

salutary system of government. He was a mighty conqueror. Wherever he went the tempest of war followed. The Lydian empire was subdued and added to his dominions, after the defeat of Croesus, famed for his wealth. Then came the capture of the great city of Babylon, one of the most wonderful achievements of all history. Through the channel of the river, whose waters had been turned out of their natural course, the battalions of Persia swept into the doomed city and took it by storm. Shortly afterwards Cyrus assumed the title and position of King, and although a great warrior, a continual fighter, for those were the days of perpetual warfare, he was a humane, wise governor, a generous liberator. He conquered in order to benefit, in order to rule in accordance with right principles, and to be a guardian to the best of his ability of the interests of the millions of people over whom he ruled with benignant sway. After this brief historical sketch we are prepared to consider him in relation to his divinely-appointed work. And

1st. In Cyrus we behold God's man for the crisis, God's man for the time. His mission was foretold in the words of prophecy. God spake of him long before in these words, recorded in Isaiah xlv. 28; "That saith of Cyrus, he is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure, even saying to Jerusalem, thou shalt be built, and to the temple, thy foundations shall be laid." Then in the 45th chapter of Isaiah God says of Cyrus: "I guided thee though thou hast not known me." Cyrus was the divinely-appointed man for the time, for the work. In God's plan competent men are brought out to grapple with the great crises that arrive. They are not hastily developed. Perhaps they have been undergoing a long course of training for years, as Moses in the sheep pasture of Midian, beneath the sombre shadows of those mountains amid which he afterwards led the liberated Israelites; as David who was to ascend the throne at a critical time in the history of the Israelites. David was preparing for years and years in the humble walks of pastoral life for the work which was to devolve upon him later in life. God is never surprised. We are often surprised. We often miscalculate. A contingency arises that we never foresaw, and we are often overwhelmed by circumstances. In God's plan as regards human history crisis after crisis arises, but the chosen instrument of deliverance is at hand. At the termination of the seventy years' captivity, when God's time had come for a mighty movement to be made, Cyrus shot forth into the foreground with his proclamation—the announce-