

and when the earth began to move they, by their dancing, would be able to keep on top and not be drawn under, while the on-moving mass would overwhelm the unmindful whites, burying them and their horses, their arms and their dwellings, leaving the new earth to the peaceful possession of the Indians. For this great event the believers must prepare themselves by accustoming their bodies to prolonged dancing, for if they should fail to dance as the land was sliding they too would perish under the avalanche.

The belief in the coming of some one who should lead the people to greater happiness can be traced as far back as we have any records of our aborigines. The well-known question put to Cortez is an instance in point. This looking forward to a deliverer seems common to all peoples; similar anticipations have taken form among the Arab tribes, the inhabitants of the Pacific Islands, and even the Esquimaux. This hope, together with that of a universal resurrection, was used by the prophet when seeking to rally the Indians to league themselves together against the white race. The idea of a future happiness which has in it nothing of former experiences of pleasure is hardly conceivable; different races and persons, therefore, picture a future life according to their culture, and although these pictures vary widely in details they have one element in common, the absence of mental and physical suffering. The notion of future happiness to the present uneducated Indian would naturally imply the restoration of past conditions of life, and that would involve the absence of the white man.

While the ghost dance was not a war dance, still, as by means of it the Indians were looking forward to their notion of an earthly paradise which excluded our race, it was difficult for the average white man to believe that any people would be willing or able to refrain from helping by overt act toward bringing about the desired end. Therefore the ghost dance, as harmless in itself as any religious excitement, became an object of suspicion, and this feeling was fostered by the fact that conjurers, dreamers, turbulent and ambitious men, used the ecstasy for their own purposes, multiplying stories of the wonder-working new messiah, which grew more and more marvellous with each recital.

It is an interesting fact that this craze is confined almost exclusively to the uneducated Indians, those who, from inclination, or some other cause, have kept aloof from the practice or the instruction in any of the arts of civilization. Those most affected with the belief in the new messiah belong to the tribes which formerly lived by hunting and knew almost nothing of raising maize; moreover, their reservations are upon land poorly adapted to successful agriculture, so that the Government ration has been almost a necessity for sustaining life. Had it not been for the complications growing out of a general distrust of a ghost dance, the financial distress of a region suffering from a series of short crops, and our political methods whereby our food supply to the Indians is sometimes inopportunistly cut down, it is not unlikely that this craze would have passed by quietly, overthrown by the influence of the progressive Indians, and the ameliorating influences of general education.

The craze presents a rudely dramatic but a pathetic picture of a class of people cut off from exercising their former skill in obtaining their food and clothing; living in a bewildering idleness, growing daily more conscious of the crushing force of our on-sweeping civilization; becoming, in their ignorance, more and more isolated from a new present, which is educating their children in a new language and with new ideas. It is not surprising that these men of the past, finding themselves hedged in on all sides and shorn of all that is familiar to their heart and mind, should seize upon the promises of the new messiah to feed their half-famished bodies, restore their dead, and give back to them their beloved land.

The part which Sitting Bull has had in this and other Indian difficulties has been made more of by the white people than the Indians. I met the man shortly after his capture and return as a prisoner to this country, and became fairly well acquainted with him and his camp. He belonged to the medicine men rather than the chiefs, and was not the leader he was supposed to

be; but the vicissitudes of the little band of followers had pushed him into a prominence he could not have gained under ordinary tribal customs. He was not a man of much mental grasp or executive power, having surrendered his reason to the dictation of dreams. In 1881 he was ready, as far as his ability went, to accept the overthrow of many of his ideas and to "face the new way." I won from him at that time and from his associates an unqualified consent that all their children should be taken away and put in school. I pictured in no uncertain colors the future which must be theirs, a future that left the past forgotten. These men, as it was natural, mournfully accepted the inevitable; they could not have honestly done more. Delays between the War and the Interior Departments let months slip into years, and except a few children taken by Bishop Hare, the young folks were left to grow up in the camp, while their elders learned to distrust the good intentions of the friends who could not do all that they would. Later on, public curiosity made it pay to exhibit Sitting Bull over the country, and the man lost what teachable spirit he had had; he easily mistook the gaping crowd for a tribute to his personality.

Now he is dead and no one has a word to say of him except as a savage well gotten rid of, while I cannot but remember the last time I saw him, eight years ago. I was in his tent; we had been talking of old customs and ceremonies; as I sat writing, his wife entered and threw herself down before the fire, blowing the embers to a flame; then she turned, and leaning her head on her arm, the firelight glinting on her score of bangles, she fastened her black eyes on my face. At length Sitting Bull said:

"You are a woman, you can look into the future and it is not strange to you; have compassion on my women. For my young men I can see what they can do, now that they can no longer hunt or go on the war-path, they can learn to plough and to raise crops; but there is nothing for my women to do, for them I see no future, and yet it is to our women that we owe everything in the past. Once I had many ponies, now I am poor, there is nothing left to me but this ring, I give it to you that you may not forget to pity my women and children."

THE AID OF IMAGINATION IN BIBLE STUDY.

BY THE REV. D. SUTHERLAND.

A very important part of the teacher's work should be to train and inform the imagination in his scholar. This should not, generally, be so very difficult, as childhood, or youth, is, in a distinctive sense, the period of imagination. It must, however, be admitted that in some children the faculty is somewhat latent, and needs to be developed. They seem to have very great difficulty in seeing anything that is not visible to the outward eye. Picturing an historical scene, or conjuring up a figure out of the vast depths of the past, is little short of impossible to them. A lady who has had considerable experience in teaching gives us an instance in point. She told the same story, on one occasion, to a company of Irish boys and girls of the peasant class, and, on another occasion, to a company of English boys and girls of a corresponding station in life. The story was about the French nuns going to the scaffold, in the dark days of the Revolution, singing, as they went, the "Te Deum," and continuing the verses, in lessening numbers, as head by head fell, until the abbess alone was left. Even then the heroic abbess was undaunted. Looking steadfastly on the headless bodies of her followers, she sang, triumphantly, the "Gloria in Excelsis," and ceased not until the knife struck. The story was told graphically and dramatically, but it did not produce a like effect. With sparkling eyes and eager faces the Irish children exclaimed, "What a glorious death to die!" The English children looked as blank as the wall of the room in which they sat, kept silence, and when they did break their silence it was but to remark, "She told us about a lot of women having their heads cut off." The beauty and pathetic power of the tale were lost on the second audience, as the storyteller saw at once, from sheer lack of imaginative training.

And so it is too often in the Sunday-school. The beauty and power of the gospel narratives are lost upon the children through neglecting the aid of imagination in Bible study. The scenes are shadowy and the persons dim in the far-away distance. They need to be brought near, and made as real as next-door neighbors. This can be done through the use of imagination. Train the children to picture what they read until scenes and actors pass in a panorama before their mind.

The writer would earnestly recommend Sunday-school teachers to realize what an invaluable aid imagination may be in Bible study, and how interesting Bible stories can be made to scholars when they are turned into pictures, instead of mere historical facts. An informed, cultured, and devout imagination is worth a dozen shelves of commentaries in helping one to understand the Scriptures. If you doubt this, put it to the test. Take up a gospel, read it carefully, and let the events recorded therein unroll themselves as in a panorama before your mind's eye. What you read will then become real to you, and carry with it that force of actuality which makes the Bible helpful and inspiring.—*Richmond, Halifax, N. S.*

Best in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him.

PSA. 37:7.

SCHOLAR'S NOTES.

(From Westminster Question Book.)

LESSON IX.—MARCH 1, 1891.

THE SHUNAMMITE'S SON.—2 Kings 4:25-37.

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 32-34.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"The Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them."—John 5:21.

HOME READINGS.

M. 2 Kings 4:8-17.—The Prophet's Chamber.
T. 2 Kings 4:18-37.—The Shunammite's Son.
W. Luke 7:11-17.—The Widow's Son Raised.
Th. Matt. 9:18-26.—The Ruler's Daughter Raised.
F. Acts 9:32-43.—Dorcas Raised.
S. 1 Cor. 15:35-58.—Believers to be Raised.
S. Phil. 3:7-21.—Our Bodies Changed.

LESSON PLAN.

I. The Mother's Pleading, vs. 25-28.
II. The Prophet's Staff, vs. 29-31.
III. The Child's Restoration, vs. 32-37.

TIME.—B.C. 892. The visits at the home in Shunem probably began soon after the translation of Elijah, three or four years before.

PLACES.—Mount Carmel, seventeen miles from Jezreel; Shunem, now Solam, three miles north of Jezreel.

OPENING WORDS.

Elisha made Samaria, the capital of Israel, his home. From this centre he made circuits through the country, visiting the schools of the prophets, instructing the people, and retiring at intervals to Carmel. So frequently did he pass through Shunem that a rich woman who lived there prepared a chamber for him and devoted it to his use. In reward for this kindness to his servant, God gave her a son. This son, a few years after, died very suddenly, and the mother in her distress went immediately to the prophet. Our lesson tells us how, in answer to his prayer, the child was restored to life.

HELP IN STUDYING THE LESSON.

V. 25. *The man of God*—Elisha, V. 26. *It is well*—"Shalom"—peace; the usual Oriental salutation. V. 27. *Caught him by the feet*—as a suppliant, after the Oriental manner. Matt. 18:29; Luke 8:4. *Had hid it from me*—prophets were not omniscient. V. 28. *Did I desire a son*—was I thus blessed only to be visited with sorrow? V. 29. *Gird up thy loins*—gather up thy robe for a rapid journey. *My staff*—the symbol of the prophet's office. *Salute him not*—lose no time on the way. V. 30. *I will not leave thee*—an urgent request that he would go in person with her. V. 31. *Neither voice nor hearing*—no sign of returning life. V. 32. *Prayed*—in dependence on God to do the work. V. 34. He was divinely directed as to the means he should employ. *Waxed warm*—evidence of returning life. V. 35. *Sneezed*—restored breath. V. 37. *She fell at his feet*—in gratitude; the first impulse, even before taking up her son.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—At whose house did Elisha stay when in Shunem? What provision was made for his comfort? How was the Shunammite rewarded? Title of this lesson? Golden Text? Lesson Plan? Time? Place? Memory verses?

I. THE MOTHER'S PLEADING, vs. 25-28.—Why did this woman seek the prophet? vs. 18-20. How did she show her haste? Where did she find the prophet? Whom did the prophet send to meet her? What did he tell his servant to ask her? How did she reply? What did she do when she came to the prophet? What did she say to Elisha?

II. THE PROPHET'S STAFF, vs. 29-31.—What did the prophets tell Gehazi to do? What did the mother say to the prophet? What was the result of Gehazi's errand? What word did he bring back?

III. THE CHILD'S RESTORATION, vs. 32-37.—What did Elisha find when he came into the house? Whose help did he seek? What did he do with the child? What result followed? By whose power was the miracle wrought?

WHAT HAVE I LEARNED?

1. That our heaviest sorrows often come from our greatest joys.
2. That God often tries the faith of his people.
3. That our own work may not be handed over to others.
4. That true religion is full of sympathy with the afflicted.
5. That kindness to God's servants will bring its reward.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW.

1. What great trouble came upon the Shunammite woman? Ans. Her only son died very suddenly.
2. Whom did she seek in her trouble? Ans. The prophet Elisha.
3. What did Elisha first do? Ans. He sent Gehazi, his servant, to lay his staff upon the child.
4. What did Elisha afterward do? Ans. He returned with the mother, and in answer to his prayer the child was restored to life.
5. How did the mother show her gratitude? Ans. She fell at Elisha's feet, and bowed herself to the ground.

LESSON X.—MARCH 8, 1891.

NAAMAN HEALED.—2 Kings 5:1-14.

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 13, 14.

GOLDEN TEXT.

"Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases."—Ps. 103:3.

HOME READINGS.

M. Lev. 13:38-46.—The Law of Leprosy.
T. Lev. 14:1-29.—The Law of Cleansing.
W. 2 Kings 5:1-14.—Naaman Healed.
Th. Mark 1:35-45.—The Leper of Capernaum.
F. Luke 17:11-9.—Ten Lepers Healed.
S. Zech. 13:1-9.—A Fountain for Uncleanness.
S. Psalm, 103:3.—"Who Healeth all thy Diseases."

LESSON PLAN.

- I. A Child's Ministry, vs. 1-4.
 - II. A King's Perplexity, vs. 5-7.
 - III. A Prophet's Message, vs. 8-10.
 - IV. A Leper's Cleansing, vs. 11-14.
- TIME.—B.C. 891. Jeroboam, the son of Ahab, king of Israel; Benhadad II, king of Syria.

PLACES.—Damascus, the capital of Syria, one hundred and twenty miles north-east from Jerusalem; Samaria, the capital of the kingdom of Israel.

OPENING WORDS.

Of all Elisha's miracles this healing of Naaman was the only one he wrought upon a heathen. It was fitting that one famous miracle of healing should be wrought upon a foreigner: a miracle conveying rich moral lessons for all nations and all ages. Naaman's cure, which was wrought by miracle when he obeyed the word of the Lord spoken through Elisha, is a standing type of salvation from sin by the Gospel.

HELP IN STUDYING THE LESSON.

V. 1. *Captain*—commander-in-chief. *Deliverance*—victory over the Assyrians, which secured the independence of Syria. V. 2. *By companies*—plundering parties. *A little maid*—a young girl in a strange land, faithful to her mistress and true to the God of her fathers. V. 4. *One went in rather*, "he," that is, Naaman. *His lord*—Benhadad, king of Syria. V. 5. *Ten talents of silver*—equal to about \$17,750. *Six thousand pieces of gold*—about \$37,500. *Changes of raiment*—gifts of honor in the East. V. 7. *Rent his clothes*—in alarm. V. 8. *Let him come to me*—the grand object of Providence in the visit of Naaman. V. 10. *Sent a messenger*—to humble his pride. *Go and wash*—compare John 9:7. The command was given to test his faith, not because there was any healing virtue in the waters of Jordan. V. 12. *Abana*—the modern Barada, a beautiful stream which flows through Damascus. *Pharpar*—the modern Awaj, a stream flowing across the plain of Damascus. V. 13. *His servants*—more wise than the master. V. 14. *Was clean*—so the obedience of faith secures spiritual cleansing.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—What was the subject of the last lesson? What other miracle had Elisha wrought? Title of this lesson? Golden Text? Lesson Plan? Time? Place? Memory verses?

I. A CHILD'S MINISTRY, vs. 1-4.—Who was Naaman? What disease had he? Of what moral disease is leprosy a type? Who alone can cure sin? Acts. 4:12. Who was the servant of Naaman's wife? What did she say to her mistress?

II. A KING'S PERPLEXITY, vs. 5-7.—What did the king of Syria say when he heard this? Who was the king of Israel? What did Naaman do? What did he take with him? What was in the letter? How did Jeroboam receive it? For what purpose did he think it sent?

III. A PROPHET'S MESSAGE, vs. 8-10.—What message did Elisha send to the king? What did Naaman then do? What message did the prophet send to Naaman?

IV. A LEPER CLEANSED, vs. 11-14.—Why was Naaman wroth? What did his servants say to him? What followed his obedience? How may we be cleansed from sin? Zech. 13:1; 1 John 1:7.

WHAT HAVE I LEARNED?

1. That even a child may find opportunities for doing good.
2. That we are to seek the good even of those who wrong us.
3. That men naturally dislike the humbling doctrines of salvation by God's grace.
4. That we must take God's healing in God's way.
5. That the blood of Christ cleanses from all sin.

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW.

1. Who was Naaman? Ans. Commander of the Syrian army, a mighty man of valor, but a leper.
2. How did he hear of the prophet Elisha? Ans. From a captive Hebrew maid, who said the prophet could cure him.
3. To whom did the king of Syria send Naaman when he heard this? Ans. To the king of Israel, to be recovered from his leprosy.
4. What message did Elisha send to the king? Ans. Let him come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel.
5. How was Naaman cured? Ans. By the prophet's command he went and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, and was clean.