

rescue the Hebrews from the twenty years' cruel oppression of Jabin, the Canaanite, he educated two women, Deborah, a judge and a prophetess, and Jael, the wife of Heber, and inspired them with a heroism that seems to have been wanting in the men of that age, and led the first to the battle field, and the last to drive a nail through the head of Sisera, and thus deliver the land from bondage. How eminently fitted by nature and by discipline for the trying work assigned them were Elijah and Elisha ! And by what a series of hardships, privations, and dangers, was David, the shepherd boy, gradually conducted to the throne, and even made a type of the Saviour ! How different the education of his son Solomon ! but as wisely adapted to the peaceful yet magnificent scenes through which he was to pass.

An unrighteous decree for the destruction of the Jews scattered through the one hundred and twenty-seven provinces of Persia and Medea, had been surreptitiously obtained from Ahasuerus, and their fate seemed inevitable. But God had long ago provided for their rescue, and prepared the appropriate instruments. Mordecai and Esther were educated and sent into the palace of the king for this very purpose ; the first, a stern old man, inflexible in his religious character ; and the last an amiable woman, of great personal beauty, who had obtained a strong influence over the king, and yet had not lost her attachment to her own people, nor become insensible to the moral obligations that came upon her from her exalted position. She therefore resolutely put her life in jeopardy, and thus saved herself and her people, and brought the avenging sword upon their persecutors.

When the captivity of the Jews in Babylon had continued long enough to answer the divine purposes, Cyrus was placed on the throne of Persia and Medea, with a heart prepared to