

In all this there was no premeditated plan of revolt or national deliverance. It was the sudden act of an old priest infuriated by the desecration of his faith; but as it has happened so often since, it was really the beginning of a national resistance that was ultimately crowned with success, and was destined to make his name and that of his sons illustrious in the annals of his country's history. The immediate effect, however, was only a terrible fear, as the inhabitants of Modin saw what was done. The news would reach Jerusalem, and an army be immediately despatched against them. Gathering together their little possessions, they dashed into the caves and retreats of the neighboring mountains, to live like the animals, and feed on the wild herbs of the wilderness. Such a sight, we are told, may be witnessed even to-day in unhappy Palestine, where, under Turkish rule, the extortions of the tax-gatherers often provoke the violence of the exasperated peasantry, and the latter have then to flee to the waste lands of the country to escape punishment. And now Mattathias raised the standard of revolt. The villagers of Modin formed the nucleus of his band, but it was soon augmented by accessions from the *chasidim*, or Puritans (the later Pharisees). The war-cry was *the ancient religion of their fathers*. In the first year of the revolt Mattathias succumbed under the weight of years and the hardships he had undergone. But the work was taken up instantly by his five sons. "Seldom," says a great German historian, "has the world seen an instance of five brothers, animated by the same spirit, and without mutual jealousy, sacrificing themselves for the same cause, of whom one only survived another in order to carry it on, if possible, with more zeal and success, while not one had anything in view but the great object for which his father had fallen." The second, SIMON, was esteemed the wisest of the brothers, and JUDAS, the third, the greatest warrior. It is the achievements of this latter that we are about to relate. He was surnamed MACCABÆUS, which means the *hammerer*, and to him the command of the insurgent forces immediately fell. There is hardly a greater instance in history of unselfishness of aim, humility of life, and success in arms than that which his career affords, and, though not living in an age falling within the limits of the inspired Book, he is worthy of a place beside Moses, and Joshua, and Gideon, and David, as leaders and benefactors of God's people.

With a small but united band of enthu-

siasts, Judas Maccabæus took the field in 167 B.C. against the tyranny of Antiochus. His aim was to restore the religion of his fathers, to free Israel from the Greeks, and re-establish the independence of the nation; and to accomplish it they were all prepared to shed their last drop of blood. The governor of Samaria, to whom Judea had been recently assigned as a province, collected all his local forces and advanced against Judas, but was defeated and slain. His sword was afterwards carried by Judas in all his battles. But more terrible foes were now to be met, for, hearing of the defeat, Antiochus despatched his general, Seron, with an army of regular troops, to put down the insurrection. The orders of the general were more violent than any given before. The Jewish insurgents were to be annihilated, and their religion utterly stamped out. The land was to be colonized by strangers and parcelled among them by lot. With an imperious confidence, the army of Seron marched toward Jerusalem by the main road from Lydda, past Modin, the home of Judas, and climbed the steep ascent to Bethhoron. The road here became a narrow mountain pass, and at the top of it Judas placed his scanty forces, displaying a military talent of a very high order. Here he waited for the Greek advance. The place was one full of inspiring memories. Not only was Modin, his father's burial place, near by, but here, many hundred years before, Joshua had defeated the Amorites, on the day when he commanded the sun to stand still until the enemy was crushed. All about him, too, were spots renowned in Jewish history. On came the Greek host, when, suddenly, Judas charged and, with every advantage of ground, drove their shattered forces further, even, than Joshua pursued the Amorites at the first battle of Bethhoron. It was a glorious victory, and secured, for the time being, a very large measure of independence. Moreover, such a spirit was infused into the heart of every Jew as made further victories almost certain.

In 165 B.C., three new generals were sent to reconquer Judea. They commanded a force of 40,000 footmen and 7,000 horse. Remembering the fate of Seron, they tried a new road to Jerusalem, the main road leading up from the west. With this overwhelming force they felt certain of success, and they permitted merchants to follow the camp provided with gold and silver to buy, as slaves, the Jewish captives of the next battle, little dreaming that Judas was about to win another—

and, perhaps, his greatest—victory. His little army of 3,000 men he gathered at Mizpeh, immediately north of Jerusalem, and spent a day in prayer and fasting. At night they set out on a long march, and in the gray dawn found themselves in sight of the Greek army. In the meanwhile, one of the Greek generals, Gorgias, had been despatched, with 5,000 men, to surprise Judas by night and prevent his retreat into the mountains. This detachment was allowed to slip by, and Judas, with a Napoleonic instinct for battle, resolved to attack the main army under Nicanor, who was utterly unprepared for a fight, thinking that Gorgias had already defeated the handful of Jews. The attack was made at Emmaus, and was so sudden and unexpected that the Greeks fled without striking a blow, and left their whole camp as booty for the victors. And now Gorgias, having wandered about in the mountains, vainly seeking Judas, returned, but the first sight that met him was the blazing tents of the main army, and the first sound, the Jewish trumpet calling to the onset. There was another precipitate retreat, and the little force of 3,000 Jewish warriors stood victors over 40,000 picked troops of Antiochus. This battle of Emmaus is generally considered the most brilliant of the many victories of Judas.

(To be continued.)

OUR ALARM CLOCK.

Not many years ago a student, desiring to rise early in the morning, bought an alarm clock. For a short time it worked well. But one morning, after being aroused by its alarm, he turned over and went to sleep again. On the subsequent mornings the clock failed to wake him. He placed it at the head of his bed in close proximity to his ear. There it woke him till the time he disobeyed its summons; ever afterwards it was a failure; he slept through its call with perfect regularity.

In like manner the conscience may be deadened. Let the Christian disregard its voice, and soon it will become unable to arouse him at all. Let him carefully heed its faintest remonstrance, and it will become to him a most valuable mentor. Take good care of your conscience; it is a most delicate apparatus.

"LET our unceasing, earnest prayer
Be, too, for light—for strength to bear
Our portion of the weight of care
That crushes into dumb despair
One-half the human race."

—Longfellow.