

Sinai, it is almost certain that, forty years before that meeting of the "noble brothers," Moses stood pretty nearly alone in respect of both his patriotic impulses and religious conceptions. The notion¹ that, "before the return of Moses from Sinai, the Israelites in Egypt had risen up energetically against the dangers which threatened their nationality and their religion, and were in the midst of a movement which the arrival of Moses, as their deliverer, only brought to a climax," does not seem warranted by the facts presented in Scripture; but, even if it were, it would still most accord with these facts to say that, at the time when Moses took the decisive step which really proved the turning-point in his history, and the starting-point of his subsequent unparalleled career, his views and projects, his hopes and aspirations, were shared in by comparatively few besides himself. And this is ever found to be characteristic, more or less, of great men who are called to be leaders of their fellows. The pioneers of all mighty movements, whether in Church or in State, in religion or in politics, for the most part live alone, in advance of their age, in communion with and under the fascination of the lofty ideas by which they have become inspired, and must go forth alone, almost always in the first instance without either the co-operation or the sympathy of those they desire to serve; must go forth alone, prepared to endure obloquy, persecution, death itself, in order to point the way to the Eldorado of the future, and to strike the first blow for its realisation.

The OUTCOME of this stupendous act of self-sacrifice on the part of Moses can only be briefly referred to. Its immediate consequence was precipitous flight from the land of Egypt, followed by forty years' obscurity in Midian. When he smote and buried the overseer, he imagined that his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver Israel, but they did not; and so, alarmed for his safety, he escaped beyond the king's dominions—away around the northern fork of the Red Sea, out into the wilderness of Sinai, in amongst the deep defiles and rocky cliffs of Horeb, where he forgot all about his former dignity as "the son of Pharaoh's

¹ *History of Israel*, vol. ii. p. 39.