

VI. FALSEHOOD.

He denied it again. v. 70.
"Lie not one to another. Col. 3. 9.

VII. BLASPHEMY.

Began to curse and to swear. v. 71.
"Not take the name of the Lord....in
vain." Ex. 20. 7.

ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL LESSONS.

Foes of Christ.

1. Christ's foes in vain endeavour to impugn the purity of his character. v. 55.
2. Christ's foes can succeed against him only by perverting and misrepresenting his words. v. 57, 58.
3. Christ's foes, though united in their purpose, are really at discord in their testimonies. v. 59.
4. Christ's foes will wring his own words of truth into a cause of false accusation. v. 60.
5. Christ's foes shall yet see him in his power and glory. v. 62.
6. Christ's foes show their spirit by their acts of brutality and cruelty. v. 65.
7. Christ's foes are dangerous company for Christ's disciples.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

61. How did they behave themselves towards God after this division?

After the division of Israel into the two kingdoms of Judah and Israel, most of their kings, as well as the people, behaved very ill; for they provoked God by their idols, and their great wickedness.

ENGLISH TEACHER'S NOTES.

BY SARAH GERALDINA STOCK.

"SPEECH," says the German proverb, "is silver, but silence is gold." There is much truth in this, as in many other proverbs. But there is a speech, as well as a silence, which is golden. There is "a time to keep silence, and a time to speak." And we have the most sublime illustration the world ever saw, of both these, in the passage for to-day. The Golden Text directs our attention to the silence of the Lord Jesus before the council; but of equal importance is his one single speech. Look at

1. *Jesus keeping silence.*

The prisoner is safe in the hands of the Jewish rulers. They have really secured him at last; and, since he has in no way answered to the hopes of the people for a Messiah who should deliver them from the foreign yoke, there is little fear of popular intervention. Still, they must have some definite offence

with which to charge him before he can be condemned to death, and the charge must, according to their own law, be supported by the agreement of two witnesses. For such witness they seek eagerly, but in vain. Nothing can be found against him. At last "certain" persons remember a striking saying of his about the "temple," a prophecy, in fact, of the deed the rulers are about to commit. It is falsely reported; and yet even in this the witnesses cannot agree. What is to be done?

If he would only make some answer to his accusers, they think they might find something to turn against him. But all this while he has sat silent. "Answerest thou nothing?" asks the high-priest. But he still holds his peace.

What is the reason of this silence. The witness against him is false, and yet he does not deny it. He who has so often confounded the scribes and the Pharisees when they sought to "catch him in his words," might easily have cleared himself now, and vindicated his words and his speech. But his time had come to suffer. And just as, at the moment of his seizure, he forebore to call to his Father, and summon angelic legions to his succor, so now, "as a sheep dumb before her shearers, he openeth not his mouth." But see now

2. *Jesus breaking silence.*

It is not to answer his accusers, or confound his persecutors. All the false charges laid against him have not brought a word from his lips. But at length the high-priest, growing desperate with the repeated failures, puts the plain, direct question: "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" And now the silence was broken. He who is the "faithful and true witness" cannot withhold his testimony. When his divine Sonship, and his divine mission are questioned, he cannot hold his peace. He knows what will be the effect of his speech. He knows that the declaration and the awful warning he is about to give his enemies will be disregarded. He knows it will be the signal for the verdict to be pronounced against him. Yet he speaks calmly and deliberately; the solemn words are uttered, (words reported for us in this gospel from the memory of the disciple in whose hearing they were spoken.) If a thrill of guilty terror went through the audience, it is quickly suppressed. The verdict is given, and the "Son of the Blessed" is delivered to the malice of his enemies.

There was one disciple who had witnessed all this, and of whose behaviour a full account is given us. Peter had followed his Lord "afar off," prompted, no doubt, by the warmth and love of his zeal, but, perhaps, also with a natural desire to put into action his