

ORATION.

"How are the valiant fallen in battle? Jonathan slain in the high places? I grieve for that brother Jonathan, exceedingly beautiful and amiable above the love of woman. As the mother loveth her only son so did I love you."—2 Kings, I. 25.

DEAR BRETHREN,—

In the first chapter of the second Book of Kings, we read that Saul the valiant King of Israel, and Jonathan his warrior son, were slain in battle by the Philistines on the mountains of Gelboe. Saul, the implacable enemy of David, and Jonathan by loveliness of character as well as by inheritance his rival to the throne, were struck down as if by a single blow; and with all the glitter of kingly grandeur to which he was so suddenly lifted up to dazzle him, instead of rejoicing, David with his big heart, burst forth into lamentation, tones not surpassed in graphic beauty, tenderness, and deep intensity of feeling, by any human wailings on record. It was at a moment of triumph and in the full tide of victory he first heard the disastrous news in Siceleg, and so overpowered was his manly nature, that, forgetting his triumphs and fortunes alike, he mourned his country's woe, and wept as few ever wept, for the "unreturning brave," the "valiant fallen ones of Israel."

According to the customs of the times in which they lived, David and the Warriors in his train rent their garments, and mourned, wept, and fasted till evening, for Saul and Jonathan and the Hosts of Israel that fell by the sword; and so poignant was his grief, so great his horror of the catastrophe, that in the depths of his anguish he invoked maledictions, as it were, on the ensanguined spot where his dearest were so ruthlessly cloven down. "Ye mountains of Gelboe," said he,