

ninety-five millions of miles away, and yet giving to the earth life and heat and motion, which has been burning for thousands of years without being reduced in size? Yet the sun is not a miracle, because God does not appeal to it as a special sign to confirm His word or to show His power. The rainbow is a sign to which God appeals as a token of His covenant with man. But the rainbow is not a miracle; for it is not out of the ordinary course of nature. A miracle must be above the power both of nature and of man.

There are . . . no nobler illustrations of a true understanding of the missionary obligation, and no nobler instances of personal devotion, than are to be found among the natives of Polynesia who gave themselves for the work in New Guinea. To dissuade one of the first band from venturing to Murray Island, a native said, 'There are alligators there, and snakes and centipedes.' 'Hold,' said Tepeso, 'are there *men* there?' 'Oh yes, of course; but they are such dreadful savages that there is no use of your thinking of living among them.' 'That will do,' said Tepeso; 'wherever there are men, missionaries are bound to go.' In the first twenty years of the mission a hundred and twenty Polynesian teachers died of fever,

were poisoned, or were massacred; but for every vacancy scores of others immediately offered.—Missionary Review of the World.

Light from the East

SAMARIA—Omri bought a round, isolated hill of arable land, in the Barley Vale, for \$4,000, from the farmer who owned it, built his new capital upon it and called it The Watch Tower. (1 Kings 16: 24.) It sustained many sieges, was considered almost impregnable, and was taken by the Assyrians only after an investment of three years. Half a dozen times afterwards it was demolished and again rebuilt. Herod the Great received it as a present from Augustus and proceeded to fortify and embellish it. He called it Sebaste in honor of his patron and this name survives in Sebastiyeh, the insignificant Arabic village on the eastern crest of the hill. For upwards of a mile round the summit the street of columns, with which Herod adorned the city, can be traced. On the summit, near a grove of olives, stand sixteen pillars which probably mark the site of Herod's temple to Caesar. Resting amid the singular beauty of that historic hill, the traveller can scarcely realize that the green grass under his feet covers up so many tragedies of treachery and blood. See Isaiah's name for the city, Is. 28: 1.

TEACHING HINTS AND HELPS

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the school.

For Bible Class Teachers

AN ANALYSIS

The rapid growth of the church in Jerusalem shortly after our Lord's ascension was most remarkable: about three thousand members added in one day, Acts 2: 41; then daily additions, v. 47. Later "the number of men" (exclusive of women) "came to be about five thousand," ch. 4: 4. Later still, "believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women," ch. 5: 14. These, except the apostles, were all scattered by the hand of persecution into Judea and Samaria, ch. 8: 1. For teaching this lesson attention must be given specially to three persons along with the dispersed believers.

1. *Saul the persecutor.* He may be characterized at this time (a) As a man of marked ability and culture. He was educated by Gamaliel (Acts 22: 3), was familiar with Greek and Roman learning, and contributed eleven, if not twelve, epistles to the New Testament, (b) A man of amazing energy and endurance. See his record, 1 Cor. 11: 22-33. Five times scourged, thrice beaten with rods, once stoned, thrice shipwrecked, in journeyings, perils, etc. (c) As a persecutor he displayed persistent ferocity, v. 3. Paul's own confession is decisive in this respect, Acts 26: 9-11. (He "strove to make them blaspheme," v. 11, Rev. Ver.)

2. *The dispersed believers.* (a) Who were they? Not all, without exception, because the church is mentioned, v. 3 and ch. 9: 26. They were the deacons and private members generally. Some of them were foreign Jews,