

marsh harrier is very often confounded with the buzzard, but the latter build in trees, while the harrier lives in the open country, preferring marshy, fenny districts where they find plenty of snakes and frogs, which form the greater part of their food. They are known almost all over the world and may be distinguished from the buzzards by their longer wings and legs. The males and females are very different in color and general appearance and for a long time they were believed to belong to different species altogether.

Buzzard is the name of still another large group of diurnal birds of prey closely resembling eagles. The bill of the buzzard, however, is decurved from the base and its head is short and round, while the bill of the eagle is straight near its base and the head is more elongated. The buzzard is also smaller than the eagle, as a rule, though not always; its plumage is more mottled, and it is slower and heavier in flight. For this latter cause it was looked upon with great scorn in the old days of falconry and gave rise to the expression "As stupid as a buzzard." It, too, has unjustly fallen under the ban of game-keepers, for its food is chiefly composed of small mammals, young birds, amphibians, and insects, particularly beetles. It is found all over the world except in Australia, and the honey-buzzard, the specimen given in our cut, is a summer visitor to Europe from the south.

The word hawk is used to distinguish all diurnal birds of prey which are neither vultures, or eagles, nor yet buzzards, falcons, harriers or kites. They include about one hundred species, and are distinguished by short wings, long legs, and a bill which begins to decurve directly at the soft skin which covers its base. It preys upon hares, rabbits, pheasants, partridges, and wild fowl. The goshawk in appearance is very much like the peregrine falcon and while very rare now in England was once very common. It lived altogether in the woods and as these have gradually disappeared it has become scarce also. It is very destructive to pigeons and poultry. It is found in North America, Australia, and China.

The kite, hardly to be counted as a falcon, may be considered by itself. It was once the most familiar bird of prey in Great Britain but is now the rarest. Three or four hundred years ago they hung thick over the London parks and in the streets did good service as scavengers, but now the only reminders of them left in any thickly settled place are the paper toys, their namesakes, sported by the average small boy on a windy summer day. The kite is kept, however, in some places in England but where is not generally known. The bird is usually over two feet in length and measures across its outstretched wings five feet from tip to tip. In flying its great tail acts as a rudder to steer its course. Its general color is a pale reddish-brown with head grayish white. It builds its nest in the crotch of a large tree of sticks and much miscellaneous stuff, among which rags are occasionally found. Its eggs number three or four and are of a dull white hue spotted and blotched with brown or sometimes with black.

The eggs of the different falcons are shown on another page, No. 5. is the egg of the Peregrine; 6. The Hobby; 7. Merlin; 8. Kestrel; 9. Goshawk; 10. Sparrow Hawk; 11. Kite; 12. Buzzard; 13. Rough-legged Buzzard; 14. Honey Buzzard; 15. Hen Harrier

#### HOW A TOAD UNDRESSES.

A gentleman sends to an agricultural paper an amusing description of "How a toad takes off his coat and pants." He says he has seen one do it and a friend has seen another do it in the same way:

"About the middle of July I found a toad on a hill of melons, and not wanting him to leave I hood around him; he appeared sluggish and not inclined to move. Presently I observed him pressing his elbows against his sides and rubbing downward. He appeared so singular that I watched to see what he was up to. After a few smart rubs the skin began to burst open straight along the back. Now, said I, old fellow, you have done it; but he appeared unconcerned and kept on rubbing until he had worked all his skin into folds on his sides and hips; then grasping one hind leg with both his hands he hauled off one leg of his pants the same as anybody would, then stripped the other hind leg in the same way. He then took his cast-off cuticle forward

between his fore legs into his mouth and swallowed it; then, by raising and lowering his head, swallowing as his head came down, he stripped off the skin underneath until it came to his fore legs, and then grasping one of these with the opposite hand, by considerable pulling stripped off the skin; changing hands he stripped the other, and by a slight motion of the head, and all the while swallowing, he drew it from the neck and swallowed the whole. The operation seemed an agreeable one, and occupied but a short time."

#### THE MISSIONARY MEETING.

BY REV. E. K. ALDEN, D. D.,  
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A prayer-meeting, if it is genuine, earnest, intercessory prayer, always, to use a common phrase, "means business." This is emphatically true of a consecration-meeting. It also appropriately belongs to a well conducted inquiry-meeting as well as to a praise and promise-meeting. Since all these elements unite, as we have already seen, in the missionary-meeting, it would be a serious omission not to call special attention to the practical business toward which they all lead the way. That business is the devising and putting into efficient prosecution the wisest and best methods for sending forth and sustaining the personal messengers, and for awakening and deepening missionary interest.

Such questions as the following immediately suggest themselves; How shall we increase our own intelligent interest in missions? How shall we enlarge, systematically and generously, our personal offerings for this work? How shall we secure a hearty gift from every person in our congregation, young and old? What shall be done to lead our best-educated and most promising young men and young women to consider seriously the question of becoming themselves personal messengers to China, or Japan, or India, or to some other important missionary field? May we not support one or two missionary representatives from our own church; or from our own Society of Christian Endeavor? How shall we add continually to the interest and power of our missionary meetings?

Such inquiries as these will lead to judicious division of labor among the young people. One or two, for example, will report, in a racy style, on appropriate occasions, from the department of missionary biography, giving in their own way the story of John Williams, Bishop Patteson, John Geddil, Titus Coan, and others, in the Islands of the Pacific. Another will visit the site of the old house in Templeton, Mass., where William Goodell was born, and will briefly review his remarkable life and its results. Another, perhaps, will write a letter to Dr. Cyrus Hamlin, and secure from him a personal letter in return, as to some of his own recollections of work in Turkey. Others will look carefully and systematically over the finance department, and will become ingenious in methods of adding to the monthly missionary contributions. Others will see to the selection and circulation of missionary literature. Others will use the gift of speech in conversation, and will know how to employ the social element in the interest of missions. In some way it will be manifest that the yearning desire for the salvation of a perishing world is on the brain and on the heart continuously.

An occasional report of what is positively attempted and, to a good degree, effected, by such a company of consecrated missionary laborers and inquirers as this, will not only be intensely interesting and somewhat surprising as a report, but will stimulate to new and more earnest endeavors and plans for the future. This will be "a business-meeting" in its best sense, the results of which will extend around the world, and will, by-and-by, be heard from in the great gathering from every language and people around the throne in heaven.—*Golden Rule.*

#### THE DAY OF SMALL THING

"Here is the way Professor L.—made me practise my scales by the hour," said a lady whose fine playing had charmed us into expressions of great praise, and her fingers lingered on each note of the piano until one would imagine it must be the very epitome of everything tiresome, tedious and monotonous to spend hours going from one end of the notes to the

other in such slow, precise measure. Ah! but the way her fingers chased each other, never tripping, never missing a note nor an instant in time as she skillfully executed the difficult music her practice had made perfect. We remember once reading of a drummer boy who thought it was going to be grand sport, learning to drum. He fancied over and over again the delight it would be to have a nice new drum, smart sticks, and a master under whose teaching he confidently believed he could in a short time learn to drum with great expertness. What was his disquiet on starting out for his first lesson, to be taken by the old drum-major into a yard, handed two ordinary sticks and brought up to an old stump on which he would be expected to beat correctly to different measures before he would be allowed to use a drum at all. But it was that or nothing, and he soon learned the importance of being able to simply strike the stump with both sticks at exactly the same instant; the rolling and the beating came slowly on in due time. People whose opportunities for doing good often seem so limited as to cause discouragement, should constantly keep in mind the fact—that no good deed, however small, should be regarded as worthless. We never know how far a little kindness may be felt, or what may be the result of even a kindly word. It is as necessary to train ourselves in the slow practice of kindly deeds and Christian acts if we ever wish to attain to ripe Christian lives, as it is to submit to the practice and drill which make perfect in the mere accomplishments of life. If young people entering the church could be influenced to begin doing little things for the Master, the gradual practice would soon become the habit of the life, and somehow, or in some way, opportunities for benefiting others would always be found and improved.—*Christian at Work.*

#### SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From International Question Book.)

#### LESSON IX.—AUGUST 26.

#### THE PILLAR OF CLOUD AND OF FIRE.—

Num. 9: 15-23.

COMMIT VERSES 15, 16

#### GOLDEN TEXT.

O send out thy light and thy truth: let them lead me.—Ps. 43: 3.

#### CENTRAL TRUTH.

Christ, revealed in the Word, is our pillar of cloud and of fire.

#### DAILY READINGS.

M. Num. 1: 45-51.

T. Num. 9: 1-14.

W. Num. 9: 15-23.

Th. Ex. 13: 17-22; 14: 18-20.

F. Deut. 8: 1-20.

Sa. John 1: 1-17.

Su. Heb. 1: 1-14.

#### HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

The Israelites were about to start on a journey to the promised land through an unknown wilderness, away from a beaten track, ignorant of what was to befall them. They needed a wise, strong, good guide. 15. *On the day:* (Ex. 40: 2.) *Appearance of fire:* not fire, but like it. Fire was a good symbol of God's presence, bright, cheering, warming, purifying, life-giving, all-pervasive, consuming to evil. 19. *Tarried long:* once remained eighteen years. *Kept the charge:* obeyed the commandments. Strange guidance: this guide led the people into deserts, against enemies, into hunger and thirst, among serpents, as well as by the wells and palm groves of Elim, and it led them 40 years on a journey that a few weeks would have accomplished. Why? To fit them for the promised land to which they were going.

#### SUBJECT: OUR GUIDE ON THE JOURNEY OF LIFE.

#### QUESTIONS.

I. THE JOURNEY OF LIFE.—Where were the children of Israel at this time? Where were they going? When were they to start? (Num. 10: 11.) Through what kind of a country must they go? (Deut. 8: 15.) Did they know the way? Did they know what dangers they would meet? What kind of a guide did they need under these circumstances? To what country are we going? (Heb. 11: 14-16.) In what respects is life like the journey of the Israelites through the wilderness? Do we know what dangers, difficulties, and temptations are before us? Will there be many joys and beautiful things on the way? Can we find the way ourselves? What kind of a guide do we need?

II. THE PILLAR OF CLOUD AND OF FIRE THE GUIDE.—(vs. 15-23.)—By what symbol did God guide the Israelites? When did it first appear? (Ex. 13: 21, 22.) Where did it abide after the tabernacle was set up? Why there? How did it show to the Israelites when to rest, and when and where to go? How long did this guidance continue? (Deut. 8: 2.) In what respects was this pillar of cloud and fire a true symbol of God?

III. STRANGE GUIDANCE.—Would the Israelites naturally expect to be led only into pleasant places with God for their guide? Into what places did he lead them sometimes? (Ex. 14: 2-4, 10-12; 15-23; 16: 3; 17: 3, 8; Num. 13: 32, 33; 21: 4-6.) Did God deliver them in all these cases? Were there also pleasant places? (Ex. 15: 27; 19: 1-3; Num. 13: 23, 27.) Why did God lead them into such places? (Deut. 8: 2.) Would they have been fitted for the promised land without these experiences?

IV. NEW TESTAMENT LIGHT.—Who is our light and guide? (John 1: 4, 5, 9, 17, 18.) How is he like the pillar of cloud and fire? (Heb. 1: 3.) What does he say of himself? (John 11: 6.) Whom has he sent to be an ever-present guide? (John 14: 16, 17; 16: 7, 13.) Why are we sometimes led into trials and troubles? (2 Cor. 4: 17, 18; James 1: 2, 3; 1 Pet. 1: 7, 8.) Does God bring good out of them all? (Rom. 8: 28; 1 Cor. 10: 13.) If we follow him, will he guide us to heaven?

#### LESSON X.—SEPTEMBER 2.

#### THE SPIES SENT INTO CANAAN.—Num. 13: 27-33.

COMMIT VERSES 30-32.

#### GOLDEN TEXT.

Let us go up at once, and possess it: for we are well able to overcome it.—Num. 13: 30.

#### CENTRAL TRUTH.

Every professing Christian brings a good or evil report of his religion to the world.

#### DAILY READINGS.

M. Num. 11: 1-23.

T. Num. 11: 21-35.

W. Num. 12: 1-16.

Th. Num. 13: 1-3, 17-33.

F. Deut. 1: 1-26.

Sa. Ps. 106: 1-26.

Su. Ps. 106: 27-48.

INTRODUCTION.—In our last lesson we studied the plan of divine guidance through the wilderness. After the people had been about a year at Sinai, in May, on the 20th of the second month of the second year (Num. 10: 11), they left Sinai and moved toward Canaan. Their number was 603,550 men, besides 22,000 Levites, or, at least, 2,000,000 in all. On the way, the people murmured and were punished; Miriam and Aaron rebelled, but were quickly subdued. The people were organized politically. They reached Kadesh-Barnea probably in July or August. (v. 20.) From this place the spies were sent out.

#### HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

17. *Sent them:* 12 chiefs, one from each tribe. See previous verses. *This way southward:* rather, into the South-Country, the southern region of Palestine, but north of their encampment at Kadesh. 20. *Time of first-ripe grapes:* July, August. 21. *Wilderness of sin:* the northern part of the desert of Paran, in which Kadesh was. (v. 26.) *Iehob:* near the sources of Jordan. *As men come to Hamath:* the entering-in of Hamath, north the valley of Baalbek. This was the northern frontier of Canaan. *Sons of Anak:* giants. 23. *Brook of Eschol:* near Helson. *Between two on a staff:* because it would be crushed if carried any other way. Some clusters weigh 10 or 12 or even 18 pounds. 30. *Caleb stilled the people:* together with Joshua. The people were excited by the emphasis laid by the ten spies on the difficulties of the way. They forgot God's power and his previous marvellous works, and hence it was an evil report. 32. *A land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof:* either by scarcity of products, or by unhealthiness, or by feuds and strifes.

#### SUBJECT: REPORTS FROM THE CHRISTIAN'S PROMISED LAND.

#### QUESTIONS.

I. THE JOURNEY TO THE BORDERS OF THE PROMISED LAND.—How long had the Israelites been at Mount Sinai? When did they make a new start? (10: 11.) Under whose guidance? Into what trouble did they come on the way? (chap. 11.) What rebellion arose? (chap. 12.) To what place did they come on the borders of the promised land? (13: 26. Deut. 1: 19.) How long were they on the journey? (Compare Num. 10: 11 with 13: 20.) How many people were there? (Num. 1: 46, 47.)

II. THE EXPEDITION OF THE SPIES (vs. 17-25.)—What should the people have done when they reached Kadesh? (Deut. 1: 21.) Could they have entered then and there had they trusted God? What did they propose instead? (Deut. 1: 22, 23.) How many were sent as spies? For what purpose? When did they go? How long were they absent? What did they bring home? Why in the way they did?

III. THE REPORT OF THE SPIES (vs. 26-33.)—What was the report as to the excellence of the country? How did they prove their report? What difficulties were in the way? What kind of people defended the country? How did they seem to some of the spies? (v. 33.) Why was the report of these called "an evil report?" What promise of God did they forget? (Ex. 12: 25.) What mighty works had he already done in their defence? What two made a different report? (v. 30; 11: 38.) Why was theirs a good report? What was the difference? How were the good spies rewarded? How were the bad ones punished? (14: 23, 30.)

IV. NEW TESTAMENT LIGHT.—What is our promised land? What can you tell about the blessedness of religion? (John 11: 27; Phil. 4: 7.) Are all those who profess to be Christians bringing a report about their religion to the world? (2 Cor. 3: 2, 3; Matt. 5: 14.) What fruits do they bring to prove it? (Gal. 5: 22, 23.) What difficulties are in the way? (Eph. 6: 12; John 11: 36.) Is the presence of difficulties a good reason for not becoming Christians? How may we bring an evil report? What has God done in the past to show us that he can save us?

#### LESSON CALENDAR.

(Third Quarter, 1888.)

- July 1.—God's Covenant with Israel.—Ex. 21: 1-12.
- July 8.—The Golden Calf.—Ex. 32: 15-26.
- July 15.—God's Presence Promised.—Ex. 33: 12-23.
- July 22.—Free Gifts for the Tabernacle.—Ex. 35: 20-29.
- July 29.—The Tabernacle.—Ex. 40: 1-16.
- Aug. 5.—The Burnt Offering.—Lev. 1: 1-9.
- Aug. 12.—The Day of Atonement.—Lev. 16: 1-16.
- Aug. 19.—The Feast of Tabernacles.—Lev. 23: 33-44.
- Aug. 26.—The Pillar of Cloud and of Fire.—Num. 9: 15-23.
- Sept. 2.—The Spies Sent into Canaan.—Num. 13: 17-33.
- Sept. 9.—The Unbelief of the People.—Num. 14: 1-10.
- Sept. 16.—The Smitten Rock.—Num. 20: 1-13.
- Sept. 23.—Death and Burial of Moses.—Deut. 34: 1-12.
- Sept. 30.—Review, Temperance, Deut. 21: 18-21, and Missions.