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THE HOME OF DAVID IN GIBBEAH.

BY REV. G. H. ATKINSON.

David the young shepherd had become the champion of the army of Israel. He had slain the Philistine giant, Goliath of Gath, while they stood trembling around the tent of Saul their king. His return with them from pursuing and slaying the enemy down the valley of Elah over the plains into their walled cities, Gath and Ekron, was welcomed by the women, coming out of all the cities of Israel, with song and dance, and answering one another, as they played: "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." Those responses rising, and swelling on every side, from the glad hearts of wives and mothers and daughters, whose homes had thus been freed from their idolatrous oppressors, aroused the king's wrath. The saying displeased him; and he said, "They have ascribed unto David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed but thousands; and what can he have more but the kingdom?"

Yet his pledge with oath had been given to all Israel, "the man who killeth him the king will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel." That public oath must be kept. The roddy youth from the Bethlehem hills, Jesse's eighth and youngest, had won the prize. Saul's family welcomed the hero of the battle. Jonathan, a true warrior, who had a dozen years before driven a Philistine garrison from their strong hold on the heights of Gibeah, and put their whole army to flight, and led his forces in the rout as far as Beth-Aven, admired the courage of David, and with a soldier's honor admitted his prowess. His heart warmed towards him. "Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul."

The king took him to his own house, but he eyed him from that day forward and feared him because the Lord was with him, and in a heat of passion hurled his javelin at him, saying, "I will smite him to the wall." He made him captain of a thousand men that he might be slain in battle, and then offered his eldest daughter for his valor, but she was given to another. Again and again the young hero led Israel and Judah out to victory and won their love also.

Michal, Saul's

daughter, like her elder brother, felt an admiration for his heroism, which soon ripened into love. The king accepted this testimonial, as another chance to lay a snare for David's life. A hundred more Philistines slain was to be the dowry. It was speedily paid. Two hundred were brought. David becomes the king's son-in-law, through the peril of many a battle field before the king's first oath is kept. The outward show of honor must be awarded him, and a house is given him on the brow of the hill on which was the walled city Gibeah, Saul's royal abode, overlooking the rich plains eastward towards Gilgal and the Jordan Valley. Thither the young couple moved and made their home. The fig, the vine, the mulberry, the olive, the rose, the lily and violet grew luxuriantly around their dwelling. Fields of wheat and barley waved in the breeze, and far down towards the river, clusters of palms waved their green banners aloft in token of peace. It was a soldier's fit place of rest after the din and carnage of war. But the

king's hatred grew more fierce. Michal saw it in her father's eye. She read its venomous jealousy and fell purpose at a glance. She watched the signs as she folded her husband to her heart, and resolved to shield him from the first danger. Night came and her quick ear caught the crackling of the bushes as the king's guards silently took their stations around the house of David. She knew that it meant his death. Up, she whispers with startling earnestness. Flee, David, flee! "If thou save not thy life to-night, to-morrow thou shalt be slain." Bind thy long mantle to the window bar and swing out into the darkness. Escape! You know every path. The deep caverns in the cliffs are not far off. The guards are on the stairs! I'll put this terraphim, idol-trophy of your prowess, over the Philistene in the bed, and tell them you are sick. Away to Engedi! Send me a signal that you are safe!

There has caught the spirit of this drama and its closing tragedy, as described in 1st Samuel 18th

and 19th chapters, and has also wrought the previous events into the intense wifely devotion, mingled with terror, expressed in the face of Saul's daughter, and in the calmer look of David the ennobled prince of Israel.

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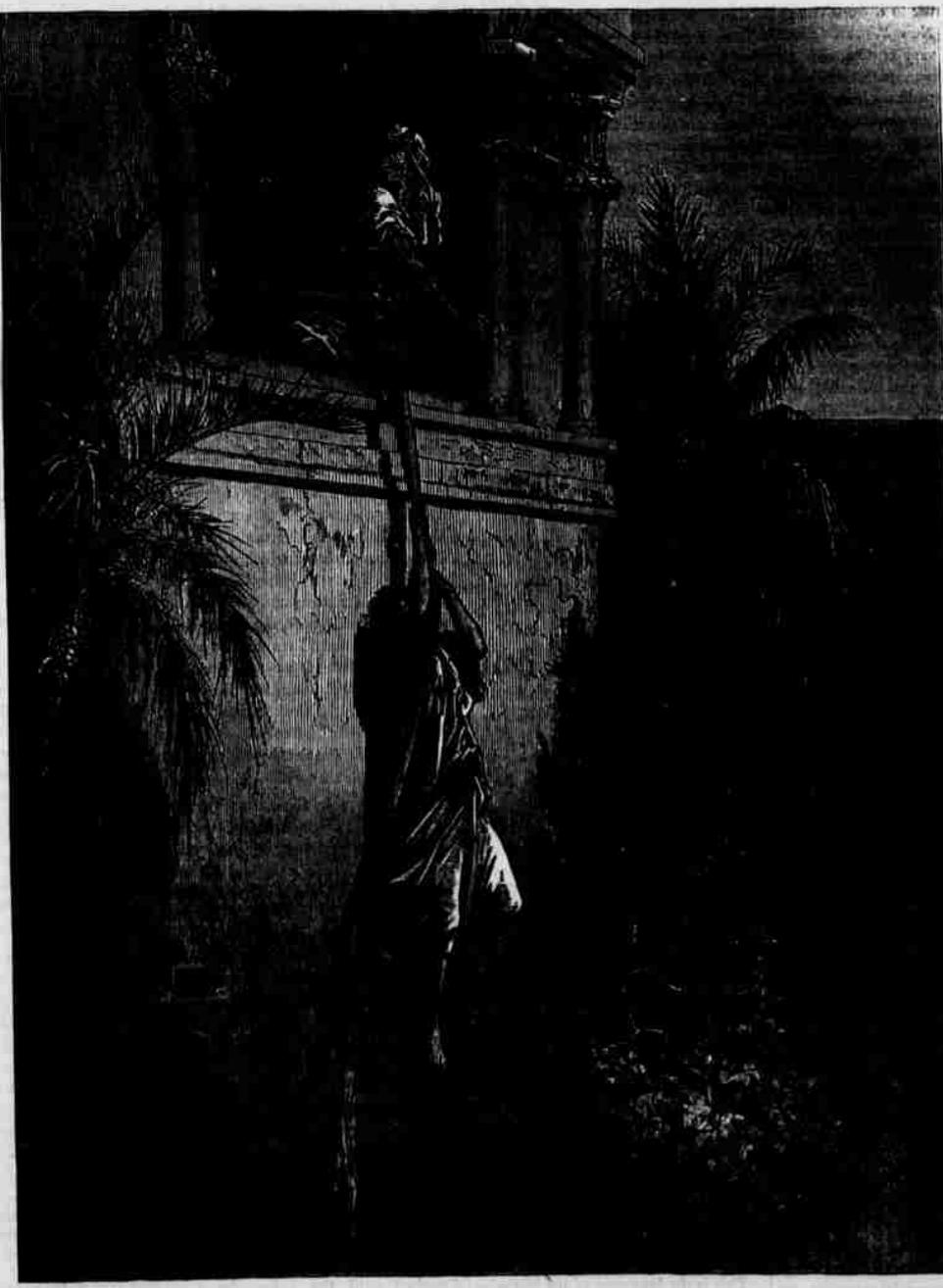
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The Eleventh Annual Fair of the Washington Co. Agricultural Society is again September 23th. The weather was unfavorable, but notwithstanding this, there was a good attendance.

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THE ESCAPE OF DAVID—BY GUSTAVE DORE.