

ting by her side, in my drunken 'bouts' I used to lick him under the table." "Willie," he shouted, "does thy dad ever kick thee now?" The child and his mother were both in tears, and also many of the congregation. The speaker went on,—"Some of you knew me when I never crossed the threshold of God's house, I spent the greater part of my Sundays at the saloon, but now I am happy to say I am a seat holder in a place of worship and a member of a Christian church, and what is better still, Mr. Lecturer," placing his hand on his heart, "I've the love of God shed abroad here in my heart. Glory be to His name! I know, my friends, that my sins are forgiven, because the Spirit of God beareth witness with my spirit that I am a child of God. Its here! my friends, its here!" said he, clapping his hands heartily over the region of his heart, "and blessed be God, no devil or infidel can take it from me." "Yes," he resumed, "many of you know me to be a better man, a better citizen and a better subject than I used to be. My wife knows me to be a better husband, my little boy knows me to be a better father than I once was. I don't say it boastfully, but the fact is, although I am not as good as I ought to be, nor as good as I want to be, yet a great change has taken place in me for the better, I feel it, my acquaintances know it; and God knows it. Now Mr. Lecturer, would you like to know how this great change was brought about? I will tell you: It was through reading the Bible." Looking steadfastly on the lecturer, he said: "The question I want to ask of you, and to which I hope you will give a straight answer, is this: If the Bible is a bad book, and you say it is, how came it to pass that this bad book made a bad man good?" He then sat down amid the hearty applause of nearly the whole audience. The logic of this plain Christian man was too tough for the slim, subtle, sceptic to masticate. Running his fingers through his hair in great confusion, and looking hastily at his watch, he said, he "had not time to go into the question," and left the platform amid the hissing and hooting of the people. He has not yet returned to "go into the question," nor to try to answer it, nor is it likely he will, from the simple fact that the question is unanswerable.

Such Christians as the one referred to, who know they have undergone a great change for the better, and who can call heaven and earth to witness the consistency of their conduct, are doing more to overthrow infidelity than all the dry philosophical arguments ever published. *Exchange.*

## INTERNATIONAL S. S. LESSON.

Sunday, July 24.

(Specially prepared for the "Christian Helper" by Mrs. J. C. Yule.)

Moses and Aaron. Ex. iv. 27-31; v. 1-4. B. C., 1491.

GOLDEN TEXT, Psalms ciii. 26.—He sent Moses His servant and Aaron whom He had chosen.

### INTRODUCTION AND CONNECTION.

Intermediate between this lesson and our last, are Moses' objections to attempting the deliverance of Israel, the Lord's replies, the bestowment of certain signs, with the promise that Aaron should be associated with him in the work, Moses' departure with his family from Midian, the meeting with the Lord by the way, the judgment which was well-nigh being executed upon one of the sons of Moses—(see Gen. xvii. 14)—and which was only averted by the prompt obedience of the mother.

### LESSON NOTES.

(27.) *And the Lord said* (perhaps had already said—see v. 14) *to Aaron—* Aaron was Moses' brother, three years his senior. Moses was eighty years old at this time, and his brother eighty-three (Ex. vii. 7)

What would now be very aged was then but little past middle life—a ripe maturity needful for the responsible cares and duties to which they were called—*go into the wilderness* to meet Moses. The wilderness was not then, probably, the dreary, solitary region it is now. Probably the oases were more frequent, and the people less hostile—*And he went and met him in the mount of God*—in the mountain or region in which God had appeared to Moses. This, when taken in connection with v. 14, would seem to imply that Aaron was already on his way when the Lord appeared to Moses, and that he arrived before Moses quitted the mount—possibly very soon after the vision. *Known* a common form of salutation. These brothers had been separated for forty years; therefore, their meeting—and that, too, by God's appointment—must have been peculiarly joyful to both.

(28.) *And Moses told Auro, &c.* All this conversation with its many inquiries on the part of each, its anxieties, its hopes, its misgivings, its reviewings of God's promises to the patriarchs, and their mutual exhortations to trust and be confident, are omitted here. It is as though the narrator, urged on by his mighty theme, felt that he had weightier matters to deal with than those minor ones of which an uninspired writer would have made so much.

(29.) *And Moses and Aaron went* For the few particulars of this journey that are recorded, see v. 20-27—the one incident alone which bears upon the history in its religious aspects being given, and that with so much brevity as to be barely intelligible. *The elders*—the aged and influential men, heads of families, and tribes. The Israelites had kept themselves a distinct and separate people, hence the gathering together of their chief men was a very easy matter.

(30.) *And Aaron spake, &c.* Aaron was (v. 14-16) thenceforth to be Moses' spokesman. Perhaps, owing to his Egyptian education, Moses was unable to speak the Hebrew language readily; perhaps he was naturally of a slow and hesitating speech. From whatever cause it might be, he had felt his incompetency to speak to the people; and God had given him Aaron, with whose mouth, as also with Moses' mouth, He had promised to be. *And did the signs in the sight of the people.* It would seem that Aaron, under the direction of Moses, put forth the signs by which their divine authority was recognized and acknowledged by their brethren. In their dealings with the Egyptians, we find that sometimes Aaron and sometimes Moses wielded the rod by means of which the signs were given.

(31.) *And the people believed.* Their hearts, already prepared by God, yielded a ready acceptance to the message of Aaron and Moses, especially as the signs, which they were always so ready to demand, were not of a nature to be questioned or controverted. *And when they heard that the Lord had visited, &c., &c.—they bowed the head, and worshipped.* The outward signs of worship were the bowing of the head and the prostrating of the body with the forehead in the dust. These were the signs of humility and self-abasement that even heathenism recognized as proper and becoming in those who approached the gods. How much more so were they then, in men who recognized the High and Holy God who created heaven and earth, and approached Him in worship. (Ch. v. 1) *Moses and Aaron went in—*doubtless with as little delay as possible—*and told Pharaoh.* Pharaoh was not a proper name, but a title, as Caesar was in later times among the Romans. *Thus saith the Lord God of Israel—*Moses and Aaron were ambassadors, and they at once announced the name of Him who had sent them. It was an authoritative message which they bore—*let my people go.* It was no petition—no asking a favour, but it was a demand. *My people.* They were God's people, not Pharaoh's to crush and trample under foot. *That they may hold a feast* (a solemn religious festival) *unto me in the wilderness.* Such a feast as God demanded, consisting in great part of the sacrificial offering of slain beasts could not be held in Egypt without grievous offence to the Egyptians, as they were worshippers of the very animals the Israelites sacrificed. *In the wilderness—*some place of privacy and retirement outside of Egypt.

(2.) *Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice, to let Israel go?* Such were the words of a proud heathen king; they are practically the words of sinners in all ages

and in all places. They either secretly or openly everywhere deny and contemn the authority of God. *I know not the Lord.* Pharaoh told the truth here. He was an idolator, ignorant of the true God, and, as all idolators are, full of cruelty and debasing sensuality. But God was about to afford him the most convincing proof of His existence and power, and give him an opportunity to do one of the grandest and noblest services any man could be called to do, that of giving up one of his valued sources of gain and emolument at His command. Had Pharaoh done this, his name might have stood forth to all ages haloed with the richest glory; but he hardened his heart against God, and his name is now, and ever will be *intimus.* *Neither will I let Israel go,*—a positive refusal. God had already forewarned Moses that this would be Pharaoh's attitude, yet Moses seems hardly to have expected it. (See vs. 22, 23.) (3.) *The God of the Hebrews hath met with us.* This is said to meet Pharaoh's *I know not the Lord*—as much as to say, *but we know Him, for He has met with us.* We have seen Him, and talked with Him, and He has sent us to you with His express command. *Let us go, we pray thee, three days journey into the desert, and sacrifice.* There was no promise, as there was intention to return; but they were at first to ask no more, in order to test Pharaoh. His refusal to obey God in so small a matter would show what they were to expect when the command was extended to that of allowing them to leave Egypt forever. *Let He fall upon us, that is, visit us with judgment for not obeying Him in the matter of worship, by sacrifices, according to His own appointment. The offering of sacrifices was necessary to the Israelites in their established worship; they could not offer them in Egypt without drawing down upon themselves the vengeance of the Egyptians; would not the king, then, permit them to obey their God?*

(4.) This appeal, so reasonable even to a heathen who claimed for himself and his people the necessity of worshipping their gods, was only met by the insolent question—*wherefore do ye, Moses and Aaron, let (hinder) the people from their works.* As if he had said "What do you want, you two insolent fellows, you, *Moses and Aaron,* men of no consideration, no account—what do you mean by hindering these multitudes of people from their appointed tasks? *Get you unto your burdens.*" *Your burdens,* that is, not only the people's, but that of Moses and Aaron as well.

### SUGGESTED THOUGHTS.

God is very pitiful of the weaknesses and the timidity of His people, thus, tenderly mindful of Moses' need, He associated with him one whose natural gifts should graciously supplement his own, and whose sympathy and companionship should be an unailing source of strength.

When Moses undertook for Israel in mistaken zeal and blind self-confidence, the people disbelieved, and repelled him. When, armed with his high commission, he came with a mind and heart divinely prepared, he found a prepared people; his message was believed, the people worshipped God, and deliverance was soon achieved.

Pharaoh's scorn of the humble instruments God sent to him, is quite in keeping with the way men have always regarded God's instrumentalities. Men accomplish their great works by what they consider great agencies; God, Himself the greatest of beings, effects His purposes by the weakest. Thus, while men glorify their instruments, God glorifies Himself.

### A SINGLE UNTRUTH.

I shall never forget an untruth I once told, although it happened when I was a very little child. My younger sister had a farthing, with which she wished to buy a fig, but being too ill to go down to the shop herself, she engaged me to go. Accordingly, I went. As I returned with a fig nicely folded up in a small piece of paper, suddenly the thought occurred to me that I should like to take a peep at the fig. So I very carefully opened the paper, when the fig looked so very tempting, I thought I could not help tasting it a little at one end. I had scarcely eaten it, before I wanted all; and without much more thought I ate up the whole fig! Then,

when it was all gone, and I had nothing to do but to think, I began to feel very uncomfortable. I stood disgraced before myself. I thought of running away some where, I did not exactly know where, but from whence I should never come back. It was not long before I reached home. I went as quickly as I could. I told my sister that I had lost the farthing. I remember she cried sadly, but I went directly out into the garden, and tried to think of something else, but in vain. My own guilt stared me steadily in the face, and I was wretched. Although it wanted a few minutes to the dinner hour, yet it seemed very long to me. I was anxious some event might intervene between me and the lie I had told. I wandered about with a very heavy spirit. I thought I would give worlds if it had not happened.

When the dinner hour came I was seated in my high chair at my father's side, when my sister made her appearance crying and looking very much grieved. My father immediately asked what the matter was. Then my mother stated the story, the conclusion of which was that I had "lost the farthing." I can never forget the look of kind, perfectly unsuspecting confidence with which my father turned on me, and with his large blue eyes full in my face, said "Where did you lose the farthing? Perhaps we can find it again." Not for a single instant could I brave that tone and that look, but, bursting into tears, I screamed out: "Oh, I did not lose the farthing—I ate up the fig." A silence, as of the grave, ensued. No one spoke. In an instant I seemed to be separated at an immense distance from all the rest of the family. A great gulf yawned between us. A sense of loneliness and desolation came over me, the impression of which will go with me forever. I left the table, and all that afternoon, and next day, and during the week my feelings were melancholy in the extreme. But my father and mother, brothers and sister, received me back to their love and favour as time wore away, and my spirits recovered their wonted tone. The whole event left an indelible impression on my mind and heart.—*English Magazine.*

When Dr. Marshwood was a young man, and at home, he was frequently the subject of doubts and fears. On his return from India, after nearly thirty years' residence and labour there William Jay said to him—"Well, Doctor, how about doubts and fears?" "Haven't time for them," was the answer.

—A writer in the *Sunday-School Times* says that he took a friend to an Arch-street dentist, who said to him that "the young man is troubled with necrosis of both the maxillary and mandibular, accompanied with exfoliation of the alveolar," the meaning of which he informed us was simply "his disease is deadening of the bone, with scaling off of the sockets of the teeth." Going home he thought the dentist's answer nearly equalled Herbert Spencer's definition of "evolution," which is a "change from an indefinite incoherent homogeneity to a definite coherent heterogeneity through continuous differentiations and integrations." Yet this he says is excelled by Kirkman's definition of change: "Change is a perichoretical synechy of pamparallagmatic horroteroporenmatial differentiations and integrations." We agree with him in condemning such a bombastic and inflated style, especially in the pulpit, and on the platform, and in the class. Anglo-Saxon for the foundation and body—foreign derivatives to be used when they embody ideas for which there are no Anglo-Saxon words, or in moderation, and in their simplest forms for the sake of variety—is the principle which gives clearness and force, and causes what is spoken to enter the mind of the hearer or reader.