They are attempts to ruin the kingdom, the first through its King, the second through its God, the third through its means and agents. They are the successive scenes, or acts, of one great drama, where the actors are spiritual, the struggles and triumphs the same. And yet they describe a contest representative and universal. Jesus is here the representative Man, the source and head of the new humanity, the founder of the kingdom that is to be. When He triumphs, it triumphs. When He is victorious, all are victorious that live in and by Him. And his victory, as it was for humanity, was by humanity. The supernatural energies that were in Him He did not use for Himself. In our nature, as in our name, He stood, fought, conquered. How perfectly, then, is He qualified to be at once our Saviour and example! The heart that loves us is a heart that was once strained in a great battle, where the pain was its own and the victory ours. To Him, as He lives and reigns in love and might, we can come in sin and weakness, in joy and sorrow, certain that, as He "suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."

A. M. FAIRBAIRN.

II. *SAMUEL AND THE SCHOOLS OF THE PROPHETS.*

It was the singular good fortune of Samuel to be the founder both of the monarchy in Israel and also of the Prophetic order. Both had existed in embryo in the institutions of Moses; but now, out of the

chaos which lasted for twenty years after the fall of Eli, the creative genius of this great man called them forth into ampler proportions and established them upon a lasting and solid basis. If the Messiah was to be Prophet, Priest, and King, it was necessary that, as Israel was the type of the militant Church of Christ, all three offices should attain in it to their perfect development. Hitherto there had been the Priest only; now, contemporaneously, King and Prophet appear, and continue their course side by side till the monarchy fell. Nor did prophecy long survive. Its voice was heard in the century which immediately followed the return from exile, and then it was silent. It was the king, not the priest, who was ever confronted by the Prophet. When the kingdom ceased, prophecy had also performed its allotted task.

I am not prepared to say how far Samuel foresaw that the Prophet was to be, politically, the check upon the royal power. It was the happiness of Israel that a special Providence ever watched over its true interests; and, undeniably, the influence of the Prophets over the people confined the power of the kings within reasonable limits. Once only did the kingdom become a tyranny; but before this was possible Manasseh filled Jerusalem with innocent blood, and by wholesale executions silenced the prophetic voice. And similarly when, in Israel, Jezebel wished to overthrow the national institutions, she recognized in the Prophets the representatives of freedom, and ruthlessly destroyed them, only to see the monarchy confronted and overmatched by the majesty of Elijah's spiritual power, appealing to a

popular convention assembled at Mount Carmel. Not that this was the primary object for which the Prophets were called into existence. Their business was to keep all Israel, people as well as king, true to the Divine purpose for which they had been made into a nation. But this higher duty contained also the lower. A nation of slaves is a thing too mean to have any noble part assigned to it in the Divine drama of human development.

But, undoubtedly, Samuel did purpose to raise the intellectual condition of Israel. All the weapons of his warfare were, as we have seen, moral. A great general might give the people deliverance from their enemies by a successful battle, but at his death the struggle would begin afresh. The one thing that could make and keep them free would be their own advancement in virtue and religion. But Samuel did not suppose this to be possible without higher culture for their minds. Education is not a panacea for all human ills, but it is an indispensable condition both of individual and of national progress.

And to this work Samuel devoted himself with eager energy, while in establishing the monarchy he was a reluctant actor. He would have preferred a more direct dependence of the nation upon Jehovah; but he saw that the time was come when Israel required a king, and, true statesman that he was, he gave way. But the culture of the nation had been his earlier and self-chosen task. For when he had anointed Saul to be king, the last of the three signs, which were to remove all hesitation from the heart of the youth as to the reality of his investment with the kingly power, was that he should "meet a company

of prophets coming down from the high place [or, coming from Gibeah] with psaltery and tabret, pipe and harp" (1 Sam. x. 5). Already, therefore, the Prophets were growing numerous, were arranged in an orderly manner, and were instructed in music.

We may conclude, then, that Samuel, trained in priestly learning within the sacred precincts, either understood, from the first, that education was a necessary condition of his reforms, or that he was gradually led to this conviction by feeling the need of fit men to help him in carrying out his designs. At all events, he soon gathered young men of promise round him: for we learn (1 Sam. xix. 18–24) that the first college of the "sons of the prophets" was at Naioth in Ramah. Now Ramah was Samuel's own dwelling-place (1 Sam. vii. 17), and Naioth, or, more strictly, Nevaioth, means "the pastures." In the same way, then, that young men in the meadows at Oxford gathered round the school attached, as it seems, to the Priory of St. Frideswyde, bearing with them fates pregnant with the grandest issues, so there gathered round Samuel the rising youth of Israel for a yet diviner purpose; and rough booths and tents were erected for their lodging in the neighbouring fields.

The necessity would soon arise for more convenient and durable dwellings. So, too, it was at Oxford. The two colleges which claim the greatest antiquity take their origin from benefactions intended for the purchase or erection of buildings in which the poor scholars might lodge. Samuel's scholars did the work themselves. Even long afterwards, at a time when these colleges were at the height of

their renown under Elisha as their rector, we find the students going in a body, with him at their head, to the thickets on the bank of the Jordan to cut down beams wherewith to erect a hall for their teacher's use. In Samuel's time buildings were generally of a very slight character, and most of the people dwelt in tents. And tents and booths sufficed for the use of Samuel's disciples.

The passage already referred to (1 Sam. xix. 20) admits us into the very centre of the prophetic school. By the stratagem of Michal, David had escaped from the emissaries of Saul sent to slay him. But whither should he flee? Where could he find one able and willing to protect him? The thought arose in his mind of the grand old man who had placed Saul upon the throne, and toward whom that wayward king had ever shewn respect. With Samuel he might find safety, and Saul would accord the right of sanctuary to one so fenced round with religious awe. But, no; the Crown is at stake, and Saul sends messengers to tear him thence. They force themselves into Samuel's presence, "but when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as appointed over them, the Spirit of God was upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied" (1 Sam. xix. 20). Now, first, the word for *company* is not the same as in 1 Sam. x. 10. Literally, there it is a *string*, or, as we say, a band, of prophets, implying simply that there were several of them. Here, though the letters of the word have become curiously transposed in the Hebrew (*lahak* for *kahal*), yet, as all the ancient Versions shew, a regularly organized body

is intended. So Israel, regarded in its religious aspect, is called the *kahal* of Jehovah (Num. xvi. 3; xx. 4), or the *kahal* of Elohim (Deut. xxxi. 30).

But even more remarkable is the next point. It is stated that Samuel was standing in the midst of the young men as their head. The word is that translated *officer* in 1 Kings iv. 5, 7, 27, and shews that this, the first prophetic college, had now arrived at such proportions as to be presided over by an appointed chief. The word even suggests that Samuel's authority was not simply that of Founder. The organization of the "sons of the Prophets" had passed beyond this stage, and probably, by some official act, they had recognized and defined Samuel's exact place. We subsequently find an account of the manner in which Elisha was appointed to the office. At Jericho fifty members of the powerful prophetic college there, warned that God would take away his master from Elisha's head that day, accompanied Elijah and Elisha to the Jordan, and stood as eager spectators of the coming event. With wonder they observed the miracle by which Elijah parted the waters, and watched from afar the journey of the two Seers into the wilderness. For some hours, it may be, they waited impatiently for tidings, and at length Elisha appears alone. Slowly and sadly he advances to the river's edge, and there essays his power. He had prayed for an eldest son's portion of Elijah's spirit (compare 2 Kings ii. 9 with Deut. xxi. 17), and received the promise that, if he saw his master when carried away from him, it should be granted. He now stands with the fallen mantle in his hand on

the Jordan's bank, and striking the waters, cries, "Where is Jehovah, Elijah's God?" At the words the waters roll asunder, and the sons of the prophets at once recognize Elisha as their head. "The spirit of Elijah, they say, doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him" (2 Kings ii. 15). It was a formal acknowledgment of him as Elijah's successor in the government of the prophetic schools, and we have many interesting records afterwards of the manner in which Elisha discharged his office.

The words, then, lead to the conclusion that the college at Ramah had passed beyond its first tentative commencements, that it was of sufficient importance to occupy Samuel's main attention, and developed enough to appoint, or at least acknowledge, him as its head by some formal act. We next learn that Samuel's scholars were *prophesying*. The word is not that used, at the end of the verse, of Saul's messengers, nor of Saul himself, either in verses 23, 24, or in 1 Sam. x. 10, though it is used of him in 1 Sam. x. 11. It is the more formal and strict word for the exercise of prophetic powers, and is a passive verb indicating that those powers were not the Prophet's own, but came to him from without. Are we then to suppose that these young men were all uttering predictions and fortelling the future? or even that they were rhapsodizing, and speaking in unknown tongues? No; the word means that they were being trained in music and singing. So, when David with the captains of the host established the musical services of the sanctuary, they appointed

the sons of Asaph "to prophesy with harps" (1 Chron. xxv. 1–3). So, in Amos iii. 8, the words probably mean, "Jehovah hath spoken: who but must sing his praise?"

I will not dwell here upon the close connection in old time between the poet and the prophet. The poet was one inspired: his poetry an outpouring of the Deity. More to our purpose is it to notice that the intellectual life of a nation begins with, and is fostered by, poetry. Not in books, but upon the tablets of the memory, is inscribed a nation's earliest mental treasure; and to render its preservation easy that treasure has to take such forms as make it easy to remember. Every thoughtful reader will have noticed how full the Pentateuch is of quotations from ancient poetry. One such echo even comes down to us from the antediluvian world, in Lamech's lament to his wives over the youth whom he had slain. The two chief stores among the Israelites of their national history were two books of song: the "Wars of Jehovah," and the "Book of Jashar," or the Upright. Both were intensely religious. For this, which is the common quality of all primæval poetry, was present in that of the Hebrews in a still higher degree. Religion with them was not dissipated among a crowd of charming but motley beings, with which every part of nature was peopled: it was devoted to the one God. Both these records were also historical. They were the nation's archives. And both were preserved by oral tradition. So, when David composed his elegy over Saul and Jonathan, he took care for its preservation by making the people learn it by heart, as the words

of 2 Sam. i. 18 really mean. "The Bow" is there, the name of the elegy itself. The written record of Israel's devotional poetry remains for us in the Book of Psalms, the noblest outpouring of religious feeling that ever nation possessed. When prophesying, therefore, Samuel's scholars were learning by heart, or reciting in measured tones, the religious poetry of their race. There were even among them some composing new hymns of praise to Israel's Jehovah, for among these scholars was David, the sweet singer of Israel; and when such strains were improvised, all recognized in them an even more immediate presence of the Holy Spirit. The words of the singers seemed to be, and were, more than human. Like the Sybil's, it was no human voice:

> "Nec mortale sonans; afflata est numine quando
> Jam propiore Dei."[1]

Nor must we lightly estimate the effect upon the mass of the people of men whose memories were thus stored, and their intellects trained in the study of history and of the devotional poetry of their race. In those days there were none of the many means of mental enjoyment which we now possess. There were no books, no serials, no newspapers, no letters from friends. Men, therefore, who knew by heart the many lays which recorded the mighty deeds of yore, and shewed how Jehovah had ever upheld their nation and raised up mighty men of valour for its deliverance, would hold in their hands the means of most powerfully influencing the minds of the people. But we must not suppose that poetry and music (of which more hereafter) were

[1] Virg. Æn. vi. 50.

their sole studies. These are mentioned because it was the sight of the "sons of the Prophets" arranged in orderly choir, with Samuel as their precentor, singing to the sound of various instruments of music the spirit-stirring ballads which recorded the heroic deeds of their ancestors, or solemn psalms to the praise of God: it was this sight which so filled the minds of Saul's messengers and, finally, of Saul himself with enthusiasm that they too "prophesied." The word in their case means "to imitate or act the part of the prophet," and implies that they joined the sacred choir and sang and recited with it as best they could. Nor can we think meanly of a people who shewed so divine an enthusiasm for poetry and song.

But we must not conclude that these exercises were all. It is evident that the "sons of the Prophets" were, moreover, taught to read and write. These were no common arts, and it is a proof of the early intellectual advancement of the Semitic races that syllabic writing with them goes back to the most remote antiquity (Ewald, "History of Israel," i. 51). But in the Book of Judges these arts seem well-nigh lost. *Now* they appear again, and henceforward we find the annals of the kingdom regularly kept by trained scribes. In 1 Chron. xxix. 29 we see the long series of these chroniclers taking its origin from Samuel. The acts of David, we read, were recorded in regular order by "Samuel the seer, and Nathan the prophet, and Gad, who saw visions." Can we doubt that Nathan and Gad were Samuel's disciples? Or is it reasonable to suppose that they gained the knowledge

of these most important arts anywhere else than in his schools? And what Samuel communicated to them he would certainly communicate to many more. David, we may feel sure, was one who had sat at Samuel's feet, and drunk in from Samuel's mouth not only his love for letters, but also that deep religious feeling which makes him so perfect a representative of the theocratic spirit. It opens to us also fresh subjects for thought when thus we see the probability that David and Nathan and Gad had been schoolfellows. Perhaps only disciples of the highest promise were instructed in studies deemed then so mysterious and profound as to write and read; but evidently from Samuel's days an era of culture begins. A wide chasm divides the untutored warriors of the Book of Judges from the trained scholars of the courts of David and Solomon. Even Joab can read (2 Sam. xi. 14), and Saul might have proved less wild and wayward if he had been thus trained. But he had had no such opportunities; and the people laughed at the thought of one so stalwart, but withal so clumsy and untaught, joining in the literary exercises of educated men (1 Sam. xix. 24).

It remains to say a few words about music. The ancients, as is well known, attached great importance to it as a branch of education. The three things taught to the wealthier youth of Athens were music, grammar, and gymnastics (Plato, "Theog." 122E), and a man who could play no instrument of music was looked upon as an ill-bred fellow. Originally song was closely connected with religion, and Plutarch, in his Treatise on Music, says, that

at first music was regarded as a thing so holy that it was not permitted even to be used in the theatre, but was reserved for the worship of the gods and the education of youth. We also read that Timotheus of Miletum was severely reproved by the Lacedæmonian magistrates because he had eleven strings to his cithara, instead of the usual complement of seven. Such an innovation seemed to them likely to diminish from the solemnity of its sounds and make it fit for lighter and more trivial uses. To no vulgar theme had song stooped down in the olden time. As Homer tells us (Odys. i. 338), "The things that minstrels sing are the exploits of heroes and of gods."

So it was among the Jews. Carrying back its origin to that grand Cainite family who had enriched society with so many noble arts (Gen. iv. 21), they employed it for strictly religious uses. When Moses heard, on his return from the mount with the two tables of stone, "the noise of them that sing" (Exod. xxxii. 18), he knew that the people were engaged in some religious ceremony. They were worshipping, with solemn chants, the golden calf. But history was almost as sacred. The Hebrews saw in all noble deeds the working of the Deity. If a man slew but a lion it was because the Spirit of Jehovah came upon him mightily (Judges xiv. 6). It was a noble thing thus to recognize the true source of all that is great in man; and to these reverent thinkers the mighty achievements of heroes were as fit subjects for song as the praise of God itself: for these deeds were God's deeds. To the sound, then, of psaltery and harp they

recited the glorious acts of their forefathers or sang psalms of praise. How soothing their melody was we learn subsequently, when Elisha refused to prophecy till a minstrel had been brought, who calmed down his angry feelings by tones which awakened in his mind feelings of devoutest reverence.

We see, then, that it was no inferior education which Samuel offered to the young men who gathered round him in the meadows at Ramah. They learned both to read and write; they were trained in the history and religion of their nation; and they were taught singing and instrumental music. Skilled in these arts, we find David attaining to a superiority in poetry, in statesmanship, and in war immeasurably in advance of previous times; and reaching almost to the heroic lineaments of Moses, who, too, had been trained in all human learning, not indeed after the manner of the Hebrews, but in Egyptian schools. And Samuel's work was destined to endure. He had laid his foundations broad and deep, and the Israelites became a cultivated and refined people. And so, finally, we owe to Samuel's schools that race of inspired penmen who, in the first place, have preserved for us the annals of the chosen race. It needs but to read the Books of Chronicles to find how numerous were the authors who studied and wrote the records of their native history. And thus trained and practised, they soared aloft into still higher and more exalted regions. The psalmists found meet utterance and expression for the deepest thoughts of the heart when communing

with God; the later prophets unfolded to man the divine purposes of mercy and the plan of human redemption. Nothing less than this was involved in Samuel's schools. They wrought, first, for the mental and moral culture of the people of Israel; and, finally, for the teaching of the whole world.

R. PAYNE SMITH.

"THAT WICKED PERSON."

1 COR. V. 1–5, 13; AND 2 COR. II. 5–11; VII. 8–13.

AMONG the minor characters of the New Testament there is one who often attracts our thoughts by the fascination of an undefined and mysterious doom. He stands deep in the shadows of the background, so deep that we see him but darkly; but, so far as we can see him, there is a certain ominous and fatal look about the man, an air of guilt, and of such guilt as the moral sense of mankind has pronounced well-nigh unpardonable century after century. He is one of the "reprobates" of the New Testament story, an apostate from the Faith, an offender against the native and inbred instincts of humanity. The very name by which he is commonly known—"the *incestuous* Corinthian"—kindles horror and loathing in us. We condemn him without hesitation, without waiting to hear what may be alleged, if not in his defence, yet in palliation of his guilt. We too commonly assume even that the anathema of the Church still rests upon him, forgetting the absolution pronounced upon him by St. Paul within a few weeks after he had been cast out of the Church.