israel? Far from it. As Jehovah liveth, there shall not one hair of his head fall to the ground, for he has wrought with God this day.'" The people saw far better than their superstitious king that the doing of the will of God in guarding the life of the innocent was vastly more important than the unwitting violation of the order of the king, though

that had been given from religious motives and accepted as a sacred pledge. Saul's religious attitude in this time of crisis was that of a narrow-minded, superstitious, though absolutely sincere follower of what he believed to be the divine will. The judgment of the great mass of Israel's warriors was that God's will must be in accord with the principles of common sense and of sound judgment.

Later in life, as Saul approached the last great crisis, when he found himself practically deserted by the priests and religious leaders of Israel, he turned in the same helpless, superstitious manner to the witch of Endor, one of the representatives of the old heathenism that still remained in Palestine. Her methods seem to have been those of the later fortune-tellers or spiritualistic mediums. Although Saul came to her in disguise, she must have recognized him from his gigantic form and the type of his followers. Presumably her sympathies were with his enemies; at any rate her judgment was sound in the belief that a leader consulting her under such circumstances was not likely to be successful in battle. Her summoning before her the spirit of Samuel and her pronouncement of the judgment that he gave, is a mark of not merely a shrewd judge of mankind and of events, but also of marked courage and determination. Saul was evidently greatly impressed by her decision and, overcome by terror, went with fear and hopelessness, though bravely, as became a heroic warrior, to meet his fate.

Nowhere in David's life do we find any such crude manifestation of religious belief in times of emergency. He, too, before the battle consulted the ephod, but his priests, knowing the spirit of the leader, in every instance cited in the Bible, advised an attack and predicted victory. Nowhere do we find David uttering any rash vows which might either weaken his followers or lead to such terrible consequences as occurred in the sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter in the early wars against the Ammonites on the east of the Jordan or as would have resulted in the sacrifice of Jonathan had not the people's judgment been much sounder than that of their king. David's religion seems always to have been a source of courage and of comfort to him in times of crisis, excepting when his own conscience told him that his acts had been wrong, and that it was his duty to make reparation. When the prophet Nathan

most shrewdly and wisely, though boldly, aroused the conscience of the king to recognize his guilt in the seizure of Bathsheba and the wanton sacrifice of Uriah the Hittite, the king recognized his guilt. His religion led him to call upon God for mercy, though his religious belief was not strong enough to lead him to any further attempt to put away his sin. It was, perhaps, then too late to make any kind of reparation. Throughout his life, however, David's religion was to him a source of joy and strength.

Why do people of the present day ever seriously seek to have their fortunes told? How does the mere listening to one's fortune thus told tend in itself to bring about the results predicted? Ought one's prayer in time of crisis to be a plea for rescue and safety or for strength and courage to meet the crisis sanely and to accept whatever result may come as the will of God? Many of the members of ignorant Mohammedan tribes of Upper Egypt are said to have attacked the English battle squares with reckless bravery, because their religion had taught them that death won in slaying a Christian would lead them straight to a blissful paradise. Before Port Arthur in the Russo-Japanese war thousands of Japanese marched cheerfully to certain death, because it was said they counted it a joy and privilege to sacrifice their lives for the sake of their beloved Emperor whom they counted divine, the direct descendant of the gods. At the battle of Gettysburg the Confederate soldiers whose bravery gave world-wide fame to Pickett's charge, went cheerfully against the Northern lines, knowing that many of them could never return. Compare and distinguish carefully the differences in the religious element that supported the bravery of the men in the different instances just cited.

IV.

THE FATAL BATTLE OF GILBOA.

Although in the period of Saul's strength we find mention made of many victories, even over the peoples east of the Jordan and to the north, his personal weaknesses had broken his power. The expulsion of David from his court had meant to Saul not merely the loss of probably his most skillful warrior, but also that of many others of his ablest men, several hundreds of whom followed David when he went into the South

Country and afterward to the Philistines. There is good reason to believe that this defection and Saul's gradual loss of popularity were influential in leading the Philistines to renew their attacks upon Israel.

According to the records, Achish, the king of Gath, whose vassal David had become, had so great confidence in David's fidelity that he put him in charge of his bodyguard and determined to take him with him in the attacks against the Israelites. The other leaders of the Philistines, however, shrewdly and probably more accurately, thinking that David at the time of conflict might suddenly determine to take sides with Israel against them, all insisted upon his returning to the country of the Philistines and not accompanying them to the battle.

As the Philistines approached, they came up the coast plains west of Israel's strongholds, then turned eastward through the valley of Esdraelon, with probably two intentions: first, to cut Saul off from any possible relief from the northern tribes, and in the second place, to secure for themselves a greater freedom for manœuvering with their horses and chariots in case the battle could be fought in the lowlands.

Saul, however, recognized his weakness, and, fearing the possibility of defeat, drew up his men with his experienced skill on the rocky heights of Gilboa, where he would have first, the advantage of forcing the Philistines to leave their chariots and horses and meet his men on foot, and second, the advantage, no slight one in those days of hand-to-hand conflicts, of an attack from the higher level.

In his doubt and fear regarding the coming battle, he naturally, as was his custom, consulted the priests and besought the oracles of Jehovah for signs of victory. Probably his priests shared his doubts for he obtained no response. With his superstitious attitude of mind he turned, as we have already seen, to the witch of Endor, going to her in disguise and asking for judgment on the events of the morrow. Her decision overwhelmed him with despair, and it took her persuasions and those of his followers to convince him that he should take food and prepare for the battle. Like the brave man, however, that he had always been, he and his sons stood firm in the battle, while most of their followers turned in dismay and fled, pursued and slaughtered by the oncoming Philistines. His three sons, Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchishua, fell,

slain in his presence, and he himself was sorely wounded by the archers. Knowing the barbarous treatment that he might expect from his foes, seeing that all hope was gone, like the Roman Antony centuries later, he first besought his armor-bearer to slay him. When the latter refused, he fell on his own sword and his armorbearer immediately followed his example. The acts of the Philistines in stripping him of his armor, and fastening his body with those of his sons on the wall of Bethshan showed clearly how accurate was Saul's judgment regarding the treatment that he might anticipate from his foes.

A pleasing token of grateful remembrance of Saul's generous and successful bravery lights up the last tragic scene in his career. As will be recalled, the Ammonites had threatened in the early days all the men of Jabesh in Gilead with the loss of the right eye, when Saul's vigorous attack destroyed the Ammonites and saved the Jabeshites. In memory of that day they marched from their eastern home all night, took the bodies of Saul and his sons from the wall of Bethshan, carried them back to Jabesh, held ceremonial laments, and then buried them under the famous tamarisk tree near the city, and fasted seven days in their honor.

The life of the impetuous warrior king was ended, and with his death went also the liberty of the Israelites. For nearly a decade, under Saul's weakling son and successor, whose armies were led by Saul's chief captain Abner, the northern tribes were vassals of the Philistines. The presumption is also that for some years David, as leader of Judah and the southern tribes, paid tribute to the Philistines.

Saul's services, however, cannot be overlooked. Out of a group of disconnected, warring tribes he had made and for some years had maintained a single nation that, however loosely connected in many ways, acted together in times of emergency. Although eventually he fell before his foreign foes, it was still Saul's prowess and his strength as a leader that made David's later successful career possible.

Explain how Saul's visit to the medium of Endor may have contributed toward his defeat in battle. In your judgment, had David accompanied the Philistines to the battle, would he have fought for or against Saul? On which side ought he to have fought? What reasons have you for thinking that

Saul's treatment of David led to his own destruction? Work out your own plan, as far as possible in detail, for a careful study of Saul's life.

V.

DAVID'S EULOGY OF SAUL AND HIS WORK.

The generous and noble character of David is seen in his reception of the news of Saul's defeat and death. Though the battle of Gilboa opened David's way to the kingship of Judah, and eventually to the rule of all Israel, and although David, with his clear insight into political conditions, must have forecast, at any rate in hope, this future, when the man from Saul's camp came and reported that the people fled from the battle, that many of the soldiers had fallen, and that Saul and Jonathan, his son, were dead, "David took hold of his clothes and tore them, and all the men who were with him did likewise, and they mourned and wept and fasted until evening for Saul and for Jonathan, his son, and for the people of Jehovah and for the house of Israel because they had fallen by the sword." There is no reason to doubt that David's grief was sincere and heartfelt. Jonathan was his most intimate friend and sworn brother, while Saul in his earlier days had been his patron and friend, whose good qualities David could not fail to discern and remember, even though he could not overlook his weaknesses. It was natural that he should mourn them together. He sang in their honor a noble requiem that has been preserved to the present day. The singers of Israel, like the European bards of later days, composed their own songs, and there is good reason for believing that David's ode of sorrow comes in practically its original form from the lips of the warrior poet. This dirge has been characterized as follows:

"The artistic beauty of the poem is unsurpassed. It opens with a stanza in the quick two-beat measure, which rises in the second stanza to the three-beat, and in the third to the four-beat measure, which is maintained throughout the song, until the last refrain is introduced, giving the effect of a final sob. In the first stanza the nation is called upon to join in the lamentation, in the second the cruel exultation of the Philistines is viewed with horror, and in the third, nature and especially the mountains of Gilboa, the scene of the disastrous

battle, are called upon to join in the universal lamentation. In the next two stanzas the courage, the prowess and the virtues of Saul and Jonathan are powerfully presented. The women of Israel, who led in the ancient lamentations, are reminded of what Saul has done for them and the nation. The culmination of the poem is reached in the pathetic stanza in which David protests his deep love for Jonathan and voices his own bitter sorrow."

David's relief at the removal of fear of Saul's hatred must have been great. He could now safely return to his own people. His life opened before him; his heart must have leaped with ambition. Leaving the country of the Philistines, with his usual forethought and tact he turned to Judah and the southern tribes, who, in the circumstances, quite naturally called him to rule over them, while he himself must have been looking forward and planning for the eventual leadership of all Israel. But with all this in prospect, his love for Jonathan, his sympathetic heart, his insight into character, his great-souled nature led him to feel towards Saul pity rather than anger or hate. He recognized Saul's bravery and skill and real services to Israel, so that when his tragic fate overcame him on the heights of Gilboa, David's lament was sincere and genuine.

Could David be sincere in his grief over the death of Saul and still feel glad of the personal opportunities which his death afforded? Is there any religious element to be found in David's dirge over Saul and Jonathan? Does this dirge sound to you more like a heathen or like a Hebrew poem? Point out the elements of beauty, artistic or moral, in the poem. In what respects are our modern funeral customs an improvement upon those of the Hebrews? Or inferior?

VI.

THE ESSENTIALS OF EFFECTIVE STATESMANSHIP.

A little reflection regarding the characters of Israel's first two kings, Saul and David, gives one a clear conception of the qualities required to make a person an effective and successful statesman.

A man may be a brave, and on the whole effective, fighter without great mental ability, but even in hand-to-hand conflicts a quick mind is of great advantage and no one can be

a successful general without a broad-minded intelligence which enables him to grasp as a whole plans of attack and defense on a great scale. In later times and in more complex societies, when the business of the statesman is not so much warfare as finance, the development of economic resources, the protection of the industrial welfare of a people, intelligence, intellectual training and manifold knowledge become even more essential.

The contrast of the two characters, Saul and David, bring into high relief the grave necessity of self-control and cool judgment on the part of the ruler. A man who cannot control his temper, a man who will not maintain at least the semblance of patience in times of emergency, or one who will not restrain his acts until he can foresee their results, is sure to fail in any field of activity, but especially in a position as leader where self-control is the prime consideration in enabling one to control others. Whether David or Solomon or some other of the wise men of ancient Israel was the author of the proverb, "He who ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city," there can be no question as to its essential truth.

Closely related to the characteristics just mentioned is the power of insight into character and the ability to understand the feelings and wishes of one's people. This gift of understanding the popular will is something different from mere intelligence, something quite apart from ordinary knowledge that can be acquired by study. It implies a sympathy with one's neighbors, and apparently an almost intuitive touch with people of all classes and types in society. The men who have possessed this gift are not always the men who are the best fitted to plan the work of a great state, but this power is of the greatest service in putting plans into effect and often in knowing what plans are possible. It is generally conceded that, although Jefferson lacked the breadth of intellect and original creative power of Hamilton, in his understanding of the American people and the way to reach their sympathies he was greatly Hamilton's superior. Lincoln's greatness as a statesman was due perhaps as much to this quality of sympathetic insight as to any other of his great gifts. In this respect it is worth while to note the sharp contrast between Saul and David and to recognize how much of David's success was due to this gift of understanding.

Closely allied with this, of course, is tact in dealing with individuals and social groups, whether foes or friends. These qualities often belong to a boss as well as to a statesman, to a man who is a political manipulator for selfish ends, as well as to a patriotic leader, but the qualities are important for a statesman of the highest type.

Beyond all these personal gifts must be emphasized, of course, patriotism — unselfish devotion to one's country's welfare. All personal gifts of whatever nature, if turned to selfish ends, fall short of effective statesmanship, though unselfish patriotism, unaccompanied by the personal characteristics mentioned, is not in itself enough to make any public man effective.

In these later days, when personal religion seems to have no longer the hold upon the popular mind that it had in the earlier days, it is of importance to note how great was the influence of devotion to Jehovah in the lives of both Saul and David. Although, we have seen, Saul's religion often degenerated into mere superstition, so that it was a source of weakness rather than strength, David's religion seems never to have been a source of weakness, and in many instances, to have been a source of strength. Beyond all doubt, any man's conception of his relation to his God cannot fail to affect most profoundly his attitude toward his country and toward the welfare of its people. Without any ascription of a miraculous or supernatural influence in the lives of men, it would still remain true that any statesman's views of his relation to God must color materially his plans of working and living and must thus become an important element in the effectiveness of whatever he undertakes in behalf of his people. Aside from the reaction upon his own personality, the effect which the statesman's religious views produce directly upon his people must also be considered. The most civilized peoples of the present day, although their conceptions of religion are greatly different from those of ancient Israel, are, nevertheless, profound believers in religion and in the thought that the most successful work in statesmanship cannot be combined with a faithless, selfish, ignoble, corrupt character. The belief is also general that the surest guarantee of the noblest character is an absolutely sincere, reasonable, tolerant, devout religious belief.

Analyze as best you can in accordance with the principles of statesmanship mentioned in this section the characters of Presidents Wilson, Taft, Roosevelt, McKinley and Cleveland. Distinguish the boss from the statesman. Which of the qualities named above does the successful boss possess and which does he lack?

Subjects for Further Study.

(1) Hebrew Mourning Customs. Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible*, III, pp. 453-455; Kent, *Songs, Hymns and Prayers of the Old Testament*, pp. 16, 17.

(2) Read carefully an account of the life and services of Thomas Paine, whose writings had much to do in securing American independence. Judge impartially the effect that his religious views had upon his life and service to his country.

CHAPTER IV.

THE RIGHT AND WRONG OF IMPERIAL EXPANSION.

DAVID AS AN EMPIRE BUILDER.—II Sam. 2—8; 23: 8—39.

Parallel Readings.

Kent, *Historical Bible*, Vol. II, pp. 121-146.

Croly, Chap. IV; Lowell, Chaps. VII, VIII.

Then all the tribes of Israel came to David to Hebron and said, See we are your bone and your flesh. In times past when Saul was king over us, it was you who led out and brought in Israel, and Jehovah hath said to you, 'Thou shalt be shepherd of my people Israel, and thou shalt be prince over Israel.'—*II Sam. 5: 1, 2.*

And David kept on growing greater, for Jehovah of hosts was with him.—*II Sam. 5: 10.*

Ez fer war, I call it murder—
 Ther you hev it plain and flat;
 I don't want to go no furdur
 Than my Testyment fer that.—*Lowell.*

The arms are fair

When the intent for bearing them is just.—*Shakespeare.*

Nothing except a battle lost can be half so melancholy as a battle won.—
Duke of Wellington.

I.

THE DECLINE OF SAUL'S KINGDOM.

After the tragic fate of Saul and his elder sons had been decided on Mount Gilboa the way seemed clear for David to

become in due course of time the ruler of all Israel. His personal popularity and also the care that he had taken to court the friendly feelings of the southern tribes received their immediate reward; while the friendship of the northern tribes was gradually won over by the skillful tactics that he had employed throughout his career.

Immediately after the news of Saul's death had been received, David turned towards the south and went to Hebron taking with him his two wives. One was Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, through the marriage with whom he had strengthened his position with one of the southern tribes. The other was Abigail through whose intercession he had spared the life of Nabal and whom after Nabal's death he had himself married, acquiring thereby wealth and influence as well as a wife of great ability and charm. As was learned in the account given of his dealings with Nabal, David had for years, while living as outlaw, protected the flocks and herds of the southern tribes against the attacks of the men of the desert and had thereby won their friendship. It was not difficult for them, as soon as they heard of the death of Saul, to choose for their leader and king a man from among themselves who had already won their affection through his protection of their interests and his personal ability and in whose ranks many of their own people were already fighting.

We need not question the sincerity of David's appreciation of the noble spirit of the Jabeshites, even though he knew that his recognition of their loyal act would serve also to strengthen him with the northern tribes. As soon as he heard of their action he sent messengers to them saying: "May you be blessed by Jehovah because you have shown this kindness to your leader Saul and have buried him. Even so may Jehovah show kindness and truth to you; and I also will do well by you because you have done this thing. Now, therefore, be courageous and valiant; for Saul, your leader, is dead, and the house of Judah has anointed me king over them." It was not, however, until years later that David was to become king also of the northern tribes. Abner, Saul's ablest captain after Jonathan, had survived the battle of Gilboa. As commander of Saul's army he had selected Ishbaal, a younger son of Saul, and had him set up as king over all of the northern

tribes, and had established the new capital east of the Jordan at Mahanaim.

As was to be expected, a conflict between David and the followers of Ishbaal soon began. Apparently both Ishbaal and David, although acting independently of each other, were paying tribute to the Philistines, and not until some years later, after David had become king of all Israel, was he able to throw off the Philistine yoke.

According to the accounts given us, the fate of the divided kingdom and of the separate rulers was determined, as is so often the case in history, by the private personal passions, loves and hatreds of individual actors. Ishbaal, a weak king, was practically under the domination of his great leader Abner, while David, though a strong character and one who eventually controlled, still found it necessary to deal tactfully with his own war chief, Joab, a man of marked military ability, but of narrow mind and petty jealousies.

In a battle fought between Abner and Joab and their followers near the Pool of Gibeon, after an exhibition duel between twelve young champions from each of the two sides, in which apparently all were killed, the forces of Abner were defeated by the men of David. In the retreat that followed, Joab's younger brother, Asahel, a fleet runner, pursuing Abner alone, was slain. Though the older and more skillful warrior had warned him and offered to let him escape and even to take with him some plunder, Abner at length was forced to kill him in self-defense, thereby creating a blood feud with Joab that eventually brought dire results. The battle ended indeed by Abner suggesting a truce to prevent a continuation of what he considered a civil war; but, although the battle ended, the war dragged on. Meantime David continually grew stronger and the followers of Ishbaal fewer and weaker. Abner had apparently for some time felt that it would be wiser for the forces to unite as one kingdom under David. At length Ishbaal, by reproving Abner for having taken to himself Rizpah, who had formerly been a concubine of Saul, offended Abner, who considered rightly that he himself was the actual ruler, although Ishbaal held the title. In consequence Abner sent word to David that he would undertake to persuade the northern tribes to submit. David responded favorably, making first the one condition, that before any negotiations were formally

taken up there should be returned to him the wife of his youth, Michal, the daughter of Saul, whom the king had given to him in return for his victory over the Philistines. It was she who had saved his life when Saul turned against him, but whom Saul later, after the expulsion of David from his kingdom, had given in marriage to another man named Paltiel. This occurrence is a striking illustration of the customs of the time as well as of the threads of personal feelings and interests that mold the welfare of nations. Michal seems to have nothing to say in either case regarding her fate. She had apparently been loyal to David and had protected him against her father even at great risk to herself. She had likewise won the love of her second husband, for when she was taken from him by Abner at David's suggestion, he followed her, weeping as he went, until Abner turned him back. Later we find Michal criticizing David most scornfully for his dancing before the ark of the covenant when it was brought up to Jerusalem, and in turn being rebuked by David whose affection for her had apparently been supplanted by that felt for another wife, for his retort is severe and sarcastic. The narrator adds that Michal, the daughter of Saul, had no child to the day of her death. Had she perhaps inherited some of the jealous disposition of her father?

Abner and David, in the absence of Joab, David's military commander, made arrangements for the transfer of Abner's loyalty from Ishbaal to David with the expectation that the northern tribes in consequence would make David the ruler of all Israel. But Joab on his return followed Abner and treacherously slew him. In thus avenging the death of his brother Asahel, Joab nearly ruined the plans that David his king had made for the welfare of the nation.

This treacherous murder would have prevented absolutely the uniting of the kingdom had not David with his customary tact, as well as with sincerity of feeling, immediately repudiated all knowledge of Joab's deed, giving to Abner a state funeral, sorrowing for him and fasting as for the death of a royal brother, while he likewise cursed Joab as a guilty murderer whom he compelled to take part in the funeral ceremony.

Two of Ishbaal's treacherous captains, hearing of Abner's death, sought the house of Ishbaal, murdered him and brought his head to David thinking thus to win the king's favor. Here

again, doubtless in part from sincere abhorrence of the treacherous deed and doubtless also with the knowledge of the good effect that would be produced upon the northern tribes, David ordered the immediate execution of the murderers and the exposure of their bodies as a warning to the people, while Ishbaal's head was buried with all honor in Abner's grave at Hebron.

The total result, however, of Ishbaal's interference with Abner and of the political circumstances of the time was that all the northern tribes came to David in Hebron and asked him to take the kingship of united Israel, saying that in the days of Saul he had been the warrior who had led them out to battle and to whom Jehovah had said, "Thou shalt be the shepherd of my people Israel and thou shalt be prince over Israel."

Do you approve of David's treatment of Joab? Did not Joab usually have David's welfare at heart? How far was Abner justified in his treatment of Ishbaal? What in your judgment was Abner's chief motive, — personal pique or regard for the welfare of his people?

II.

THROWING OFF THE PHILISTINE YOKE.

The success of the Philistines in overthrowing Saul in the great battle of Gilboa and the relative weakness of both David and Ishbaal in the succeeding years had made these foes of Israel dominant throughout southern Palestine. There can be little doubt that both David and Ishbaal paid tribute to them for a time and were considered their vassals. David's growing strength, however, and the knowledge of the Philistine leaders of his ability naturally tended to make them fearful of his success. In consequence, when they heard that David had been anointed king over Israel as well as over Judah, they decided to move against him. It is not improbable that David himself instituted the revolt, for the northern tribes looked to him as their liberator. The accounts of the war are brief and incomplete. It is probable that it lasted for a number of years. At first David remained in the highlands, making his defense from his old stronghold, the cave of Adullam and the heights around about, and attacking the Philistines as opportunity

offered. Later, as he grew stronger, sometimes by open battle, sometimes by strategy that enabled him to strike them unawares, he succeeded in beating them back; and finally in two great victories on the plain south of Jerusalem he completely won his independence from them, driving them back as far as Gezer, their large fortified city on the border of the western plain.

Consider the economic gain to David's kingdom from these victories. The political gain. The military gain. How far has the United States gained in political and military strength from the annexation of the Hawaiian Islands? From the acquisition of the Philippines?

III.

THE UNIFICATION OF ALL ISRAEL.

David completed his conquest of the ancient land of Canaan by attacking the Jebusites whose hold upon Jerusalem had never yet been shaken. The situation and the fortifications were of such strength that the enemy had little fear of an attack, thinking that even the lame and the blind would be sufficient to hold the city against any assaulting force; but by sending some of his strong warriors up through the water courses David succeeded in gaining a foothold and eventually in capturing the ancient fortress.

Jerusalem was peculiarly well fitted to become the new capital of the united kingdom. It was in the first place a city of almost impregnable strength both by virtue of its natural situation and of the new fortifications and encircling wall and towers built by David. Furthermore, its situation between the land of Judah and that occupied by the northern tribes, meant that David's residence there would not arouse factional jealousies. It was an advantage that a man of David's tact would not overlook.

David's knowledge of human nature and of his people led him further to see the importance of making this capital city, so far as possible, also the religious center of his kingdom. Since the earlier victories over the Philistines, the Israelites had regained control of the ark of Jehovah, which had remained in Baal-Judah. When David had finally established his residence in Jerusalem and had built there a palace, he made

provision for bringing up the ark and thus making Jerusalem pre-eminently the center of the national worship of Jehovah, though it was not until centuries later that the local shrines in the different towns and cities were abolished. The ark was transferred with great ceremony, David assembling all the chosen men of Israel, some thirty thousand, besides the hordes of unarmed people who wished to accompany him, in order to give the ceremony the greatest impressiveness possible. The accidental death of one of the attendants at the moment that he happened to touch the ark to prevent it from falling, was at first interpreted as a signal of Jehovah's displeasure, and the ark remained outside the city in the home of one of David's Philistine bodyguards for a considerable period, until the prosperity of the guard seemed to make it clear that Jehovah's favor had been restored.

At Jerusalem the ark was deposited in a tent especially prepared. Sacrifices and feasts and rich offerings were presented by David, and gifts were distributed among the people in commemoration and celebration of the entrance of this symbol of God's favor, which had been brought by the people from Mount Sinai, into the new capital of the kingdom. With the people united now in loyalty to their ruler and in religious sentiment as well, and with an army loyal, strong, and skilled in warfare, it was natural that David should enter upon the career of conquest which made Israel one of the great states of southwestern Asia.

Compare the geographical and political causes which have made great capitals, Jerusalem, Berlin, Washington, Peking, Paris and Rome. Compare the political, economic, social, artistic, or religious influences which these cities have exercised upon their respective countries and upon the world.

IV.

DAVID'S REASONS FOR BUILDING AN EMPIRE.

David's experience not only with the Philistines but also with the various tribes of Israel had made it clear to him that the only safety for his kingdom lay in a strong military power, and, considering the strength and habits of the neighboring nations, he was perhaps right. The same argument has been

used for many years by the German Empire, and by the advocates of a stronger navy for the United States.

Furthermore the military power of any country is dependent not only upon the strength of its army and navy, but to no less degree upon its financial strength. David was far-sighted enough and had sufficient experience in war and statesmanship to know that he must be regularly provided with supplies for his army and with economic resources for the development of his kingdom. By controlling the people on the borders of Judah and the outlying tribes of Israel he was securing not merely additional territory for agricultural development, but also, what was perhaps of still greater consequence, he was obtaining control of the trade routes between Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria and those running north through Damascus and farther westward on to the territory now known as Asia Minor. Through the facilities afforded by these trade routes he opened the way for the commercial development of Palestine, which was later carried to a much higher degree by his successor Solomon.

Moreover, David himself represented the noblest product of the literary and artistic culture of his race, as well as the civilization of war and conquest. By securing control of the territory of the Canaanites in the lowlands, he and his people were brought into immediate touch with the highest material civilization of the period. The Hebrew race of that day, and especially the tribe of Judah, knew little of the refinements of modern civilization. They were a hill people relying chiefly upon the growth of their flocks and herds for their material welfare, and although they possessed the noblest morality and religion of their day, in the refinements of civilization they were doubtless very inferior to the people of the lowlands whom they had conquered, and especially to the inhabitants of Egypt and Babylon. David was too able a man not to be conscious of the advantages that would come from more intimate association with the surrounding peoples.

Moreover, for any strong man, as well as for any growing nation, mastery of others, the sense of power, the love and will to control are among the dominant ambitions. As soon as the opportunity offered, it was to be expected that a king like David, leader of an invading, aggressive people, would wish to extend the boundaries of his kingdom so as to become

the ruler of a great, wealthy, influential empire, instead of being merely the head of a small, even a vassal kingdom, as for some years Judah had been.

Compare the motives of David with those of King William of Prussia from the years 1860 to 1875. With those of England in India and Egypt. According to the biblical accounts, David was tolerant of the religious beliefs and practices of the Canaanites among whom the various communities worshiped each its own separate Baal. Do you approve of this religious toleration? Why?

V.

METHODS OF CONQUEST.

The great European wars of the present day often lead us to wonder whether there has been any advance whatever in civilization within historic times. The changes that have been wrought by new inventions, increasing the efficiency of weapons of destruction, seem to some to be the chief improvements since the days of David, although, of course, economic reasons and the earlier stage of civilization compelled a somewhat different method of civil and military organization. King David's regular army apparently consisted of only his few chosen leaders and his six hundred trained fighting men who made up his bodyguard. We read that among the leaders there were three of pre-eminent ability, and that following them were thirty, each one of whom was able to slaughter his opponents by the score, for in the early days of warfare personal prowess counted far more than at the present time. Aside from these, every able-bodied man in the kingdom was subject to call in time of need, being regularly summoned by their tribal and local leaders who fought under the direction of David's chieftains. Usually during the winter and spring the army remained at home attending their flocks or tilling their fields. The campaigns were carried on after the harvest time in early summer. The simple habits of the people and this method of fighting enabled David to carry on these wars of conquest year after year without seriously draining the resources of his kingdom. This was done the more readily because the subjugated nations were compelled to pay tribute, and in many instances great numbers of the able bodied were enslaved and forced to cultivate the soil.

In certain cases the wars were begun by hostile nations that had hoped to overwhelm the Hebrews; in other cases David himself took the aggressive. His first extensive foreign campaign was apparently against the Ammonites, east of the Jordan, the war being incited by the treatment of ambassadors from David who were insulted in ways recognized as cruel, uncivilized and contrary to the rules of war even of those early days. Later wars with tribes to the north, east and south extended his kingdom, until it reached from the neighborhood of Damascus on the north to the eastern arm of the Red Sea on the south and from the Phœnicians and Philistines on the west to the desert on the east, a territory nearly twice as large as that originally occupied by the Israelites.

Frequently the wars were carried on with extreme cruelty. In some cases, as in that of the Moabites, the people were completely subjugated, as many as two-thirds of them being put to death and the others enslaved. At other times the conquered nations were left largely under their own government, being forced merely to pay tribute.

In practically every case then, as well as now, all of the contending nations felt that the deity was on their side—a condition of affairs, too, much more easily understood than now, for, in those days, each tribe had its own patron god upon whom it felt that it could normally rely, while, at the present time, all the Christian nations apparently call upon the same God. It is a striking illustration of the narrowness and self-conceit of most individuals, who see the justice of their own side in every dispute so clearly and that of their opponent so dimly, that all apparently feel conscientiously justified, while they condemn unqualifiedly the cause of their opponents.

When one ancient nation conquered another, it was looked upon simply as proof that the god of the victorious people was stronger than the god of the conquered. The weaker god, however, was not rejected as no longer worthy of reverence. The subjugated people still followed their own god, but they often added to this the worship of the conquering deity.

Another method by which David extended his kingdom or confirmed his hold upon conquered territory was by marriage. We have already seen how he had extended his wealth and power by marrying Abigail, the wife of Nabal the Carmelite,

and had won the favor of a southern tribe by his marriage with Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, after he had been driven out of Saul's kingdom. Later, he took other wives; for example, he married the daughter of Talmi the king of Geshur. The same custom of strengthening by marriage the political power of the king was carried to a still greater extent by Solomon, and is by no means unknown even at the present day.

In what ways do the royal families of Europe carry out the same ideas regarding the political importance and use of marriage? What is a morganatic marriage? What is its effect regarding the right of succession to a throne? Cite modern illustrations among rulers and wars in which the barbarities of lust and cruelty are comparable with those of King David in his treatment of conquered peoples. Discuss briefly the religious element in the wars of the present day from (a) the viewpoint of religious justification for war, and (b) the viewpoint of conflicts arising from differing religious beliefs.

VI.

THE RIGHT OF FOREIGN CONQUEST.

Practically every growing nation in all periods of history has felt itself justified in demanding room for expansion. Japan at the present time is said to be looking for territory to which her own people may be sent as settlers. Germany for half a century has been seeking colonies in which to expand. In the earlier days the American colonies, and afterwards the States on the Atlantic Coast, felt that it was necessary for them to secure territory to the westward, and similar feelings and practices are almost universal.

The sentiment followed seems to be that "the earth belongs to him who makes the best use of it," and inasmuch as each powerful nation is in a position to be judge in its own cause, it seems to be often a contest of civilization against barbarism, in which usually the civilized country wins. Civilized peoples with their greater skill in invention and their better practice in organization, are usually the strongest, so that in the ultimate analysis the justification of their conquests is a refined type of the doctrine that might makes right. Certain exceptions to this general principle are found, as in the case of the ancient Greeks, where the more highly cultivated people was

conquered by the Romans who, though on a lower stage of civilization, were nevertheless able to absorb so much of the higher culture of the Greeks that the union of the two seemed to promote rather than to destroy civilization. A somewhat similar statement may be made with reference to the ancient Jews, whose religion and business ability has permeated the civilized world, even though as a separate nation they ceased to exist many centuries ago.

The only way perhaps—at any rate, the only way that seems yet to have been found—by which the benefits of differing civilizations, even of different stages of social development, can be combined without working destruction and injustice, is by the federal system as it has been most extensively and successfully developed in the United States and in Switzerland. In a federal government each local division may retain its own customs so long as it is willing to join with other divisions in matters that are of common concern to all. In Switzerland we find different religions, different races, different languages, and yet a harmonious action in questions that are common to all. It is apparently through the extension of this federal principle that we must look ahead, so far as it shall prove practical, to an ultimate world peace through a world state, which may control in certain common matters, possibly even those touching war and peace, but which shall still leave to each separate state—almost each separate community within each state—the right to direct its own local affairs and to each individual liberty to play a part in proportion to his ability and influence.

What are the advantages of a great unified state as compared with those of separate small states? Draw up a plan of a federated state of Europe naming matters of interest common to all of the states, and indicating also matters of special interest which might be retained separately by the different states without affecting unfavorably the general welfare. By what means could such a state be established? What part should the United States take in such a federation?

Subjects for Further Study.

(1) Hebrew Military Organization and Methods. Kent, *Israel's Laws and Legal Precedents*, pp. 80-86; Hastings, *Dictionary of the Bible*, IV, pp. 892-895.

(2) Situation and Strength of Jerusalem. Kent, *Biblical Geography and History*, pp. 64-70; Smith, *Jerusalem*, Vol. I.

- (3) Study the story of the formation of the German Empire and compare the methods employed by Bismarck with those used by David. *Bismarck's Autobiography*: passim; Hazen, Chaps. XI, XIII, XIV, XXX.
- (4) The Effects of War upon Religious Feeling. Compare the biblical accounts of David's wars with the English and German literature of the European war in 1914-15.

CHAPTER V.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PERSONAL CHARACTER IN A PUBLIC OFFICIAL.

DAVID'S WEAKNESS AND SINS AND THEIR EFFECTS. II Sam. 9—20; I Kgs. 1:1—2:12.

Parallel Readings.

Kent, *Historical Bible*, Vol. II, pp. 146-182.
Croly, Chap. V; Lowell, Chaps. IX, X.

Nathan said to David, thou art the man! . . . And David said to Nathan, I have sinned against Jehovah.—*II Sam. 12: 7a, 13a.*

Mercy and truth preserve the king,
And his throne is upholden by mercy.—*Prov. 20: 28.*

If a ruler hearkeneth to falsehood,
All his servants are wicked.—*Prov. 29: 12.*

I will be lord over myself. No one who cannot master himself is worthy to rule, and only he can rule.—*Goethe.*

Wisdom does not show itself so much in precept as in life—in a firmness of mind and mastery of appetite. It teaches us to do, as well as to talk; and to make our actions and words all of a color.—*Seneca.*

A religious life is a struggle and not a hymn.—*Mme. de Stael.*

I.

DAVID'S FALL.

The tragic, revolting story of David's relations with Bathsheba and her husband Uriah the Hittite is too familiar to need repetition. The detailed account of the king's weak yielding to passion, his consequent attempted trickery to conceal his crime that was foiled by Uriah's innocent, patriotic

self-devotion, then his brutal order to Joab to encompass the death of Uriah, is one of the best illustrations of the fact that the biblical account of Israel's history had for its prime purpose moral and religious instruction. The condemnation of the prophetic narrator and the pitiless frankness with which the sin and its far-reaching consequences, extending over decades of time and generations of men, is told, are perhaps unmatched in literature. The tactful but unsparing rebuke of the prophet Nathan, while a model of literary skill, is none the less an appeal to the best motives and the noblest feelings of men of all times.

The account discloses many of the customs and much of the moral attitude of the people of that day. The king's word was law, whether for good or evil. Neither the king's attendants, nor Bathsheba, nor Joab seems to have raised any question of obedience. The subsequent narratives show nevertheless that Bathsheba was a woman skillful in intrigue, most persuasive in person, and limitless in ambition, one that under like conditions might have developed as did the famous Empress Dowager of China, whose first successes were apparently due to the same seductive qualities. From the time of her marriage with David after Uriah's death, Bathsheba seems to have been his favorite wife, and it was apparently her personal ability as much as his own deserts that secured for Solomon, her son, the succession to David's throne.

It is noteworthy, too, that the sin that was so bitterly condemned by the prophet seems not to have been the act of adultery—though that crime was punished throughout Hebrew history as unsparingly as murder—but rather the ingratitude and treachery and contemptible meanness shown by the king in the gratification of his desire and in his attempts to escape its consequences. The strong are utterly despicable when for personal gratification they plunder the weak.

Consider carefully the social reasons which make the crime of adultery so injurious to the public welfare. Why is the wrong not merely personal, but also public? Why are acts of faithlessness and treachery on the part of nations or rulers of supreme significance? Is there any other sin so flagrant for a ruler as a violation of public obligation? Why?

II.

REMORSE THAT DID NOT UNDO WRONG.

The vivid parable of Nathan at first aroused David's just indignation and scorn and he utterly condemned himself in the person of the fabled rich man. When Nathan in his condemnatory announcement, "Thou art the man," drove the lesson home and sentenced him, David repentantly acknowledged his sin and took with a humble spirit the punishment declared against him by the prophet.

It is known that the tale was written long after the event and this probably explains in part the fact that the results foretold—the violation of David's wives and the death of Bathsheba's son—both actually took place in exact accord with the account given; and yet it required no gift of second sight or miraculous foresight to see that such a sin, committed even in these early days when the moral delinquencies of kings did not always receive the condemnation which they merited, would certainly have dire results.

David's disposition is likewise clearly depicted in the story told of the death of Bathsheba's son. When the child fell sick, David besought God, lying all night in sackcloth upon the roof, as he sent up his petitions, and fasting continually until on the seventh day the child died. As soon, however, as hope had gone, his practical sense and energetic disposition made themselves manifest and he rose, washed, anointed himself, changed his garments, came to the house of Jehovah and worshipped. Then going to his own house, he ate and took up the business of the day.

It is not recorded that David made any further effort whatsoever to expiate his sin. Indeed, how could such expiation be made excepting through better instruction that might be given his sons and the further teaching of his people? Doubtless many moralists would insist that he should have repudiated Bathsheba and disinherited Solomon, her son. Such an act, however, was not at all in accord with David's disposition and character, and it is an open question whether thereby he would not have committed a further sin instead of having expiated his first offense. David's frank, generous and on the whole, upright character led him doubtless to keen repent-

ance, but his active, cheerful, optimistic temperament would not permit him to brood over his sins.

Ought one to brood over a sin committed? Is there a better proof of repentance than a changed mode of life? Did David truly repent? What are the reasons for your opinion? What, according to the New Testament, is the remedy for past sins? Compare David with Shakespeare's Macbeth, King Lear, and George Eliot's Adam Bede.

III.

THE SHADOW OF DAVID'S CRIME.

Whether willing or unwilling to change his course, the terrible effects of David's unbridled passions were not to be escaped. Repentance seldom changes results. Even in the members of his own family the same gross crimes reappear, and one can scarcely doubt that the example and influence of the father were felt by his sons, giving them a plausible excuse for similar acts. David's pitiful weakness in dealing with members of his own family, as he grew old, casts such a deep shadow upon his reputation that it darkens materially the brilliancy of his greatest achievements. The odious crime of his eldest son Amnon, whom David at that time doubtless looked upon as his probable successor, was so like that of his father, both in nature and in the personal meanness of his actions in connection with the accompanying results, that one might well think of an hereditary influence. The murder of Amnon by his half-brother, Absalom, in revenge, was doubtless in part inspired by what he looked upon as his duty, being the next of kin to his wronged sister, in part, also, doubtless, by some hope of succeeding to the throne in case of his brother's death.

As David had shown weakness in dealing with Amnon, he likewise showed similar weakness in dealing with the various acts of treason of Absalom. Is it perhaps possible that the kindness and consideration shown by David in his youth toward his earlier patron and friend, King Saul, were after all, merely a certain kindly weakness of disposition and character that later in life in dealings with his children became a most grievous fault, leading to the condoning of hideous crimes and eventually to the disruption of his kingdom? Is a kind disposition often an accompaniment of weakness? Is

there any relation between strength and courage and cruelty of nature?

IV.

THE REVOLT OF ABSALOM.

One would be more inclined to believe that Absalom was influenced on the whole by worthy aims in encompassing the death of his guilty brother Amnon, had his succeeding years been less marked by treachery and treason, leading even to an attempt to secure the throne by killing his own father. After the consideration shown him by King David in permitting him to return to Jerusalem, Absalom treacherously took pains to cultivate the friendship of the Hebrews. He appears to have devoted his attention especially to the citizens of Judah, the democratic hill men, who seemed somewhat to resent David's growing neglect of his royal duties as judge and leader, and who, doubtless also, on account of their ruder, half-nomadic habits, their greater personal independence, and their closer allegiance to the older belief in Jehovah, were inclined to criticize the gradual drifting of the kingdom into the more refined and luxurious customs of the lowlands and of the subjected Canaanites. There can be little doubt that with the new prosperity of the kingdom a far greater degree of luxury became prevalent even at David's court, and that with the refinements of the Egyptian and Babylonian civilizations, there came also not a little of the Canaanite corruption so bitterly denounced by the later prophets. A sharp conflict sprang up between the two types of civilization, and it is evident that David, who had been reared in the stricter school of the pastoral tribes, in his declining years gradually drifted into the more luxurious and weaker habits of those against whom in his earlier days he had waged some of his best fought battles.

Absalom was crafty enough to take advantage of the situation and patiently and treasonably to cultivate the friendship of these dissatisfied tribesmen. When, however, the rebellion actually broke out and Absalom gathered his cohorts about him to overthrow the king, David, although taken by surprise, showed all of his old shrewdness and skill in escaping the immediate danger, in misleading Absalom with the aid of his counsellor Hushai and his priests Zadok and Abiathar, until

his own safety was secured and the downfall of Absalom became certain. Again, however, at the time of the final battle with Absalom, we see the same personal weakness, which now almost wrecked the kingdom. Beyond doubt Absalom was a traitor of the most dangerous type; beyond doubt also the kingdom was far better off in David's hands than in those of his son, and even David showed no desire whatever to abdicate in Absalom's favor. Unless he intended to abdicate, the only possible course to be followed, in the light of the conditions of those days, was to encompass the defeat and death of Absalom. David's attempt to save Absalom's life and, what was still worse, his failure to show appreciation of the loyalty of not only Joab, but also of his host of devoted followers, nearly divided the kingdom. This tenderness of heart and conscience seems a lofty virtue as it is manifested in David's relations with Saul; it seems also a worthy and on the whole a noble humility when David takes meekly the abuse of Shimai; but in the crucial conditions under which the revolt of Absalom took place, the same characteristic is clearly a fatal weakness.

What excuse had Absalom for his conspiracy? Did he really sympathize with the sterner beliefs and habits of the Judahites? What limit should each of us set upon his own kindness and mercy? Is kindness that is not prompted by justice often a crime? Illustrate.

V.

THE TRAGEDY OF DAVID'S LATER YEARS.

David in his last years is a weak, lonely, sad, betrayed old man. The pitiful longing and weakness of a failing man, as well as the customs of his age and of the degenerate court, are vividly painted in the story of Abishag, the beautiful Shunammite; and the almost complete withdrawal of the king from participation in public affairs appears in the conspiracies of Adonijah and Bathsheba, regarding the succession. The king himself seems to have had little will or interest in the matter; but when Bathsheba came to him in person, her former charm and force of character appeared, and under her persuasive influence and that of Nathan, whose vigorous courage had won the king's confidence years before, David carried out their wishes. Even in this last appearance of David in public life, we see the diplomatic skill which through-

out his many years was so marked a characteristic. It was King David, not Bathsheba nor Nathan, who promptly formulated the plan by which Solomon was to be anointed king under such circumstances that the people would stand by him as the Lord's anointed in accordance with the law and customs of the age.

Perhaps no other character in Hebrew history, with the possible exception of Moses, shows so many marked characteristics of personal success and greatness as did David. No other character has his personal weaknesses and sins pointed out with such detail and merciless frankness. The Hebrew narrators clearly intended that their moral lessons should be unmistakably understood; and yet David had evidently won their hearts also as he did the hearts of all who came in contact with him, so that in summing up his story, they loved him still and depicted him as the greatest hero of their race.

What bearing has the story of Bathsheba upon the extent and nature of woman's influence in public affairs? How far ought we to guard ourselves against excusing the sins and weaknesses of those we love? At what period in their lives should old men transfer their responsibilities to younger shoulders? What are the ethical and social principles involved?

VI.

THE INFLUENCE OF A GREAT MAN'S CHARACTER ON HIS RACE.

The only immortality that George Eliot recognizes in her writings is that which comes from personal heredity (that is, the acquired qualities which one transmits through his descendants) and especially from the personal influence of one individual upon others. The whole story of King David emphasizes, perhaps as strongly as that of any character in history, the powerful influence exerted by a strong man in an influential position. His history, too, seems to controvert Shakespeare's dictum:

"The evil that men do lives after them
The good is oft interred with their bones."

As has been shown beyond question, the evil in David's life and the weakness in his character undoubtedly influenced many others to commit gross crimes and led even to revolution within the kingdom itself. But as one gains a com-

prehensive view of the entire course of David's life and notes the ennobling influence of his better personal characteristics upon his people, marks the love and loyalty with which not only Joab and the Philistine warriors but also his people both of Judah and Israel followed him throughout his life, in spite of his sins and weakness, and understands also how his skill in war and diplomacy enabled him to build up out of a weak group of jealous, quarrelsome, scattered tribes a united kingdom which under his leadership grew into one of the great empires of his day, it is easy to appreciate the tremendous power of nobility and strength of character. In David's case the good far out-tops the evil. In spite, too, of the pitiful suffering of his later days and the regrets and pain which violations of his conscience brought him, his life seems on the whole to have yielded to him a surplus of satisfaction and happiness. It was the joy of patriotic service and worthy achievement, and these acts were remembered by the people long after his personal faults and sins were forgotten. Centuries later they continued to look for the advent of another anointed one who would rule in the spirit and reproduce the glories of David's reign.

It has been said that one should so shape his life that his last ten years shall be his best in influence, in achievement, in happiness. Suggest changes in David's life that would have promoted such a desirable result. Are you building your life on such a plan? How far will such a plan consider one's physical welfare? Mental culture? Moral habits? Religious beliefs? Religious practices?

Subjects for Further Study.

(1) Israel's Laws regarding Adultery. Kent, *Israel's Laws and Legal Precedents*, pp. 109-111.

(2) Compare the statesmanship of Daniel Webster and Abraham Lincoln and judge how far moral integrity was a factor in determining the fate of each. Tarbell, *Life of Lincoln*; Lodge, *Life of Webster*.

CHAPTER VI.

CULTURE WITHOUT RELIGION.

SOLOMON'S POLICY.—I Kgs. 2:13—4:6; 4:29-34; 5:1—8:66.

Parallel Readings.

Kent, *Historical Bible*, Vol. II, pp. 183-185, 187-192.

Croly, Chap. VI; Lowell, Chaps. XI, XII.

So the king gave command to Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and he went out and struck Shimei down, and thus he died. So the kingdom was brought completely under the control of Solomon.—*I Kings 2: 46.*

Now when Solomon was old, his heart was not perfect with Jehovah his God.—*I Kings 11: 4b.*

Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant.—*Matt. 20: 27.*

He who learns the rules of wisdom, without conforming to them in his life, is like a man who labored in his fields, but did not sow.—*Saadi.*

Wisdom will never let us stand with any man or men on an unfriendly footing.—*Emerson.*

'Tis not what man Does which exalts him, but what man Would do!—*Browning.*

I.

THE WAY IN WHICH SOLOMON BECAME KING.

It was of course natural that as David grew old there should be strife among his sons as to which one should become his successor. In those days, as we have already noted, the eldest son was naturally the heir to the throne, although if other sons showed superior ability, they were sometimes chosen. It was recognized that the reigning king had the privilege of nominating his successor, but in any event the nomination was to be confirmed by the approval of the leaders of the people either formally or informally.

David's eldest son Amnon had been murdered by Absalom in revenge for the wrong done to Absalom's sister. Absalom himself, the next in line, had been slain in battle in revolt against his father. The next in order was Adonijah, a man described by the narrator as "an exceedingly good-looking man." Apparently he was also a man of ambition and fond of display. Counting upon the inactivity or good nature of his father David, "he prepared for himself chariots, horsemen and fifty men to run before him as runners," and made it clear to the people that he desired to be king. His father had never questioned his acts and he did not expect that he would be

troubled now. He discussed his plans with Joab the leader of the army and with Abiathar, one of the leading priests, and won them over to his side. A certain strong group, including the other chief priest, Zadok, Benaiah, the leader of the king's bodyguard, the three famous heroes of David, and Nathan the prophet, he could not persuade to espouse his cause. They favored instead Solomon, his younger brother. No justification is given for their preference of Solomon. There is good reason to believe, however, that they considered him the better man. His mother, Bathsheba, as we know from other accounts, was a woman of ability and great persuasive powers; and she probably had used her influence in favor of her son, not only with the king, but also with these leading men of the nation. Moreover, as later history shows, Solomon himself was a most attractive personality and in all probability a man of greater strength of mind and character than his older brother.

As soon as Adonijah's plans became evident, Bathsheba by the advice of Nathan laid the case before David. Doubtless the emergency was critical. If Adonijah succeeded, Bathsheba and Solomon and probably Nathan and the other leaders opposed to Adonijah would lose their lives. Bathsheba's appeal to David was successful. He had apparently earlier promised that Solomon should succeed, and now he not only confirmed the nomination but with all his old-time shrewdness and skill he laid the plans by which Solomon should first be seated on the throne and secure the approval of the people.

Evidently the personal rivalry of the different party leaders had much to do with the selection. Joab and Benaiah were rival leaders of different military bodies. Abiathar and Zadok were rivals as priests. Nathan, who years before had so boldly denounced David for his alliance with Bathsheba, had apparently been won over by her, so that in any jealous antagonism that must have existed between her and the other wives of David's harem, the old prophet was on her side.

David's own promptness and skill and knowledge of his people seem, nevertheless, to have been the decisive factor. It was a recognized custom of the time for the king to nominate his successor, and David clinched his nomination by having Solomon actually seated on the royal ass, publicly proclaimed as king, and approved by the people, while the good-looking

Adonijah was wasting time in attempting to win over his followers by personal display and by giving a feast.

How do you explain the act of Joab in supporting Adonijah against the will of King David? Compare the plots of Adonijah and Solomon with those of Huerta and Carranza and other leaders in Mexico. Mention any similar practices in modern European or Asiatic history.

II.

SOLOMON'S MACHIAVELLIANISM.

Even Adonijah, when he saw how completely he had been outwitted, promptly accepted Solomon as king. Knowing that his life was in danger, he fled at once to the altar for protection and appealed to Solomon for mercy. King Solomon promised to spare him, provided he were thereafter to "show himself a worthy man."

Apparently, however, Adonijah did not reckon upon the stern decision of Solomon's character, but ventured a little later to tempt his kindness further. Solomon then hesitated no longer. He showed all of the cold-blooded, calculating sternness that Machiavelli recommends in his famous book "The Prince." "The usurper of a state should commit all the cruelties which his safety renders necessary at once, that he may never have cause to repeat them; . . . matters of severity should be finished at one blow. . . . When it is necessary for a Prince to restrain his subjects within the bounds of duty, he should not regard the imputation of cruelty. He should not shrink from encountering some blame on account of vices which are important to the support of his states. I maintain that a prince, and especially a new prince, cannot with impunity exercise all the virtues, because his own self-preservation will often compel him to violate the laws of charity, religion, and humanity."

The provocation for the first stroke was thus: Adonijah persuaded Bathsheba to ask Solomon to give to him in marriage Abishag, the beautiful young attendant of David. Inasmuch as it was generally recognized in those days that the man who took the concubines of the king was the king's successor, the request was extremely bold, even though it was possibly made with an innocent intent. Abishag had never been really the concubine of King David, though nominally so, and it

was not unnatural for Adonijah to wish her for his wife. Nevertheless he was familiar with the custom. Even his elder brother Absalom in his revolt against his father, acting on the advice of his priests, had entered the harem of King David and taken his concubines as evidence of his succession to the throne.

Adonijah should have been wiser than to tempt the king, but he promptly paid the penalty, for he was immediately put to death. The life of Abiathar the priest was spared simply because he had borne the ark of Jehovah before King David and had shared all of David's trials, but he was deprived of his priestly rank and banished to his private estate at Anathoth, north of Jerusalem. Joab, who had been one of the leaders of Adonijah's party, though he fled immediately to the altar for sanctuary, was slain there by Benaiah, the leader of the bodyguard, and the king placed Benaiah at the head of the army in Joab's place. The killing of Joab, now an old man, who had been the faithful, though at times the harsh and unruly friend of David, seems merciless; but the king gave as explanation of his acts the fact that Joab had slain with his own hand two men (Abner and Amasa) "more honorable than he" without sufficient reason. And from the published accounts most men would agree that those acts of Joab had not been justifiable. A later account also states that King David had himself recommended to Solomon that Joab's life be taken. If this account is authentic, it remains an open question whether the dying king in a spirit of petty spitefulness had turned against the man who had so often made him trouble in earlier years, though always faithful, or whether he seriously recognized that so long as Joab lived, King Solomon could never depend upon his absolute loyalty on account of his support of Adonijah. Whatever the reason may have been, Solomon apparently determined to take no further chances with any of his enemies. One after the other was removed, apparently not in passion nor in fear, but coolly, deliberately, after calm consideration, until he stood alone without a rival.

Do you approve or condemn Solomon's treatment of Adonijah? Of Joab? Is it likely that David urged that Joab be slain? Why do you think so? Mention modern instances of like character. Is the political overthrow of a rival by false stories or insinuation against his character less blameworthy than Solomon's method? Give illustrations of modern as-

sassination or attempted ruin of reputation for political purposes. Ought a ruler's code of morals to differ from that of a private citizen, as Machiavelli seems to teach?

III.

SOLOMON'S REPUTATION FOR WISDOM.

There is no more attractive story in history of youthful devotion and noble ambition than the account given of Jehovah's appearance to Solomon in a dream in Gibeon. The modest youth apparently realizing to the full the heavy responsibilities resting upon him as heir to the great empire of his father uttered the beautiful prayer, "Thou hast showed to thy servant David my father, great kindness. And now, Holy Jehovah, my God, thou hast made thy servant king in the place of David my father, although I am but a child, not knowing how to go out or to come in. Give thy servant, therefore, an understanding mind to teach thy people, that I may discern between good and evil; for who is able to judge this thy great people?" Solomon received in full the answer to his petition; but it is interesting to note the nature of the oriental wisdom which he exhibited to so marked a degree that he was considered by later Hebrew historians the wisest man of all time. The oriental mind is traditionally given to philosophical speculation, it delights in the solution of knotty personal problems, it makes fine hair-splitting distinctions in logical analysis: but, nevertheless, it is often found lacking in practical sagacity when dealing with the every-day problems of life.

Solomon doubtless had the "discerning mind," as is shown by the illustrations given in the Bible. He could answer promptly all the puzzling riddles of the Queen of Sheba. He could analyze the motives of a jealous woman and readily determine justice in individual cases; but in the deeper western sense of the word, Solomon did not possess practical wisdom, however penetrating his intellect or keen his insight.

Solomon was not farsighted in the affairs of his kingdom as had been David his father. David knew that his kingdom must rest upon the will and favor of his people, and through his whole career in innumerable instances we see evidence of this knowledge. He had a sound judgment in building

upon the feelings, even upon the prejudices of the Hebrews, so as to weld together out of numerous jealous tribes one people, united in a purposeful ambition and devotion both to him and to the principles of Jehovah's rule for which he stood. Solomon, on the other hand, seems to have had little regard for either the feelings or the welfare of his people. He doubtless pleased many of them by the artistic display of his wealth and by rich ceremonial, but this was at the expense of the comfort and personal welfare of the masses; and even before his death, as we shall see, his nation had commenced to call him to account. Moreover, he lacked good judgment and tact in dealing with individual problems, when he himself was not in a position of an absolute judge and dictator. More than to anybody else he owed consideration to King Hiram of Tyre, from whom he received much of the material out of which he built the temple on Mount Zion, which made him celebrated throughout the ancient Semitic world and which helped him to unify his kingdom. Also it was by King Hiram's advice and with his immediate help that he entered upon the commercial plans that brought great wealth and display into his kingdom. No other alliance had been so fruitful of good either to himself or to King David, his father, as that with Hiram; and yet, when the opportunity came for him to pay his ally, instead of cementing this friendship, he aroused the king's displeasure. Evidently in return for favors received Solomon assigned to Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee; but apparently he selected cities that were poor and not worthy to be offered as such gifts, for when Hiram came from Tyre to see them, he was displeased with them and gave them the name which lasted for centuries "the land of Cabul (good for nothing)." Apparently with a feeling of ironical contempt he sent (Hebrew tradition asserts) still further to King Solomon one hundred twenty talents of gold.

Solomon showed a certain ability in organizing the details of administration, but he manifested also a vanity and love of personal display combined with carelessness regarding the welfare of his people that amounted to the greatest folly. It is questionable whether on the whole it would not be a more just estimate of Solomon to call him, not the wisest, but the most foolish of Israel's kings.

General Grant ranked low in his class at West Point. How

do you explain his remarkable success as a general? General McClellan ranked high at West Point. How do you explain his lack of success in the field?

Consider the early records of Bismarck, Gladstone, John Quincy Adams, Jackson. What is the test of wisdom? What are the main causes of greatness? Of the men named above which most resembled Solomon?

IV.

SOLOMON'S IDEAS OF RELIGIOUS WORSHIP.

In the field of religion likewise Solomon fell far below the wisdom and insight of the great prophets. His religious worship was formal rather than spiritual. It had, too, a political aspect, in that he made the great temple that he built at Jerusalem one of the chief places of worship for the Hebrews, so that not only his capital city was strengthened but also his centralizing policy was furthered through having the eyes of all the tribes turned toward Jerusalem as the great religious center of the kingdom. He appreciated the political and artistic elements in the worship of Jehovah; but he did not appreciate the need of right personal living as the fundamental characteristic of devout worship.

We speak much in these days of religious toleration. It is, however, worth while to note the different meanings of toleration. Solomon was doubtless tolerant. He was willing to have his people subscribe to any and all beliefs. In his day, to be sure, most peoples believed in numerous gods, each tribe, often each clan, having its own separate divinity. But Jehovah had become to the Israelites the one God most worthy of their devotion and the one whose will, as they understood it, led to the highest and noblest living. Solomon appeared to make no distinction between the gods. He set up new sanctuaries merely to please his foreign wives. He did not study the varying moral ideals represented by the different gods or forms of worship, nor did he even advocate the good represented by each, but in sheer good-natured carelessness, or more likely in order to facilitate his foreign alliances, he said, "Let every one do as he will." It is beyond question that the worship of Chemosh the god of Moab and of Ashtarte the goddess of the Sidonians and that of many of the Canaanite

gods were attended with licentious practices that, while they enticed and pleased, had still a corrupting influence upon the morals of the people. But the worship of Jehovah, though attended with bloody sacrifices that seem to us barbarous relics of the crude anthropological conception of the deity was nevertheless in its total effect only uplifting and purifying to morals. Solomon apparently made no distinction between them and cared little for the moral effects of worship. In fact a man whose chief delight was in the magnificence of his court and "who was a lover of women" could not be expected to have a keen moral sense.

The account given of Solomon's worship was of course written after the event, and the writer in many instances condemned Solomon far more bitterly than even the most enlightened thinker of his day could have done. Yet even in his own time the spiritually minded men, especially of the tribe of Judah, who still retained the simpler beliefs and practices of King David and his predecessor, condemned most bitterly these practices, and were ready before Solomon's death to stir up a conflict between the stricter followers of Jehovah and the more cultured devotees of the gods of the Canaanites. The prophet Ahijah before Solomon's death predicted the division of the kingdom and the succession of Jeroboam.

Distinguish between the toleration of Solomon and that of Jesus. Was Lincoln tolerant in political matters? Had Lincoln been tolerant in politics in the same way that Solomon was tolerant in religion, should we have today a united country? Think out fully the reasons for your opinion. Define real toleration, political and religious. Did Solomon's religious toleration have a positive political bearing?

V.

CHURCH AND STATE.

In any consideration of the history of the ancient Semitic peoples we must recognize that there was no division between church and state. Every nation, even every tribe, had its own separate deity. Every ruler of necessity worshiped the deity of his people and promulgated his laws as the commands of the god. The wars that were fought between the

different nations were looked upon as wars of the separate gods, and when a victory was won, it was ascribed to the active intercession of the nation's god and was accepted as a proof that the victorious god was superior in skill and power to the vanquished. In those circumstances it is evident that there could be no distinction made between church and state, between the administration of religious and of secular affairs. Such a distinction is entirely a modern conception and a modern practice.

Even in the middle ages and down to modern times the division line between the religious and secular fields of human activity is not clearly drawn. The greatest contest of the middle ages in Europe was that between the so-called spiritual power of the popes and the temporal power of the kings; and as we know, the power of the most ambitious and most successful of the spiritual rulers was based on their assumption of the right to interfere in temporal affairs. Even the temporal rulers received their kingdoms with the consent of the pope. This head of the church claimed the right to absolve from their allegiance the subjects of any king whose acts he declared contrary to the laws of God. When King Henry IV was kept waiting for three days bareheaded and barefooted at the palace gates at Canossa before the haughty Pope Gregory would admit him to make his confession of wrong doing and his submission to the dominant, not to say domineering religious potentate, he recognized, it is true, a distinction between the spiritual and temporal realms that could not have been recognized by King David or King Solomon, but he still was compelled to feel most keenly a relationship between the two that no longer exists. The personal ambitions and desires, the growing economic and military strength of the kings and, most of all, the growth of personal independence of the people in thought and act that followed the invention of printing and the Protestant Reformation, carrying out the individualistic and social teachings of the New Testament, brought about the separation of the two spheres of personal activity. The effective motives, as for example in the case of King Henry VIII of England, were not always the highest; but in the case of most religious leaders and of the leading religious and philosophical thinkers only the welfare of humanity was sought.

Today in Russia where the Czar from his official position is the nominal head of the established church, in Greece and Spain and other countries where a similar church organization still remains, and even in England where with the utmost liberality of religious toleration in thought and act the appointment to all positions of religious control and church worship in the established church remains in the hands of the government, we still find remaining a relic of the old absolute union that existed in ancient days. Throughout the centuries since the Protestant Reformation, however, the tendency toward separation has been steadily strengthened, until at the present time in all countries among the so-called non-conformist denominations and in some, like the United States, with all denominations, the separation has become complete, apparently to the moral and religious benefit of both state and church.

This formal separation between the political and religious organizations does not imply any fundamental separation between the two fields of religion and politics. In the church there should be carried out the form of governmental organization that is best suited to the needs and effective work of the members of the religious body concerned, and in the state all the officials of whatever degree should be actuated by the principles of righteousness and by an unselfish devotion to the welfare of humanity that characterizes the teachings and to a continually increasing degree throughout the civilized world marks the practices of the religious leaders of all churches of whatever faith.

Is the appointment of Thanksgiving Day by the President of the United States a political or a religious function? In some of the American colonies only church members were allowed to vote on governmental questions. Was this a union of church and state? What are some of the arguments for and against dividing the public school funds among religious denominations and then giving them control of the schools?

VI.

THE TREND OF MODERN CIVILIZATION.

It has already been intimated that King Solomon with all of his magnificent personal ability must still be counted a failure in the political field, because he failed to recognize

the rights of the individual citizens in his kingdom and in consequence was dwarfing rather than strengthening the personal development of his subjects; for every government may well be tested by the tendency toward an increasing of the welfare—economic, intellectual and moral—of the great mass of the people.

In modern times there has been a rapid development in the spirit of religious freedom and toleration—with here and there a rare exception—among civilized peoples. The individual is now at liberty to speak and even to act as he will on religious matters. Wherever there is a distinct separation between church and state and especially where there is a large degree of individual initiative left to the citizen, this toleration becomes easy. In Switzerland, for example, under the federal form of government, we find Roman Catholics and Protestants of various denominations living in harmony, because the central government does not interfere with religious questions and no citizen is compelled to pay taxes for the support of any church to which he does not belong, though in some of the cantons the schools are placed under the direction of the churches and the clergy are supported by public funds. We find also in Switzerland different nationalities, Italians, French, Germans (even in many cases they do not understand one another's language) living in harmony, because the central government does not interfere with local affairs. The representatives from the separate cantons, that deal with federal matters of common interest, can either speak and understand one another's language or the official interpreter makes clear whatever points are not readily understood. The tendency of the times is clearly toward the greatest toleration, the weakening of formalism, and the strengthening of the influence of religion upon man's moral acts.

There was seen in Solomon's reign a great increase of wealth and of luxury in the nation. In ancient Palestine, however, the increasing wealth was not widely distributed among the people. It was invested largely in public buildings, in magnificent royal robes, precious jewels and other articles for display, and in luxurious—often licentious—living for the king and the court, and was not devoted to increasing the comfort of the common people. Indeed, as the court increased in magnificence, heavier burdens were laid upon the people.

While the king and the courtiers and their associates and visitors lived in the midst of luxury, the common people dwelt in little mud huts in abject poverty, many of them in a state of slavery amidst conditions worse than in the days of his father David and with the degree of wretchedness steadily on the increase. The revolt following Solomon's death was based upon the demand for greater freedom and greater comfort for the people. There is fortunately a clearly defined tendency in modern times, with the rapidly growing wealth that comes from modern inventions and improved methods of business, for the people to demand a larger share in the increasing wealth. Sometimes this demand is granted; often it is at first refused; but its validity is being more and more generally recognized. Danger comes indeed, as many examples in history show, from the increase of luxury in any community, but the improvement in the standard of living will do not harm but good, provided the general level of comfort in the community rises and luxury is not retained as the perquisite of a few rich people, but within the limits of reason and justice is distributed widely among the people. This is a normal result of the teaching of the purest and best religion, as well as of democracy.

We have already noted that Solomon's efforts toward despotism eventually led through revolt toward democracy. There can be no doubt that the scientific thinkers on politics since Solomon's day, as shown by Aristotle in the fourth century before Christ, have clearly recognized that tyranny leads ultimately toward democracy. Aristotle also taught, as have writers since his day, that there may be a tyranny of the people; that a democracy in which the citizens do not exhibit self-control and show no desire to do justice to all certainly leads to an ignorant and vicious oppression of certain classes which likewise at times brings about the rule of one who becomes a despot. The course of history seems to have shown this truth also; and in consequence there is reason to believe that the people are thus becoming through experience in political affairs, as well as in religious affairs, more tolerant and more ready to grant to one another the rights that each demands.

Can one trace in modern Germany the development of the principles just laid down regarding either religious toleration or luxury or democracy? Can one trace these principles in

modern Russia any less? Give an illustration of oppression by the people or their representatives that has led to a benevolent despotism. Can we infer from the form of government whether it will be despotic or democratic in spirit?

Subjects for Further Study.

(1) Ancient Egyptian Wisdom. Wisdom of the East Series, *The Instruction of Ptah-hotep*; Breasted, Egyptian Records, Vol. I, 230, 231.

(2) Study carefully the history of religious oppression and religious freedom in the Colonies of Massachusetts Bay and Rhode Island, and compare the conditions there with those under the rule of Solomon. Lodge, *English Colonies in America*; Frothingham, *The Rise of the American Republic*.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FUNDAMENTAL IMPORTANCE OF A RIGHT FINANCIAL POLICY.

SOLOMON'S SYSTEM OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE.

—I Kgs. 4:7-28; 9:10—11:40

Parallel Readings.

Kent, *Historical Bible*, Vol. II, pp. 186, 201-208.

Croly, Chap. VII; Lowell, Chap. XIII.

And Solomon had twelve officers over all Israel, who provided food for the king and his household: each man had to make provision for a month in the year.—*I Kings 4: 7.*

Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one year was six hundred and sixty-six talents of gold, besides what came from the traffic of the merchants and from all the kings of the Arabians and from the governors of the country.—*I Kings 10: 14, 15.*

The king shall not take many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away; nor shall he collect for himself great quantities of silver and gold.—*Deut. 17: 16b, 17.*

Of all the evils that infest the state,
The tyrant is the greatest: there the laws
Hold not one common tenor; his sole will
Commands the laws, and lords it over them.

—*Euripides.*

The prince who
Neglects or violates his trust is more
A brigand than the robber chief.—*Byron.*

I.

THE OBJECT AND RIGHT OF TAXATION.

Some of the so-called scientific anarchists of the present day, recognizing too keenly certain weaknesses that are found

in most governments, teach that we should abolish all governments and that matters of common interest should be regulated by voluntary organizations of groups of people interested who have agreed upon their rules of action. Others say that, although this is not practical because many individuals are selfish, still if we should ever reach a stage of moral excellence in which each individual exemplifies the Christian principle of unselfishness, government would no longer be necessary, since each would care for others. Is it not evident, however, that, even though each individual were absolutely unselfish, if each were also intelligent, independent in judgment, and ready to take upon himself the responsibility for his acts, there would still be a difference in conscientious judgments which would lead to conflicts that in some way must be settled? However unselfish a man might be, his conscience would compel him to insist upon what he believed to be for the welfare of others, even though he might meet many differing opinions. On this account it becomes clearly evident that, in all countries, under all beliefs, at all times, there must be some form of government with authority to compel action if need be. As population increases, civilization develops, invention multiplies, life becomes more and more complex and the need of regulation becomes continually greater, it is found more expedient and best for all the people to delegate certain functions of regulation and action to a committee who shall carry them out for the benefit of the whole. Thus government is established to formulate and enforce the rules of action that become necessary.

Men who give their time in this way to promote the welfare of the community must be supported; and thus in the most natural manner the need for taxation arises.

It has been sometimes asserted that people should pay taxes in proportion to the services rendered them by the government. In a few special cases, as for example in sending letters through the post office, the service rendered can in a general way be measured so that this plan is adopted. Generally speaking, however, such measurement of service is impossible. While a rich man has more property to be protected by the government than has the poor man, he is better able to hire protection than is a poor man, so that it may well be argued that the poor man has the greater need and that the

service rendered him is correspondingly greater. The fact is that in all civilized countries practically every one of our activities is controlled by the government and therefore government is to each one a matter of superlative importance. Even before a child is born it has a legal status and rights that have been determined by governmental act. Every business contract made of whatever nature has its sanction and its enforcement through the government. Peace and safety in the community, the health of the inhabitants, many of the conveniences of their lives are either directly guaranteed or supported by the government. Even the conditions of one's death and burial are to a large degree prescribed. Every man owes practically all the benefits of civilization to his government and the government has the right in case of need, and it frequently exercises the power, to call for any sacrifice, even for that of life, from its citizens. All of the leading authorities, therefore, on taxation have reached the general conclusion that people should pay taxes, not in proportion to the benefits received from the government, as they cannot be measured, but rather in proportion to their ability to pay. The methods of determining the amount payable naturally must vary in different countries and under different conditions dependent upon economic considerations, on the form of government, and equally upon the intelligence and skill of the law-makers and of the citizens. Taxes should be payable always in the ways and at the times most convenient for the people, and only in cases of the most extreme necessity should they be levied so as to lessen at all the productive forces of the country. Moreover, as government exists for the good of the governed, no taxes whatever are justified unless they are to be expended for the good of the people. Any tax levied for the mere satisfaction of a ruler without regard to the welfare of his people is not justified; but any tax or any burden that is fitted to promote the general welfare may, at the discretion of the government properly established by the people, be laid upon them. It is lack of recognition of what we owe to the government and of the patriotic sacrifices that each one can well afford to make, which leads so many short-sighted and selfish individuals to avoid taxation and to attempt to escape payment of their proper share.

On what ground do you justify taxation for the support

of public schools? Of a public library? Of a public art gallery? Of a public opera house? Of a public dance hall? Is it wise and fitting to use rooms in public school buildings for dances and plays? Is a person ever justified in refusing to pay a tax that he thinks unwise? Would a believer in free trade be any more justified in smuggling than a believer in a protective tariff? Why do many people attempt to conceal their property from the tax assessors in order to escape taxation?

II.

SOLOMON'S NEEDS FOR REVENUE.

Solomon of course had the normal needs for the support of government officials that his father David had and that all rulers find necessary. In addition thereto, however, there were many special expenditures made by Solomon, some of which were doubtless beneficial, others of questionable need or advantage. Solomon strengthened the fortifications of Jerusalem and improved decidedly its strength as a military post and its advantages as a social and religious center. Besides strengthening Jerusalem he also built fortresses in different parts of his kingdom at Hazor and Megiddo in the north, Baalath, Gezer and Bethhoron in the west, over against the Philistines, at Tamar in the south, and storehouses and cities elsewhere. So far as these fortresses were needed as a defense against foreign tribes and nations there was ample justification for the wealth expended upon them. It seems probable, however, that these fortified places were used in part, at any rate toward the close of his reign, in order to strengthen his hands in enforcing compulsory labor upon his people by which many thousands of them became practically public slaves with no individual rights of their own, and also to enable him better to suppress any revolt caused by his tyrannical policy. So far as the fortresses were desired to suppress the aspirations of his own people for freedom and a voice in the government the expenditures were not justifiable.

Later tradition states that David had planned to build for the ark of the covenant, which had remained on Mount Zion in a tent, a temple suitable for the housing of so sacred a memorial of Jehovah's covenant with his people; but he had to content himself with collecting materials for its construc-

tion. Solomon carried out this plan on a scale that seemed most magnificent to his subjects, although the temple as compared with our modern buildings was not large. It was a little over ninety feet long, thirty feet broad and forty-five feet in height. It was nevertheless planned in beautiful proportions and was decorated with an elaborate richness and splendor that certainly had never before been equalled in Palestine. One might well apply to it the saying applied centuries later to the Taj Mahal, the magnificent mausoleum erected at Agra, in India, by the Grand Mogul Shah Jehan in loving memory of his favorite wife Mumtaz-y-Mahal, "It was planned by Titans and finished by jewelers." Evidently the priests who later gave us in the sixth chapter of I Kings the detailed account of the temple and its furnishings, believed it was wise and proper for Solomon to expend vast sums upon the temple erected in honor of Jehovah the God of Israel. It is indeed probable that the conditions were such in Jerusalem at that day that this relatively large expenditure for the worship of Jehovah was fully justified, although under the different conditions of modern times many of the noblest religious thinkers would believe that at least part of that outlay might better have been devoted to promoting the personal comfort and welfare of the people.

However well the expenditure upon the temple may be justified, most thoughtful students of politics would agree that the enormous sums expended upon the building of Solomon's palace and the apartments erected for the satisfaction and pleasure of his Egyptian queen and his numerous wives and concubines could have no such justification.

Are churches ever tempted to expend wealth on buildings that might better be spent on "social work"? On what principle ought a church to regulate its expenditures? Is there danger that a modern government will spend too much for public buildings? Would you favor an increase or a decrease in the salary of the President of the United States? Of our ambassadors abroad? Why? Does the building of fortresses by Solomon throw any light on the problem of our military expenditures? Give reasons.

III.

SOLOMON'S SOURCES OF REVENUE.

During much of his reign, especially the earlier part, Solomon must have received large revenues from tributes paid by conquered tribes and peoples whom King David had subdued. We have no record of the amounts thus received; but from the accounts given of his other revenues this source was probably only of minor importance.

In building the temple and his palaces Solomon made an agreement with Hiram, king of Tyre, by which the latter furnished cypress timber for his buildings, Solomon paying therefor in wheat and olive oil. To carry out his building schemes Solomon raised a forced levy of thirty thousand men, besides seventy thousand burden bearers and eighty thousand hewers of stone in the mountains together with officers and superintendents. An onerous burden was thus imposed upon his people that could be justified by only the greatest necessity or for a satisfaction common to all his people.

The same inexcusable and short-sighted extravagance is shown in the way in which he carried on his commercial undertakings. David had extended the kingdom to the eastern arm of the Red Sea, so that there was an outlet by water to the Indian Ocean and the lands beyond. With the assistance of King Hiram, many of whose subjects were seamen with knowledge of the commercial water routes, Solomon built a fleet of ships on the Red Sea and sent them to Ophir (probably in India, perhaps some port of eastern Arabia, or possibly East Africa) from which he imported gold, silver and ivory, and also large quantities of red sandalwood and precious stones, together with apes and peacocks and other objects of luxury and display from the distant Orient. On account of the splendors of his court many other rulers came from distant lands to visit him, bringing with them presents of all kinds, so that his wealth was thereby increased. These were, of course, all sources of revenue; but it is to be noted in these latter cases that the imports into his kingdom were such as would add to the magnificence of his position as a ruler, but not to the comfort or welfare or commercial strength of his people.

In one or two lines, however, it is evident that Solomon and his advisers had the true commercial spirit. He imported

horses from Muçri and Kûe and sold them again at a large profit to the kings of the Hittites and the Arameans; and it is entirely possible that it was wise in those days for the government to engage directly in a commercial enterprise of this kind to a degree that would not be wise and profitable now. This is the only reference to a foreign trade that was profitable to the people, and there is no evidence that even this profit lessened in any way the burdens laid upon them. It all depends upon the use made of the surplus revenue.

A large part of Solomon's building enterprises, as we have seen, did not benefit his people directly nor add to the comfort of their lives, while, with the possible exception of the building of the temple and the trading in horses, all of the rest of the commerce mentioned and the expenditures of which any account is given served simply to add to the burdens of his people while gratifying his own personal extravagance and his luxurious and licentious tastes. It should be noted that most of this revenue, whether wheat or oil or labor, was probably levied as a direct tax upon his people and was payable in kind, as is customary now in India and Egypt and Java and other oriental countries. It is doubtful, however, if it was levied justly in proportion to the income of the wheat and oil growers, as is done strictly in the modern cases mentioned. It is more probable that the products were taken with little regard for an easy adjustment of burdens, while the levy of forced labor of course fell upon the poorer classes so heavily as practically to reduce them to slavery.

IV.

THE EFFECTS OF SOLOMON'S POLICY UPON ECONOMIC CONDITIONS.

We have already noted that the chief sources of revenue that Solomon employed were direct levies of labor and food, although some profit was also made from commerce, and doubtless numerous gifts added to his revenues. His father, King David, had extended the bounds of his kingdom by conquests and had greatly added to his revenues by securing the tributes paid to him by the subject tribes. Some of these tributes were still continued throughout the reign of Solomon, but as is related in the eleventh chapter of I Kings, before the end

of his reign a series of revolts broke out which must have deprived him of large revenues. All of these defections naturally increased the burdens which Solomon laid upon the Israelites, for he was determined to gratify his extravagant tastes to the utmost and apparently in his short-sightedness or his selfish recklessness took little heed of the distant future.

The consequence of this short-sighted policy was that the king, who had the reputation of being the wisest man of his age in uttering maxims, in solving riddles, in rendering judgment in minor individual cases, by producing lavish entertainments, and by gratifying the artistic tastes of the wealthy, was steadily impoverishing his kingdom and laying burdens upon his people that were becoming more and more intolerable.

Inasmuch as his subjects were a pastoral and agricultural people and were not in a position themselves to market their products readily, it is probable that the payment of the levies in kind was entirely satisfactory, so far as they were levied justly and proportionately. The chief objection to this part of his taxing system was the amount demanded and probably also the injustice of the distribution of the burden, although of that we have no definite account.

The same comment may be made regarding the economic effect of forced labor. In early stages of society, where there is little agriculture and practically no manufacturing and few commercial enterprises, a reasonable amount of forced labor is not objectionable. It is retained to a small extent in the United States and France and takes the form of labor on public roads. In many cases the inhabitants are compelled, not only to work upon roads, but also to perform personal services for the rulers, as was earlier the case in the Philippines, or to act as night policemen and day patrol, as is common today in Java and Burmah. Whatever the nature of the work, if not too much is demanded, it is often the easiest way in which taxes can be paid. In the case of Solomon, however, it is clear that the numbers levied and the amount of their time taken were so large that it must have affected most unfavorably the actual productive work of the kingdom. Moreover the labor required was, as we have seen, not necessary for the comfort of the people, nor did it tend to increase the capital of the kingdom.

Even the revenue from gifts was doubtless paid for by even

more magnificent presents from Solomon, so that instead of a source of permanent gain, the visits of generous rulers were a source of actual loss. And as the gains in territory made by his father were not increased by Solomon, the revenue from those conquests were gradually and, toward the close of his reign, rapidly becoming less. The people must, therefore, have felt keenly the increase of burdens and their growing poverty.

Some people have claimed that certain taxes, like a protective tariff, impose no burden upon the people. In what cases is this true? One of the Malay states whose production of tin is so large that it has a certain monopoly therein levies an export duty on tin. Who bears the burden of that tax, the residents of that country or the foreign consumers of tin? Who bears the burden of the export duty on Manila hemp, the Filipino producers or the consumers of rope? How about the United States tariff on tin plate? On potatoes, eggs, wine? Was Solomon able to make foreigners bear the burden of any of his revenues?

V.

EFFECTS UPON THE POLITICAL SITUATION.

All of these results of this wisest king's most foolish policy could have only a very seriously detrimental political effect. In the earlier days of David, the people had a voice in determining their own political policy. The need for individual self-reliance in defending themselves against the perils of the desert and the wilderness had made them independent in spirit. The continual warfare against the desert peoples and the hostile Philistines had made them resourceful, thoughtful warriors; and the Jewish people have never at any stage of their history, even in its early days, been lacking in intellectual independence and self-reliance. The tyrannical policy of Solomon, therefore, with its most burdensome economic effects, raised against him the feelings of the multitude leading, as we have seen, to revolutions among the outlying nations that had been conquered by David and finally, near the close of his reign, to a rebellion on the part of two of the tribes.

Jeroboam was a man of ability and authority selected by Solomon himself to be placed in charge of the forced labor employed in building the royal palace at Jerusalem, and a

man who would hardly have led a revolt without good excuse. This uprising was unsuccessful, but it is a clear evidence of the justice of the complaints of the northern districts that revolted that Jeroboam was encouraged in his acts by Ahijah, the prophet of Shiloh, one of the enlightened prophets who saw in Solomon's policy a menace to true religion.

Is economic oppression likely to lead to political revolution? How far were the causes of the American revolution economic? Of the French revolution? Of the rebellion of the Southern States?

VI.

THE CITIZEN'S ATTITUDE TOWARD TAXATION.

It has already been intimated in Section I, that, inasmuch as government is a necessity and a wise government a benefit, taxation is fully justified. The only question regarding it that can properly be raised by the citizens is concerning the justice of the government's tax policy, its direction, and the amount to be levied. The nature of the tax policy must be determined by the stage of civilization and the conditions under which the people are living. Usually the policy is to a great extent determined also by the wisdom or ignorance of the government. Solomon's case demands careful study of the possible methods, as well as of those employed.

The question of the direction in which the money is to be spent is also a matter of vital importance, as well as the amount to be levied. Every citizen has not only a right to inquire regarding the nature and amount of the tax that he shall pay, but in a self-governing country, inasmuch as injustice is often wrought through taxation, it is a recognized duty of the individual citizen to inquire also regarding expenditures. A clear distinction should be kept in mind between the nature of expenditures of private individuals and those of the state. A private individual should and must adapt his expenditures to his income. The state, on the other hand, determines first what expenditures it is wise to make, then adapts its income by means of compulsory taxation to cover its expenditures. The only sound policy for a government to follow, therefore, is to prepare in advance, as is usual in most civilized countries, an annual budget, naming, first the proper expenditure, thus fixing the amount of revenue to be raised,

then determining the best and least burdensome ways to raise the sums needed. In all modern progressive governments this budget must be fully explained to the people or their representatives, and must receive their approval before the taxes are levied. Usually the budget is one of the important, frequently the most important subject discussed by the legislature. It is always subjected to severe criticism. Evidently Solomon did not depend upon a budgetary system that had passed the criticism of the representatives of the people.

When is a man justified in "swearing off" his taxes? Can a taxpayer sometimes shift the burden of his tax upon another? Give examples. Do you consider this practice right and just? Under what circumstances and how far?

Subjects for Further Study.

(1) Hebrew Systems of Taxation and Tribute. *Encyclopedia Biblica*, IV, pp. 4905-4916.

(2) Examine the last financial report of the State in which you live, or that of your city, noting the sources of revenue and the main items of expenditure. Compare these with Solomon's sources of revenue and objects of expenditure from the viewpoint of the welfare of the common people.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE EXPRESSION OF THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE.

THE DIVISION OF THE HEBREW KINGDOM.—I Kgs. 12.

Parallel Readings.

Kent, *Historical Bible*, Vol. III (*Kings and Prophets of Israel and Judah*); pp. 1-7.

Croly, Chap. VIII; Lowell, Chap. XIV.

And they said to Rehoboam, Your father made our yoke intolerable. Now therefore make the intolerable service of your father and the heavy yoke he laid upon us lighter, and we will serve you.—*I Kings 12: 7.*

And when all Israel saw that the king gave no heed to them, the people answered the king, saying,

What share have we in David?

We have no claim in the son of Jesse!

To your tents, O Israel!

Now care for your own house, O David!—*I Kings 12: 16.*

Statesmanship would be out to meet a crisis before it had become acute. The thing it would emphatically not do is to dam up an insurgent current until it overflowed the countryside.—*Lippmann*.

Tyranny

Absolves all faith; and who invades our rights,
Howe'er his own commence, can never be
But an usurper.—*Brooke*.

When private men shall act with original views, the lustre will be transferred from the actions of kings to those of gentlemen.—*Emerson*.

I.

THE DEMANDS OF THE NORTHERN TRIBES.

Nowhere in ancient literature and history is the issue between despotic tyranny and democracy more clearly presented than in the twelfth chapter of I Kings. It is a memorable chapter from its bearing upon the age-long contest between designing selfish rulers and their subjects. It describes in simplest terms that for which the common people in the French Revolution were wildly groping, that which our revolutionary fathers demanded from King George, that for which the English House of Commons has been successfully contending, that which the Social Democratic party of Germany proposes to wrest by force, if need be, from the government which they have considered a military autocracy, and that which the citizens of our American cities are beginning to recover from the greedy hands of political bosses. The tribes assembled at the ancient city of Shechem demanded that the man whom they called to lead and represent them should be their servant, not their irresponsible master. No befogging theories about the divine rights of self-constituted kings blinded the vision of the practical, intrepid elders of Northern Israel. Hard experience had taught them on the one hand their need of a ruler who would bind them together in a common defense against their foes; on the other how intolerable were the burdens of irresponsible despotism. Their ideal was not hazy and impracticable, but absolutely concrete and definite, for David's policy as a ruler in his earlier years was the embodiment of that for which they were contending and Solomon's of that which they were absolutely repudiating.

The demand of the elders also assumed that the institution of the kingship was based on an implied or definitely expressed contract or covenant between the ruler and those ruled. What

they demanded was a *magna charta*, definitely expressed in words, if not in writing. In modern terms they were seeking to establish a limited, constitutional monarchy. Moreover, the men who formulated these demands were not a few revolutionary iconoclasts, but the elders of the nation, the official representatives of at least three-fourths of the population and area of Israel. Their method of procedure was determined, but law-abiding and strictly constitutional. The memorable gathering at Shechem has sometimes been characterized as a rebellion. As a matter of fact it may be more truly described as the first constitutional assembly of which we have any record in human history. The institution of the kingship was still new among the Hebrews. As has been noted, it was the outgrowth of the older office of tribal sheik, which was in many respects most democratic. The law of succession was uncertain and the right of primogeniture by no means firmly established, as is shown by the ambitious contentions of David's sons and by the fact that his eldest, Adonijah, did not actually succeed him. The two determining factors appear to have been the nomination of the dying king and the popular acceptance of this choice by the people. Even though Solomon was the choice of David and had the support of a strong group in the court, including the royal guard, he did not become king until he was publicly presented to the people and accepted by them as their new ruler. Undoubtedly Rehoboam was Solomon's nominee, and this nomination probably had the tacit, possibly the public, approval of the people of Jerusalem, but he could not become the legitimate and established king of all Israel until he had the approval of a majority of the tribes. Before giving that approval, they were entirely justified in requiring definite assurances that Rehoboam would rule in accord with the oldest and best traditions of the Hebrew kingship.

Was a popular assembly like that recorded in I Kings 12 possible or conceivable in ancient Egypt or Babylonia? If not, why not? Do you recall any earlier attempt (that is, before 937 B.C.) in human history to establish a constitutional or limited monarchy? In what respects does a constitutional monarchy differ from a republic? Is the freedom of the people materially less?

II.

THE FOLLY OF DENYING THE PEOPLE THEIR RIGHTS.

The legality of the demand of the elders of Israel is demonstrated by the fact that Rehoboam went with his court and counsellors to Shechem to treat with the popular leaders of the nation. A great opportunity was then offered him to cement the varied and discontented elements in the Hebrew Empire and to lay a solid foundation for his rule over united Israel, for the people declared that they were ready to give him loyal service in return for fair treatment. The fires of tribal jealousy appear for the time to have been smothered. Never was a fairer demand made of a ruler. Evidently Rehoboam was deeply impressed with its fairness. Is it possible that at first the noble ideals inherited from his grandfather David mastered him and that he had a glorious vision of a contented, united Israel? At least it is clear that he was deeply impressed with the importance of the decision which he was called upon to make, for he demanded three days to consider it. In so doing he tacitly recognized the propriety of the people's action and gave them encouragement that the reply would be favorable.

The Biblical historian with marvelous skill has carried us back to that early age and by means of his dramatic record made us eye-witnesses and auditors at this fateful moment in Israel's life. We hear Rehoboam's voice as he asked the advice of the old men, who had sat in the council chamber of his father Solomon and learned lessons from his mistakes, but who had been bred in the camp and court of the patriotic David, the king that had come from the ranks and loved his people more than he did himself. Their words apply equally well to any young ruler facing his responsibilities of office: "If now you will be a servant to this people and serve them, and give them a favorable answer, then they will be your servants forever." These words embody a fundamental principle of life, which the great prophet who wrote Isaiah 40-53 and Jesus were destined to make central in all their teachings. If Rehoboam had only had a larger vision and experience of life, he would have been able to appreciate the eminent wisdom of this counsel; but with the self-sufficiency of a youth reared in a false environment he rejected it. Pride and selfishness inclined him to the counsels of the young men, who, like himself, had been

born and reared in the glittering, superficial, pleasure-loving court of Solomon. The issue was clear-cut and Rehoboam and his counsellors so interpreted it. It was the conciliatory, democratic policy of David and the popular party versus the autocratic despotism of Solomon and the military party. The demand of the people was too simple and direct and the rightness of their cause too obvious for compromise between these two antithetic policies. Rehoboam, like many a king before and after him, chose the policy that promised to satisfy his own selfish ambition and turned a deaf ear to the voice of his people. By dire threats he sought to silence that voice. "If you found my father a hard taskmaster, you will find me a merciless tyrant," was his tactless, shameless reply to the demand that he grant the people their rights. The event quickly demonstrated the superlative folly of his policy.

Is the counsel of the old men always the wisest? What advantages does it possess? What influences often vitiate the counsel of those of mature years? In what fields of thought and action are the conclusions and counsels of youth of especial value? What have youth and old age each to contribute to the other? Is the present tendency to disregard the counsels of mature experience perilous?

Was Rehoboam the victim of wrong counsel or of his own deliberate selfishness? Cite other historic illustrations of rulers who have deliberately refused to grant the people their rights. In what respects, if any, did Rehoboam's attitude toward society differ from that of a highway robber?

III.

THE POLITICAL EFFECT OF THE DIVISION.

In its effects, not only upon him but upon his race, Rehoboam's decision was one of the most momentous ever made by a Hebrew ruler. For him it meant the immediate loss of two-thirds of the empire that might have been his, and fully three-fourths of the arable land and therefore of the income inherited from his father. It left him master simply of a little, barren upland principality that was speedily overrun and stripped of its inherited resources by the plundering Egyptian King Shishak. The direst effect of all was the heritage of civil war between Judah and Northern Israel which constantly

weakened the strength of the two kingdoms and rendered them an easy prey for the Assyrian and Babylonian conquerors, when they later set out to take possession of southwestern Asia. One direct effect of the division upon Northern Israel was the establishment of a series of military dynasties, which depended upon the sword for their authority and which fell in a welter of bloodshed the moment a stronger rival appeared. The result is that Northern Israel's history is stained by a series of royal assassinations that weakened both the resisting power and the patriotism of the people of the north.

The division also intensified the old rivalry between the north and the south, which David sought so earnestly and successfully to allay. So intense did it become in the centuries following Rehoboam's disastrous decision that it survived the Babylonian exile and reappeared in the bitter Samaritan feud which burned far down into the Roman period. The cry of the representatives of the northern tribes at Shechem:

"What claim have we in David?

We have no claim in the son of Jesse!"

not only separated the Hebrew tribes, but also hastened the fall of Samaria in 722 and of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. More disastrous still in bringing about the exile of the Jewish race was that lack of harmony and mutual confidence between rulers and those ruled which was voiced in the demands of the people at Shechem and intensified by the brutal words of Rehoboam. Thus for the Hebrews, as for many other nations, disunion in the end meant subjection.

Picture what might have been the political history of united Israel if Rehoboam had sought to serve rather than to enslave his people. Would Israel's permanent integrity have been assured if the northern tribes had submitted at Shechem to Rehoboam's tyrannical demands? Are lasting peace and prosperity possible under a despotism? Are the political power and prestige of a powerful state essential to the welfare of a people? Compare the relative prosperity of the average citizen of England or Germany and of Switzerland or Holland.

IV.

THE SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS EFFECTS OF THE DIVISION.

The decision of the people at Shechem meant political disaster for the Hebrew race, but it was not lacking in positive

values for them and for humanity. It was a dramatic declaration that the object of all government is the conservation of the rights of the people. It committed a large majority of the Israelites to relentless opposition to the despotic misuse of political power. Has this been in general the attitude of the Jews throughout the centuries? Cite present-day illustrations in Europe and America.

The northern tribes placed at their head a certain Jeroboam who came from the ranks and who had gained their confidence by his brave and determined opposition to the oppressive policy of Solomon. In every sense the action of the ten tribes was a democratic movement. Jeroboam I bore the current title king, but he was as much the choice of the people as George Washington or Abraham Lincoln. The exigencies of the situation made it necessary to establish a military organization in Northern Israel, and certain of the later kings yielded to the temptation of attempting to exercise despotic powers, but the relentless judgment that was visited upon such offenders showed how firmly democratic ideals were established in the minds of the people. The record of the reign of Jeroboam I is brief and has been colored by the prejudices of the later Judean historians, who had come to regard Jerusalem as the one legitimate sanctuary and the northerners as rebels. But from the meager record it appears that Jeroboam did all in his power to fulfil the public trust laid upon him. There is no suggestion of tyranny and oppression. Private and public interests were undoubtedly faithfully guarded. May it not well be that his experience in charge of the forced levy had not only given him invaluable experience as an administrator, but had also strengthened his sympathy for the oppressed? He knew their sufferings perhaps better than any other man in the kingdom. It was a difficult task that devolved upon this son of the common people, for Northern Israel was by no means a homogeneous geographical unit and Solomon's policy had done little to develop and unite them except in their opposition to despotic oppression. The Philistines pressed them hard in the west, and Shishak of Egypt in his looting expedition overran Northern Israel, as well as Judah. The one important act that is recorded of Jeroboam is condemned by the biblical historians, but it is an index of his spirit and policy. For the convenience of his subjects he established

not one royal sanctuary, as had Gideon and Solomon, but two: one in the extreme north and another in the extreme south. If he had been seeking merely to strengthen his own ambitions, he would have naturally lent his patronage to the local sanctuary at his capital Shechem. His democratic tendencies are also revealed by his selection of priests from among all the people who were not of the sons of Levi. To a later religious historian this seemed gross impiety, as did also his public participation in the services of the royal sanctuaries, but in so doing he was not only following earlier well-established traditions but also carrying into the national religion his democratic ideas. These acts also suggest that he was deeply interested in all that vitally concerned his subjects. For over two decades he guided the troubled destinies of Northern Israel, and at his death his independent subjects endorsed his policy by electing his son his successor.

The division of the Hebrew Kingdom in 937 B.C. marked large progress in defining and establishing the rights of man, and in developing a people that would lend a ready ear to the lofty social ideals of their later prophets. It also precipitated in time the series of political crises, which called forth the great social and religious reformers like Elijah, Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah, who transformed men's conception of God and of their responsibilities to their fellows. It destroyed all possibilities of a world empire, but it gave to men a vision of rulers who would attain glory by being the servants of their people and of the one divine King, ruling in justice and love over all mankind.

Modern governments are often classified as monarchical, aristocratic, and democratic. Can the various church organizations be similarly classified? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each of these forms of organization in church and state? Does the present-day English or German reporter write as fair an account of the great European war as did the biblical historian of the reign of Jeroboam I?

V.

THE RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE TO EXPRESS AND ENFORCE THEIR WILL.

It is a far cry from the assembly of the people at Shechem among the hills of Ephraim to the halls of the Continental

Congress in Philadelphia. And yet the demands of the northern Israelites upon the successor of King Solomon are justified in the principles of the Declaration of Independence. The demands in both cases embody the same ideas. The foundations of these demands are also substantially the same; they are found in human nature—normal mental and moral growth for each and every individual. Normal moral health demands not only mental activity but also the power of choice, the right of initiative, the obligation to make decisions.

In our schools little children memorize, older children are taught to reason and are given certain rights of initiative and the obligation to decide upon questions laid before them. In business mere clerks do routine work, the heads of departments, who supervise the work of others, must take the responsibility of making decisions. The manager of a great business has time to do little except to formulate plans and to make decisions. There has been in the business world an outcry against the great industrial combinations because it has been said that they weaken the power of initiative, that they absorb the business of the smaller men and make mere hired men of those who formerly had to carry the responsibilities of an independent business. Beyond doubt, if justified by facts, this charge against the combinations is exceedingly grave. On the other hand it is claimed that the heads of departments in the industrial combinations are given the power of originating plans, of making decisions, and that they are held responsible primarily only for results, so that they have the same power of initiative as in an independent business, while the responsibility is more direct, and that in the combination nothing is lost in initiative, while much is gained in training. Whatever the facts may be in individual cases, all agree that it is an essential for the success of any business that the power of initiative be encouraged. In many business houses at the present time a suggestion box is placed where every employee, however humble his position, may make suggestions for the improvement of the business; and the workers are even stimulated to be thoughtful in this regard by prizes that are offered for the best suggestions.

Inasmuch as the government in any state more or less completely controls practically all of the activities of life, deciding upon the forms which contracts shall take, supervising

the preparation of medicines and the sale of foods, determining the conditions of marriage and divorce, making regulations for the protection of the health of the citizens; and even, for the protection of the public, ordering individuals to lay down their lives in war, it is evident that in the realm of government there is far greater opportunity to affect the welfare of individuals and of states, than in business. It is in consequence extremely important that the best policy be followed by the government. As it is essential that children be guided in their activities, so primitive peoples are under the immediate control of the father or chief of the family or clan. But as peoples grow in intelligence and experience, the individual citizens must act, take responsibilities, be given opportunity for initiative and choice, in order to secure their own best development.

But human nature is selfish and it is found that rulers often act for their own individual welfare, whether this be for the good of their fellow citizens or not. As we have seen, partly perhaps from natural inclination, partly because it was essential for the development of his kingdom, David put in the foreground the welfare of his people. Under his rule, as in days that had preceded, the individual carried his own responsibilities. Solomon, however, in selfishly promoting his own power and magnificence, neglected the welfare of the people and even oppressed them in order that he might satisfy his pride and ambition.

Many centuries later we find that the lords in England in the early days had the opportunity and used it to shape legislation in their own interest regardless of the welfare of the common people. Similar instances are found among the great land owners in Germany, among the aristocrats in Russia; and, for that matter, wherever any class in the community is able to get into its own hands the power of government, that power is likely to be used selfishly and not with due regard for the common interest. The struggle in practically every state should be to secure such use of the power of government that the welfare, not of one class, but of the whole shall be promoted. At Shechem, the people looking back to the customs of their ancestors, under which the people had possessed the right of initiative and had been able to take the responsibilities which make for the building of character, demanded that they be given back the freedom they had earlier possessed.

This demand was based upon the fact that Solomon had selfishly sacrificed their interests. They did not propose to permit his successor to continue to sacrifice them, as he had done.

The ideal in government, if the above considerations are justified, would be that which would give to the individual citizens the power to decide what the policy of the state should be and under which each individual citizen in the state should have the desire and the will to consider the welfare of all the citizens, so that the government would exist simply to promote the general welfare. Only a people schooled in self-discipline is willing in such circumstances to yield to the authority of law as formulated by the majority or the representatives of the majority. But for people skilled in popular government this readiness to submit to law normally accompanies the ability to make the best type of laws.

To what extent are the people in the United States given the freedom of choice in the states which are under so-called "boss" rule? Could we speak of "freedom" under the Czar of Russia, if the Czar carried out the will of his people? What would Rehoboam have gained if he had assented to the request of his people?

Ought an employer to give his workmen the right of determining what the policy of the business shall be? Give the reasons for your answer.

In a country like that of the ancient Hebrews where the church and state are one, would these same principles apply in the realm of religion?

VI.

WAYS OF EXPRESSING THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE.

It is immaterial what the form of government may be called, if only it is such that right practical results are achieved. Often we are misled by words in the discussion of such questions. We speak of Great Britain as a "monarchy." During the days that the recent war seemed impending the government refused to take a definite stand. Sir Edward Grey, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, said officially that the government would not act until the people's desires became known. As soon as an event had occurred that seemed to crystallize public opinion, the action of the government was quick and reasonably

sure. In the light of these and many similar facts shall we say that England is in fact a republic or a monarchy?

In France at the present day the power remains with the President of the Republic to remove from office the prefect of any department or the mayor of any city. The government is strongly centralized, substantially according to the plans first put into effect by Napoleon Bonaparte. Yet France is a republic in form. Is the government in France more or less democratic than that of England?

Before the outbreak of the European war the Czar of Russia in his communication to the German Emperor said that under certain circumstances he could not restrain his people and that war would inevitably come. If this is a fact, does it weaken the autocracy of the Czar? It is well known that in the native states of India and in the Federated Malay States, by the side of the native ruler is placed a British "resident," whose duty it is to make suggestions and to give advice to the Sultan or local chief, and that the native chief must follow the advice given him, although the laws are issued and put into effect in the name of the native ruler. An Englishman traveling some years since in the Federated States and observing these conditions protested vigorously in a letter to the *London Times*, saying that in fact the chief had been deprived of all authority and that England was acting hypocritically. The letter was translated to the native chief referred to who replied: "What does the fellow want? The English now do practically all the work, while I get the honor and the pay. He seems to want me to do all the work. I prefer the present conditions." Was the chief imbued with the spirit of liberty and self-government?

The people may express their will in various ways, either directly in a general assembly by the clashing of their swords against their shields to express their approval of measures proposed, as in the case of the ancient Greeks, or by the show of hands in a general assembly, as in the smaller mountain cantons of Switzerland, or as in the United States in town meetings by oral vote or ballot.

The people may express their will through representatives of various kinds. Among primitive people the elders of the village in accordance with custom hold the position of representatives through general assent. A king is sometimes elected,

sometimes he inherits his position and title under a regular constitution. Such constitutional monarchies are often controlled by representatives chosen by the people. The essential fact is that the desires of the people are carried out by their representatives.

Sometimes a representative is looked upon as a mere mouth-piece of his constituents, one to ascertain their wishes and carry them out, even though they be contrary to his own views and convictions. Others believe that constituencies should select as their representative some man who understands their needs, who has their confidence and who, in consequence, should be trusted by them to do as to him seems best, even though his views as an expert may differ from those of his constituents.

Which is the better principle of representative government? Which principle is the one more commonly followed?

In case it is desired to change radically the form of government, this change has been at times brought about by violence, as in the case of the great revolutions. In other cases, however, where provision has been made beforehand, such a change may be brought about peacefully through creating or amending a constitution. The ideal would seem to be that representatives be chosen for their ability and experience, as well as for their general views on public questions, and then be given a reasonable amount of discretion regarding the use of their votes, without any citizen feeling that he is misrepresented, and that provision be made for peaceful changes, even though they be radical in their nature.

Is a lawyer a representative of his client? Do you give your lawyer discretion in using his judgment? Is a physician to be considered as a representative of his patient in the treatment of disease? Is it customary to give him full discretion in the treatment of a case? Why? Why ought not a congressman to be given as great a degree of liberty in determining the policy that he shall follow as the trained expert in either law or medicine, science or business? Is a congressman so trained in his field of legislation that he can be considered an expert?

When President Wilson was elected, was the change in our governmental policy such that we might speak of it as a peaceful revolution?

The first President of the Chinese Republic, Yuan Shih-kai, in the opinion of some, assumed a dictatorship. Can a change be made quickly from a despotism to a real democracy with full authority in the people's hands? Why?

Under the laws of most of our States a man is said to "come of age" with full legal rights of manhood, at twenty-one years of age. Why not eighteen years? Or twenty-five years? Is there any method that can be devised by which the capabilities of decision and of wise action may be determined by examination?

Subjects for Further Study.

(1) Structure and Literary History of I Kings. Kent, *Israel's Historical and Biographical Narratives*, pp. 14-18.

(2) Examine the question of establishing a referendum on constitutional amendments and on important laws in two of the United States having such referendum or in Switzerland. Give an opinion somewhat in detail as to the classes of laws upon which the American electorate is fairly well qualified to express an intelligent judgment. Lowell, *Public Opinion and Popular Government*.

CHAPTER IX.

RELIGION AND POLITICS.

ELIJAH'S ARRAIGNMENT OF AHAB'S POLICY.—I Kgs. 16:21—19:43.

Parallel Readings.

Kent, *Historical Bible*, Vol. III, pp. 8-23, 25-27.

Croly, Chap. IX; Lowell, Chap. XV.

Then Elijah came near to all the people and said, How long are you going to limp between the two sides? If Jehovah be God, follow him, but if the Baal, then follow him.—*I Kings 18: 21.*

No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other.—*Matt. 6: 24.*

We know, and, what is better, we feel inwardly, that religion is the basis of civil society, and the source of all good and of all comfort.—*Burke.*

Our human laws are but the copies, more or less imperfect, of the eternal laws, so far as we can read them.—*Froude.*

Democracy is better for us, because the religious sentiment of the present time accords better with it.—*Emerson.*

I.

ISRAEL'S POLITICAL PROBLEMS.

Throughout the two centuries of its independent existence Northern Israel was confronted by many grave problems. Its geographical position and physical attractiveness exposed it to constant peril. On the southwest were the warlike Philistines, eager to extend their territory and to keep open the great highways of commerce which brought to them their chief wealth. The western headlands of Judah presented a frowning front; but broad, open valleys ran through the territory of Northern Israel from east to west and north to south. The wide fertile plain of Esdraelon lay in its very center, and across it passed the natural highways along which traders, immigrants, and conquering armies had traveled from time immemorial. It also separated the tribes in the north from those in central Palestine, while from north to south ran the deep rift of the Jordan valley. Thus Northern Israel was divided into three distinct natural units.

Along the western valleys came Philistine armies to contest the possession of the border towns. On the southeast the Moabites were constantly seeking to push their boundaries northward and to expel or subject the isolated east-Jordan tribes. During the first half-century the relations between the northern and southern Israelites were hostile; but when Baasha, who mounted the throne of Northern Israel, after slaying the son of Jeroboam, pressed Asa of Judah too hard, the latter called to his help a nation which proved one of Israel's deadliest foes. It was the Aramean kingdom of Damascus. Situated in a fertile basin on the borders of the desert, this ancient city had grown rich through trade and the products of the agricultural territory which it held along the slopes of the Anti-Lebanon mountains. It was also ambitious to extend its territory and sphere of influence throughout southern Palestine. Control of the land held by the Northern Israelites was essential, if it was to carry on unimpeded trade with Egypt. Thus on three sides Northern Israel was subject to almost constant attacks of strong, persistent foes, and its fertile grain fields were a bait attracting its greedy neighbors.

Omri, the founder of the strongest dynasty of Israel, was

called to the throne while leading an army against the Philistines. He it was, according to the testimony of King Mesha that was found inscribed on the famous Moabite stone, who broke the power of his southeastern foes and for a generation held the cities of northern Moab in subjection. It was Omri, who with the trained instincts of a general, selected a high, sloping hill in central Ephraim and founded the strongly fortified city of Samaria, and made it his capital. He was also the first of Israel's rulers to pay tribute to Assyria, as is recorded in the annals of Ashurnaçirpal III's campaign into northern Syria in 876 B.C. During the later years of his reign Omri's might was broken by the attacks of the Aramean armies from Damascus. He was obliged to cede certain of his territory to them and to set aside certain streets or quarters in Samaria for the Aramean traders. After his death and the accession of his son Ahab the Aramean King Benhadad almost succeeded in completely subjugating Northern Israel, for his armies penetrated to the very gates of Samaria.

In what respects did Omri resemble David? As a rule did the danger from attack from without develop or weaken the nations of antiquity? What degree and types of opposition are beneficial to nations? To individuals? Were economic forces as potent in ancient Semitic politics as today? Illustrate.

II.

AHAB'S POLITICAL POLICY AND ITS EFFECTS.

Ahab inherited from his father Omri two things: a broken and almost subjugated kingdom and the ambitions and ability of a statesman and organizer. It was a period in Israel's history that called for able, broad-minded leadership. The first task was to repel the Aramean invaders. The situation seemed almost hopeless; but Ahab's followers were fighting in desperation for their homes and very existence, while his foes were sated with victory and over-confidence. In the two great battles against the Arameans Ahab showed himself a daring, able leader. In the last battle at Aphek he not only liberated his people, but captured Benhadad, the Aramean king. Then, doubtless to the surprise of his followers and in the face of the open protest and condemnation of the sons of the prophets, he set Benhadad free and concluded with him

a treaty that gave Ahab possession of all the cities conquered by his father Omri and special trading quarters in Damascus for Hebrew merchants. In view of the natural strength of Damascus war could bring him no more. It also reveals his policy. Although he was an able warrior, he appreciated the superior advantages of peace and commerce. He purposed to build up and strengthen his nation, not by the sword but by alliances and trade. In this respect he was far in advance of his barbarous age. Northern Israel had rich natural resources. Its grain fields bore far more than was required for the support of its inhabitants; but the land had been devastated and its resources drained by the protracted wars. More than the spoils of war his people needed rest and an opportunity to till their fields and to rebuild their homes.

Another reason may also have influenced Ahab to be clement toward his fallen foe: it was the approach of their common enemy Assyria. He may have been far-sighted enough to have seen that all the united strength of the peoples of Syria was needed to repel the dread invader. From the annals of Shalmaneser II we learn that in 854 B.C. both the Israelites and Arameans fought side by side in a great but indecisive battle against the Assyrians. The fact that according to that record Ahab sent more chariots into the battle than the Arameans is explained by his earlier victory at Aphek.

Ahab's policy was in many respects similar to that of Solomon. His ambition was to place Northern Israel in the forefront among the nations of southwestern Asia, and to that end he or his father Omri had made a treaty with their western neighbors, the peaceful, commercial Phœnicians. The advantages of such an alliance are obvious. As had been clearly shown in the relations between Solomon and King Hiram, the Phœnicians were in need of grain, which the Hebrews could supply in abundance, and they were able to furnish in exchange the military equipment and the products of art and civilization that Ahab required for the realization of his ambitions. This alliance meant a favorable, nearby market and a valuable ally. No wonder that it was sealed by a royal marriage between Ahab and the daughter of the king of Tyre. By the subjects of both kings this marriage was doubtless regarded as an act of wise statesmanship.

The alliance with Tyre might have brought only well-being

to both peoples, had Jezebel, who became Ahab's wife, been an ordinary oriental woman. But she was the daughter of Ethbaal, the ex-priest of Baal, who had mounted the throne of Tyre by assassinating his royal master, and Jezebel was a true daughter of her energetic, ambitious, unscrupulous father. She was doubtless a woman of fascinating personality, with bold spirit and eager determination. The international courtesy of the day permitted her to have a temple of her god in her new home, Samaria, and the Baal priests necessary for its service. Alliances between Semitic peoples also meant friendship between their gods. The situation in Israel was rendered more perilous by the fact that many of the Northern Israelites had Canaanite blood in their veins, and in the north many of the Canaanite religious customs and shrines, which were identical with those of the Phœnicians, had survived. The Canaanite cults were also closely connected with the agricultural life of Northern Israel and were in themselves exceedingly attractive to a pleasure-loving people, for they were joyous and gave free license to the baser passions. In this fertile and already well-prepared field Jezebel appears to have initiated a proselyting campaign. In any case the Israelites were free to follow the Canaanite customs with the tacit approval of the court. There is no evidence that Ahab or a majority of his subjects contemplated for a moment abandoning the worship of Jehovah, the traditional Baal or Master of Israel, but they were quite ready to make friends with the ancient baals of the land and of their opulent allies in the west.

Do you think that Ahab's policy had the approval of a majority of his subjects? Why? Did Ahab probably regard himself as another David and the saviour of his country? With what reason? Did the sons of the prophet, who condemned his toleration of Benhadad rightly interpret the divine will? Were the Spanish inquisition and the burning of witches in early New England originally regarded as doing the will of God? What crimes have been committed in recent times under the sanction of divine authority? How far is there danger of interpreting our will as the will of God?

III.

ELIJAH THE TISHBITE.

Elijah is one of the most dramatic figures in Israel's dramatic history. The biblical historian projects him into the narrative without preface or introduction. Like a storm-cloud he sweeps across the serene horizon of the middle of Ahab's reign. He is a gaunt, austere, outspoken man, clad in the grim garb of the desert-dweller. He comes from the otherwise unknown village of Tishbi on the heights of Gilead, east of the Jordan, where the wandering nomad and the agriculturist meet, and where the traditions of Jehovah, the God of Moses and of the Wilderness, were still cherished. In Ahab's mind he was classed with the sons of the prophets, who had opposed his policy of alliance and expansion, and whom he had in retaliation attempted to hunt from the land. Amidst the smiling, vine-clad hills of central Israel Elijah seemed sadly out of place. In fact he never felt at home in the great cities of Israel. He was lacking also in tact and diplomatic skill. Indirection and compromise were unknown to him. His strength lay in his clear, direct insight and in his uncompromising boldness. Elijah was one of the last of the older type of prophets. He had much in common with Deborah and Samuel. He was able unerringly to analyze a political and religious situation that escaped or baffled the more learned and experienced statesmen of his day. His was the intuition of the child that simply and unquestioningly arrives at true conclusions regarding human character and motives where those of maturer years are often deceived. Like the earlier prophets, when he saw a fact or truth he proclaimed it, regardless of the consequences to himself. Elijah was thus the enlightened conscience of his nation. By Ahab and undoubtedly by a majority of his contemporaries he was regarded as "the troubler of Israel," a fanatical calamity howler, who was barring national progress, a dangerous character who should be suppressed or hunted from the land.

Do intellectual training and culture blunt a nation's or a man's intuitive appreciation of what is right and wrong? Why is it that children are often better judges of human nature than their elders? How may men retain the child's power of intuitive analysis? Are the calamity howlers of one genera-

tion often recognized as true prophets by the next? Illustrate. What unpopular teachers of today may possibly belong to that category? Does the fear of seeming queer and of being called calamity howlers often deter men from doing their best work?

IV.

ELIJAH'S INTERPRETATION OF THE RELIGIOUS CRISIS.

The world-wide differences between Ahab's and Elijah's interpretation of the political and religious situation in Northern Israel were due to their diverse point of view and training. Both felt that they were right. Ahab was conscious of the support of the overwhelming majority of his subjects; Elijah, of standing almost alone. Ahab trusted to his processes of reasoning; Elijah felt in the depths of his consciousness the absolute conviction that Jehovah himself was speaking to and through him. Ahab's point of view and training were those of a man reared in the most advanced center of the mingled Hebrew and Canaanite culture that had developed in Northern Israel. The sterner moral ideals that the ancestors of the Hebrews had brought from the wilderness and learned from the lips of Moses had been enervated by wealth and comparative luxury and undermined by the insidious influence of the degenerate, materialistic Canaanite civilization that in the north had so largely absorbed Israel's earlier loyalty to Jehovah. The sanctity of the marriage relation, the integrity of rulers and judges and the sense of social responsibility were all being severely tested, and great was the danger that they would be abandoned by the luxury-loving, ambitious sons of the north.

Elijah, reared in the older environment, taught from infancy to abhor the Canaanite cults and licentiousness, clearly saw the peril. He recognized that Northern Israel under the strong leadership of Ahab and Jezebel was in imminent danger, while finding its national life, of losing its soul. The problem that confronted and at times seemed to baffle him was how to make his countrymen see the peril and avert it. At first he appears to have gone directly to King Ahab and protested to him against the current tendencies. When he was received with contempt by the king he uttered his warnings to the people, probably thereby winning the taunting title, "Troubler of Israel." It is possible that he next aroused some of the

members of the prophetic guilds, known as the sons of the prophets, with which he was closely connected, to join in a campaign of protest. This would explain why Obadiah, the religiously inclined prefect of Ahab's palace, had at the risk of his own life hid a hundred of the prophets of Jehovah in caves to guard them from Jezebel's wrath and proselyting zeal. These zealous, though fanatical, champions of the Jehovah religion undoubtedly exerted some influence upon the common people; but their protests and those of Elijah only aroused the bitter persecution of Ahab and probably of many of the leaders of the nation.

The only hope of reaching and moving the conscience of Israel was to appeal from king and rulers to the people, as has often been done in modern times, even in America, when a ruler or reformer has felt that the leaders of parties or the lawmakers were sacrificing the best interests of the nation to temporal, selfish ends. As has often been the case in history, a striking natural phenomenon made this possible in a most effective way. The actual facts are clearly recorded in the picturesque, concrete symbolism of later story. The traditions regarding Elijah and Elisha came to us as they were probably told among the prophetic guilds of Northern Israel and Judah two or three generations after these prophets lived. The supernatural elements that have been woven into them in such unparalleled profusion are nevertheless important, for they reveal the impression that the personality of each of these great prophets made upon their own and later generations. The prologue to the epoch-making assembly on Mount Carmel was the terrible drouth that, according to the Greek writer Meander, occurred during the reign of Ittobaal of Tyre and lasted one full year. Both Phœnicians and Hebrews regarded this terrible calamity as a judgment sent by their Deity. It prepared the mind of Ahab and his counsellors for Elijah's bold demand, presented to the king in person by the intrepid prophet: "Send now and gather the fifty prophets of the Baal, who eat at Jezebel's table." A contest or debate makes a universal appeal especially to that elemental fighting instinct which was exceedingly strong in Ahab's character. The unusual character of Elijah's request also undoubtedly fascinated the king. Doubtless he was conscious of a deep undercurrent of popular discontent. "This drouth is Jehovah's

punishment of Ahab's persecution of the prophets" was on many lips, and Ahab himself probably more than half believed it. Here, however, was an opportunity to conciliate the prophets and people. The proposal that the Baal prophets be invited also was as attractive as it was surprising. It suggested full representation of all the varied religious parties in his kingdom and the possibilities of an agreement and compact between them. In any case the king readily acceded to Elijah's request.

On the commanding height that rises in the heart of central Israel, easily accessible to all and yet above the agricultural environment of the broad valleys below, the representatives of the people met together. The effects of the blighting drouth were in evidence as far as the eye could reach, and the air, even on the mountain plateau, was hot and stifling. Evidences of Jehovah's displeasure engulfed the people and thirst and hunger within emphasized what they believed to be the divine protest. When the gaunt, severe, dauntless prophet rose before them, he had at last an audience prepared for his message. Clear and direct as a lightning flash it came to them. It revealed the whole religious issue stripped of all its complexities and allurements: "How long are you going to limp between the two sides? If Jehovah be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." Tradition has embellished the scene, but it is perfectly clear that Elijah had done all that any true prophet could do; he had presented the facts and appealed directly to the conscience of the nation. In graphic words he declared: "You are making absurd, pathetic efforts to serve two gods, to hold two types of faith, diametrically opposed. The task is impossible. Choose one or the other and be loyal to him." No answer came at the moment from the people, but the next quarter century showed beyond question that Elijah's words had touched the popular conscience and evoked a true response. The narrative implies that the prophets of Baal were given ample opportunity to present their cause, but it evoked no response from god or man. The narrative states that they were slain by the people at Elijah's command beside the Kishon below, even as were the Canaanites beside the same historic brook centuries before by the Hebrew warriors who followed Deborah and Barak. At last the full meaning of the great religious crisis was clear

even to the humblest and most obtuse in Northern Israel; the popular conscience had been thoroughly aroused. The sinister meaning of Ahab's policy and of Jezebel's proselyting was revealed. Time and circumstance would give the people opportunity, as they did in gory terms in the revolution of Jehu, to express their deep conviction and determination to limp no longer between two sides.

Do you think that what they beheld on Mount Carmel was a special miracle? Does a striking natural phenomenon often afford the opportunity for a religious or social leader to attain moral ends? How far were the people justified in regarding it as a direct divine judgment? Why does the miraculous element abound in the Elijah and Elisha stories, while it is entirely lacking in the contemporary record of Amos and Hosea? What light does the different type of miracles recounted of Elijah and Elisha throw upon the character of each of these prophets? In calling for a great popular assembly was Elijah reasserting the rights of the people? What other memorable assembly of the Northern Israelites did it recall?

V.

THE CONFLICT AND RECONCILIATION OF POLITICS AND RELIGION.

Never in Israel's history did the conflict between the demands of practical politics and applied religion seem so sharp as in the days of Ahab. If Ahab and his counsellors had acceded at once to Elijah's demands they would have banished all traces of the Phœnician Baal cult from the land. This would have meant, not only that Ahab would have been exposed to the rage of an infuriated and determined queen, but also the severing of the profitable alliance with Tyre, the closing of Israel's best market, and the cutting off of its chief source of military supplies at a time when the nation was in constant danger of attack. To Ahab and his statesmen this seemed an impossible price to pay for mere ease of conscience. Besides Jehovah was still the recognized God of Israel, and the toleration of Baal worship was regarded by them as simply a common act of international courtesy.

In the light of a broader perspective the true reconciliation is revealed. No political policy is practical for a nation that

does not conserve its largest and most permanent interests. Israel was not weak in material resources. Its supreme need was a force to bind together into close unity its naturally dissimilar and dis severed elements. Its chief peril was not, after all, foreign foes, but the internal strife and luxury and licentiousness that threatened to destroy its virility and power of resistance. Loyalty to Jehovah, complete and undivided, was the one force capable of uniting the nation, and also the only one capable of preserving it. The seductive, pernicious influence of the Baal cults was the great disintegrating, weakening factor in Israel's life. On the simple basis of practical politics, disloyalty to Jehovah and a weak toleration of Baalism was the worst policy Israel could possibly pursue. Ahab persisted in this short-sighted policy and thereby wrecked his dynasty and nearly ruined his kingdom. As soon as he ceased to command the confidence of his people in his loyalty to the God of the nation, they were ready, as the event proved, to follow the lead of an aggressive revolutionist. The struggle between antagonistic religious parties caused the best blood of Israel to be needlessly shed. Immorality, due to the influence of Baalism, and the lack of united and consistent action were the chief causes of the final downfall of the northern kingdom. Modern history abounds in illustrations of the fact that there is no real conflict between the demands of politics and religion and that the greatest evil that can befall a nation is for its statesman to neglect the fundamental principles of all great religions. As nations are bound together more and more closely and politics become more international, the seeming conflict between politics and religion is more completely eliminated. The dream of the greatest prophets throughout the ages has been a federation of man, in which the petty jealousies and intrigues of nations would disappear and all the human race be united in conserving the highest welfare of humanity. On this ultimate foundation the aims of politics and of religion become absolutely one.

Which of the great nations of today have been founded and guided throughout certain periods of their history by the principles of religion? Name countries and periods. What countries illustrate at times the evils that come from the lack of such guidance? Illustrate. Have some of the most disastrous political blunders of modern history been made

as a result of neglecting the fundamental principles of religion and morality? Cite illustrations. Does the reconciliation of politics and religion mean the reunion of church and state? If not, why not?

VI.

MODERN POLITICS AND RELIGION.

The belief is current in many minds today that good politics is bad religion and that a rigid adherence to the Ten Commandments and above all to the fundamental teachings of Jesus unfits a man for success in political life. This is possibly true for a brief period, though not in the long run, if a man's aim in entering politics is his own personal advancement and profit. In certain cities and countries men have at times won office and held positions for a little time by corrupt or barbarous methods, but there is little doubt that such cases are becoming less and less common in all civilized Christian lands. Men are beginning to discover that so-called "good politics" is in the highest degree inimical to the common good. The ultimate aim of all rightful political organization and activity is the welfare of the people. Religion preserves and sanctions those laws and methods which, experience has taught, best conserve the interest of individuals and of society. Really good politics is therefore impossible, unless in accord with the principles of religion. Usually this accord comes through the personal activity of those who regulate their lives in accordance with those principles.

Should the priests and preachers of religion actively enter the field of politics? Do you think that they should publicly and officially support a political party? If not, in what ways can they more effectively raise the political standards of their community and state? What men in your opinion have done most for your city and community in recent years? For your country? Why?

Is it not possible for a man to have a profound influence upon his government without holding office or taking any active part in elections? How?

Subjects for Further Study.

(1) The Contemporary Testimony of the Moabite Stone. Kent, *Historical and Biographical Narratives*, pp. 494-496.

(2) Study the relations between the English government and the

Established Church in England, as regards representation of the Church in the House of Lords and the ways in which the members of the Clergy are educated, appointed and supported. Express your judgment regarding the effects of this relationship upon (a) the promotion of reforms in politics and social legislation and (b) upon the religious influence of the Clergy. Lowell, *Government of England*.

CHAPTER X.

THE RIGHTS OF CITIZENSHIP.

THE STORY OF NABOTH'S VINEYARD.—I Kgs. 21.

Parallel Readings.

Kent, *Historical Bible*, Vol. III, pp. 23-25, 28, 29, 32-35, 41-53.
Croly, Chap. X; Lowell, Chap. XVI.

Now Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard beside the palace of Ahab, king of Samaria. And Ahab spoke to Naboth, saying, Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden, because it is near my house, and I will give you a better vineyard for it; or, if it is more satisfactory to you, I will give you the value of it in money.—*I Kings 21: 1, 2.*

Then Jezebel wrote letters in Ahab's name and sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters to the elders and the nobles who were in his city, who presided with Naboth. And she wrote in the letters, Proclaim a fast and also place Naboth in a prominent place among the people. Then place two base men before him and let them bear witness against him, saying, You have cursed God and the king. And then carry him out and stone him to death.—*I Kings 21: 8-10.*

This is true Liberty when freeborn men,
Having to advise the public, may speak free.—*Horace.*

A king ruleth as he ought, a tyrant as he lists, a king to the profit of all, a tyrant only to please a few.—*Aristotle.*

I.

THE ORIENTAL ATTITUDE TOWARD INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS.

Undoubtedly one of the most marked differences between the East and the West is the prevailing attitude toward individual liberty. The westerner will sacrifice almost every other possession—wealth, prosperity, even life—to secure and protect it. The ancient oriental knew or thought no more about the equality of man than his modern descendant does

about pragmatism. What the ordinary oriental most dreaded was too much personal liberty, for it meant isolation and defenselessness. His chief ambition was to align himself closely with the communal organization, whether it be the family or tribe or state, and thereby to be assured of protection and maintenance in case of danger or misfortune. The great majority of the people of Israel were eager to secure the patronage of a strong chief or noble, who would champion their cause in the law courts and better still protect them from the aggressions of their designing neighbors and rivals. This fact explains why many free-born Hebrews voluntarily assumed the obligations of slavery for themselves and their descendants. It was of course a choice between two evils, that of penury and violence at the hands of the strong and unprincipled or the subject relation with the assurance of food and shelter and ample protection. This feeling to a great extent explains why there was such a huge slave and serf class in the old oriental monarchies like Babylonia and Egypt. It meant a small ruling class and a large body of dependents. The individual rights of the great majority were, therefore, in the keeping of irresponsible rulers. Their control of those subject to them was not merely political but also economic, and was unchecked by any ideas of individual equality or organized movements to secure personal liberty. It is not strange, therefore, that many of the ancient oriental rulers became cruelly despotic and unhesitatingly crushed any subject who stood in the way of the realization of their personal desires. Ancient oriental history abounds in gory illustrations. Even in the present generation it is stated on good authority that whenever the late Sultan of Turkey, Abdul Hamid, wished to acquire an estate belonging to one of his wealthy subjects, the body of his victim would before long be seen floating down the Bosphorus and all that the Turkish police would do was to cover the corpse with a mat to screen the crime from public gaze. Confiscation of the estates of the murdered man would soon follow without a single note of public protest.

What are the underlying psychological and economic causes of the remarkable development of fraternal and beneficiary organization in America within the present generation? Is that development normal and on the whole conducive to the welfare of society? How does it affect the efficiency of the

church? Is this development due to the fact that the church has not extended its functions so as to meet the fundamental needs of man? In what ways are the modern alliances between capital and political power similar to the ancient oriental despotisms? How does this differ from the control of the government by labor organizations?

II.

AHAB'S PERVERSION OF JUSTICE FOR PERSONAL ENDS.

Jezebel brought to the court of Ahab the perverted ideals of the oriental ruling class. Inasmuch as a king stood in the way of realizing the ambition of her father Ethbaal, he, although a priest, had not hesitated to resort to assassination. A woman of Jezebel's strong personality exerted a powerful influence over her husband. Moreover his ambitions led him to lend a ready ear to her seductive philosophy. The murder of Naboth is significant in itself, but it also revealed Ahab's real character and policy to his subjects. It was probably more potent in bringing about the final overthrow of his family than his toleration of Baalism. The opinions of the common people regarding their rulers are more often formed from acts like this than from the state policies the same rulers advocate.

The story is exceedingly realistic and full of homely touches. Ahab and his queen Jezebel wanted to add a vegetable garden to their royal estate at Jezreel, out on the fertile plain of Esdraelon. The king, well aware of the firmly fixed property laws of Israel, tried in an honorable way to acquire the adjacent vineyard; but Naboth, its owner, obstinately refused to sell his hereditary estate. Ahab, recognizing how impregnably Naboth's position was guarded by Israel's traditions and that even a king could not dispossess him, went home and to bed in ill-humor. It is not clear whether love for Ahab or for fresh vegetables or pique because of Naboth's obstinacy inspired Jezebel. In any case the present story is the later concrete version of the Fall of Man. Ahab undoubtedly knew the method she would employ to secure the coveted vegetable garden. Its boldness and simplicity perhaps fascinated him. Its assumption that his power was absolute was flattering to a king who had just been forcibly reminded of the fixed limitations of his authority.

Jezebel's action illustrates the worst fruits of absolutism. Not only did she plot deliberately to murder Naboth but in so doing she threatened the entire political and judicial organization of the nation. A shudder must have gone through all Israel, for if a man in high position as was Naboth could be falsely condemned by public officials and publicly stoned by his fellow-citizens simply at the command of a foreign-born queen, no one could feel secure. Ahab's share in the crime was even more ignominious than that of Jezebel, for he allowed his wife to do the contemptible work and then reaped its fruits.

Which is the more reprehensible, the crooked politician who directly bribes voters, or the candidate with far higher ideals who tacitly accepts the methods of the party machine? The traveling salesman, who presents a personal gift to the agent who purchases his goods, or the president of the corporation who winks at these questionable methods?

III.

ELIJAH'S ADVOCACY OF THE RIGHTS OF THE INDIVIDUAL.

When Ahab set out to take possession of Naboth's vineyard, acquired at so great a cost, the news undoubtedly spread like wild-fire throughout Jezreel and far beyond, but every mouth save one was mute with terror. Fortunate indeed was ancient Israel that it had reared up a class of men who enjoyed unique authority and whose duty it was to speak at such a time. No man in Israel, not even Ahab himself, doubted the king's guilt, but none dared raise a word of protest except Elijah. Like Nathan of old, he went straight to the king and caught him in his infamy just as he was entering upon the possession of the fruits of his cowardly connivance in Jezebel's crime. Elijah, as always, shot directly to the point without preface: "Have you killed and also taken possession?" Ahab offered no excuse, although by his words he apparently sought to imply that personal antagonism inspired Elijah: "Have you found me, O mine enemy?" The prophet's sententious reply, "I have," was full of grim significance.

It is not clear whether or not the exact form of Elijah's prediction was determined by the later narrator's knowledge of subsequent events. Elijah's words: "In the place where the dogs licked the blood of Naboth will the dogs lick thy blood

also," may have been simply the prophet's graphic putting of the old law of blood vengeance. As a matter of fact the prediction was not literally fulfilled. Naboth was a citizen of Jezreel and was publicly stoned in the open space in that northern city; while the wounded Ahab returned after his fatal battle at Ramoth in Gilead to his capital, Samaria, and it was there that the dogs licked his blood. The significant fact is that Elijah was not uttering a specific prediction, but was rather laying down in concrete terms the great principle of moral responsibility and the inevitable consequences of wrongdoing. Even under the malign influence of Jezebel, Ahab had not lost all moral sense. At least he still feared the divine judgment or, as we should say today, the outworking of the fundamental law which he had violated, for he assumed the garb of mourning and "went about quietly." His subsequent record suggests that the dominant feeling in his mind was not true repentance but simply fear of the consequences of his crime. There is no indication that he for a moment abandoned his policy of absolutism or attempted to make reparation to the family of Naboth or made public confession to his subjects whose hereditary rights he had outraged.

Elijah belongs to the older group of prophets or seers. He was clothed with the mystery and dignity of the ancient men of God. His method was chiefly that of protest. With the later prophets, who, like Elisha and Hosea and Isaiah, lived among the people, studied their detailed problems, counselled and taught them in the way of right, he had little in common. But he was nevertheless a connecting link between the earlier seers and the later religious and social reformers, for he was the first to espouse the right of the individual and to raise the cry of protest against the cruel aggressions and oppressions of the rich and ruling class. Thus Elijah was a pioneer, heralding the coming of Amos and Isaiah and the supreme Teacher of social righteousness; but he was little more than a lone voice crying in the wilderness, for he apparently made no attempt to define the ideals and methods of social service and reform. Rather he was the interpreter and defender of Israel's earlier and simpler institutions—a disciple of Moses, not a member of the unique group of eighth and seventh century prophets, who ethicized and socialized Israel's inherited religions. But in his courage, his energy

and his devotion to the ideals of his nation in a period of great peril, Elijah stands among the greatest of Israel's prophets.

Was Elijah lacking in tact in his dealing with Ahab? Which was the more guilty, Ahab or Jezebel? What should Ahab have done to make reparation for his great crime? Why was Ahab's crime more of a public menace than David's murder of Uriah? Is the degree of crime proportionate to the evil that it brings to society? Cite modern illustrations of crimes similar in their social effects to that of Ahab.

IV.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF AHAB'S DESPOTIC POLICY.

Ahab is a familiar type in our modern life. He was a man of large ability and ambitions. Today he would have been a great captain of industry. He knew how to organize men, how to inspire them to great effort; he had a broad knowledge of facts and was able to develop a consistent plan, to carry it to completion whatever be the opposition. Like many masterful men, he made the fatal mistake of not listening to the good counsels of others or of his own conscience. Both spoke to him with remarkable clearness and insistence. His mistakes were not through ignorance. He deliberately chose to do his own will, and he and his nation paid the consequences.

One of the final acts of Elijah was to associate with himself the son of a wealthy farmer of eastern Ephraim. Elisha was trained as a disciple of Elijah, but he was a very different type of man. By birth and training he was in closest touch with the rulers and people of Northern Israel and he enjoyed the confidence of both. Through him the principles for which Elijah contended were instilled into the mind of the masses and found a certain response among the members of the ruling class. The evils of Ahab's policy also became chiefly apparent during the reign of his sons Ahaziah and Joram. The immoral effects of Baalism offended the sense of the better-minded citizens, and the strong militarism which had commended Ahab's policy to his subjects began to crumble. Also the popular resentment at the tyranny, of which the story of Naboth was a glaring illustration, continued to smolder and was ready to burst into a flame at any moment. That moment came when Elisha sent one of the young sons of the prophets to

the captain Jehu, who, in the absence of the wounded King Joram, was commanding the Hebrew forces in the war against the Arameans, with the significant message: "Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, 'I have anointed thee king over Jehovah's people Israel.'" The fierce, intemperate reaction against the wrong, repressive policy of Ahab cost the blood of the reigning kings of Israel and Judah and of the chief men of the nation. It fatally weakened the strength of the northern kingdom and undoubtedly hastened its downfall. Jehu, early in his reign, paid tribute to Assyria; and under his successors Northern Israel was humbled in the dust before its old foes, the Arameans. Baalism was banished by force from the land, but its baneful influence remained, as Amos and others plainly testify. The events of the next half-century abundantly demonstrated the utter futility of a policy like that of Ahab's, which sacrificed morals and religion to material and immediate ends. In seeking a brilliant, material success Ahab lost not only his own life but also that of his nation.

What characters in modern history are similar to that of Ahab? If he had had a different type of wife, would his reign have been more successful? In what ways did Jezebel handicap him? Are any excuses to be made for Jezebel? Could she have been expected to act otherwise under the circumstances of her birth and training? Do you approve of Naboth's spirit? Compare the character and methods of Elijah and Elisha? Is a religious revolution carried through by the sword ever permanently successful or beneficial? Why not? Illustrate.

V.

THE RIGHTS OF THE CITIZEN TODAY.

Elijah, in his championship of the Israelites against what was felt to be the tyranny of Ahab, was standing for the rights of the individual as they were interpreted by him and by the more democratic leaders. They were asking for the rights of the people as they understood that these rights had come down to them from their ancestors; and in fact, the right of personal possession of land and the privilege of retaining that land in a family, was an established custom which most people did not willingly set aside.

The rights of the citizen today in the United States and in most states where there is a constitutional government, are definitely determined, sometimes, in the first instance, by the court declaring what the old-time custom has been, usually in a written constitution of which the courts merely interpret the constitutional wording. The constitution is thus framed in order to protect the people against any wilful act of oppression on the part of their government, whether the government be that of a king or of an elected president. Of course, in modern days we have gone in certain directions far beyond what was even thought of in the days of Ahab. In the United States the Congress is forbidden to make any law respecting the establishment of religion, or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press, or to prevent the people from assembling peaceably, or from petitioning the government for redress of grievances. Of course, in the days of Ahab many of these questions would not have arisen, but all of these rights probably were understood before Solomon's day, so far as the conditions themselves existed. Many people did worship Baal instead of Jehovah; the people did assemble and petition their ruler.

Among us no soldiers shall be quartered in any house in time of peace without the consent of the owner. In the days of Ahab, every man was likely to be called to be a soldier and the occasion for a restriction of this kind probably did not exist.

The right of the people to be "secure in their persons, houses, papers and effects against unreasonable searches and seizures," of course, looks to a type of civilization such as in Ahab's day had not been attained. So it is with the rights of trial by jury, of a formal defense in case of a criminal charge, and others. The ancient Hebrews had apparently the rights of democratic self-government developed to a degree far beyond that of any other people of their time. Their constitution was based largely on custom, and was supported by the power that the multitude wielded, because of the fear that a revolution might be incited by harsh treatment. Although we have gone much farther at the present day with reference to the details in which we restrain our government, the spirit of democracy was fully in the minds and often in the practice of the Hebrew people. It had not been so far forgotten that the people did not believe that they had a right to call Solomon's

successor to account even though they had not ventured to attempt to impose their will upon King Solomon himself.

The Constitution is our fundamental law. Is an ordinary untrained voter better able to vote upon its adoption or upon the passage of a tax law? Which is the more important? How far are our laws merely the formulation in written forms of old-time customs? Are laws that originate in this way the more important or less important? Are marriage laws of this type? The laws of contract? Criminal laws?

VI.

HOW THE CITIZENS' RIGHTS CAN BE PROTECTED.

In the United States today if a citizen feels that his rights have been abused by a fellow-citizen or even by any administrative officer, he appeals to the courts for redress and the courts in their interpretation of the law quite generally are inclined to interpret against the government the laws that protect the citizens.

In case there seems to be a need of adding to the protection of the citizen against his government, or if, owing to changing conditions, any modification of these rights is required, provision is regularly made to amend our constitution, or through a constitutional convention to rewrite the constitution as a whole; but the most fundamental rights are supposed to have always the formal protection of the constitution and to be enforced by the courts.

As society becomes more complex, controversy is likely to become common between those who think that the power of the government should be restricted to as great a degree as possible and those whose inclinations favor an extension of governmental power. On the one hand we find the Socialists, who think the government of their so-called Co-operative Commonwealth should take upon itself more and more the functions now performed by private establishments until all productive capital shall be in the hands of the government which shall then direct the individuals in their efforts to produce more wealth. At the other extreme we find the "scientific anarchists," who teach that there should be no government at all, but that affairs of common interest should be conducted

by voluntary associations made to satisfy the needs of the time. From what has already been said it seems clear that neither of these extremes is practical at the present stage of civilization in either America or Europe. The majority hold that the rights of property of the individual citizen should in the main be protected by leaving in the hands of private individuals most business undertakings and placing the burden of proof upon the government whenever it asserts the right or advocates the policy of taking upon itself more of the duties that have been generally left in the hands of the people. Provision must, however, be made for change, because with the changing civilizations change in the relationships between government and citizen are bound to come. These changes may be by war, through revolution, or peacefully by constitutional amendment. The rights of the citizens are probably better conserved through courts on minor matters, through constitutional conventions and amendments with the referendum to the people on matters that are less complex, but that, nevertheless, are of the most vital import and that normally belong in a constitution.

The constitution of Oklahoma is many times longer than that of the United States. Why?

Is government work usually carried on more or less efficiently than private work? More or less expensively? Why? Why did Colonel Goethals succeed in building the Panama Canal when private contractors had failed?

If our post office carries parcels long distances for less than cost, who pays the difference? Can a government be better or more intelligent than the men of whom it is composed? Why do our newspapers give more space to the utterances of President Wilson than they did to those of Professor Wilson? Are the sayings abler, or wiser? How can the people of the United States protect themselves against the foolishness or the wrong-doing of a President?

Subjects for Further Study.

(1) The Hebrew Theory regarding the Rights of Property. Kent, *Israel's Laws and Legal Precedents*, pp. 70-74.

(2) Investigate in your own State the legal restrictions upon (a) freedom of speech in public, (b) freedom of public assemblage, (c) freedom of publication of facts or opinions. How far are these restrictions intended to protect individuals? How far to protect the public? See *Statutes of the State* under "Slander, Libel, Police Power, Assemblage."

CHAPTER XI.

SACRIFICING PERSONAL INTERESTS TO PUBLIC INTERESTS.

MICAIAH'S REPLY TO AHAB.—I Kgs. 22.

Parallel Readings.

Kent, *Historical Bible*, Vol. III, pp. 30-32, 36-38.

Croly, Chaps. XI, XII; Lowell, Chaps. XVII, XVIII.

And Micaiah said, Therefore hear the word of Jehovah: I saw Jehovah sitting on his throne and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left. And Jehovah said, Who shall delude Ahab so that he will go up and fall at Ramoth in Gilead? And one proposed one thing and another another, until there came forth a spirit and stood before Jehovah and said, I will delude him. And Jehovah said to him By what means? And he said, I will go forth and become a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. Thereupon Jehovah said, Thou shalt delude him and shalt succeed also! Go forth and do so. So behold, Jehovah hath now put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these your prophets, since Jehovah hath determined to bring evil upon you.—*I Kings 22: 19-23.*

Who, born for the universe, narrowed his mind,
And to party gave up what was meant for mankind.—*Goldsmith.*

I do love
My country's good, with a respect more tender,
More holy, and profound, than mine own life.—*Shakespeare.*

Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.—*Horace.*

I.

THE FOUR HUNDRED FALSE PROPHETS.

A significant but often overlooked story comes from the closing year of Ahab's reign. It illustrates perhaps better than anything else the inevitable effects of his calculating, self-centered policy. At last he had temporarily healed the breach between the two Hebrew kingdoms and had persuaded Jehoshaphat the Judean king to unite with him in a campaign against the common foe, the Arameans. It was no longer a war of defense but one of aggression. This fact evidently raised some doubt in the minds of both kings, for they were eager to have the divine assurance that they would be victorious. Accordingly the official prophets of Northern Israel were summoned, four hundred in number. It is evident that they

were the product of Ahab's despotism. His campaign of persecution against the sons of the prophets had apparently resulted entirely to his satisfaction: these men of conviction and courage were either all slain, or hunted from the land, or silenced. The four hundred official prophets were but tools of the king. Jehoshaphat must have had some experience with official prophets or else was aware of the unnatural conditions in Ahab's court, for when, in response to the question, "Shall I go up to fight against Ramoth in Gilead or forbear?" they all replied in chorus, "Go up; for Jehovah will deliver it into the hand of the king," he became suspicious. Their fawning spirit must also have put him on his guard. His question reveals the thought in his mind, "Is there no other prophet of Jehovah, that we may inquire of him?" It was almost equivalent to saying, "Produce a real prophet, if you have one left in your kingdom. These sleek, mercenary prophets are but puppets." The situation well illustrates the perils of prosperity and of a too close union between church and state. These four hundred prophets fitted in well with Ahab's policy. They placated the people and took the place of the sons of the prophets who had been slain or banished, and they could be depended upon to say what he wanted. If Jehoshaphat had not been so impolitely persistent they would have carried Ahab very comfortably through a trying crisis; but at the same time they were unwittingly luring him on to his death. It was this type of prophet that ultimately undermined the influence of the true prophets and by their lying messages and misleading counsels hastened the destruction of both Hebrew kingdoms.

In your opinion were all of the four hundred official prophets in Ahab's court deliberate deceivers or were some of them probably self-deceived? What reason had they to think that the coming battle would result favorably for Ahab? Is the temptation for the preachers of today to speak as their audiences want them to speak as strong as in the days of Ahab? What forms does the temptation take? Has Churchill truly portrayed it in his novel, "The Inside of the Cup"? Are the effects of yielding to this temptation as disastrous today as in earlier days?

II.

THE MAN WHO DARED TELL THE TRUTH.

Jehoshaphat's question was exceedingly trying to Ahab. Reluctantly he confessed that he knew of another prophet who was able to speak with recognized authority, but that he hated him, as he did Elijah, because he had prophesied for the king only evil. Micaiah, the son of Imlah, was one of the two prophets in Israel who were trying to save the king and nation from ultimate calamity, for they alone dared point out the evil consequences of Ahab's policy.

While the messenger was going to summon Micaiah, the four hundred official prophets endeavored by means of dramatic actions to convince the sceptical Jehoshaphat of the truth of their prediction. It is a striking scene. The two kings of Judah and Israel are seated on their thrones in all the paraphernalia of their royal office. Lined up before them are the four hundred prophets of Israel, probably clad in their garb of office. Suddenly Zedekiah, their spokesman, stepped forth before the king wearing horns of iron, and turning to Ahab, declared: "With these thou shalt push the Arameans until thou hast destroyed them!" Such an elaborate symbolism suggests that it had been prepared in advance, possibly at Ahab's command, to make more impressive the already discredited authority of the mercenary four hundred, who in chorus confirmed Zedekiah's prediction.

Into this presence came the unpopular Micaiah. The royal messenger who had summoned him had voiced the spirit of Ahab's court: "The prophets have with one consent promised good fortune for the king; therefore speak the same as they all do and prophesy good fortune." Micaiah recognized it as both a bribe and threat, but it could not swerve him from his allegiance to a higher King. "As Jehovah liveth, I will speak whatever Jehovah saith to me."

If ever a man felt himself in a hopeless minority, it was Micaiah, when he was ushered into the presence of Ahab and Jehoshaphat. He well knew the feelings and temper of his royal master. His life was in imminent peril. He was already the most unpopular man in the court. If Ahab had come back successful from battle, contrary to Micaiah's prediction, his reputation as a prophet would have been ruined; and yet

he even dared mock the king by echoing, in a tone that Ahab at once recognized as irony, the oracle of the four hundred. The king's reply indicates that this was not the first time that he had ridiculed Ahab's attempt to bring under his despotic control even the oracles of the Deity himself. A certain caustic humor, as well as dramatic power of presentation, characterizes all that is related of this otherwise unknown prophet. His figure of "all Israel scattered on the mountains as sheep that have no shepherd" was well calculated to arouse Ahab to an appreciation of his high responsibility and of the woes that he was in imminent danger of bringing upon his helpless subjects. Micaiah would have been a good counsellor for many a modern ruler. Then to make his lesson doubly impressive and to rebuke the mercenary four hundred prophets, Micaiah recounted a vision. Instead of Ahab seated on his throne he seemed to see Jehovah the divine King sitting in state with all the heavenly host about him. The question raised by Jehovah is: "Who shall delude Ahab so that he will go up and fail at Ramoth in Gilead?" The implication is that Ahab is condemned; all that remains to be decided is a fitting way in which to carry out the sentence. Some of the divine attendants suggested one thing; others another, until at last one stands forth and asks that he be sent as a lying spirit in the mouth of all of Ahab's prophets. So perfectly did this punishment fit the crimes of Ahab that it at once received the divine approval. Accordingly the lying spirit was put in the mouth of the four hundred prophets with the result already noted. Micaiah's courage, insight, and skill are all equally impressive. Underlying his bold, yet gently humorous, condemnation of Ahab's tools, is the prophet's deep moral conviction that the king's policy cannot possibly receive Jehovah's approval. This conviction in Micaiah's mind must have been rendered doubly sure by the fact that the proposed war was simply prompted by the king's selfish ambitions. It meant in any case the sacrifice of innocent lives and jeopardized the future of the nation, for notwithstanding all his faults, Ahab was the best military commander Northern Israel ever had, and his death would mean that his people would indeed be left "as sheep without a shepherd."

Do you think that Micaiah had an absolute vision of the future or was his vision a graphic, concrete method of present-

ing his clear conviction that Ahab's motives and plan of war were wrong and that they would not be blest by a God of justice? Give your reasons. Is the lying spirit in the mouth of the false prophets the first appearance in Hebrew literature of the popular belief in Satan? Compare this portrait here with that in Job 1, 2. Did Micaiah wish to vindicate the four hundred prophets?

Do you think that the advisers of any of the rulers before the outbreak of the great modern war gave the advice they thought was desired instead of the soundest advice? What ones?

Are such acts common today even in the case of holders of small offices or of business men? Have you met any case in your own experience?

III.

THE FATE OF A RULER WHO REFUSED TO HEED GOOD COUNSEL.

Ahab is an excellent example of the superlative folly of trying to elude the consequences of one's own crimes. He must have recognized the absolute truth of Micaiah's contention, for he had a conscience and the figurative language in which it was presented did not conceal but rather made the more impressive its sinister warning. The false prophets also felt keenly the stinging rebuke. Zedekiah showed his anger and resentment by striking Micaiah in the face, but that intrepid prophet remained calm in the serene confidence that he was true to the eternal principles of which Jehovah was the source and embodiment. He appealed to the future for the vindication of his prediction. The exact prediction which he uttered concerning Zedekiah may never have been fulfilled, but its declaration that disaster awaited the nation Israel proved all too true.

Ahab's rage was expressed in the command to put Micaiah into prison and to feed him on scanty fare until the falsity of his prediction should be demonstrated. It was the only reply that a determined despot could make to the voice of conscience and of truth. Micaiah met his unjust fate with the confidence of a man intent on higher issues than the misfortunes of a moment. Thus Ahab entered the battle with the Arameans handicapped by a guilty conscience and deadly

fear that led him to assume a disguise. To Jehoshaphat he showed the very doubtful hospitality of putting on him his royal robes, an act which nearly cost Jehoshaphat his life, for the Aramean king had given orders that Ahab must be captured at any cost.

The knowledge of Micaiah's ominous prediction and of Ahab's infamous treatment of a faithful prophet of Jehovah must have been widely known throughout the ranks of the Hebrews, so that they entered the battle with fear in their hearts and already half defeated. Ahab's disguise must also have greatly disconcerted them, for the chief force holding them in line was the presence and personal power of their masterful king. Ahab himself was well aware of this fact, for when an arrow pierced his coat of mail and mortally wounded him, he held to his post until at the close of the day he died in his chariot. The picture of the dying king, propped up in his chariot and by sheer will power holding his place in the ranks of his followers is both inspiring and pathetic. One would like to know what were his thoughts on that tragic day, as he felt his life-blood departing and the tide of war turning against him. Was it Micaiah's vision of "all Israel scattered on the mountains as sheep without a shepherd" that held him to his post and kept his feeble heart beating? Did memories of the many times that he had refused to heed the voice of his faithful prophets and of his own conscience come back to him in the midst of that tragic battle? Like many a masterful, energetic man before and after him, he had felt himself strong enough to defy God and his people and too late learned the utter futility of the attempt. Back to his capital Samaria his fleeing followers carried the body of the king, and next day, as his servants washed his blood from his chariot and the dogs licked his blood, every thoughtful man in Israel recalled not Ahab's earlier victories but the stern prediction of Elijah and the innocent blood of Naboth, poured out at Jezreel through the cupidity and treachery of the most gifted but morally one of the weakest of the kings of Northern Israel.

Prepare a sketch of Ahab's character, noting his elements of strength and weakness. Did he genuinely love his subjects? Is war ever justifiable except for defense? If so, cite illustrations. Which is the greater prophet, Elijah or Micaiah? Why?

IV.

THE FUNCTION OF MINORITIES.

In these days of popular self-government, we are in the habit of speaking of the rule of majorities and of the rights of minorities that need to be protected, but we comparatively seldom think of the very useful function that minorities regularly perform. Men are so constituted that, unless there is some way of compelling them to act thoughtfully after due consideration, they are likely to act hastily and carelessly, often in the long run to their own injury.

In our representative governments it is natural and wise that conflicting interests and conflicting opinions should find due representation. In our legislative bodies in consequence we shall always have on every question of importance majorities and minorities. A vote is taken in any republic, if we are to follow the suggestion of Rousseau, not primarily for the purpose of putting into effect a specific opinion, but rather to find out what the majority thinks, our first interest being that the will of the majority shall rule. In consequence, a member of the minority ought not to feel that he is wronged or that his will is not being carried out, if, as an advocate, let us say, of free trade, he finds a protective system put into effect. What he cares most about is that the majority shall rule. If the majority believes in protection, he, therefore, wants the state to have protection, until he and his party can convince a majority that that system is wrong. The function of the minority, therefore, is to criticize the majority, to argue with the majority, to put forward its own views so unceasingly and so effectively that it will eventually become a majority and then it will pass its favorite measures, after they in turn have been duly criticized and opposed by the minority that follows. In this way the government is kept stable and secure, and progress, while possibly not always rapid, is steady and sure. The importance of criticism must not be overlooked in any state, or for that matter in any act of importance in private as well as in public life, and such criticism should not arouse bitterness, but should merely impose upon those who are criticized the duty of self-examination and of the needed readjustment of views and of acts.

Is it desirable that a system of proportional representation

be adopted, so that even a small minority, say twenty per cent or ten per cent, of the voters may still have an official representative to voice their opinion? In such a case would there be danger of too many small parties? Is it always desirable that one single party have a majority, so that the voters may hold it responsible for the acts of government? Would not or would a coalition of small parties on each important measure answer the same purpose?

V.

THE SEEMING CONFLICT OF PERSONAL AND PUBLIC INTEREST.

Most men feel that it is contrary to their immediate interest to pay heavy taxes, but they recognize that it is in the public interest that government be established and upheld, and they are, therefore, willing to make the sacrifice of their personal interest for the sake of promoting that of the public. Men of training and ability are frequently asked to accept public office in order that they may put their capabilities and experience at the service of the public. In many instances the acceptance of such an office means a decided sacrifice of certain types of personal interest. Not many years since a man accepted a position in the United States cabinet at a salary of \$12,000 a year, when such acceptance was said to involve the sacrifice of a personal income of \$100,000 a year or upwards. A member of the United States Senate some years ago resigned his position because, as he said, he felt it incumbent upon him to make proper financial provision for the support and education of his family and for his own needs in future years. He had long served the public as an official as efficiently as he could, and the public agreed that his services had been most useful; but he felt that the time had come for him to place first emphasis, for the time being at any rate, upon his personal affairs. This seeming conflict is one that frequently arises. Usually, if one takes the look far ahead and has his real interest in the final terms of service, there will be found to be no conflict. If a citizen cares for his character and his self-respect, he may much more easily afford to pay high taxes than to attempt to shirk his proper share of the public burdens. A man may sacrifice a fortune, as many have sacrificed fortunes,

by devoting his life to the public service, but the approval of his fellow-citizens and, what is of more importance, the approval of his conscience for a life spent in the performance of duty ought surely to be ample compensation for the loss of wealth. We know that it is practically a universal experience that men who fall on the field of battle, when fighting for a cause they believe to be just, do not regret the sacrifice, but cheerfully, gladly even, sacrifice life itself for their country and the duty imposed upon them by patriotism. Can any one believe that they have lost by sacrificing all that they have for the public good?

Give illustrations within your own knowledge of persons who have sacrificed private gain for the public good with no expectation of reward. Give illustrations of those who have sacrificed the public good for private gain. Judging all the above cases in the light of the reputation of all the persons mentioned among their neighbors, and in the scale of your conscience, would you gain most in the long run in the first or the second class?

VI.

WAYS IN WHICH MEN MAY EFFECTIVELY SERVE THEIR STATE AND NATION.

Many of the discussions regarding the duties of the citizen lay chief emphasis upon office holding and the furtherance of the public welfare through law making and law enforcement. It is too often forgotten that the unofficial citizen in many cases may accomplish for his city and state as much as can any public official. When in the early sixties, Professor Virchow of the University of Berlin noted the very high death rate of that city and believed that this death rate might be greatly lowered through the installation of a proper water supply and drainage system, his scientific studies were probably of no less service to his city than the official service which he performed when he went into the City Council, afterward to become a member of the Prussian Landtag and of the Imperial Reichstag. In these official positions he was able to assist in putting into effect remedial measures that promoted the health of his fellow-citizens. That was a work, however, that might have been accomplished by many more men than

could have performed the scientific investigations upon which these great services rested. Few people will question the service to their countries that men like Edison and Gray and Carrel and Pasteur and Helmholtz and numerous other scientific men have rendered, even when those services are put into direct comparison in value with those of important members of the government of the leading states or of the greatest generals in warfare.

But aside from the public effect of these personal services along scientific lines, there are other services directly political in nature that may be performed without securing or holding public office. A very large proportion of the legislation of the present day deals with economic and social questions. It frequently happens that a man who is thoroughly trained in business or in the commercial sciences, by virtue of his investigations, his scientific reputation, his standing as a man of good judgment and unprejudiced views may exercise even more influence upon legislation than can a man who is himself either a political leader or a member of an official body. The prime consideration, of course, is that a person have the knowledge and then the character that will win confidence. If he have the public spirit which demands that he put whatever he has of ability or strength at the service of the public, it makes little difference what his field of activity may be—he will find ample opportunity. It is not many years since, at the time of a great social crisis in New York City, large sums of money were put with full discretion into the hands of a woman of marked ability and high character, Mrs. Josephine Shaw Lowell, to expend for the public welfare, because it was generally felt that there was no public official or no other private citizen so well equipped to render this special public service that the situation demanded. Similar illustrations are found in the distribution of relief funds at the time of the San Francisco earthquake and fire, in the famines in China and India and in numberless other instances that might be cited. Let no one, therefore, feel that in order to render a public service he needs to seek or to enter public office. It is perhaps far more likely to be the case that he can render his public service either by serving as a conscientious, fearless—though he should try to be a sensible and even-tempered—critic of public affairs, or by the direct rendering

of public service through personal study and personal devotion in any field of public activity.

Is there any adverse criticism to be made of a conscientious man who does seek public office? How is one to find a just basis for judging such a man? What is the proper criterion for judgment? Ought a man always to wait until some one else suggests him for office? Or for a private appointment?

Subjects for Further Study.

(1) The False Prophets in Israel's History. Compare the references to them in Micah 3: 3-7, Jer. 5: 13, 31; 6: 13, 14, 34, and Ezek. 22: 25-28; Lam. 2: 14. Why were they a deadly menace to the integrity of the Hebrew commonwealth?

(2) If a City Government in the United States needs for public purposes—say for a park—the land of a private individual, it may take the land through condemnation proceedings by the right of eminent domain. Examine this right and the methods of procedure under the laws of your own State and compare them with Ahab's methods of securing Naboth's vineyard. *Statutes: "Eminent Domain; Condemnation Proceedings."*

CHAPTER XII.

A NATION'S DESTINY.

ISRAEL'S CONCEPTION OF ITS MISSION.—Deut. 4—9.

Parallel Readings.

Croly, Chap. XIII; Lowell, Chap. XIX.

Ye shall walk in all the ways which Jehovah your God hath commanded you, that ye may live, and that it may be well with you, and that ye may prolong your days in the land which ye shall possess.—*Deut. 5: 33.*

For thou art a holy people to Jehovah thy God. Jehovah thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people to himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.—*Deut. 7: 6.*

Know therefore that Jehovah thy God, he is God, the faithful God, who keepeth covenant and mercy with those who love him and keep his commands to a thousand generations.—*Deut. 7: 9.*

Ye are the salt of the earth.—*Matt. 5: 13.*

From the beginning the Land of Democracy has been figured as the Land of Promise. An America which was not the Land of Promise, which was not informed by a prophetic outlook and a more or less constructive ideal, would not be the America bequeathed to us by our forefathers.—*Croly.*

While it is illuminating to see how environment molds men, it is absolutely essential that men regard themselves as molders of their environment.—*Lippmann*.

This shall be thy work: to impose conditions of peace, to spare the lowly, and to overthrow the proud.—*Virgil*.

The meaning of honor and of the sanctity of one's word, the understanding of the principles of democracy and of the society in which we live, the love of humanity, and the desire to serve—these are what make a good citizen.—*Tarbell*.

We ought to be no less persuaded that the propitious smiles of heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right, which heaven itself has ordained.—*Washington*.

I.

ISRAEL'S UNFOLDING NATIONAL IDEALS.

It is reported that Gladstone in speaking regarding the American Constitution characterized it as the greatest work that had ever sprung at one time from the mind of man. If the story is true, the assumption seems to be that great historic documents come quickly into being without previous preparation. Nothing could be farther from the truth. American historians have repeatedly shown that scarcely an article or section in the American Constitution is new, but that nearly every plan proposed had been tried by some colony, and every successful institution therein established had already stood the test of experience. So it always is in the development of nations. The early Hebrew tribes established a model of democratic policy that has had a prevailing influence upon human history since that time, and the experience of Israel first proved that the democratic idea, which is commonly found in primitive society, was also adaptable to a powerful nation.

When the Hebrews first appear as a people, they are merely a band of slaves escaping from the tyranny of the Pharaoh in Egypt, but they are bound together by the influence of a leader of pre-eminent ability who knew how to unite his turbulent people into one firm social unit and to impress indelibly upon them the ideal of freedom, and especially the idea of dependence upon Jehovah. Through his ability to unite his people Moses created the Hebrew state. It consisted at first of only a small disorganized people wandering in the

wilderness with scarcely sufficient resources to meet their daily needs; but Moses gave them the ambition to become a united people with an orderly government founded upon righteousness. Their experiences in the wilderness cultivated in each man the spirit of independence and self-reliance necessary to the foundation of self-government; but in the early times they were so few in number and had a leader so pre-eminent in ability that in all matters of public policy they rested mainly on his judgment. In their own personal affairs, however, every family and clan ruled itself under the direction of its elders.

As the tribes came north through the territory east of the Jordan and entered upon the conquest of Palestine, the pressure of conflict against the desert tribes, together with the incentives to subjugate the peoples of Canaan, emphasized still further these primitive tendencies. To these were added the conception of a strong, permanent state that would enable the Hebrews to acquire property and to establish themselves as permanent residents of a home land. But it was not until later that the pressure from the surrounding nations and especially the attacks of the Philistines upon the different tribes of Israel led them to take steps to realize, as they did under Saul, the ideal of a nation united into one people, great enough to be called a state in the modern meaning of the term.

After King David overthrew the Philistines, he rapidly extended his conquests to the north and east and south, until he ruled an empire instead of a small kingdom. His realm extended from the territory of Damascus on the north to the Red Sea on the south, from the desert on the east to the land of the Philistines in the plains bordering on the Mediterranean. He had under him many subject peoples, and the conception of a kingdom, which the Israelites had held before, grew into the broader idea of a great empire. The earlier belief in Jehovah as a tribal God developed into the thought of Jehovah as a God of other gods, as a Lord of lords, although not until long after David's day did the conception of a one universal God, supreme over all peoples, become prevalent among them. It will be thus seen that step by step the nation developed from the mere idea of the family or clan with its patriarchal head, as in the days of Abraham, into that of a great imperial

nation, ruling over other nations, and that as their bounds were extended, their conception of Jehovah's influence and authority was correspondingly enlarged.

Did the Hebrews learn more in the wilderness from the teachings of Moses or from their struggles against hunger and thirst and hostile tribes? Is there anything in the nature of life in the wilderness that especially emphasizes the idea of man's dependence upon a supernatural power?

II.

THE EFFECTS OF GREAT CRISES UPON ISRAEL'S DEVELOPMENT.

Although the process of development may be slow, in the history of nations there may be noted from time to time, certain crises or steps in development that mark the beginning or the end of periods of national growth. Though the crises seem to come suddenly, they are usually the result of long preparation. Definite dates are ascribed for the beginning of the American and French revolutions, and yet in both cases it is possible to trace through a series of years influences that were steadily increased in strength until at length they suddenly burst the bonds, and events of international importance quickly took place. The sudden revolution in China against the Manchu dynasty had been preparing for many decades. The outburst came suddenly from apparently a slight, even an inadequate cause. So in the recent great war that has involved all Europe and a large proportion of the civilized world, the underlying influences of national prejudices, growing armaments, aggressive commercialism, the spirit of dominating militarism, and various suspicions were all gaining strength during a long series of years until finally, at an event that at first seemed only a minor crisis, there burst into flame in a few hours a conflagration of war that has changed all of modern history. In Israel's history we may likewise mark a series of significant crises.

In the beginning the nation came into being through a revolution that freed the Hebrew slaves from the Egyptians and gave them a chance to build stable social institutions. At Sinai, through the insight of Moses, the covenant with Jehovah was promulgated that determined the trend of the

nation's religious and political development from that time forward.

The great victory of Deborah over the Canaanites gave to the Israelites the consciousness of unity that enabled them to look forward to ultimate possession of a permanent home in a land that from its agricultural and commercial possibilities enabled them to build a sound civilization.

The pressure of the Philistines upon the scattered tribes of the North and South threatened their independent existence and forced them to accept Saul as the king of a united nation. This act inaugurated a memorable era which continued through the reigns of David and Solomon, and resulted in the gradual development of the people into a great empire.

Solomon's oppression of his people and the burdens that he laid upon them brought about the next, and, in many respects, the most important political crisis in Israel's history, when the tribes demanded of Rehoboam that he relieve the people from their unjust burdens and make himself not the tyrant but the servant of the people. This crisis, which established for the Israelites once for all the principle of individual human rights, marks the political culmination of their nation's destiny. They not only demanded, but they won self-government. The last important crisis in the period under consideration came in the days of Ahab and Elijah. The perpetuation of Israel's faith in Jehovah and the political and social and moral ideals that had crystallized about that faith were then at issue, and in the end the higher ideals triumphed.

Can there be self-government under a king? Give examples. Can there be tyranny under a democracy? Give examples. Which do you consider the most important crisis mentioned in this section? Why? Can you mention any books the publication of which has marked crises in history? What ones?

III.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE PROPHETS.

It is the fashion among a certain group of modern writers to say that the fate of individuals is determined by society and that the forces which control the development of nations and individuals alike are forces for which they are not responsible and which no individual can control. The determining

influence of environment is not to be underestimated, but it should be noted that in every movement there is some individual who starts it and to a great extent, as a result of his personal characteristics and efforts, determines its direction. Doubtless in the American situation and in the acts of Great Britain there were underlying causes that forced the American revolution; but the influence of such men as Samuel Adams, Patrick Henry, James Otis and George Washington is likewise not to be overlooked.

The system of slavery in the United States doubtless would ultimately have been abolished as a result of underlying economic and moral forces. This in no way lessens, however, the emphasis that should be placed upon the work and acts of Webster, Calhoun, Lincoln, Douglas and John Brown. So in the Hebrew history there are a few great men, the prophets, each of whom rendered a service that cannot be overlooked; each is the one in whom we find the immediate efficient, even perhaps the final cause of one of the great historic changes. The world's historians will ever look upon Moses as the great creative mind that laid the foundation of the institutions that have made the Hebrews a people of tremendous influence throughout all history. It needed a prophet like Samuel to crystallize in his mind the underlying thoughts and aspirations of his people for a greater unity, and to select the man, who of all men of his day, was probably best fitted to put that thought into effect. It needed a man with the boldness and insight of Elijah to see the necessity for the Hebrew people to stand for the rights of the individual against the tyranny of a king like Ahab and to act upon the belief that Jehovah would overthrow the oppressor of the upright and would protect his people, if they implicitly followed him and relied upon his power, in order to establish for the Hebrews and for all free peoples since that time the doctrine of individual human rights. In other cases we find prophets like Nathan and Ahijah and Elisha, and later Amos and Isaiah, and finally the greatest prophet of them all, Jesus of Nazareth, discerning first the needs of their own people and finally seeing the needs of all peoples and crystallizing in their words and lives the principles of action required to lead the world to higher levels.

In your judgment is the day of the prophets ended? Many

have thought that Emerson may be considered a prophet in view of the nature and effect of his teachings. Do you think so? Do you consider Martin Luther a prophet? Or Karl Marx? Must a man to be a prophet contribute a great idea to the world's history, or is any man of great influence to be so counted? Napoleon? Cæsar? Lincoln? Mohammed? Darwin? Fichte? Rousseau?

IV.

THE SENSE IN WHICH THE ISRAELITES WERE THE CHOSEN PEOPLE.

The story given in the Old Testament of a covenant, a bargain made between Jehovah and the Israelites, seems strange to most people of the present day. It seems at first blush derogatory to the dignity of God that he should make a bargain with a people, and it seems likewise impossible that any people could so know the will of the Deity that they could understand the terms of a covenant so as to carry it out; and yet with a somewhat different statement of the circumstances the historical significance of the covenant of Jehovah with the Hebrews becomes clear.

All primitive people, like the early Israelites, looked upon their God as being quite like themselves in nature, though of greater power. When they asked protection from him, it was natural, they thought, that he should demand something in return; and that, as the different tribes might make bargains one with the other, so might the gods of the tribes make bargains with one another and with their peoples. We find numerous illustrations in Hebrew history; for example, the vows of Jephthah and Saul. It is a most remarkable tribute to the insight and wisdom of Moses that, understanding the normal moral characteristics of his people, he should have been able to formulate the customs that had gradually developed through the preceding years and that represented the highest intellectual and moral principles of that day and generation into a series of rules of action, representing, as he felt convinced, the will of Jehovah; and then that he should be so imbued with the spirit of scientific righteousness as to dare to say to his people that, if they would keep those laws, Jehovah would be their God and friend and defender and protector against all ills.

So far as history gives us records, Moses was probably the first leader in history who recognized, so far as to dare act upon the principle, the immutability and strength of moral laws and their permanent influence upon the welfare of humanity.

At the present day in speaking of physical phenomena we all recognize the immutability of law. We speak of nature's laws of health; we say that if we obey nature's laws and live in conformity with them, we shall prosper. We say and know that if we violate those laws, we shall be punished. What has become a mere truism in the realm of physical law, the ablest thinkers of this day, attaining finally to the insight of Moses, have come to recognize as true also regarding the so-called moral and social laws. More and more it is coming to be recognized that the individuals and the peoples who obey these moral and social laws prosper; that those who violate them are punished.

In the days of the ancient Hebrews, just as the physical laws of nature were much less well understood than at the present day, so many of the moral laws were less well known. With their belief in the immediate interference of Jehovah in political affairs and with their lack of knowledge of natural law, if any ill, like a great plague, befell the people, they ascribed this to the displeasure of Jehovah and believed that in some way they had violated their covenant. Doubtless they were at times mistaken in interpreting the nature of their transgression and its consequences. There is no apparent reason why a plague should be dependent upon the taking of a census, as was believed in the case of David. But in the majority of cases they were right: the people had violated some as yet unknown moral or physical law. As their prophets acquired greater knowledge and a deeper insight into the causes of national prosperity, they were often able to declare with authority and certainty that, unless their people followed the laws of Jehovah, a serious punishment, one even that might result in the overthrow of their state, would surely follow. They had agreed to obey his laws; he would punish them if they violated them. That was their faith. It was usually justified. In that sense the Israelites were the chosen people of Jehovah. With their enlightened consciences and with a deeper insight into the significance of right living than any other people in history, they believed that they could attain

the highest success by righteous living, and that their ancestors had so pledged them to such living with Jehovah that they had become the chosen people. It needs no mystical insight to perceive the soundness of this doctrine, nor does it need any superstition or mysticism to see that any individuals or any people of the present day may themselves be designated as leaders or may be chosen as the people of their God, if they are willing in the same way to pledge themselves to righteous living in accordance with the laws established by the forces, whatever they may be, physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual, that have been laid down by the unseen and as yet only partially known power that we call God.

Mention some of nature's laws that are even now frequently violated by ignorant people. Give cases of prompt and great rewards for the observance of God's laws. Would you count the suppression of yellow fever in Cuba and Panama a case of that kind? It is asserted by historians that licentiousness and corruption were the chief causes of the downfall of the Roman Empire. Is this an illustration of the failure of a great nation to make or to keep a covenant with God? Can you give any illustration of success in an individual or a nation — in the long run, and in the best sense of the word — that has been attained by wrong-doing?

V.

THE DESTINY OF A MODERN NATION.

In this same sense in which the Hebrew prophets spoke of Israel's destiny may we speak of the destiny of a nation at the present day. As we come more and more to understand the nature of political and social forces, we can see how the life of a nation is dependent upon its geographical and economic situation, upon the character and degree of development of its people, upon its relations with other nations; and its success depends on the extent to which its people use these forces so as to produce the highest degree of development possible in the circumstances in which they live. This principle of success may well be looked upon as a covenant offered by nature or by God whose laws control nature.

It is clear that the destiny of no two peoples can be the same. The natural resources of one country make of its

people a nation of agriculturists. Another country is peculiarly well adapted to satisfy the need of the world for manufactured goods; other nations from their gifts can best serve humanity by the development of their artistic tastes; while others are better suited to become leaders in science or literature or morals. Culture is a matter of law, of imitation, of the development of individual gifts under right training. Freedom can be attained, but only in ways that conform to the laws of human nature or developed society. Good morals will bring in the end the best results. Every ruler, every people, every individual is in position to make a covenant, if he will. But people may still make mistakes, as apparently those do who still believe in the divine right of kings.

It seems clear that each nation will be best fitted to fulfill its own destiny, in the high and noble sense in which ancient Israel conceived its lot as a chosen people under the condition that it should obey the law of Jehovah, if it shall render the greatest service to its people of which it is capable, by studying its natural resources of all kinds, economic, political, social, and learning the ways in which it can best develop them so as to promote the welfare of humanity, and then direct its energies so as to attain this noblest end. Such a result cannot be attained until a nation is ready to look beyond its own borders and to develop itself, not selfishly, but for world service.

Can a nation render world service by scientific achievement? By the development of wealth? By the extension of popular education? By militarism? By the cultivation of moral philosophy? By setting the fashions in dress? By writing the world's music? By cultivating religious feeling?

VI.

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE INDIVIDUAL CITIZEN'S RELIGIOUS ATTITUDE.

Religion in these days has undoubtedly acquired a meaning different from that of the days of the Hebrew prophets, but even at the present date there is probably no universal agreement regarding the meaning of religion. We may, however, broadly define a man's religion as his attitude toward the forces outside himself which determine, often without his

understanding them, his fate. In other words, to use the common phraseology, a man's religion is his attitude toward God. In the earlier stages of society man looked upon the God as some unknown force, sometimes beneficent, sometimes vengeful, which he could appease by gifts and to which he should be thankful for favors received. Differing stages of civilization have had different conceptions of these unknown forces that they have called gods.

This conception of religion does not differ materially from that of the modern reverent scientist who recognizes the laws of nature as on the whole beneficent and who believes that they are capable of being gradually more and more understood, so that they can be better used for the promotion of human welfare, and who further believes that the laws of our being are not only physical laws but also laws of mind and of society which affect us morally and socially, so that by conscientious living we can gradually attain a higher and higher good. No two peoples, not even any two close personal friends, have exactly the same conception of God, for to every one God represents, under Christian teaching, his highest conception of what is good and right, and that conception naturally differs owing to the differing circumstances of living. Each man's conception, therefore, of the laws of God (or of nature in this broadest sense) is individual and will differ in details from the conception of others. To each of us then, the service of God, if we abandon all theological terms, is simply the rendering to one another and to the world the best service that we find possible and the doing conscientiously in all regards, to ourselves and to others, our duty. The best and truest and most devoted of men can thus simply gain the supreme uplifting joys of religion even as Jesus did, whose service was and could be only in doing His Father's work by giving His care and love and even His life for His fellowmen, the children of God. Religion comes thus directly home to each man's business and bosom and to his life as a citizen. The best state will grow from the best citizens. The highest problem of the state is to develop such citizens, for the state is simply the organized association of its individual citizens, and the government of the state is their instrument for carrying out their will. The problem of citizenship is to promote in the best ways the general

welfare. This brings the state and citizen into close touch with religion.

If this is what is meant by religion and the religious attitude (and this does not differ in essence from the teaching of Jesus), it becomes evident that, as the destiny of the Jewish nation was dependent upon the religious attitude of the Jewish people, so the destiny of every modern nation is dependent upon the religious attitude of its people. If each nation's highest destiny is to render to humanity the greatest services of which under the circumstances it is capable, this destiny will first be attained when each individual's religious attitude is also that of devoted service to what he believes to be the highest good of humanity. This was evidently the fundamental principle in Jesus' mind when he declared to his disciples: "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant, even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

According to your conception, is every law of nature a law of God? Do you think that moral and social laws depend upon natural characteristics? Are there any so-called laws of morals or social laws (not political statutes passed by men) that are not also natural laws? Are the laws of a true religion contrary to natural laws? How can you observe God's laws otherwise than by observing natural laws (physical, mental, moral and social)?

Subjects for Further Study.

(1) Trace the development of Israel's democratic ideals, noting the inheritances from the early nomadic life, the incorporation of these ideals in the Hebrew commonwealth, and the struggles to maintain them in the more complex life of Canaan.

(2) Read thoughtfully Washington's Farewell Address, Lincoln's First and Second Inaugural Addresses and Lowell's Address on Democracy. If the people and government of the United States were to live up to the principles of these addresses, would the American people prosper and take their place as the leaders of the world in political development? Find passages in these addresses which show that the writers believed that they were stating fundamental social laws which to them had also a divine sanction. Would this be considered by them as a covenant with God, if they believed that the people of the United States consciously accepted the righteous way of living suggested in their addresses?





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