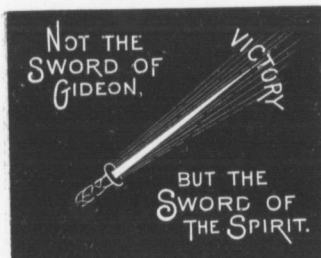


Though troubles assail.
How firm a foundation.
Fear not, God is thy shield.
Since Jesus is my friend.
He leadeth me.
The Lord will provide.
Marching to Zion.
Am I a soldier of the cross?
Battling for the Lord.
Soldiers who to Christ belong.
Soldiers of the cross, arise.
Sound the battle-cry.
Strike for victory.
Onward, Christian soldiers.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



LESSON TAUGHT. It was not the sharp-edged sword of the warrior Gideon that brought the victory, but it was the sword of the Spirit of the mighty Lord of hosts. We learn from this lesson also that one must not only have faith but obedience. Believe and obey, and the Lord will not fail.

SEVEN FAIL NOTS:

Deut. 31. 6, 8; Josh. 1. 5; Heb. 13. 5; 1 Chron. 28. 20; Psa. 27. 10; Isa. 49. 15; John 10. 27, 28.

Primary and Intermediate.

LESSON THOUGHT. How God Works.

Show as beautiful an apple as you can find. Talk about it a little. Ask what apples are good for, who makes them, whom they are made for, how they are made. Produce a wax or candy apple. Is this as good an apple as the other? Talk about how it was made, what for, etc. Tell something of the process of making the artificial apple. Then tell, letting children help as much as possible, how God works upon the real apple. Tell how his servants, earth, air, sun, rain, dew, heat, all are called to help. Tell that he works silently. Nobody sees, nobody knows how he works, but when the beautiful apples are furnished for our use we know that it is God who thought about us, and took all this trouble to please us, his children. Teach that it is God who is working all the time, even in the cold winter, in nature, and that he works for us because he loves us. God can work easily with the sun and air, the trees and flowers, because none of these has a will of its own, and refuses to do as he says. But now, we must talk about God working with people, for it is the same God who makes the apple, who makes

all the children and men and women. But people, big and little, want their own way, and so they hinder God. Let us see how he managed with the people in the story.



Print "Gideon" on board.

He worshiped God, and obeyed him. You know how the Israelites had worshiped idols, and now God had let their enemies, the Midianites, become their rulers, to punish them. Tell how the Israelites had to leave their homes and live in caves in the hills, and how at

length the Lord called Gideon to deliver them. God always calls obedient servants to help when he has work to do. Tell how quickly the people came when Gideon blew his trumpet, all ready to fight. Now God wanted to show that all power is his. He does not need any of us to help him make an apple. He does not need our help to conquer our enemies. Our part is to trust God, and do just what he tells us. Tell the story vividly, and show that God means to teach us that only those who are full of faith and zeal can really be soldiers in his army.

Talk about the enemy we have to fight. Print "Satan." Print names of some of his helpers, envy, anger, indolence, carelessness, etc. How shall they be driven away? Print, "By my Spirit." Believe God. Obey him, and he will do the rest.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

O, Gideon, the Lord is going to do great things for you in the coming battle. True, the Midianites, and Amalekites, and the children of the East have come over the hills like an immense swarm of grasshoppers. Their camels seem numberless as the sea-shore sand. You can see how far-reaching is their encampment. How swartly their faces! What strange jargon of words, what barbarous fashions! And look, out of the folds of those tents you will see the hideous faces of idols peeping! At a signal, all those belligerent idolaters will rise up, anger in their faces, sharpened weapons in their hands, bloody swiftness to their feet, and like a tornado they will rage against the Hebrews there by the well of Harod. But never you mind, Gideon. You have thirty-two thousand patriots. How flaming their devotion! Who among them all is a coward? Who has any fear? Count them up, the thirty-two thousand, and remember that one Hebrew can chase a thousand idolaters, and what an army you have with you! Is it any wonder that you step about so proudly? O, how effective will be this great arm of Hebrew flesh when you swing it, measuring thirty-two thousand man-power, and bring it down on the invaders! But hark! What is God telling thee? Too many men? Israel may boast of the strength of its own hand? Send some away?

Yes, send away—God is saying to Gideon—any one whose heart may shrink within him, "whosoever is fearful and afraid."

"Ah," Gideon may be saying, "they will not want to go, so full of daring."

But look! When they have a chance to go, see them moving away! Some of the bravest talking, probably, are the fastest in retreating. They go in clusters, and now in crowds, the ground covered with their withdrawing forms. A thousand gone, and now another, another, another, another, till twenty-two thousand have left the camp of Gideon! Only ten thousand left! But such warriors there are among them! Such tried