

appalling solemnity, to be suddenly elevated to the throne, to displace Samuel and to yield to the determination of the people in rejecting God as their king. (d) The Lord revealed his hiding place v. 22. He was brought forth and proclaimed by Samuel as the one "whom the Lord hath chosen;" and the people, delighted with his commanding appearance and with the accomplishment of their persistent desire, shouted their approval, "God save the king," vs. 22-24. They have gained their end. They have brought about a crisis in the history of the nation. They imagine that they have relieved themselves of the kingship of God. But in this very transaction the hand of the Lord was supreme, as Samuel was careful to make clear to them in his announcement of the result of the election by lot, v. 24.

2. *The valedictory address to the people, and the records made on the occasion.* (a) Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom (v. 25), that is, he explained the nature of the new regime under which they were now placed. He stated clearly the rights, privileges, and constitutional limitations of the monarch, as well as the rights of the people. He defined what belonged to each party. (b) To have the constitution duly ratified, to prevent future misunderstandings, and in order to have an authentic source of reference in case these should occur, "he wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord," deposited it in the custody of the priests, the keepers of the national archives. All this was a most patriotic and generous work on Samuel's part, especially in view of the fact that the people had deposed him from the public office he had faithfully and successfully filled. The man of God is always the true patriot and statesman.

3. *The subsequent conduct of the people and of Saul.* (a) At the close of the transactions of that memorable day, "Samuel sent all the people away," v. 25. They returned to their homes a divided people. (b) Those "whose hearts God had touched" represented one class, v. 26. They accompanied the king to Gibeah, a distance of about five miles from Jerusalem. They acted from a conscientious sense of the duty of allegiance to their chosen ruler. Would that the people always did so

in relation to the ministers and elders whom they call to be over them in the Lord! (c) The representatives of a second class were "children of Belial." (See Christ's account of those who are of their father the devil, Jno. 8:41-44.) (d) Saul "held his peace," v. 27. He silently endured the sneers and contempt of the "children of Belial." This was commendable. Some men answer their vituperations by their own inconsistencies, only to give ground for further mocking.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

It will be time gained to have the scholars go over the chief points of Samuel's discovery of Saul,—the "choice young man" (ch. 9:2), looking for his father's asses which had gone astray, and directed to Samuel, the seer, for information; the Lord apprising Samuel of Saul's coming and of His choice of him (vs. 15-17); Saul's arrival, the feast, the early morning anointing on the housetop, the Spirit of the Lord coming on Saul to the amazement of all who had known him. By the time the story has been brought thus far, the duller will be on the alert. What next?

1. The people summoned for the selection of a king, v. 17-19. There was plain talk. Samuel hid nothing of the Lord's mind—reminded them of the Lord's great goodness, and of their black ingratitude in desiring other than God Himself as their king. Don't wait until the end of the lesson for the practical applications. Here is a fine opening.

2. The solemn choice, vs. 20, 21. God would, so far as could be, overrule the people's folly. He gives His own sanction, the sanction of the lot (see Light from the East) to the choice. Note also that it was from the smallest tribe, and an obscure family, that the king was chosen. God's way of choosing His instruments is often surprisingly unlike man's.

3. Big Saul, shy and terrified, hidden among the stuff. One's heart warms to so modest a man. If Saul had been as strong and great at every point and always, as he was now in his modesty, it had been well for him and for his people.

4. The joyous shouting of "God save the king! Let the king live!" It has its glad side, for it is hopeful of a nation, when it