

make known to the Egyptians the greatness and power of God. At the first manifestation of this there is no recognition of the hand of Jehovah. At the second plague Pharaoh has recourse to Jehovah's prophet to get the frogs removed, and from this point the recognition becomes more and more distinct. But the more sure the recognition, the greater is the obstinacy that rejects the call, leading to the terrible hardening of heart described in chapter ix.

Against this hardening the Golden Text warns us. In explaining it to children two things should be noticed, 1. Pharaoh hardened his own heart before God's judicial hardening was inflicted. 2. God's hardening is not to be regarded so much as a direct Divine act as the *withdrawal* of rejected grace; the effect of which may be illustrated by the hardening of ice when the sun's rays, which in time might have melted it, are withdrawn.

Seed-Thoughts for Senior Scholars.

1. How was Pharaoh's heart *hardened*?
2. In what sense did God harden it?
3. In God's usual dealing with men, what is his *first* method or means?
4. What are the results if the first means succeed?
5. What the *second* means, if the first fail?
6. Why, after Pharaoh's refusal, did God give him further evidence *who* he was?
7. Why was Moses directed to meet Pharaoh at the water, rather than to surprise him with the judgment?
8. Why did Moses now remind him of his first application and its refusal?
9. What uses were made of the waters of the Nile?
10. Was it any greater miracle to change these waters to *blood* than to change them to that *appearance*?
11. As the Nile was a chief object of Egyptian worship, and as Pharaoh had murdered the male children, how might this *much blood* affect them?
12. How did the growing hardness of Pharaoh's heart make known Jehovah?
13. How do you account for the *imitation* of Egyptians?
14. How was it shown that their work was *only* an imitation?

Blackboard Exercises.

"But the heart of Pharaoh was hardened." It is hardness of hearts that causeth much of the bitterness of life. A heart tender and full of

love to God is ready to obey him, and needs no afflicting rod to enforce obedience. The Egyptians, through the hardness of their hearts, suffered much, and in the very beginning of their trouble all the pure water, which was their greatest blessing, and whose value is so well known in that dry, hot land, was turned to blood, so they now turned away with loathing from that which they drank of eagerly before. *He that hath a hard heart drinketh bitterness*; sooner or later the rebellious heart feels the strong hand of God turning the very blessings of his life against him. But *he who loves God* drinks from a fountain that is never dry, whose waters flow ceaselessly through all eternity, and sweeter grow as endless ages roll away. It is the *pure water of life* that flows from the throne of God. To-day if you will hear his voice harden not your hearts, and the thirst which you will have for the love of God will enable you to drink such draughts of refreshing as only can be had from the pure water of life.

Blackboard Song:

"Jesus the water of life will give,
Freely, freely, freely."

The Primary Class.

The title of this lesson being *The First Plague*, explain the meaning of the word *plague*. Then ask a question or two about the last lesson. Tell them that God had commanded Moses, with Aaron his brother, to go to Pharaoh and direct him to let the Israelites go. Because he refused to do this, God sent different plagues, of which this lesson speaks of the first. Describe the Nile; a beautiful river flowing through the country; every year overflowing its banks because of no rain in the land; filled with fish; waters used for drinking and very sweet; led through canals; kept in large cisterns in the streets, and in small vessels in the houses; at one time worshipped as a god. This river was turned to blood, so that in every place where before there was water there was now blood. How dreadful this must have been in every house and to every person. Imagine it so with us; how should we feel?

This wicked king disobeyed God. He refused to do what God commanded even after he saw the water turned into blood. His heart was hardened. A man's heart is hard when he continues to do wrong, and does not want to do right. Even children who do wrong all the time