

ment of his determination to rebuild the temple and give the captives permission to return to their own land.

2nd. Cyrus was a fitting instrument for the work assigned. He was a man of noble character, a statesman prompt and energetic, and of great executive ability. Herodotus says "he ruled his subjects like a father," Xenophen speaks of him as a model prince, and Plutarch asserts that "in wisdom, virtue, greatness of soul, he excelled all other princes." The record before us bears testimony to his noble self-sacrifice and generosity of soul. In God's plan there is a harmony between the workman and his work. It is a mistake to suppose that God employs weak, unworthy instruments to grapple with the important crises of history. God may not employ agencies that human wisdom would select, but God chooses men of power, ability, fitting instruments to come forth upon the stage of action at critical periods, such as witnessed the bringing forward of Cyrus. The man is suited for his work. This great principle of adaptation runs through the universe. This adaption of means to an end, of the limbs, structure and functions of animals to the uses that are to be made of these, is the central idea of the design-argument, and implies the existence of a grand, omnipotent designing mind. The same is true in the moral and spiritual sphere. When there is any exception to this, *e. g.*, when a man is engaged at work for which he is not adapted—this is the result of human freedom, a perversion of the ideal order, for God has adapted every man for certain work. Cyrus was eminently fitted to do his work. Moses was the very man to undertake the arduous mission of leading forth the captive Israelites from the bondage of Egypt. No one could have grappled with the great crisis at the Reformation better than the fiery, impetuous Luther. In the divine plan, God has assigned to every one a special work. Every one has a mission to fulfil in life. The work given to each is suitable to the capacity of each. The law of adaptation reaches to the humblest as well as the greatest. The mystery is that God's plan goes forward, his work is carried out even although the individual shirks his work, although he cannot shirk his responsibility. The solution is found in the parable of the talents. The work which the unprofitable servant refused to do was given to another. "Take therefore the talent from him and give it to him that hath ten talents." Brethren, you are in danger. God has given each a work. That work is meeting you every day in the shape of opportunities, deeds of