

NABOTH'S VINEYARD. 1 Kings 21: 4-16.

I. GOLDEN TEXT: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house." Ex. 20: 17.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER: God's good gifts.

III. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR TO-DAY'S LESSON: A contented heart.

IV. REVIEW:

1. How far did Elijah run before Ahab's chariot?

2. What was the wicked Queen's name?

3. What did she want to do to Elijah?

4. What did Elijah then do?

V. SYNOPSIS: Near by the palace of the selfish Ahab, was the vineyard owned by Naboth, the Jezreelite. The sale of the vineyard was contrary to the Levitical Law. When the King found he could not obtain the vineyard, he showed his lack of self-control, in a fit of sulks. The resourceful Jezebel, however, had always some scheme ready. Thoughtless for others, selfish in the extreme, she laid the plot to murder Naboth, and to seize upon the wanted property. The plan was as successful as she had hoped it would be. She told the king, "And it came to pass when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab arose up to go down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite to take possession of it."

VI. SUGGESTIVE STEPS.

It would be impossible to teach the Golden Text in to-day's lesson, if the children do not know what covetousness means. While we of course always aim to teach a positive, rather than a negative lesson, our Golden Text is from the old dispensation, and if we use it, it must be in the form of a warning. Few of the children there are who have not experienced this sin of covetousness. Let us seek to use this parable as the Saviour used his parables, to teach that the good gift of a contented life comes from God himself.

1. Suppose we begin with a question. What does this word covetousness mean? Draw from the children, by test questions, what they know about this sin of covetousness, without any reference to Naboth. Keep the one thought in mind, and continue questioning until the children see what it is we are talking about.

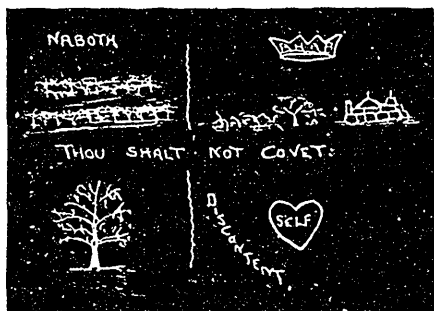
2. Tell the story of a boy you know who at the Christmas tree wanted all the best things

for himself. He was selfish, greedy, and covetous. As you tell this story, roughly draw upon the board, (for it always makes a story more interesting,) a picture of a Christmas tree, with marks to represent the things thereon.

3. Draw or pin to the board, the picture of Ahab's palace. Over it pin the crown used in the second lesson, with Ahab's name upon it. Tell how he was surrounded with good things, and how he was not happy because he did not own the little vineyard of Naboth.

4. Don't dwell too long upon the horrible detail. Tell the story of the plot that was made by Jezebel to rob Naboth of his home.

5. Hold in the hand a heart, and tell the children that this is the boy's heart, and is very like that of the king Ahab, for therein is a great giant. As you speak, from within the



heart (which is made double) draw out the piece of paper, and as you unfold it, have the children spell the giant's name, Discontent.

6. The boy at the Christmas tree was unhappy, and made others unhappy, because this giant was in his heart. The king was unhappy, and made others unhappy, because this giant was in his heart. You and I will be unhappy, and will make others unhappy, as long as we are discontented, for discontent leads to covetousness.

7. There is only one way to keep the ten commandments. We must take from God the good gift of a contented heart, which he offers us. Remember, no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. If we give our lives altogether to Jesus, and allow him to control us, he will drive out this giant, and make us contented and happy.