

DAVID'S GOLDEN PSALM.

IN spite of all critical objections that have been raised against the popular heading, or superscription, of the 16th Psalm, it will probably be known to all ages as "The Golden Psalm of David."

It is only at certain early stages of a globe's formation, when its "elements melt with fervent heat," that diamonds can be produced. And it was only in the Davidic era, and at a certain fiery-trying crisis of the great Hebrew's career, when his soul had reached the requisite white heat of holy enthusiasm, that this "jewel psalm," as it is sometimes called, could have been composed. If we have to abandon the theory that מכתם is derived from a root signifying "gold," we must still cling to the judgment of the past that the thoughts expressed in these verses are "more precious than rubies."

Comparing it with the cluster of other psalms bearing the same title (56-60), it would seem to have been written when its author was a fugitive and in daily peril of his life. This lends some countenance to the supposition that this title comes from a word signifying to "hide" or "conceal." The "Hiding Psalms of David" would be a designation borne out by strong internal evidence.

The absence of any reference to the kingship, to Mount Zion, or the Tabernacle, so rarely omitted in David's later compositions, would place its date at a period prior to his coronation, and before the ever-memorable capture of the famous stronghold. And if I am right in the conjecture that the concluding verses were inspired by the hope born of the fact of Samuel's secret "anointing,"—of which, further on—we must place it subsequent to that event. There are fair grounds for believing, therefore, that it was written in exile, when David fled from the face of Saul. As to the style of the poem, that must be left to Hebrew experts.

"*Guard me, O God, for I trust in Thee*," is the noble keynote of this exquisite piece of heart-music. It brings David