

gilding about. Eli, that old servant of God, is fast asleep. His sons, where are they? Quietly at rest, or plotting mischief? When will the Lord come and call forth some faithful servant to do his will? None can say. It is night-time in Israel as well as in Shiloh. In spiritual things there is slumbering. But where is he whom Hannah gave to the Lord for the Lord's work? He is but a youth, and to-night Samuel sleeps, feeling not the burden of any spiritual responsibility. Every body and every thing asleep save the beautiful lamp in the abiding-place of the Lord. Its light falls undisturbed in that hushed, sacred spot. How quiet it is! There is no sound save as the wind murmurs under the slivery stars.

Suddenly, there is a voice, most mysterious, solemn, impressive! It sounds just above the resting-place of Samuel. It is impressed confusedly upon him that somebody is calling. He opens his eyes. He raises himself on his elbow. He looks around. He sees no one. He hears nothing but his beating heart. He concludes, "It must be Eli. He is old. He may need my help."

He springs from his couch. He runs to Eli. He stands by Eli's bed. He finds, though, it is not the old priest who called. He returns wondering at the occasion of that call. Was it a dream? But it comes again, the same voice. Still it is not Eli. And once more! So strange, that voice echoing in the night, and yet not Eli's. But the old priest interprets it, and the solemn thought makes an awe in his face. It is the Lord calling!

Told what to do, Samuel lies down again. Can he sleep? To think that somewhere near him is God, the Jehovah of his fathers! How awful the thought! Would he call again? If he called, what would he want? To think that God, the great Jehovah, who had divided the wide sea, who had led his people like a flock through the wild desert, should want any thing of Samuel—only a youth waiting on Eli! He cannot sleep. When would it be morning? Has the lamp of God gone out? That would prophesy morning. Is any one stirring with whom Samuel could talk? Suddenly, that deep, solemn, echoing voice calls again! It is not just "Samuel." It is "Samuel! Samuel!" It is urgent. God wants him. And Samuel is ready. His voice is choked, it almost falls him, but he answers, "Speak, for thy servant heareth!"

And then comes sentence after sentence of a solemn announcement. It may have been uttered in the dark, but it was burnt into Samuel's memory as if pressed by a heated iron.

Then Samuel lay down again upon his couch. He kept it till morning. He could not have slept. His heart would beat wildly, while over and over again that voice kept sounding in his memory. He was glad when the early light made a grayness in his room, when familiar steps sounded without, when some sweet, clear note of a bird said, "It is time to arise, Samuel, and go to thy work in the house of the Lord."

Primary and Intermediate.

BY MARTHA VAN METER.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Hearing God's Call.*

Put upon the board a picture of a church. Print above it "God's House." Make or pin up picture of the Jewish tabernacle. Print above this also "God's house." Show pictures of some of the furniture of the tabernacle, as the candlestick, ark, etc.

Do we have these things in the Church now? No, but we have the holy Bible, which tells us about Jesus. Tell that the church now is like the tabernacle in this: that children are welcome there, and may work there. Our lesson is about a child who had important work to do in God's house, and to whom God spoke. His name was Samuel. [Print.]

The Child Believer. Tell what the word *Samuel* means, "Asked of God," or, "Heard of God." Tell the story of Hannah's love and prayer, and how she trained her little boy for God's service, bringing him, as soon as he was old enough, to be with Eli, the high-priest, to help in the care of the tabernacle. Teach that, though but a child, Samuel could obey; he could be reverent, careful, truthful, and earnest in his work. This was because he believed in God. A child believer now will be all this.

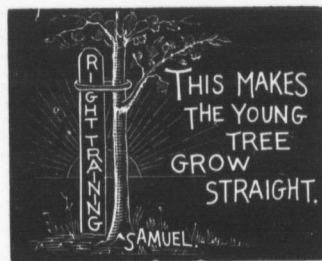
God's Call. God saw his little servant, and knew just what kind of a servant he was. He saw how fully he obeyed Eli, how carefully he did all the work that was given him to do, and he knew that such a boy could be trusted. One night God himself spoke to little Samuel. Tell that he was twelve years old at this time, and did not yet know the Lord's voice. He thought it was Eli, and rose quickly to see what the old priest wanted. Tell the story graphically, and teach that the quick obedience to Eli's supposed call showed that Samuel would answer the Lord's call just as readily when he knew it to be from the Lord.

Work for the Lord. When God called Samuel it was to tell him to do something. [Tell the work that he gave him to do.] It was hard work, but Samuel did not shrink, and God honored his obedience. When God calls a child now he always gives him work to do. Some children do not obey, and so God cannot honor them as he did Samuel.

God Calling Now. Print on the board, "How does he call?" Make list of ways on the board, By his word; by his Holy Spirit; by kind teachers and friends; by holy voices in the heart. Who will listen?

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



The blackboard represents one out of many illustrations that might be made from this beautiful lesson. This design shows the benefit of good influences on the life of a young person, and illustrates it with a picture of a young tree supported and upheld by a strong post, to which it is bound by the cords of love. The sun rising is symbolic of the morning of life, when the need of right influences is the greatest. If there is room on the