

with a sling and with a stone, and smote the Philistine, and slew him; but *there was no sword in the hand of David.*

Chap. 21. 9; Judg. 8. 31; 15. 15; chap. 23. 21.
51 Therefore David ran, and stood upon the Philistine, and took his sword, and drew it out of the sheath thereof, and slew him, and cut off his head therewith. And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, & they fled.
& Heb. 11. 34.

GENERAL STATEMENT.

The shepherd-boy of Bethlehem, soon after his anointing, was summoned to the court of King Saul to soothe the troubled spirit of the despondent and half-insane king by his music on the harp. After a few weeks of service he was again sent back to his sheep. Two years or more have since passed, and the boy has become a man of strong frame, though still bearing the fair face of his youth. The time has now come to present to Israel its future king. Ignorant of destiny, the young man goes at his father's command to the camp in the valley of Elah with greeting and gifts from home to his soldier-brothers. There he beholds the gigantic descendant of the Anakim, Goliath of Gath, daring any Israelite to meet him in single combat. Others are in terror, but the young shepherd looks on with the thought of a general, and at once plans the way to bring the giant low. To the wonder of all he offers to fight the Philistine, from meeting whom old warriors shrink. He is brought to the king, who does not recognize the minstrel-boy in the young champion. He arrays the youth in his own armour, only less in size than Goliath's, but David lays the cumbersome burden aside, for he has chosen his own weapons and his own way of warfare. Bearing his shepherd's staff, as if to guide his flock, he goes to meet the giant, while concealed he carries his unerring sling, whose power he has tested many a time among the hills of Judah. The Philistine meets him with curses and contempt, but David boldly repels scorn with scorn, and proclaims his trust in the God of Israel. Before the enemy can draw near, the smooth stone from David's sling goes whizzing through the air, and, aimed with deadly precision, sinks into the giant's uncovered forehead. He falls heavily upon the ground, not dead, but having received his death-blow. Swift to take advantage of his opportunity, David leaps upon his prostrate form, draws forth his mighty sword, and with it severs his head. The opposing hosts have gazed in wonder until this moment, but as the Philistines behold in the bloody head of their champion, they fly in disorder from the field. Led by David, Israel pursues even to the gates of Gath. Thus in a single day the shepherd and the singer has become the hero and the deliverer of his land.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 38. **Saul armed David.** See the General Statement for the introductory events. Why Saul himself did not fight the Philistine is not known. He may have become

unfitted for active warfare by his insanity, which occasionally seized him. **With his armour.** The arms, offensive and defensive, of the king, who was himself almost a giant in size. **A helmet.** The covering for the head, generally made of leather, with plates of metal. **Brass** should probably read either *bronze* or *copper*. **Coat of mail.** "A coat of scales;" made of small plates overlapping each other.

39. Girded his sword. The king's, not his own. The ancient swords were short, straight-bladed, and used rather to thrust than to cut. **Assayed.** Undertook, but found it impossible to go to battle with such inconvenient weapons. **Had not proved.** *Them* should be substituted for *it*. He was not familiar with the use of such arms, which were altogether too large for him. **I cannot go.** He was wise in his decision, for he would inevitably have lost his life in such an unequal combat. 1. He is a wise man who knows what he cannot do, as well as what he can. **Put them off.** He had his own plan of fighting, and was determined to abide by it.

40. He took his staff. The shepherd's crook, used in guiding the sheep. Perhaps he took it now to divert the giant's attention from his sling, which was concealed. **Smooth stones.** The sides and bed of the brook (dry in summer), where the contest took place, are full of water-worn rounded pebbles. Smooth stones could be aimed with certainty. **Shepherd's bag.** Made of rough, untanned leather, and used for keeping food. **Sling.** In the form of a thong of leather, broad in the middle, one end fastened to the hand by a loop, the other loose. He was an accomplished slinger, and had fixed upon this method of fighting as one in which the great size and complete armour of the enemy would be of no avail. 2. In God's warfare, it is needful to be familiar with our weapons, whether the sword of the word or the arrow of prayer. **He drew near.** Near enough to use his sling, but not near enough to be exposed to danger from the enemy's spear. The difference between David and others in the Israelite army was, not that he alone could have slain the giant in this way, but he alone had the forethought and tact and courage to undertake it.

41. The Philistine. His name was Goliath (ver. 23), and he belonged to the primeval race of the Anakim, of which the Israelites found a small remnant at the time of the conquest, four hundred years before. Num. 13. 32, 33; Josh. 14. 12. These, driven out by the Israelites, attached themselves to the Philistines; and Goliath appears to have been one of a family of giants, all of whom were slain by David and his men. 2. Sam. 21. 15-22. Goliath's height has been variously estimated at from nine to eleven feet. His armour is described, in contrast with the defenceless condition of the Israelites, in vers. 4-7. In those times great size and strength and armour were of immense power in battle. **Bare the shield.** Every leader was attended by a servant carrying a great shield,