

the way he expected, as we shall see. Meanwhile he sent on two of his helpers. Which? (Read v. 22.) Why? (See 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2; 2 Cor. ix. 5.) And he remained a little longer time at Ephesus.

You remember how great had been the success of the work there. [Recapitulate special miracles—magical books burnt, &c., and read v. 20. And many difficulties too, for it was a stronghold of Satan. St. Paul in daily, hourly danger (1 Cor. xv. 30, 31) from his own countrymen (Acts xx. 19), and from the heathen. His enemies like wild beasts (1 Cor. xv. 32).] Our Lesson to-day will show us again both success and opposition.

I. THE UPROAR IN THE CITY.

What caused it? It was about "that way." What way? (See v. 9; Acts ix. 2, xxii. 4, xxiv. 14.)

(1) Who stirred it up? (Read vs. 23-27.)

Demetrius—a silversmith—one branch of the trade mentioned. What?—Diana, the Roman name of the goddess—at Ephesus she was called Artemis. If you had been in one of the ships going into the port, you would have seen a magnificent temple built for her worship. (See v. 27.) Hundreds of years before a temple stood there, which was burnt about the time when Jeremiah lived. It was rebuilt and burnt down again—this time by a foolish man who wanted his name to be always remembered. That same night Alexander the Great was born, and the soothsayers connected the two together, and said it showed that when the baby grew up he would be a great scourge. Again they rebuilt it—this time it was more beautiful than ever—built of white marble. The ladies of Ephesus gave their jewellery to help to pay for it. It stood on a piece of ground twice as large as St. Paul's Cathedral—not all roofed in, but open to the sky, with a colonnade round. Many of the pillars were given by kings, and beautifully carved. The inner temple, which contained the idol, was supported by eight green jasper pillars, and adorned by some of the finest pictures and statues in the world. When Alexander was grown up—after a great victory—he offered to pay all the expense of rebuilding if his name might be inscribed as dedicating the temple, but this was refused. When finished, it was said to be one of the seven wonders of the world. It was not only used for worship, but also as a bank for treasures, and as a museum. Even the ground around considered sacred—those who fled there protected. No wonder the Ephesians were proud of it. [Note 1.] All is gone now—the green pillars are in a Mohammedan mosque at Constantinople. Till lately it was not known where the temple stood: a few years ago the foundations were discovered and dug out. What sort of idol should you expect to see in this grand temple? See where they thought it came from (v. 35). A beautiful carved image? No; a dark, ugly, wooden figure, in shape like a mummy—as ugly as idols in India now. This is what they worshipped at Ephesus, and not there only. (See v. 27.) What had Paul said about it? (v. 26.) One month in the year, in spring, dedicated to her worship, called after her, Artemision (just as some of our months are named after heathen gods). Crowds came to Ephesus then—some to worship, many to buy and sell—great fair held—public games going on, races, &c. Of course everybody visited the temple—when they left took away little models of the shrine in silver as a remembrance of the visit. This was the work which brought Demetrius so much money. [Note 2.] But this year a great change—it was just the busy time (1 Cor. xvi. 8), but few customers. What had made the difference? Demetrius calls together a meeting of all in the same trade—artists and workmen. What does he say to them? (vs. 25-27.) Complains of "this Paul." Why? See how this enemy bore witness to the work God had done by Paul. Now their business is in danger; that is not all—if this goes on the great goddess will be despised. Demetrius is thinking of his own loss—self his idol first (as ch. xvi. 16, 19), but he hides that under show of zeal for their goddess.

(2) What was the effect of his speech? (Read vs. 28, 29.)

Just what he wanted—like a spark on straw, all in a blaze—workmen stirred up. What do they cry? The people hear the shouts—run together—soon all the city in an uproar. They seize two of Paul's companions—whom? Greeks—from Macedonia. Aristarchus mentioned afterwards (ch. xx. 4, xxvii. 2; Col. iv. 10; Philem. 24.) Gaius possibly the same as Rom. xvi. 23; 1 Cor. i. 14—but this is very doubtful. All rush together to the theatre. This was another wonderful place—not a building, but cut out of side of hill—stone seats, row above row—open to the sky—would hold 50,000 people—ruins may be seen now.

Where was Paul? Perhaps hidden—thought his last hour had come (2 Cor. i. 8). Was he afraid? No ready to die for his Master. (Read vs. 30, 31.) Wanted to go in among the crowd. Who prevented him? Probably he would have been torn in pieces. Some nearly lost their lives in saving him (Rom. xvi. 4). Be-

sides this, a message sent to him. What? By whom? These some of richest men, who managed the public games. [Note 3.] Why did they care for Paul? Perhaps partly because they knew what would happen if the mob saw him then, and he a Roman; but no doubt Paul had gained their respect by quiet, orderly life. So God provided for His servant's safety (as 1 Kings xviii. 13; Esther iv. 14). See how St. Luke describes the riot and confusion. (Read v. 32.) Did no one try to quiet them? Yes—one man put forward. By whom? Who? (Read vs. 33, 34.) Perhaps he was the coppersmith mentioned (2 Tim. iv. 14.) How did he try to get their attention? What did he want to say? Probably the Jews afraid for themselves—wanted him to explain that Paul was no friend of theirs, they had nothing to do with him. Would they hear him? No—saw he was a Jew—Jews hated idols—this made them worse than ever—cried out for two hours—what?

II. HOW WAS THE TUMULT QUIETED? (Read vs. 35-41.)

The town clerk came into the theatre. Who was he? (Note 4.) A magistrate, called Recorder because he had charge of public records. He had a right to preside over any public meeting. He quiets them, then they listen to what he has to say. He tells them that everybody knows that Ephesus had the honour of being temple-keeper to the great goddess Diana, and therefore all this noise was unbecoming in them. Besides, these men whom they had taken had not been spoiling their temple or reviling their goddess. If Demetrius had a charge to bring against anyone, let him do it in the proper way. The assizes were held at proper times—then the magistrates would hear the complaint. [Note 5.] If any other matter was to be decided, it would be settled in a lawful assembly. This day's uproar might bring them into trouble, for they had no excuse to give, and Roman laws were very strict on this point. What was the effect of his words? Then he sent them all home. This was not the only time Paul protected by Roman law. When before? (Acts xviii. 12-16; and so again, Acts, xxii. 25, 20.) See what he says in Rom. xiii. 1, 3.) (How thankful we should be to live in a Christian land, protected by wise laws!)

But Paul's work in Ephesus now done. He has one more farewell meeting, to comfort the disciples, and then takes leave of them and starts for Macedonia (xx. 1).

See how mighty the enemies who fight against the spread of Christ's kingdom (Eph. vi. 12). So it is now wherever the Gospel is preached, as Jesus said (Matt. x. 35, 36). [Illust.—Hostility of slave-traders in East Africa, &c.] And only a few feeble men to oppose them. St. Paul at this time weak in body (2 Cor. iv. 16) burdened in spirit (2 Cor. ii. 4, vi. 4-10), his life in hourly danger (1 Cor. iv. 9). And yet the work goes on—nothing can stop it. Why? Because Christ's work—the power His (Zech. iv. 6, 7; Matt. xvi. 18; 2 Cor. iv. 7; Matt. xxviii. 20).

And in the end every enemy shall be subdued (Phil. ii. 10, 11; Rev. xi. 15).

These poor Ephesians thought it a great honour to be called even "temple-sweeper" to their senseless idol. They boasted that Asia and the world worshipped her. Now that temple is gone. By-and-by all idols shall be gone (Is. ii. 18). But the weakest believer in Jesus, who by His grace overcomes sin, shall have his place in a far more glorious temple which shall never pass away. Where? (Rev. iii. 12.)

Dear children! are you fighting against sin, day by day, in Jesus' strength? If so, remember He is with you, and He will keep you (John x. 27, 28).

NOTES.

1. A true estimate of the greatness of the temple, and of the "magnificence" that attracted travellers from all parts of the world, depends, however, on something more than its architectural proportions. It was to the life of Ephesus what the great cathedrals of Europe were to their respective cities in the palmiest days of mediæval Christendom. The revenues of the temple were large, probably enormous. Its treasury became a great "bank of deposit," in which vast sums of money were accumulated, of which the temple authorities had the usufruct. Many of the sums left for safety lapsed in course of time, as unclaimed stock lapses now. Fines and confiscations, gifts and bequests from devout worshippers, were constantly flowing in. . . . Partly through the expenditure of the revenues thus received, partly through special gifts, the temple became, like the cathedrals to which I have compared it, a great museum of art. There were to be seen the masterpieces of painters and sculptors—of Phydias and Polyctetus, of Calliphron and Apelles. For one picture, by the last-named artist, representing Alexander the Great grasping a thunderbolt, no less than twenty talents of gold had been paid, representing in modern valuation £38,650 sterling. . . . Many of these art treasures were carried off to adorn the

"golden house" which Nero erected as the monument of his own magnificence at Rome. (Plumptre's *St. Paul in Asia*, pp. 99, 100, 123.)

2. Originally, certain days only of the month had been devoted to the service of the goddess, but eventually a decree was passed that the entire month should be kept sacred. . . . This decree was found by Chandler, on a slab of white marble, near the aqueduct, having probably been removed from the temple with the other materials for the construction of the new work. The decree is given at length in Lewin's *Life, &c., of St. Paul*, vol. i. p. 405.

The silver shrines of Diana were small models of the temple containing the image of the goddess. These were eagerly purchased—by some as amulets to protect the wearer from malignant influences, and by others to carry home for the gratification of their families as an exquisitely wrought representation of one of the wonders of the world. Medallions were also struck, exhibiting the temple and image of the goddess, some of which may still be found in the cabinets of the curious. (*Ibid.*, p. 408.)

Similar models are constantly sold at Loretto, representing the Virgin Mary's house, said to have been carried there from Nazareth by angels.

3. "Chief of Asia"—in Greek, Asiarchs. These were men annually chosen to preside over the games. They received no emolument for their office, which required the outlay of large sums of money, and therefore could only be filled by persons of wealth. They held for the time a kind of sacerdotal position.

4. Town clerk—in Greek, Grammateus. Without being able to determine his exact duties, or decide whether another term, such as "Chancellor" or "Recorder" would better describe them to us, we may assert, from parallel case of Athens, and from the Ephesian records themselves, that he was a magistrate of great authority, in a high and very public position. His name often appears on the coins of Ephesus. (Conybeare and Howson, chap. xvi.)

5. The word "worshipper," used by the town clerk, is in Greek, Neokoros, which in its original significance denotes a temple-sweeper. But, in process of time, the officer thus denoted became the custodian or warden of the temple, and the office rose to such importance that persons of the highest quality aspired to it. Whole cities laid claim to the appellation; and as we see from the text, as well as from coins (a representation of one of these is given), the chief pride of the Ephesian people was to regard themselves as the Neokoro of their goddess Diana. (Kitto's *Bible Illustrations*.)

Pliny tells of a wooden image of Diana at Ephesus, so old that it had outlived seven restorations of the temple, and was therefore fabled to have dropped from heaven, no unusual belief among the ancient heathen. (Alexander's *Commentary, in loco*.)

"The law is open"—see margin, "the court days are kept." The verb may explain either the fact that there were such days, or the assizes were now being held.

CATECHISM LESSON.

THE CREED—"The Communion of the Saints."

The Holy Catholic Church is the Communion of the Saints.

Though gathered out of every nation, though separated by death, the saints which form the Church are all in one communion or fellowship: Eph. ii. 19-22. There is fellowship with God the Father: 1 John i. 3; with God the Son: 1 Cor. i. 9; with God the Holy Ghost: 2 Cor. xiii. 14. There is fellowship with one another: 1 John i. 7. Even with those who are departed out of this life, and are forever with the Lord: Heb. xii. 22, 23. "There is one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling:" Eph. iv. 4-6. All are engrafted into the same stock: John xv. 4, 5. All receive life from the same source: 1 John v. 11; Col. ii. 6, 7. All hold the same head from which "the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God:" Col. ii. 19.

Children's Corner.

MAX:

A STORY OF THE OBERSTEIN FOREST.

CHAPTER III.

"IF SINNERS ENTICE THEE, CONSENT THOU NOT."

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