

The "apparel" was probably a special military dress adapted to be worn with armor. *Helmet of brass*; really bronze, an alloy of copper and tin, our brass, an alloy of copper and zinc, being then unknown. *Coat of mail*. See *Light from the East*. The occasion was a great one, and the king naturally had the best armor. *He assayed to go*; tried to walk, but failed, the accoutrement was so unwieldy. His hope in the duel with the heavily armed Philistine lay in ease and agility of movement. *He took his staff*; no innocent weapon, but a stout oak club such as is still used to good purpose by the desert dwellers around Palestine (compare 2 Sam. 23: 21). Perhaps it was David's club which misled Goliath; he did not notice the sling. *Five smooth* (water-worn) *stones*; which would therefore be least impeded by the air. *Shepherd's bag*. *even . . . a scrip*. This was made of an animal's skin, the forelegs being tied together to form a handle, and was used by the shepherd to carry his food, while away from home with his flocks. *His sling*. Sling-men were in those days formidable fighters, Judges 20: 16. (See also *Light from the East*.)

II. The Challenge, 41-47.

Vs. 41-43. *Philistine . . . drew near*; in all the splendor of his shining armor, vs. 5-8. *Man . . . bare the shield*; large enough to cover the giant's whole body. *Looked . . . saw David*. No wonder the giant disdained the youth who came out with a club against him. *Am I a dog?* A term of contempt in all the East. *Cursed David by his gods*; Dagon the fish god, and Baal, and Ashtoreth. He called upon them to smite the presumptuous stripling.

Vs. 44-47. *I come . . . in the name of the Lord of hosts*. David's answer is characteristic; his opponent has indeed better arms than he, but it is not a duel between club and spear: it is between Israel's God and the Philistine gods,—a religious contest. Which is stronger, Jehovah or Dagon? David is confident that Jehovah is his Champion on high. *Will the Lord deliver thee*. The Philistine threatened to leave David's body for the birds and beasts of prey (v. 44); David hurls back his defiance, and boasts that all the earth shall see that Israel has a God worthy of her (v. 46): to Him belongs the issue, He is stronger than His foes, v. 47. He does not

give victory to *sword and spear*, but smites with His own resistless weapons.

III. The Combat, 48, 49.

Vs. 48, 49. *Drew nigh . . . David . . . took . . . a stone . . . slang it*. The duel of words over, the duel of arms begins. Each combatant advances, but long before they are within spear's thrust of each other, that is, long before the Philistine thought to smite his enemy, the Hebrew champion finishes the combat by a well aimed stone from his sling. One version of the Old Testament tells us that it hit the giant between the eyes, as he advanced, so that he fell on his face dead.

The victory of David was the signal for a general onset. The men of Israel raised the war cry and chased the enemy to the very gates of Gath, far beyond the foot-hills of Judah, vs. 50-54. David was led before Saul, and taken into the king's service. David and Jonathan became fast friends, vs. 17: 55 to 18: 5.

Light from the East

COAT OF MAIL—The oldest kind of armor was the tough hide of some animal, wound around the body. This was succeeded by a tunic of coarse cloth, quilted with several layers of flax. Then plates or bosses of metal began to be fastened on the most exposed parts. From this was evolved the tigulated armor, which consisted of small oblong plates of metal, overlapping one another like the scales of a fish, one end fastened to the tunic and the other riveted to the plate below it by a button, which moved in a slit, and thus gave sufficient flexibility. Chain armor of inter-linked rings and the solid corselet were later developments.

SLING—A favorite weapon of Syrian shepherds. It was simple, exactly like that made by boys now—two strings of sinew attached to a piece of leather to hold the stone. It was swung two or three times round the head, and the stone was discharged by letting go one end of the string. In war, stones as large as the fist were thrown with terrific force. Great accuracy of aim is still developed among the peasants watching their grain. Two or three together will select, each his bird, from an approaching flock, and throwing all at once, the birds will fall. Smooth stones are chosen because they are least impeded by the air.