

ing and impressive. He came down and burnt up the cities of the Plain; he came down and divided the Red Sea; he came down in fire and smoke and spake the thunderous words of the law at Mount Sinai. Israel looked to Jehovah as their mightiest champion, a "man of war" from of old. He fought as no human warrior could fight; for he wielded the most terrible weapons. He had all the terrible forces of nature at his disposal. His was the scorching east wind, the

wind of death; his the fire that swept over the dry grass, the very vipers fleeing before it (Matt. 3:7), his was the terror of earthquake and volcano, his the storm, the thunder and the lightning. Many a time he came to his own on the storm cloud,—“on the wings of the wind,” Psalm 18:10. In times of disappointment and cruel oppression they cried to God to come,—to come with all these demons of nature and confound their enemies and his.

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

Have the class trace on the map the three possible routes for the Israelites from Egypt to Palestine: 1. The Philistia Road (see Ex. 13:17). This was the most northerly of the three, crossing the lakes forming the bed of the modern Suez Canal, just north of Lake Ballah, at a point still called El-Dantarah, “the bridge.”

2. The Wall Road, “the way to Shur” (which means “wall”), Gen. 16:7. This starts near the modern Ismailia, and leads straight across the desert, entering Palestine by way of Beersheba and Hebron.



3. The Red Sea Road (see Ex. 13:18), the great route of modern pilgrims to Mecca, sweeping across the wilderness from the head of the Gulf of Suez to the head of the Gulf of Akaba. Moses chose the first of these routes, and led Israel northwards, as far as Etham (see Ex. 13:20), but, at God's bidding, they turned southward, Ex.

13:17, 18. For the apparent trap into which this route brought them, see The Lesson Explained, and compare with what is written there, Exodus 14:2.

THE LESSON APPLIED

We come now to the *birthday of Israel*, the great event which marked the release of the people from serfdom, and their entry into the status of an independent tribe. A national ode full of wild vigor celebrates the hour of the nation's deliverance. No wonder the religious teachers of Israel felt impelled to discover in the crossing of the Red Sea the providence of their God.

Burns says that “man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn.” Certainly Pharaoh's cruelty made the lot of the Hebrews hard and bitter. Many people since then have suffered at the hands of cruel kings. They are suffering to-day. Sometimes the people have rebelled against their own rulers and put them to death. Charles I. of England is an example, also Louis XVI. of France. A foolish king of England lost the American colonies for the British empire, because he was stubborn and oppressive. Many

years after the American colonists had won their independence, they had to ask themselves the same question that Pharaoh asked long ago: What shall be done with these serfs? It was a large question, and the United States endured four years of war in order to settle it right. But how different Lincoln's attitude toward the slave was from Pharaoh's. We have been thinking of cruel kings and rulers, but there is another side. Rulers have been animated oftentimes by the kindest feelings towards those under them, as Lincoln was. So was the British Government in its attitude toward the conquered Boers.

But we must think of other political despots. There are social despots as well, the customs and fashions of the hour that rule us with rigor. There is also the rule of King Alcohol, and he is kind to none of his subjects. Tyranny of every sort we must learn to resist. Jesus warned the scribes that they were slaves