

are reported to be," said Wallace, "our chances of victory are small."

"I fear ye're richt," said Black. "It becomes Ignorance to haud its tongue in the presence o' Knowledge, nae doot—an' I confess to bein' as ignorant as a bairn o' the art o' war; but common sense seems to say that haverin' about theology on the eve o' a fecht is no sae wise-like as disposin' yer men to advantage. The very craws might be ashamed o' sic a noise!"

Even while he spoke a cry was raised that the enemy was in sight; and the confusion that prevailed before became redoubled as the necessity for instant action arose. In the midst of it, however, a few among the more sedate and cool-headed leaders did their best to reduce the little army to something like order, and put it in battle array. There was no lack of personal courage. Men who had, for the sake of righteousness, suffered the loss of all things, and had carried their lives in their hands for so many years, were not likely to present a timid front in the hour of battle. And leaders such as John Nisbet of Hardhill, one of the most interesting of sufferers in the twenty-eight years' persecution; Clelland, who had fought with distinguished courage at Drumlog; and John Balfour of Burley—such men were able to have led a band of even half-disciplined men to victory if united under a capable general. But such was not to be. The laws of God, whether related to physics or morals, are inexorable. A divided army cannot conquer. They had assembled to fight; instead of fighting they disputed, and that so fiercely that two opposing parties were formed in the camp, and their councils of war became arenas of strife. The drilling of men had been neglected, officers were not appointed, stores of ammunition and other supplies were not provided, and no plan of battle was concerted. All this, with incapacity at the helm, resulted in overwhelming disaster and the sacrifice of a body of brave, devoted men. It afterwards intensified persecution, and postponed constitutional liberty for many years.

In this state of disorganization the Covenanters were found by the royal troops. The latter were allowed quietly to plant their guns and make arrangements for the attack.

But they were not suffered to cross Bothwell Bridge with impunity. Some of the bolder spirits, leaving the disputants to fight with tongue and eye, drew their swords and advanced to confront the foe.

"It's every man for himself here," remarked Andrew Black indignantly, wiping his mouth with his cuff, as he arose from the meal which he was well aware might be his last. "The Lord has mercy on the puir Covenanters, for they're in sair straits this day. Come awa', Will Wallace—lead us on to battle."

Our hero, who was busily forming up his men, needed no such exhortation. Seeing that there was no one in authority to direct his movements, he resolved to act "for his own hand." He gave the word to march, and set off at a quick step for the river, where the fight had already begun. Soon he and his small band were among those who held the bridge. Here they found Hackston, Hall, Turnbull, and the lion-like John Nisbet, each with a small band of devoted followers sternly and steadily defending what they knew to be the key to their position. Distributing his men in such a way among the coppices on the river's bank that they could assail the foe to the greatest advantage without unnecessarily exposing themselves, Wallace commenced a steady fusillade on the King's footguards, who were attempting to storm the bridge. The Covenanters had only one cannon and about 300 men with which to meet the assault; but the gun was effectively handled, and the men were staunch.

On the central arch of the old bridge—which was long and narrow—there stood a gate. This had been closed and barricaded with beams and trees, and the parapets on the farther side had been thrown down to prevent the enemy finding shelter behind them. These arrangements aided the defenders greatly, so that for three hours the gallant 300 held the position in spite of all that superior discipline and numerous guns could do. At last, however, the ammunition of the defenders began to fail.

"Where did ye tether my horse?" asked Will Wallace, addressing Peter, who acted the part of aide-de-camp and servant to his commander.

"Ayont the hoose there," replied Peter, who was crouching behind a tree-stump.

"Jump on its back, lad, and ride to the rear at full speed. Tell them we're running short of powder and ball. We want more men, too, at once. Haste ye!"

"Ay, an' tell them frae me, that if we lose the brig we lose the day," growled Andrew Black, who, begrimed with powder, was busily loading and firing his musket from behind a thick bush, which, though an admirable

screen from vision, was a very poor protection from bullets, as the passage of several leaden messengers had already proved. But our farmer was too much engrossed with present duty to notice trifles!

Without a word, except his usual "Ay," Ramblin' Peter jumped up and ran to where his commander's steed was picketed. In doing so he had to pass an open space, and a ball striking his cap sent it spinning into the air; but Peter, like Black, was not easily affected by trifles. Next moment he was on the back of Will's horse—a great, long-legged chestnut—and flying towards the main body of Covenanters in rear.

The bullets were whistling thickly past him. One of these, grazing some tender part of his steed's body, acted as a powerful spur, so that the alarmed creature flew over the ground at racing speed, much to the rider's satisfaction. When they reached the lines, however, and he attempted to pull up, Peter found that the great tough-mouthed animal had taken the bit in his teeth and bolted. No effort that his puny arm could make availed to check it. Through the ranks of the Covenanters he sped wildly, and in a short time was many miles from the battle-field. How long he might have continued his involuntary retreat is uncertain, but the branch of a tree brought it to a close by sweeping him off his saddle. Quarter of an hour later an old woman found him lying on the ground insensible, and with much difficulty succeeded in dragging him to her cottage.

From that time forward they galloped about the moor, slaying remorselessly all whom they came across.

The gentle-spirited Monmouth, seeing that the victory was gained, gave orders to cease the carnage; but Claverhouse paid no attention to this. He was like the man-eating tigers,—having once tasted blood he could not be controlled, though Monmouth galloped about the field doing his best to check the savage soldiery.

Speaking to Monmouth about his conduct Charles said, "If I had been present there should have been no trouble about prisoners." To which Monmouth replied, "If that was your wish, you should not have sent me, but a butcher!"

In the general flight Black, owing to his lame leg, stumbled over a bank, pitched on his head, and lay stunned. Quentin Dick, stooping to succour him, was knocked down from behind, and both were captured. Fortunately Monmouth chanced to be near them at the time and prevented being slaughtered on the spot, like so many of their countrymen, of whom it is estimated that upwards of four hundred men were slain in pursuit that succeeded the fight—many of them being men of the neighbourhood, who had not been present on the actual field of battle at all. Among others Wallace's uncle, David Spence was killed. Twelve hundred, it is said, laid down their arms and surrendered at discretion.

(To be continued.)



JESUS AND NICODEMUS.—John 3. 1-16.

Meanwhile the tide of war had gone against the Covenanters. Whatever may be said of Hamilton, unquestionably he did not manage the fight well. No ammunition or reinforcements were sent to the front. The stout defenders of the bridge were forced to give way in such an unequal conflict. Yet they retired fighting for every inch of the ground. Indeed, instead of being reinforced they were ordered to retire; and at last, when all hope was gone, they reluctantly obeyed.

"Noo this bates a'!" exclaimed Black in a tone of ineffable disgust, as he ran to the end of the bridge, clubbed his musket, and laid about him with the energy of despair. Will Wallace was at his side in a moment; so was Quentin Dick. They found Balfour and Hackston already there; and for a few moments these men even turned the tide of battle, for they made an irresistible dash across the bridge, and absolutely drove the assailants from their guns, but, being unsupported, were compelled to retire. If each had been a Hercules, the gallant five would have had to succumb before such overwhelming odds. A few minutes more and the Covenanters were driven back. The King's troops poured over the bridge and began to form on the other side.

Then it was that Graham, of Claverhouse, seeing his opportunity, led his dragoons across the bridge and charged the main body of the Covenanters. Undisciplined troops could not withstand the shock of such a charge. They quickly broke and fled; and now the battle was changed to a regular rout.

"Kill! kill!" cried Claverhouse; "no quarter!"

His men needed no such encouragement.

cles"—These were intended to be, as Nicodemus regarded them, evidences of the divine mission of Jesus.

3. "Jesus answered"—Answered Nicodemus's thought. "Born again"—An entirely new life must begin in him. "The kingdom of God"—Nicodemus thought he was a citizen of that kingdom by right of birth. Jesus tells him that, to be God's heir, he must have a higher birthright than any that Abraham could give.

5. "Verily, verily"—A term used by our Lord for emphasis. "Born of water and of the Spirit"—A man must begin a new life in the sight of others by publicly acknowledging and confessing his sin, and a new life in the sight of God by having the Spirit of God work a direct change in his character.

7. "Marvel not"—Wonder not.

8. "Canst not tell whence"—Just where it comes from and just how far its forces will extend the most advanced science cannot tell. "So is every one"—Such is the case of every one. We feel the Spirit of God as we feel and hear the wind, but it is incomprehensible to us.

10. "Art thou a master"—A teacher, which is the old sense of the word, retained by us in "schoolmaster" and "master of arts."

11. "We . . . we . . . we"—The ambassadors of God.

12. "Earthly things . . . heavenly things"—The conversion of a man on earth is hard to comprehend, but what of eternal spiritual activity?

13. "The Son of man"—A term used in the Old Testament which Jesus was fond of applying to himself. "Heaven"—Spiritual conditions.

14. "Must"—The atoning sacrifice of Christ was a necessity. "He lifted up"—Nicodemus may not have understood that this was a prophecy of the death of Christ.

15. "Whosoever"—Nicodemus would have said, "What Jew soever."

16. "Everlasting life."—The life of the soul.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Jesus and Nicodemus.—John 3. 1-16.
- Tu. The brazen serpent.—Num. 21. 4-9.
- W. Natural and spiritual.—Rom. 8. 1-11.
- Th. A new creature.—2 Cor. 5. 14-21.
- F. A new heart.—Ezek. 36. 22-27.
- S. Life by faith.—John 6. 28-40.
- Su. Mighty love.—Rom. 8. 31-39.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Where in this lesson are we taught—

1. The meaning of miracles?
2. The need of being born again?
3. The blessedness of being born again?

THE LESSON CATECHISM.

1. What did Jesus say to Nicodemus? "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." 2. How did he say a man must be born again? "Of water and of the Spirit." 3. Like what did Jesus say is the working of the Spirit? "Like the wind, which bloweth where it listeth." 4. To what did Jesus compare his own death for mankind? "To Moses lifting up the serpent in the wilderness." 5. What is the Golden Text? "God so loved," etc.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Regeneration.

CATECHISM QUESTIONS.

What was the Spirit's work of inspiration? He moved and guided the writers of the Bible, so that they truly recorded the truth of God.

What was the Spirit's work as to the person of Jesus? He brought into being the human nature of our Lord, so that he was born without sin; and gave to him as the Christ—or the Anointed—wisdom and grace without measure for his redeeming work.

WHAT A BOY CAN DO.

In a small village an elderly lady, who is a diligent and faithful worker in the church, distributes tracts on Sunday afternoon, and frequently takes her little grandson with her. In going her rounds she sometimes meets several young men on the sidewalks smoking their cigars or pipes, to whom she always gave tracts. One Sunday the little boy gave one of them, with the following advice: "Don't throw it away, nor light your pipe with it, but read it." Some time after a young man arose in the fellowship meeting, and said he was converted by reading a tract given to him on the street by an elderly lady, or rather by a little boy she had with her. By small means God sometimes accomplishes great results. "In the morning sow thy seed, in the evening withhold not thy hand, for thou knowest not whether shall prosper this or that, or both may be alike prosperous; trying all means, if by any we may save some."

LESSON NOTES.

THIRD QUARTER.

LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF OUR LORD.

A.D. 28.] LESSON XI. [Sept. 9.

JESUS AND NICODEMUS.

John 3. 1-16. Memory verses, 1-3.

GOLDEN TEXT.

God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.—John 3. 16.

OUTLINE.

1. The Need of the New Birth, 1. 1-3.
2. The Mystery of the New Birth, v. 4-12.
3. The Author of the New Birth, v. 13-16.

TIME.—A.D. 27 or 28.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

RULERS.—Herod in Galilee; Pilate in Judaea.

CONNECTING LINKS.—This conversation was held soon after the last lesson, while Jesus was still in Jerusalem.

EXPLANATIONS.

1. "A ruler"—A member of the Sanhedrin, a body which consisted of priests, rabbis, and elders.
2. "By night"—Perhaps for fear of the Jews; perhaps to avoid interruption. "Rabbi"—A term of respectful courtesy. "Mira-