

## TEACHING HINTS

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

### For Teachers of the Older Scholars and Bible Classes

Introduce the Lesson with a reference to the Philistine demand for a combat by champions (vs. 8-10); the dismay of Israel (v. 11); the prolonged suspense (vs. 16, 24); and the final acceptance of the challenge (v. 32) by the obscure shepherd lad, acting at the time as errand-boy to his big brothers (vs. 17, 18), who had a hearty contempt for him, v. 28.

1. *Arming for the fray*, vs. 38-40. Picture the gigantic man, his heavy armor at every step rattling like a crate of dishes (vs. 5, 6); his mammoth spear and sword brandished menacingly in the sun. Saul provides David with armor (v. 38); but the sagacity of the shepherd convinces him, after experiment (v. 39), that it will put him at a disadvantage. The Philistine is used to all this clumsy accoutrement. David is not. He will be wiser to move unencumbered and depend upon his familiar sling. Solitary struggles endured with no other armor than a determined will and faith in Christ, are the best training and equipment for open conflicts, 2 Cor. 10 : 3-5.

2. *The battle of words*, vs. 41-47. Canadian schoolboys are not unaccustomed to the stinging taunts that precede fisticuffs; but Goliath's defiance (vs. 43, 44), and David's retorts (vs. 45-47), are peculiarly Oriental. The real battle follows. We often complacently quote the old doggerel about "sticks and stones", but it is amazing how merely "calling names" still hurts. The taunts of unbelief often make Christians stagger as if they had been real blows, Ps. 42 : 10. Faith should always have the last word to say, 1 John 5 : 4, 5. An undaunted front is half the battle. Many fall because they don't believe they can stand.

3. *The triumph of faith over brute force*, vs. 48, 49. Brute force still goes hurtling through the world with its coarse jests and boastful threats; but after all it is frequently arrested by seemingly inadequate forces, Judg. 7 : 20. The superior strength of an enemy does not settle everything. In the war of 1812, at Chateauguay, 350 French-Canadians, largely

through the skilful use of bugles, defeated 3,500 invaders advancing on Montreal. David's sling practice served him in good stead, v. 49. He had learned his unerrancy of aim in daily life. That kind of "practice" usually tells, whether we fight against evil thoughts, angry tempers, unkind language, bitter jealousy, consuming selfishness, debasing appetite, or what not. The best preparation for warring with Giant Despair, Giant Diffidence, Giant Intemperance, Giant Impurity, Giant Mammon, and all others, is to wear the solid steel of heaven, Eph. 6 : 14-18.

### For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

Recall, from last Lesson, David, the shepherd lad, his quiet time on the hills with the gentle flocks, his chances there of thinking of and communing with God, the sudden summons home, the strange anointing at the hand of the old prophet, and the new stirrings of the Spirit of God within him. He knew now that he was to be king. The interest of the Lesson to-day will turn, in part at least, on his preparation for that high position. The scholars may know that a portion of the training of the present Prince of Wales, who will by and by be king, was a thorough course in seamanship, from midshipman upwards, and that his eldest son is already entered in the naval academy.

*At Saul's court*, as harper (ch. 16 : 23), and armor-bearer, ch. 16 : 21 : these were steps in the preparation. Have the scholars mark, that what the young David did he did willingly and well.

*At the camp*. There will be no difficulty in getting the story of the giant, and his challenges—the scholars will be eager here. And they will follow the young shepherd up from the fields (see v. 15) to the camp, with provisions for his brothers and a present for their captain. They will watch him as he catches sight of the Philistine champion. Bring out the king's promise to the victor (v. 25), David's enquiry (v. 26), Eliab, his elder brother's scorn (v. 28), and the thrilling dialogue between David and Saul, vs. 32, 33, which brings at last the king's consent to his fight.

*Armed for the battle*. Saul's armor? Why not? He hadn't proved it. In our battles