BOOKS OF SAMUEL.

CHAPTER I.

I. Samuel i.

1 Now there was a certain man of Ramathaim-zophim, of mount Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah.

2 And he had two wives; the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah; and Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.

3 And this man went up out of his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto the Lord of hosts in Shiloh.

4 And when the time was that Elkanah offered, he gave to Peninnah his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters, portions:

5 But unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion; for he loved Hannah; but Peninnah mocked her.

6 And as he did so year by year, when she went up to the house of the Lord; so she provoked her, therefore she wept, and did not eat.

7 Then said Elkanah her husband to her, Hannah, whyittest thou and why eatest thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? art not I better to thee than ten sons?

8 And she said, I pray thee, my lord, give me this grace, that when I speak unto thy maidens, or they displease me, I may have this grace in thine eyes.

9 Now Eli the priest sat upon a post of the temple of the Lord.

10 And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore.

11 And she vowed a vow, and said, O Lord of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and wilt give unto me a man child, then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life.

12 Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace; and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him. And she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of the Lord.

13 And she said, O my lord, as thy soul liveth, I am the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the Lord.

14 For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him.

15 Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord, as long as he liveth.

These books contain the history of the last two of the judges of Israel. Eli and Samuel were not as the rest, men of war, but priests. It is uncertain who wrote these books. Some say that Samuel wrote the history of his times, and that Nathan the Prophet continued it. Elkanah, though a godly man, had sore family trials, the result of having married two wives, just as Abraham and Jacob did before him. It is probable that Elkanah married Hannah from pure love; but she had no children, and as at that time every man had great pride in building up a family, he married Peninnah, who bare him children, but in other respects was a constant vexation.
Peninnah was haughty and insolent because she had children, while Hannah was melancholy and discontented because she had none, hence Elkanah had no pleasure in his daily life with either. He had a difficult part to act. Hoping much from the consolations of religion, he took his wives and children annually up to the temple of the Lord in Shiloh to worship. Being of a devout spiritual nature, he thought that worshiping at the same altar must produce greater harmony between his wives. But Penninah became more peevish and provoking, and Hannah more silent and sorrowful, weeping most of the time. Elkanah's love and patience with Hannah was beautiful to behold. He paid her every possible attention and gave her valuable gifts.

Appreciating his own feelings, he said to her one day in an exuberant burst of devotion, "Am I not more to thee than ten sons?" He made peace offerings to the Lord, gave Hannah the choice bits at the table, but all his delicate attentions made Hannah more melancholy and Peninnah more rebellious. He and Hannah continued to pray earnestly to the Lord to remove her reproach, and their prayers were at last answered.

Eli was presiding at the temple one day when he noticed Hannah in a remote corner wrestling in prayer with the Lord. Though her manner was intense, and her lips moved, he heard no sound, and inferred that she was intoxicated. Hannah, hearing of his suspicion, said that naught but the debauchery of his own sons could have made such a suspicion possible. But Eli made atonement for his rash, unfriendly censure by a kind of fatherly benediction. With all these adverse winds in this visit to Shiloh, Elkanah must have felt as if his family had been possessed by the spirit of evil. When the sons of God come "to present themselves before the Lord, Satan will be seen to come also." Peninnah behaved worse during these religious festivities because she saw more of Elkanah's devotion to Hannah. Hannah became more sad because she was losing faith in prayer. "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick."

An endless discord in the harmony of the family joys was a puzzling problem for the sweet tempered Elkanah. But the ever-turning wheel of fortune brought peace and prosperity to his do-
mestic altar at last. Hannah bore a son and named him Samuel, which signifies "heard of the Lord," or given by the Lord. Hannah was very modest in her petition; she said, "O Lord, give me a son," while Rachel said, "give me children."

The one sorrow which overtopped all others with these Bible women was in regard to children. If they had none, they made everybody miserable. If they had children, they fanned the jealousies of one for the other. See how Rebekah deceived Isaac and defrauded Esau of his birthright. The men, instead of appealing to the common sense of the women, join in constant prayer for the Lord to do what was sometimes impossible.

Hannah in due time took Samuel up to the temple at Shiloh. In presenting Samuel to Eli the priest she reminded him that she was the woman on whom he passed the severe comment; but now she came to present the child the Lord had given to her. She offered three bullocks, one for each year of his life, one for a burnt offering, one for a sin offering and one for a peace offering. So Hannah dedicated him wholly to the Lord and left him in Shiloh to be educated with the sons of the priests. Although Samuel was Hannah's only child and dearly loved, she did not hesitate to keep her vow unto the Lord.

1 Samuel ii.
11 And Elkanah went to Ramah to his house. And the child did minister unto the Lord before Eli the priest.
18 But Samuel ministered before the Lord, being a child, girded with a linen ephod.
19 Moreover his mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice.
20 And Eli blessed Elkanah and his wife. And they went unto their own house.
21 And Hannah bare three sons and two daughters. And the child Samuel grew before the Lord.

The historians and commentators dwell on the fact that Hannah made her son "a little coat," and brought one annually. It is more probable that she brought to him a complete suit of clothes once in three months, especially trousers, if those destined to service in the temple were allowed to join in any sports. Even devotional genuflections are severe on that garment, which must have often needed Hannah's care. Her virtue and wisdom as a mother were in due time rewarded by five other children, three sons and two daughters.
And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. Saul was made king at the request of the people. The ark of the Lord fell into the hands of the Philistines. This event, with the death of Eli and his sons, had most tragic results, viz., in the killing of thirty thousand people and the death of the wife of Phinehas, who was said to have been a woman of gracious spirit, though the wife of a wicked husband. Her grief for the death of her husband and father-in-law proved her strong natural affection, but her much greater concern for the loss of the ark of the Lord was an evidence of her devout affection to God. Her dying words, "the glory has departed from Israel," show that her last thought was of her religion. She named her son Ichabod, whose premature birth was the result of many calamities, both public and private, crowning all with the great battle with the Philistines. Samuel was the last judge of Israel. As the people clamored for a king, Saul was chosen to rule over them. The women joined in the festivities of the occasion with music and dancing.

1 Samuel xviii.

6 And it came to pass when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistines that the women came out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet King Saul, with tabrets and instruments of music.

7 And the women answered one another as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands.

8 And Saul was very wroth, and the saying displeased him; and he said, They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands; and what can he have more than the kingdom?

It was the custom among women to celebrate the triumphs of their warriors after a great battle in spectacular performances. Decked with wreaths, they danced down the public streets, singing the songs of victory in praise of their great leaders. They were specially enthusiastic over David, the chorus, "Saul hath killed his thousands, but David his ten thousands," chanted with pride by beautiful maidens and wise matrons, stirred the very soul of Saul to deadly jealousy, and he determined to suppress David in some way or to kill him outright. It is not probable that any of these battle hymns, so much admired, emanated from the brain of woman; the blood and thunder style shows clearly that they were all written by
the pen of a warrior, long after the women of their respective tribes were at rest in Abraham’s bosom.

David was a general favorite; even the Philistines admired his courage and modesty. The killing of Goliath impressed the people generally that David was the chosen of the Lord to succeed Saul as King of Israel.

But on the heels of his triumphs David’s troubles soon began. Saul was absorbed in plotting and in planning how to circumvent David, and looked with jealousy on the warm friendship maturing between him and his son Jonathan.

17 And Saul said to David, Behold my elder daughter Merab; her will I give thee to wife: only be thou valiant for me, and fight the Lord’s battles. For Saul said, Let not mine hand be upon him, but let the hand of the Philistines be upon him.
18 And David said unto Saul, Who am I? and what is my life, or my father’s family in Israel, that I should be son-in-law to the king?
19 But it came to pass at the time when Merab, Saul’s daughter, should have been given to David, that she was given unto Adriel, the Meholathite, to wife.
20 And Michal, Saul’s daughter, loved David: and they told Saul, and the thing pleased him.
21 And Saul said, I will give him her, that she may be a snare to him, and that the hand of the Philistines may be against him. Wherefore Saul said to David, Thou shalt this day be my son in law in the one of the twain.
22 And Saul commanded his servants, saying, Commune with David secretly, and say, Behold the king hath delight in thee, and all his servants love thee: now therefore be the king’s son-in-law.
24 And Saul’s servants spake those words in the ears of David. And David said, Seemeth it to you a light thing to be a king’s son-in-law, seeing that I am a poor man, and lightly esteemed?
28 And Saul saw and knew that the Lord was with David, and that Michal, Saul’s daughter, loved him.

Saul thought if he could get David to marry his daughter he would make her a snare to entrap him. He promised David his daughter, and then married her to another to provoke him to some act of violence, that he might have an excuse for whatever he chose to do. But when Saul offered to give him Michal, David modestly replied that he belonged to a humble shepherd family and was not worthy to be the son-in-law of a king.

In due time David did marry Michal, who loved him and proved a blessing rather than a snare. On one occasion when Saul had made secret plans to capture David, Michal with her diplomacy saved him. Saul surrounded his house with guards and ordered them to kill David the moment he appeared in the morning. Michal, seeing their preparations, knew their significance, and at night, when all
was still, she let David down through a window and told him to flee. In the morning, as David did not appear, they searched the house. Michal told them that David was ill and in bed. She had covered the head of a wooden image with goat's hair and tucked the supposed David up snug and warm. The guards would not wake a sick man in order to kill him, and they reported what they saw to Saul, but he ordered them to return and to bring David, sick or well.

When Saul found that he had escaped, he was very wroth and upbraided Michal for her disrespect to him. Though she had saved the man she loved, yet she marred her noble deed by saying that David would have killed her if he suspected she had connived with her father to kill him. But alas! the poor woman was between two fires—the husband whom she loved on one side, and the father whom she feared on the other. Most of the women in the Bible seem to have been in a quandary the chief part of the time.

Saul made a special war on the soothsayers and the fortunetellers, because they were divining evil things of him. But losing faith in himself and embittered by many troubles, he went to the witch of Endor to take counsel with Samuel, hoping to find more comfort with the dead than with the living. The witch recognized him and asked him why he came to her, having so cruelly persecuted her craft. However, she summoned Samuel at his request, who told him that on the morrow, in the coming battle with the Philistines, he and his sons would be slain by the enemy. When the witch saw Saul's grief and consternation she begged him to eat, placing some tempting viands before him, which he did, and then hastened to depart while it was yet dark, that he might not be seen coming from such a house. Commentators say it was not Samuel who appeared, but Satan in the guise of the prophet, as he especially enjoys all psychical mysteries. Josephus extols the witch for her courtesy, and Saul for his courage in going forth to the battle on the next day to meet his doom.

The poet says that the heart from love to one grows bountiful to all. This seems to have been the case with David as he adds wife to wife, Michal, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the Carmelitess. His meeting with Abigail in the hills of Carmel was quite romantic.
She made an indelible impression on his heart, and as soon as her husband was gathered to his fathers David at once proposed and was accepted. Though the women who attracted David were "beautiful to look upon," yet they had great qualities of head and heart, and he seemed equally devoted to all of them. When carried off captives in war he made haste to recapture them. Michal's steadfastness seems questionable at one or two points of her career, but the historian does not let us into the secret recesses of her feelings.

David's time and thoughts seem to have been equally divided between the study of government and social ethics, and he does not appear very wise in either. His honor shines brighter in his psalms than in his ordinary, everyday life. E. C. S.
1 Samuel xxv.

2 And there was a man in Maon, whose possessions were in Carmel; and the man was very great, and he had three thousand sheep, and a thousand goats: and he was shearing his sheep in Carmel.

3 Now the name of the man was Nabal, and the name of his wife Abigail; and she was a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance: but the man was churlish and evil in his doings.

4 And David heard in the wilderness that Nabal did shear his sheep.

5 And David sent out ten young men, and David said unto the young men, Get you up to Carmel, and go to Nabal, and greet him in my name:

6 And thus shall ye say to him that liveth in prosperity, Peace be both to thee, and peace be to thine house, and peace be unto all that thou hast.

7 . . . Give, I pray thee, whatsoever cometh to thine hand unto thy servants.

8 And Nabal said, Who is David? and who is the son of Jesse?

9 Shall I then take my bread, and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my shearsers, and give unto men, whom I know not whence they be?

10 So David’s young men came and told him all these sayings.

11 And David said unto his men, Gird ye on every man his sword; and David also girded on his sword: and there went up after David about four hundred men; and two hundred abode by the stuff.

14 But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal’s wife, saying, Behold, David sent messengers out of the wilderness to salute our master; and he railed on them.

15 Then Abigail made haste, and took two hundred loaves, and two bottles of wine, and five sheep ready dressed, and five measures of parched corn, and a hundred clusters of raisins, and two hundred cases of figs, and laid them on asses.

16 And when Abigail saw David, she hasted, and lighted off the ass, and fell before David on her face, and bowed herself to the ground.

17 Let not my lord, I pray thee, regard this man of Belial, even Nabal: for as his name is, so is he; Nabal is his name, and folly is with him: but I thine handmaid saw not the young men of my lord, whom thou didst send.

30 And David said to Abigail, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me:

31 So David received of her hand that which she had brought him, and said unto her, Go up in peace to thine house;

32 And it came to pass about ten days after, that the Lord smote Nabal, that he died.

33 . . . And David sent and communed with Abigail, to take her to him to wife.

42 And Abigail hasted, and arose, and rode upon an ass, with five damsels of hers that went after her; and she went after the messengers of David, and became his wife.

THE chief business of the women in the reigns of Kings Saul and David seems to have been to rescue men from the craft and the greed of each other. The whole interest in this story of Nabal centres in the tact of Abigail in saving their lives and possessions from threatened destruction, owing to the folly and the ignorance of her husband. His name, Nabal, signifying folly, describes his character.
It is a wonder that his parents should have given to him such a name, and a greater wonder that Abigail should have married him. He inherited Caleb's estate; but he was far from inheriting his virtues. His wealth was great; but he was a selfish, snarling cynic. Abigail's name signifies "the joy of her father;" but he could not have promised himself much joy in her, caring more for the wealth than for the wisdom of her husband. Many a child is thus thrown away—married to worldly wealth and to nothing else which is desirable. Wisdom is good with an inheritance; but an inheritance without wisdom is good for nothing. Many an Abigail is tied to a Nabal; but even if they have her understanding they will find it hard enough to fill such a relation.

David and his men were returning from Samuel’s funeral through the wilderness of Paran and were in sore need of provisions, and knowing that Nabal had immense wealth, and, moreover, that it was the season for sheep shearing, David thought that he would be happy to place the king under obligations to him, and was surprised to find him so disloyal. Abigail, however, appreciated the situation, and by her courtesy and her generosity made amends for the rudeness of her husband. She did not stop to parley with him, but hastened to meet the king with the needed provisions. She wasted no words of excuse for Nabal, but spoke of him with marked contempt. Her conduct would have shocked the Apostle who laid such stress on the motto, "Wives, obey your husbands." "What little reason we have to value the wealth of this world," says the historian, "when such a churl as Nabal abounds in plenty, while such a saint as David suffers want."

David sent to him most gracious messages; but he replied in his usual gruff manner, "Who is David, that I should share with him my riches? What care I for the son of Jesse?" The servant did not return to Nabal with David's outburst of wrath nor his resolution of vengeance; but he told all to Abigail, who made haste to avert the threatened danger. She did what she saw was to be done, quickly. Wisdom in such a case was better than weapons of war.

Nabal begrudged the king and his retinue water; but Abigail gave them two casks of wine and all sorts of provisions in abun-
dance. She met David on the march big with resentment, meditating the destruction of Nabal. But Abigail by her humility completely disarmed the king. With great respect and complaisance she urges him to lay all of the blame on her; and to attribute Nabal’s faults to his want of wit, born simple, not spiteful. Abigail puts herself in the attitude of a humble petitioner.

David received all that Abigail brought him with many thanks. It is evident from the text that she gave to him many of the delicacies from her larder. Ten days after this Nabal died. David immediately sent messengers to Abigail asking her to be his wife. She readily accepted, as David had made a deep impression on her heart. So, with her five damsels, all mounted on white jackasses, she accompanied the messengers to the king and became his wife.

The Hebrew mythology does not gild the season of courtship and marriage with much sentiment or romance. The transfer of a camel or a donkey from one owner to another, no doubt, was often marked with more consideration than that of a daughter. One loves a faithful animal long in our possession and manifests more grief in parting than did these Hebrew fathers in giving away their daughters, or than the daughters did in leaving their family, their home or their country.

We have no beautiful pictures of lovers sitting in shady groves, exchanging their tributes of love and of friendship, their hopes and fears of the future; no temples of knowledge where philosophers and learned matrons discussed great questions of human destiny, such as Greek mythology gives to us; Socrates and Plato, learning wisdom at the feet of the Diametias of their times, give to us a glimpse of a more exalted type of womanhood than any which the sacred fabulists have vouchsafed thus far.

2 Samuel iii.
2 And unto David were sons born in Hebron: and his firstborn was Amnon, of Ahinoam the Jezreelitess: 3 And his second, Chileab, of Abigail the wife of Nabal the Carmelite; and the third, Absalom the son of Maacah the daughter of Talmai king of Geshur: 4 And the fourth, Adonijah the son of Haggith; and the fifth, Shephatiah the son of Abital; 5 And the sixth, Ithream, by Eglah David's wife. These were born to David in Hebron.
The last is called David’s wife, his only rightful wife, Michal. It was a fault in David, say the commentators, thus to multiply wives contrary to Jewish law. It was a bad example to his successors. Men who make the laws should not be the first to disobey them. None of his sons was famous, but three were infamous, due in part to their father’s nature and example.

14 And David danced before the Lord with all his might; and David was girded with a linen ephod.

15 So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouting, and with the sound of the trumpet.

16 And as the ark of the Lord came into the city of David, Michal Saul’s daughter looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the Lord; and she despised him in her heart.

20 Then David returned to bless his household. And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, How glorious was the king of Israel to-day, who uncovered himself in the eyes of his servants, as one of the vain fellows.

21 And David said unto Michal, It was before the Lord, which chose me before thy father.

Michal, like Abigail, does not seem to have been overburdened with conjugal respect. She was so impatient to let the king know how he appeared in her sight that she could not wait at home, but went out to meet him. She even questions the wisdom of such a parade over the ark, and tells the king that it would have been better to leave it where it had been hidden for years.

Neither Michal nor Abigail seem to have made idols of their husbands; they did not even consult them as to what they should think, say or do. They furnish a good example to wives to use their own judgment and to keep their own secrets, not make the family altar a constant confessional.

2 Samuel xi.

2 And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king’s house, and saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon.

3 And David sent and inquired after her. And one said, Is not this Bath-she-ba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?

4 And David sent messengers, and took her; and she came in unto him.

6 And David sent to Joab, saying, Send me Uriah the Hittite. And Joab sent Uriah to David.

7 And when Uriah was come unto him,

David demanded of him how Joab did, and how the people did, and how the war prospered.

9 And Uriah slept at the door of the king’s house with all the servants of his lord, and went not down to his house.

14 And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah.

15 And he wrote in the letter saying, Set ye Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die.

16 And it came to pass, when Joab ob-
served the city, that he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men were.

17 And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell some of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also.

26 And when the wife of Uriah heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband.

27 And when the mourning was past, David sent and fetched her to his house, and she became his wife, and bare him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord.

This book contains but little in regard to women. What is worthy of mention in the story of Bath-sheba is finished in the following book. David’s first vision of her is such a reflection on his honor that, from respect to the “man after the Lord’s own heart,” we pass it in silence.

David’s social ethics were not quite up to the standard even of his own times. It is said that he was a master of his pen as well as of his sword. His poem on the death of Saul and Jonathan has been much praised by literary critics. But, alas! David was not able to hold the Divine heights which he occasionally attained. As in the case of Bath-sheba, he remained where he could see her; instead of going with his army to Jerusalem to attend to his duties as King of Israel and general of the army, he delegated them to others. Had he been at his post he would have been out of the way of temptation. He used to pray three times a day, not only at morning and evening, but at noon also. It is to be feared than on this day he forgot his devotions and thought only of Bath-sheba.

Uriah, the husband of Bath-sheba, was one of David’s soldiers, a man of strict honor and virtue. To get rid of him for a season, David sent him with a message to one of the officers at Jerusalem, telling him that in the next battle to place Uriah in the front rank that he might distinguish himself. Uriah was a poor man and tenderly loved his wife. He little knew the fatal contents of the letter which he carried. When Joab received the letter, he took it for granted that he was guilty of some crime and that the king wished him to be punished. So Joab obeyed the king and Uriah was killed. In due time all this was known, and filled the people with astonishment and greatly displeased the Lord.

It is to be hoped that he did not commune with God during this period of humiliation or pen any psalms of praise for His goodness
and mercy. He married Bath-sheba, and she bore him a son and called his name Solomon. But this did not atone for his sin. "His heart was sad, his soul," says a commentator, "was like a tree in winter which has life in the root only."

2 Samuel vii.
And the Lord sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him: There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor.
2 The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds:
3 But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished: and it grew up together with him, and with his children: it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter.
4 And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man, but took the poor man's lamb and dressed it.
5 And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die:
6 And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing.
7 And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul;
8 Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight? Thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.
9 Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.

And the Lord said unto Nathan the Prophet, David's faithful friend, "Go thou and instruct and counsel him." Nathan judiciously gives his advice in the form of a parable, on which David gives his judgment as to the sin of the chief actor and denounces him in unmeasured terms, and says that he should be punished with death—"he shall surely die." David did not suspect the bearing of the fable until Nathan applied it, and, to David's surprise and consternation, said, "Thou art the man."

Uriah the Hittite had but "one little ewe lamb," one wife whom he loved as his own soul, while King David had many; yet he robbed Uriah of all that he had and made him carry his own message of death to Joab, the general of the army, who gave to him the most dangerous place in the battle, and, as the king desired, he was killed.

When the king first recalled Uriah from the field, Uriah went not to his own house, as he suspected foul play, having heard that Bath-sheba often appeared at court. Both the king and Bath-sheba urged him to go to his own house; but he went not. Bath-sheba had been to him all that was pure and beautiful in woman, and he could not
endure even the suspicion of guilt in her. He understood the king's plans, and probably welcomed death, as without Bathsheba's love, life had no joy for him. But to be transferred from the cottage of a poor soldier to the palace of a king was a sufficient compensation for the loss of the love of a true and faithful man.

This was one of the most cruel deeds of David's life, marked with so many acts of weakness and of crime. He was ruled entirely by his passions. Reason had no sway over him. Fortunately, the development of self-respect and independence in woman, and a higher idea of individual conscience and judgment in religion and in government, have supplied the needed restraint for man. Men will be wise and virtuous just in proportion as women are self-reliant and able to meet them on the highest planes of thought and of action.

No magnet is so powerful as that which draws men and women to each other. Hence they rise or fall together. This is one lesson which the Bible illustrates over and over—the degradation of woman degrades man also. "Her face pleaseth me," said Samson, who, although he could conquer lions, was like putty in the hands of women.

E. C. S.