

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL.

JULY 8, 1883.

PASSING OVER JORDAN.

JOSHUA 3. 5-17.

The historical narratives of the Old Testament do not always proceed continuously in the order of time. It must be so here, for otherwise the narrative is not reconcilable with Joshua's promise that they should cross over Jordan within three days (chap. 1. 2). At this temporary encampment all the preparations for crossing the river were made. The people were instructed to carry the ark of the covenant on their shoulders (ver. 3)—probably in the same way as at Mount Sinai (Exodus 19. 15)—because on the morrow the Lord would do wonders amongst them. Officers were sent throughout the camp to explain to the people exactly what they were to do (verses 2, 4). When they should see the ark of the covenant removed by the priests, they were to follow after it, but not to approach nearer than two thousand cubits, i. e., a thousand yards, or more than half a mile. They carried out all the instructions given by their leaders, in faith that some way would be opened for them; but not until the last moment were they told that the waters should be miraculously divided as they had been for their fathers at the Red Sea.

The whole mode of procedure on this occasion is very suggestive of practical lessons for us. The Ark was now to take the place which the pillar of fire and cloud had done. They might not move till the Ark moved, and they were to follow in the way which the Ark led them. There was thus both an encouragement to the timid ones whose faith was weak, and a check on the bold, impetuous spirits who might be disposed to act rashly. If any Israelite, wrought up to an excited feeling of enthusiastic faith through the promise that the waters would be divided, rushed down to the river's brink before the Ark, he would find that no miracle took place for him; while if any shrank back aghast at the sight of the Ark, he would find that there could be no danger while following it. There are many circumstances in our more ordinary lives in which the Divine dispensations are ordered so as to be encouraging to some, and restraining to others. We may learn that reverence is necessary to clearness of vision in Divine things. It is not the man who impetuously rushes in where angels fear to tread who obtains the truest insight into the ways of God, but he who, conscious of his own unworthiness, humbly waits for Divine light and leading, praying, "Keep back also Thy servant from presumptuous sins."

2.—Near the Dead Sea, the plain of the Jordan attains its greatest breadth. The mountain ranges on each side are higher, more rugged, and more desolate. The river winds through its centre between two sets of banks. The lower banks which usually confine the water are soft clay, fringed with jungles of canes, willows, and tamarisks. Beyond these the strips of meadow, dotted with tamarisk shrubs, and shut in by the high white banks of the ravine. It was harvest-time—the beginning of April—when the Israelites crossed. The rain was still falling in the mountains, and the snows of Hermon were melting, so that the river was made to overflow all its banks (ver. 15), or, the Hebrew signifies, it was full up to all its banks—that is, not merely up to the banks of the stream itself, but up to the banks of the ravine; covering wholly or partly the strips of meadow on each side, and thus rendering the fords impassable. The opening of a passage through the Jordan at such a season was a stupendous miracle, well calculated to strike terror into the hearts of the Canaanites. Had it been late in summer, it might have been thought that natural causes operated, but in harvest the finger of God was manifest to all.

Into this swollen flood the priests bearing the Ark were directed to step. They implicitly obeyed; and as they advanced, the stream above them ceased to flow, and by the time they got to the position assigned them in the midst of the river, the whole of the strong rapid current was arrested in its course, and stood in a wall above them, leaving all the lower part of the bed of the river dry for the Israelites to pass over. If it required strong faith on the part of these priests to enter the river, it needed still stronger faith to stand there with that great wall of waters above them, until the passage was safely accomplished. It is, in fact, a sublime example of the faith which ought to animate the servants of God when called upon to stand between His people and the danger with which they are threatened. The Israelites had their confidence sustained by the sight of the Ark of God's presence. *Abridged from the H. M. S. S. Man.*

MEAT EATING.

On the subject of diet, the London *Lancet* says: "Nervous diseases and weakness increase in a country as the population comes to live on the flesh of warm-blooded animals. Meat is highly stimulating and supplies proportionately more exciting than actually nourishing pabulum to the nervous system. The meat eater lives at high pressure, and is, or

ought to be, a peculiarly active organization, like a predatory animal, always on the alert, walking rapidly and consuming large quantities of oxygen. In practice we find that the meat-eater does not live up to the level of his food, and as a consequence he cannot or does not take in enough oxygen to satisfy the exigencies of his mode of life. Thereupon follow many if not most of the ills to which highly civilized and luxurious meat-eating classes are liable." If one wishes to draw a conclusion he has but to consider the sedentary habits of American women, their nervous diseases and their propensity for meat-eating.

READING ALOUD.

There is no accomplishment which is so fascinating as the power of reading well; it is a pleasing, although much neglected accomplishment. No music has such a charm as good reading, and where one person will be charmed by music, twenty will be fascinated by good reading; and where one person can be a good musician, twenty persons can be good readers. It seems to bring back the old authors, and to cause us to imagine ourselves sitting down and talking familiarly with them. What is more charming or interesting than the plays of Shakespeare, when delivered in a full, clear, distinct and well modulated voice? There is no accomplishment which causes so much pleasure in the family or social circle, the invalid's chamber, the hospital, the nursery, as good reading.—*Selected.*

USEFUL HINTS.

Never be above your calling, or be afraid to appear dressed in accordance with the business you are performing.

It is asserted that nine-tenths of the foot and ankle ailments of horses are traceable to standing on dry plank floors.

A young girl has died at Thorne, near Johnstone, after eating orange skin. The danger of this practice has already been illustrated by fatal cases in Airdrie.

Iron rust may be removed from delicate garments, upon which you dare not try oxalic acid, by mixing the juice of a lemon with some salt; put this over the rusted spots, and then hold over the spout of a steaming tea-kettle. This is almost always effectual.

An excellent lubricant for wagons is palm-oil, which is thick and adhesive. It may be improved by adding to it an equal weight of black lead and thoroughly mixing it. A very small quantity need be used. For road wagons and boggies castor-oil is an excellent lubricant.

After the dust has been thoroughly beaten out of carpets, and they tacked down again, they can be brightened very much by scattering corn meal mixed with coarse salt over them, and then sweeping it all off. Mix the salt and meal in equal proportions.

A dance to be recommended: Fashionable young people are calling upon somebody to invent a new dance. Suppose somebody invents one wherein the young lady dances around the house and helps her mother a little at housework—how would that step take?

A cow reared on a farm where she is to remain is more valuable to her owner than a strange cow. She is acquainted with the herd with which she must associate. She is familiar with the lands from which she obtains her food, and can travel them with greater ease than a strange cow. In consequence of these things she will yield more milk and be more profitable.

No matter how industrious or economical a young man may be, his endeavours to save are wasted if he has a careless wife. He might just as well be doomed to spend his whole strength and life in an attempt to catch water in a sieve. The effort would be scarcely less certain in vain. Habits of economy, the way to turn everything in the household affairs to the best account—these are among the best things which every mother should teach her daughters. By neglecting so to do they make a great mistake.

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"Eleven years our daughter has suffered on a bed of misery. From a complication of kidney, liver, rheumatic trouble and nervous debility. Under the care of the best physicians. Who gave her disease various names, 'But no relief. And now she is restored to us in good health by as simple a remedy as Hop Bitters, that we had shunned for years before using it.'—THE PARENTS.

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MOTHERS! MOTHERS! MOTHERS! Are you distressed at night and broken of your rest by a sick child suffering and crying with the excruciating pain of cutting teeth? If so, go at once and get a bottle of Mrs. WYSS' Sore Throat Syrup. It will relieve the poor little sufferer immediately—depend upon it; there is no mistake about it. There is not a mother on earth who has ever used it, who will not tell you at once that it will regulate the bowels, and give rest to the mother, and relief and health to the child, operating like magic. It is perfectly safe to use in all cases, and pleasant to the taste, and is the prescription of one of the oldest and best medical practitioners in the United States. Sold everywhere. 25 cents a bottle. See to it.

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JAS. LANGILLE, Springfield, Annapolis Co., 1882. mar 2 1n

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