

An Ancient Table.

"I have a table,"  
Said Arthur to Mabel,  
Three thousand years old;  
And though it has stood  
So long, 'tis as good  
As the finest of gold!"

"O Arthur, your table,  
I fear, is a fable,  
And you are its knight.  
Of course it is round,  
But where was it found,  
Now tell—honour bright!"

"'Twas found, they say, Mabel,  
In the great tower of Babel,  
And learned folk say  
That wise old Hindoos  
'This table could use  
Before Egypt's day!"

"Why, Arthur," said Mabel,  
Do show us this table  
That's older than Egypt—as old as  
creation!"  
My table is square,  
Not round—to be fair,  
But why should I show  
What all the girls know—  
This very old table, called Multipli-  
cation?"

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE ACTS AND EPISTLES.

LESSON VIII.—FEBRUARY 21.

THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MARTYR.

Acts 6. 8-15. 7. 54-60. Memory verses, 57-60.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.—Rev. 2. 10.

OUTLINE.

1. Faithful, v. 8-15.
2. Crowned, v. 54-60.

Time.—Uncertain, but probably A.D. 37 (possibly in the month of May).

Place.—The Hall of Sanhedrin in Jerusalem; the Valley of Jehoshaphat near Jerusalem.

HOME READINGS.

- Mo. The first Christian martyr.—Acts 6. 8-15.
- Tu. The first Christian martyr.—Acts 7. 51-60.
- W. The roll of honour.—Heb. 11. 32-40.
- Th. Our example.—Heb. 12. 1-6.
- F. More than conquerors.—Rom. 8. 31-39.
- S. The eternal glory.—2 Cor. 4. 7-18.
- Su. A crown of life.—Rev. 2. 1-11.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. Faithful, v. 8-15.  
Who was Stephen, and what was his character?  
What did he do?  
How was Luke 21. 15 fulfilled in him?  
What did his enemies say against him?  
What did they do, and for what purpose?  
What four charges did they bring against him?  
How did he fulfil Matt. 10. 17?  
What did Jesus say in Matt. 24. 2, and John 4. 21?  
How was this testimony against Stephen false?  
How did Stephen's face appear?  
How did this show the truth of 2 Cor. 3. 18?
2. Crowned, v. 54-60.  
Where was Stephen at this time?  
How did the council feel toward him?  
What made them angry at him?  
Verses 51, 52.  
What did Stephen see? Where was Jesus?  
What did Stephen say to the council?  
What is said of Jesus in Heb. 1. 3?  
What was the effect of Stephen's words on the council?  
What three things did the council do to Stephen?  
Who were the witnesses? Acts 6. 13, 14.  
What young man took part in this murder?  
What did he do? See also Acts 22. 20.  
What two prayers did Stephen offer while dying?  
Whose dying words were these like? Luke 23. 34, 46.  
What is said of Stephen's end of life? Verse 60.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

- Where in this lesson are we shown—
1. How to work for Christ?
  2. How Christ's glory is shown by his disciples?
  3. How we should treat our enemies?
  4. How a Christian should meet death?

CRADLES.

BY REV. S. BAKING GOULED, M.A.

As the cradle is the first bit of furniture with which we become intimately acquainted, so was it in all probability the first piece of furniture which the ingenuity of man drove him to create.

By law, in Austria a mother may not have her baby in bed with her at night, lest she should overlie it and so suffocate it; consequently the cradle is then an article of furniture absolutely necessary in the house of married people.

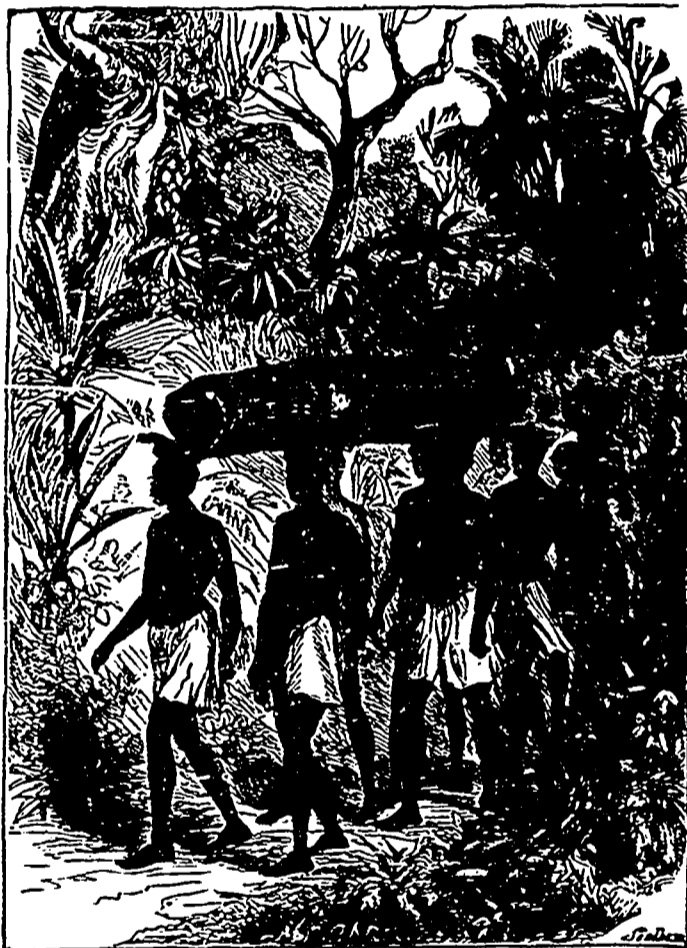
Old cradles in England were usually of oak, with a hood over them; on rockers, of course, extended beyond the bed itself, so that the mother, when spinning, by pressing her foot on a rocker, might sway the cradle.

One of the most curious developments of parental ingenuity is to be found in the Alps, where the mother is obliged to attend to the work of the little farm, and cannot be ever with the babe. There a string is carried from the cradle through a hole in the window to a little water-wheel with a crank, that is kept revolving by the stream that flows into the trough at which the cattle drink. This crank gives to the string the necessary alternate tension and relaxation to keep the cradle rocking all the while the mother is away, haymaking or driving the cows to pasture; and the poor little innocent sleeps content, in full belief

Tack, tack, in your shop?  
What are you shaping, scraping, hewing?  
Saw, saw, chip, chop!  
Carpenter, why as you work do you sigh,  
Sadly, O so sadly sigh,  
O so sadly?  
"I saw a white pigeon heavenward soar,  
And under her wing a soul she bore,  
A little white soul;  
And therefore of coffins I make one more,  
And I sigh, with a tear in eye."

MANLY BOYS.

I am by no means an old man, but I have lived long enough to be thankful that I was one of the boys of whom rude boys speak as "led by a mother's apron strings." I was reared in a large city, and in a neighbourhood where there was a large number of boys. Many of these seemed to have or to take their own way; a few of us were kept under parental guidance and control. I confess that there were times when it seemed hard because I was not permitted to go and come just as some boys were doing whom I knew. But now, when I think of the after-results in the different cases, I feel that I cannot be too grateful for the home influence which I had, and to which I yielded in youth. Of the boys whom I knew, those who lived and attained and honourably filled positions of trust were without exception those who



CARRYING LIVINGSTONE'S BODY TO THE SEA-COAST.

that it is being rocked by its mother's foot.

It is significant that the first cradle and the first coffin were identical—the cradle that rocked the infant into the life here, and the coffin in which sleep prefigured the life beyond. In the Catacombs of Rome, the early Christians put little ivory dolls and other playthings with their darlings when they committed them to their graves. Indeed, to heathen and Christian alike, death has been always looked on as a passage into a new life, the initial sleep that leads to an awakening to a spirit-life. Consequently it was not without such a thought in their minds that the men of primitive age laid their dead in what were only large cradles, identical in shape, in material, in construction, with those beds in which infancy lay and slept in its first stage of existence.

Carpenter! carpenter! what are you doing?  
Tack, tack, in your shop?  
What are you shaping, scraping, hewing?  
Saw, saw, chip, chop!  
Carpenter, why as you work do you sing,  
Merrily, merrily sing,  
Oh, so merrily?  
"I saw a white pigeon fly down this way,  
And under her wing hides a soul, they say,  
A little white soul,  
And for that I make a cradle to-day,  
And I sing till the rafters ring."  
Carpenter! carpenter! what are you doing?

were known as the "home boys," the "mother boys," the "babies;" and all because they did not think it manly to swear, and smoke or chew tobacco, and fight, and play truant from school, and be a nuisance in general. They were by no means goody-goody boys, they were not angels: they loved and had their fun; they had games, but they were loving and kind to their parents, and truthful and honest and well behaved everywhere; and although thus nicknamed, many of them were strong enough to withstand the temptations of the camp and to endure severe hardships, and brave enough to fall on the field of battle with the face to the foe. Others of them have been able to keep themselves pure, and to make for themselves a good record in the midst of the tests and struggles of life. In the meantime, as I have had opportunity to learn, the sad news comes to me of the moral wreck of one after another of those who preferred a street education, or who hated and rebelled against everything like a wholesome restraint, and who considered themselves manly.

A lady, being a member of the church where she lived, had occasion to move away, taking her church letter with her. Having never presented it to the church in the town she had moved to, she kept it in a trunk. One day her little girl was rummaging in the trunk: when she found the neglected church letter. Running to her mother she cried, "Oh mamma! I found your religion in the trunk!"

A BRAVE KANGAROO.

A very pathetic story comes from Australia, describing a kangaroo's daring for the sake of her young. The owner of a country station was sitting one evening on the balcony outside his house when he was surprised to notice a kangaroo lingering about, alternately approaching and retiring from the house, as though half in doubt and fear what to do. At last she approached the water-pails, and, taking a young one from her pouch, held it to the water to drink. While the baby was satisfying its thirst, the mother was quivering all over with excitement, for she was only a few feet from the balcony on which one of her great foes was sitting watching her. The little one, having finished drinking, it was replaced in the pouch, and the old kangaroo started off at a rapid pace. When the natural timidity of the kangaroo is taken into account, it will be recognized what astonishing bravery this affectionate mother betrayed. It is a pleasing ending to the story to be able to state that the eye-witness was so affected by the scene, that from that time forward he could never shoot a kangaroo.

A REMARKABLE COW.

Down south lives a gentleman who owns a most remarkable cow. She looks like a most ordinary black cow, but she isn't ordinary at all, for she absolutely refuses to be separated from her owner's children. If the children are at home, the cow will stay in the pasture, which is near the house, separated from it by a low house. But if the children go away, she will jump high fences to follow them until she is caught. When the cow has been put in pasture, she remains quiet; but if put in the lot near the house, when the children are away from home, it is impossible to keep her there. If allowed, she will follow the children about exactly like a dog, keeping behind them and apparently watching over them, perfectly happy if only the children are within sight or hearing.

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