

## HIS BRILLIANT SON,

the fourth great name in that patriarchal succession which prepared the way for Israel. His life is the most romantic in the Bible : but again be it said that the deepest interest of that life is not the romance, but the discipline through which it passed, and by which it was made strong as well as beautiful.

With a charm which is all his own, Joseph has all his father's resource, versatility, and splendid faith in the future and the unseen. He proves himself, when the time comes, to be a man of affairs. But he is also a dreamer, and it is in this capacity that he is first offered to us, as one who believes in his destiny, and who is not afraid to cherish and express

## THE BOLDEST HOPES.

In his self-confidence he reminds us of his father ; and he will need, like him, to tread a way of sorrow. His boldness provokes the jealousy and malice of his brethren, in whose conversation we see something of the unscrupulousness of their father, and they cruelly scheme to compass his destruction. But the Power that watches over him has a great work for him yet to do, and will not let him die. He is saved but taken away from the promised land to serve in Egypt

It is all very sad, but not half so sad as it looks, for it is God's way of training him to fill the post of governor, and to school his soul. He learns in Egypt what he never could have learned as his father's pet in Canaan ; and notice that, he, like Jacob, like all of us,

## LEARNED THROUGH SERVICE AND SORROW.

Sorrow, too, of the deepest, for nothing so sorely vexes a noble heart as the thought that it is held guilty of the thing it despises. Besides the sorrows of the dungeon, Joseph has the deeper sorrow of being misunderstood, yet with a moral courage which we can only call heroic, he refuses to speak the word which would have set him free.

Time passes. There is no swinging open of the prison door : yet the hopeful Joseph does not lose his faith in dreams, nor does he allow his sorrow to paralyse his willingness to help any who appeal to him. He

helps the butler and the baker as he can, and learns after his services, that his own help must come not from man, but from God ; for "the butler did not remember Joseph, but forgot him." Nor was his hope in vain ; for in His own strange way, God brought him into prominence by a prophetic dream which disturbed Pharaoh, and which his own magicians could not read. They could not, but Joseph could ; and Pharaoh saw in his power the special inspiration of the Divine Spirit ; and, just as the native kings of Canaan had been eager to form a friendship with Abraham and Isaac, because the hand of God was clearly resting upon their lives, so did Pharaoh, in the best interests of his kingdom, exalt Joseph to the highest place in the land, next his own. Thus

## JOSEPH REACHES THE HEIGHTS

when he is fit to stand upon them without feeling proud or giddy, and after sorrow and waiting, the boldest dreams of his youth are fulfilled.

But the brothers need discipline as well as Joseph, even more than he, and their turn is coming. The famine drives them to Egypt, and there they have to face the brother whom so long ago they wronged, although they know him not. Joseph's searching questions perplex them. The past rushes in upon them and smites

## THEIR SLUMBERING CONSCIENCES ;

and their confusion is confounded when they discover each man his money in his sack's mouth. They spend their days now in uneasiness. The famine grows sorer. They find themselves compelled to go back and face that strange man again, who so mysteriously woke their conscience ; and he has told them that he will not listen to them again unless they bring their younger brother.

Forth then they go again, with the blessing of the heartbroken Jacob upon them, and Joseph receives them very graciously, hardly able to control the feeling that rises in his heart, as he hears them talk, and asks if all is well with their father. But the joy