

THE STORY OF A LITTLE SWEEP.

It is a story of long ago, for there are no little sweeps now. No child of the present day ever saw such a thing; but forty years since it was a common sight to anybody who happened to be out early in the morning.

Amongst these sweeps was Carlo. He was not an English boy, and that made his case worse. He had come from Savoy—I am afraid he had been stolen—and, instead of the warmth and bright sunny skies of his native land, he had to live in dirt and misery and hardship as a chimney-sweep's apprentice.

But there was something in his heart which craved for better things. Nobody had ever taught him anything, but he wanted to learn to read; and after he had done his morning's work, he could roam about the streets and look in at the book shops, and wonder if ever the desire of his heart would be granted him.

One summer's day he came in his wanderings to a kind of square, where the boys of some public school were collected together at play. They had thrown their books on the ground, and several were lying open as Carlo passed by. He stopped, and stooped down to look at the strange, unknown characters. Oh, if only he understood them as these boys did!

This was too good an offer to be refused, and the lessons began. But, alas! the sooty fingers of the little sweep left their traces on the page, and the teacher said he had got in disgrace at school, and could not let him have his book any more. Poor Carlo was sorely disappointed.

Then came something else to help him on. The son of his master took him with him to the Sunday-school. There he learned to read the Bible; and, more than that, the beautiful Bible words sunk into his heart. And this was one of his favorite verses: "Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold" (Psalm lxxviii. 13).

Not that he understood exactly what it meant, but he felt something like this as he read: "I suppose pots are black; and if a dove lay among them, she would get her wings black too. But then she'd fly up, and the blacks would all shake up, and the silver and gold feathers would shine out just the same. She was not really any the worse. Perhaps it's the same with me. I'm black and grimy enough outside, I know; but then it's only the outside—God's good Spirit can make me clean and pure inside all the same."

And so He did. God Himself, the Best Teacher, taught the little sweep and led him to Jesus as his Saviour and his Friend. He did not get much farther in earthly learning, because this Friend did something far better for him—He took him to Himself. The boy met with an accident, was taken to the hospital, and died there. So now, in a shining robe instead of sooty garments, and with a heart washed white in the blood of Jesus, the little Savoyard sweep stands be-

fore the throne of God. Though once he lay among the pots, there is no dove with such silvery wings as are his now; and all his woes and hardships are forgotten amid the joys of that Happy Land.

And other poor little sweeps; did they go on in their sad life? Oh, no! The dear good Lord Shaftesbury took up their cause; and though he had to toil and talk a long time before he could make people see how cruel it was, and how unnecessary for little children to be chimney-sweeps, yet at last he conquered, and a law was passed that machines should go up the chimneys henceforward, and not infant human beings.—Child's Companion.

MUSIC-LOVING ANIMALS.

I once read a pretty story of a Scotch keeper, who when he needed to call the deer together would play upon his bagpipes. The deer, some of them a long distance off, no sooner heard the shrill strains than they at once followed the player, evidently enjoying the music.

We can also tell you about some sheep which loved music. No doubt you have heard of the great musician Haydn; you have listened to some of his well known melodies, and perhaps played them yourselves on the piano or harmonium. Like most great men, Joseph Haydn began to be great when he was a little boy. His father was a German wheelwright, and I daresay never meant him to be anything but a wheelwright too; but he showed such a taste for music, and had so sweet a voice, it was quite clear he was meant for something different. When eight years old he was chosen to be a chorister at St. Stephen's Church, in Vienna, and music was henceforward the business of his life. But while he was yet a lad, he and one of his young companions set out on a little tour. There were no railways in those days (for Haydn was born in the year 1752), and they were too poor to go by diligence, so they walked, carrying the few things they wanted in knapsacks. Of course, they could not do without some music, so their flute went with them. They had reached Italy, and while crossing the Apennines sat down to rest. It was hot, and I daresay they were weary, so the flute was brought out to refresh their spirits. The blue Italian sky was overhead, and there were vineyards in the valley below; on the hill-side sheep were feeding, though they hardly noticed them, as Haydn began playing to his friend and himself.

But presently—would you believe it?—first one sheep lifted up its head to listen, then another; then the first drew a little nearer, the second nearer still, till the others all followed and the whole flock stood as if spellbound around Joseph Haydn and his friend. They were much astonished at this very unlooked-for behavior on the part of their dumb companions, and were still more so when they found the sheep entered into the difference between the lively and the sad; for when Haydn played a plaintive air, they drooped their heads in sympathy; and when he changed it to a cheerful strain, they came closer still, and even rubbed against his legs to show their pleasure, and tell him that was what they liked the best.

We should like to tell you a little bit more about Joseph Haydn, which shows that he, like the sheep, preferred the strain that was lively. A friend asked him once, how it was that the church music he composed was always cheerful. "Well, I can't help it," he said, "when my heart is so full of joy. I write according to the thoughts I feel; and when I think upon God, and all His goodness, the notes dance and leap as it were from my pen. Since He has given me a cheerful heart, it will be pardoned me that I serve Him with a cheerful spirit."—Child's Companion.

EARLY FOOTSTEPS.

Toddling right across the floor, Stays to rest against the door: "Stay, my baby, do not fall!" "There he goes against the wall!" Struggles up, and off again, Never needs a little pain; Pattering on his little feet. Soon a fancied prize to meet; Laughing out with childish joy, When he finds a long lost toy. Ever wanting something new—Any bit of thing will do. Whimpering, laughing, crying out, Varied with a merry shout; Filling gaps with childish talk—Thus my baby learns to walk.—Little Friend.

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From International Question Book.)

LESSON VI.—MAY 8.

THE CHILD MOSES—EX. 2: 1-10.

COMMIT VERSES 7-10.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The Lord is thy keeper.—Ps. 121: 5.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

The Lord watches over and prepares his people for their work.

DAILY READINGS.

- M. Ex. 2: 1-10. T. Ex. 2: 11-25. W. Acts 7: 15-30. Th. Heb. 11: 23-28. F. Matt. 2: 1-23. Sa. Matt. 4: 1-11. Su. Ps. 121: 1-8.

TIME.—Moses was born B.C. 1571.

PLACE.—The capital of Egypt was then Zoan (Tanis, in Greek, the modern San), near the Tanitic or eastern mouth of the Nile.

MOSES WAS THE SON OF AMRAM AND JOCHEBED, of the tribe of Levi. He was born near Zoan, the capital of Egypt. He had a sister Miriam, several years older than himself, and a brother, Aaron, three years older.

INTRODUCTION.—The lesson begins in the midst of Pharaoh's efforts to stop the rapid increase of the Israelites, by severe oppressions, and by destroying all the male infants.

MOSES' TRAINING.—1. AT HOME—in true religion, in the knowledge of God, in morality, in the hopes and promises of God's people. 2. AT COURT—in all the learning of the Egyptians, as we learn from Acts 7: 22—literature, geography, engineering, astronomy, architecture, music, arithmetic. He was also "mighty in word and deed," trained in the arts of war and government. 3. BY HIS GREAT CHOICE—described in Heb 11: 24-27. He deliberately chose God and his people in poverty and slavery, rather than the court of Pharaoh. Ex. 2: 11-13 and Acts 7: 23-25 show how he put his decision into action. 4. HE WAS TRAINED IN THE WILDERNESS—by forty years of solitary thought and communion with God.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

- 1. MAN OF THE HOUSE OF LEVI—Amram, son of Kohath. DAUGHTER OF LEVI—Jochabed. 3. ARK—a covered box or basket. BULRUSHES—papyrus reeds, sewed or woven together. Egyptian paper was made from the papyrus reeds, and hence our word "paper." DAUBED IT WITH SLIME—either asphalt or Nile mud. AND PITCOIL—to make it watertight. 4. TO WIT—to know. 5. THE DAUGHTER OF PHARAOH—Josephus calls her Thermuthis. She was probably the wife of an under ruler, and had an independent household. THE RIVER—the eastern or Tanitic branch of the Nile, near Zoan, the capital. No crocodiles are found there. 7. SAID HIS SISTER—Miriam, probably twelve or fourteen years old. 9. I WILL GIVE WAGES—thus she became a servant of the princess, and she and the child were safe. 10. BROUGHT HIM TO PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER—at what age, we do not know. BECAME HER SON—was taken to her home, and trained as one of the royal family. MOSES—the word means, one drawn from the water.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—How was the Lord making a great nation of the Israelites? In what country were they? What plans did Pharaoh make to stop their rapid increase? With what success?

SUBJECT: TRAINING FOR A USEFUL LIFE.

I. THE EARLY LIFE OF MOSES (vs. 1-5).—When was Moses born? In what country? Of what tribe? What were the names of his parents? (Ex. 6: 20.) Tell the story of his childhood. To what danger was he exposed? How did his mother save his life? Who found Moses among the flags and rushes? How did Moses' sister help him? What was her name? (Ex. 15: 20.) Why was the name Moses given to this child? (v. 10.)

What marks of a divine Providence do you find in this story? Does the same kind Providence watch over us? (Matt. 10: 29-30.) What is the Golden Text? How should this fact make us feel? (1 Cor. 15: 10.)

II. HIS HOME TRAINING (vs. 8, 9).—Who became the nurse of Moses? Was this probably planned beforehand? Why was he safer now than before? How would this home training influence Moses' whole career? What would he be taught in this Hebrew home? Are you thankful for your training in religious things?

III. HIS TRAINING AT THE ROYAL COURT (v. 10).—Where did Moses go on leaving his mother? Was Pharaoh's daughter a heathen? With what influences was Moses now surrounded? What temptation would he have? What only could keep him from being spoiled? What was he taught? (Acts 7: 22.) In what were the Egyptians learned? How would this help to fit him for his great work? How long did Moses remain at Pharaoh's court? (Acts 7: 23.)

IV. HIS TRAINING BY A GREAT DECISION.—What great question came before Moses when he was forty years old? (Heb. 11: 24-26.) What would make it hard to decide aright? How did Moses decide? What effect did it have on his life? What was his first act under this decision? (Ex. 2: 11-14.) What did he expect? (Acts 7: 25.) Was his decision wise? How was it by faith? Do we all have to make a like decision? How have you decided?

V. HIS TRAINING IN THE WILDERNESS.—Why did Moses leave Egypt? (Ex. 2: 13-15.) Where did he go? What did he do in the wilderness? How long was he there? (Acts 7: 30.) What effect did this have upon his fitness to be the deliverer of his people?

LESSON VII.—MAY 15.

THE CALL OF MOSES.—EX. 3: 1-12.

COMMIT VERSES 2-5.

GOLDEN TEXT.

I will be thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.—Ex. 4: 12.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

God is preparing each one for a good work, and will call us to it in due time.

DAILY READINGS.

- M. Ex. 3: 1-12. T. Ex. 3: 13-22. W. Ex. 4: 1-20. Th. Acts 26: 12-20. F. Deut. 30: 8-20. Sa. Deut. 32: 1-18. Su. Ps. 115: 1-18.

PLACE.—The home of Moses was in the country of the Midianites, probably near Sherm, at the southern point of the peninsula of Arabia. The burning bush was on the Horeb mountain, of which Sinai was one mountain. The bush was on Sinai.

MOSES WAS BORN B.C. 1571, in Egypt, near Zoan, the capital. He was brought up as a son of Pharaoh till he was forty years old. The next forty years he lived in the wilderness of Arabia. His wife was Zipporah, daughter of Jethro. He had two sons, Gershom (a stranger here) and Eliezer (God our help).

INTRODUCTION.—When Moses fled from Pharaoh, he came to the southern point of Arabia; and at a well of the Midianites he found seven sisters trying to water their flocks, but driven away by some rude shepherds. Moses always ready to help the weak, took the part of the sisters and aided them to water the sheep. This introduced him to their father, Reuel (Jethro), a priest of Midian. He married one of the daughters, and took care of his father-in-law's sheep for forty years.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

I. JETHRO—this is the official title, meaning pre-eminence, of Reuel—also called Raguel—a priest of Midian. BACKSIDE OF THE DESERT—the farther side of the wilderness from Jethro's home. The wilderness pastures dried up in the summer, and Moses went up among the Sinai hills for pasture. HOREB—see Place: the region is called Horeb, and a single peak Sinai. 2. THE ANGEL OF THE LORD—God in visible form. BUSH—the thorny acacia, abundant in these mountains. It was a small spreading tree. FLAME OF FIRE—the best natural symbol of God, shining, life-giving, consuming evil, purifying, powerful. BUSH NOT CONSUMED—a type of Israel and the church, in the furnace of affliction, but not destroyed, because God's presence was there. 5. PUT OFF THY SHOES—the Egyptians always took off their shoes, as we do our hats, before entering a temple. It was a sign of reverence. 6. GOD OF ABRAHAM—therefore the one who made the promises to the Israelites. 8. CANAANITES, etc.—the others were mostly the tribes descended from the sons of Canaan. A land that supported so many tribes must be good and large. 11. WHO AM I?—Moses' first difficulty, his personal unworthiness. A single shepherd, what could he do against the most powerful monarch in the world? 12. I WILL BE WITH THEE—God's answer to Moses. God would do the work, not Moses. Moses found three other difficulties in the way. The second difficulty was to convince the people of the authority and nature of God who sent him. The third was to make the people believe that Moses was sent by God. For this he was endowed with the power of working miracles. The fourth was Moses' slowness of speech. To meet this Aaron was associated with him.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—Give a brief outline of Moses' early life? How long before this lesson did Moses leave Egypt? Why? Who became Moses' wife? How did he first become acquainted with her? (Ex. 2: 15-21.) What are the names of his two sons? (Ex. 2: 22; 18: 4.)

SUBJECT: OUR CALL FROM GOD TO LIFE'S WORK.

I. THE LONG PREPARATION (v. 1).—What did Moses do in Midian? Who was Jethro? Meaning of "the backside of the desert"? Where was Horeb? What other name is given to these mountains? (19: 1.) What were some of the events which took place there? (Ex. 20: 1, etc.; 1 Kings 19: 8-14.) How long did Moses spend in this region? (Acts 7: 30.)

What would you learn of Moses' feelings from the names he gave his two sons? In what ways did Moses' long retirement prepare him for his work, spiritually, mentally, physically, by knowledge of the region? What hints have we of a change wrought in Moses' character? (Compare Acts 7: 23-26, with Ex. 3: 11.) Give some examples of a similar retirement!

II. THE CALL OF GOD (vs. 2-6).—Who is the angel of the Lord? In what form did he appear to Moses? In what place? In what respects is fire a symbol of God? What is represented by the bush in the flame, but unconsumed? Give an illustration from Daniel. (Dan. 3: 23-27.) Why did Moses take off his shoes? What does this teach as to our behavior in the house of God? Why was Moses afraid?

What kind of a bush was this? In what sense was the place "holy ground"? Is one place more holy than another? Why? How may we make all places holy? Why are men afraid in the manifest presence of God?

III.—THE DUTY OF THE HOUR (7-10).—What was the work Moses was called to do? Had God known all these years the afflictions of his people? Can you see how all this time God was preparing the answer to their prayers?

IV. DIFFICULTIES REMOVED (vs. 11, 12).—What difficulties did Moses find in the way? Was the work very great and beyond his power? How did God remove this difficulty? What was the second difficulty? (v. 13.) How did God remove this? What was the third difficulty? (4: 1.) How was this removed? What was the fourth difficulty? (4: 10.) How was this removed? Will God remove all real difficulties in the way of our duty?

LESSON CALENDAR.

(Second Quarter, 1887.)

- 6. May 8.—The Child Moses.....Exod. 2: 1-10. 7. May 15.—The Call of Moses.....Exod. 3: 1-12. 8. May 22.—The Passover.....Exod. 12: 1-14. 9. May 29.—The Red Sea.....Exod. 14: 10-31. 10. June 5.—The Manna.....Exod. 16: 1-12. 11. June 12.—The Commandments.....Exod. 20: 1-11. 12. June 19.—The Commandments.....Exod. 20: 12-21. 13. June 26.—Review, Temperance, Lev. 10: 1-11, and Missions, Ex. 35: 20-26.