

COLUMBUS' FLEET.

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Our picture shows the three vessels of Columbus leaving the harbour of Palos. Very small and inadequate for such an undertaking were these vessels, and unmanageable also. No one a whit less brave and determined than Columbus ever would have ventured on the great unknown waters in these light ships and with such a crew as he had been given. Fortunately, however, the weather was calm, and these caravels on which such mighty issues depended made their long voyage and returned in safety.

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER.

LESSON IV.—JANUARY 22.

JOSHUA THE HIGH PRIEST.

Zech. 3. 1-10.] [Memory verses, 7, 8.

GOLDEN TEXT.

We have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God.—Hab. 4. 14.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Jesus Christ, our great high priest, brings to us the cleansing from sin necessary for dwelling in the city of God.

TIME.—Zechariah began to prophesy in November B.C. 520, the month following our last lesson. The lesson for to-day was one of a series of visions seen on the night of the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, that is, in March, 519.

PLACE.—Jerusalem.

PROPHET.—Haggai prophesied at the same time and place and for the same object.

PLACE IN BIBLE HISTORY.—Ezra, chapters 5 and 6. The first prophecy between verses 9 and 10 of Hag. 2. The lesson just after the close of Haggai's prophecy.

THE CIRCUMSTANCES.

The returned exiles had, fifteen years before, begun to rebuild the temple; and then, on account of the great opposition, had ceased to build. Just before this time they had again entered upon the work, under the inspiration of Haggai. But there was much to discourage the feeble band; the building would be inferior to the former temple, and their enemies had written against them to the Persian government.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

The lesson to-day is one of a series of visions in one night, the object of which was to encourage the people. The first one showed that God knew and influenced all parts of the world. The second showed that God's spiritual forces were destroying the power of their great enemies. The third was a promise of such growth and prosperity that no walls could contain the people or were needed for their defence. The fourth showed them that their sins were forgiven. 1. "Joshua"—Representing the nation. "Satan"—Accusing them of sin. 2. "A brand plucked out of the fire"—Representing the Israelites consumed

by captivity, almost burned up as a nation by their enemies and by their sins, but saved from those fires by God, because there was something to be saved. It showed his care and love. 3. "Clothed with filthy garments"—A type of this sinful state of the nation which he represented. 4. "A change of raiment"—A festival dress, a beautiful garment, showing that God had forgiven and cleansed them from sin. 7. "I will give thee places," etc. Room among the angels. "Men wondered at"—A portent, a sign, a type. The priests were a type of Jesus, the great high priest, and their services types of spiritual things. "The Branch"—Christ. Isaiah 11. 1. 9. "Stone"—Foundation stone; head of the corner Christ. "Seven ages"—The seven spirits of God; that is, the complete Spirit of God in all his working.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

Every great cause has its periods of discouragement.

God's cure for discouragement is through his prophets and promises and the assurance of success.

The great forces of God work silently but surely.

Only through cleansing from sin can we enter the kingdom of God.

We are not only cleansed from the past, but purified and crowned with holiness and joy.

Jesus is our great high priest. To each disciple is given a white stone, on which a new name is written.

REVIEW EXERCISE

1. Who was Zechariah? A prophet living in Jerusalem at the same time with Haggai.
2. What was his work? To encourage the people in rebuilding the temple and the city.
3. How did he accomplish it? By messages from God, illustrated by types and symbols.
4. What was the one in this lesson? The high priest standing before the judgment-seat in filthy garments, acquitted, and clothed in beautiful garments.
5. What did this teach? That God forgave the sins of his people, and would make them holy and blessed.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

What does his new commandment mean? That we should show special love to all the disciples of Christ, by whatever name they are called.

Ephesians 6. 24; 1 John 4. 11; 1 John 3. 16; Romans 12. 10; Galatians 6. 10; Hebrews 13. 1; 2 Peter 1. 7.

MESSAGES.

A GERMAN fable tells that once upon a time Death promised a young man that he would not summon him until he had first sent several messengers to apprise him of his coming.

So the youth took his fill of pleasure and wasted health and strength in riotous living. Presently a fever laid him low; but as no messenger had appeared he had no apprehensions; and when he recovered he returned to his former sins. He then fell a prey to other maladies, but remembering his covenant with Death, made light of

them. "I am not going to die," he cried, "the first messenger has not yet come."

But one day some one tapped him on the shoulder. He turned and saw Death standing at his elbow. "Follow me," said the King of Terrors, "the hour of thy departure is come."

"How is this?" exclaimed the youth, "Thou art false to thy words! Thou didst promise to send me messengers, and I have seen none."

"Silence!" sternly answered the destroyer, "I have sent messenger after messenger. What was the fever? What was the apoplexy? What was each sickness that befell thee? Each was my herald; each was my messenger."

The Drunkard's Daughter.

Out in the street, with naked feet,
I saw the drunkard's little daughter;
Her tattered shawl was thin and small;
She knew little—for no one taught her.

Heart-broken child, she seldom smiled;
Hope promised her no bright morrow;
Or, if its light flashed on her night,
Then up came darker clouds of sorrow.

She softly said: "We have no bread,
No wood to keep the fire a-burning."
The child was ill, the winds were chill;
Her thin, cold blood to ice was turning.

But men well fed and warmly clad,
And ladies robed in richest fashion,
Passed on the side where no one cried
To them, for pity or compassion.

That long night fled, and then the light
Of rosy day in beauty shining,
Set dome and spire and roof on fire,
And shone on one beyond repining.

Asleep—alone—as cold as stone,
Where no dear parent ever sought her;
In a winding-sheet of snow and sleet,
Was found the drunkard's lifeless daughter.

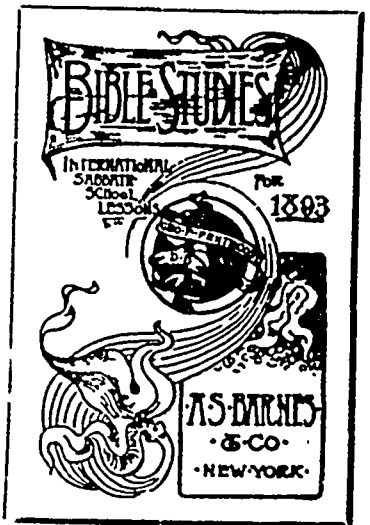
A BEGGAR-BOY IN CHINA.

SUMMER or winter, he is up early and out on the road, watching for the carts or litters carrying travellers to and from the great cities. He hails the rufian with the cry: "Lao yeh, lao yeh, kei wo i ko ch'ien pa"—that is, "Venerable sir, venerable sir, give me a cash." It does not matter whether the traveller is old or young, he calls him old, as any other address would not be respectful.

Perhaps the traveller does not give at once. Then the boy runs ahead, drops on his knees for an instant, knocks his head to the ground, and, scrambling to his feet runs after the cart with the same cry as before.

The greater part of the year the little beggar is clad only in a suit of brown which nature has provided. Relays of these little fellows are seen on all the great roads. What becomes of them when they get to large to bag, who knows?

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