

## The Bird's Calendar.

BY FLORENCE TYLER.

## MAY.

Six poplar trees in golden green  
Stand up the sweet May snow between—  
The snow of plum and pear tree bloom:  
And I, looking down from my little room,  
Called to the bird on the bough. "What  
cheer?"  
And he pipes for answer: "The spring  
is here."

## JUNE.

A month goes by with its sun and rain,  
And a rosebud taps at my window pane:  
I see in the garden down below,  
The tall white lilies, a stately row;  
The birds are pecking the cherries red.  
"Summer is sweet," the robins said.

## OCTOBER.

Again I look from my casement down;  
The leaves are changing to red and  
brown;

As overhead, through a sky of gray,  
The swallows are flying far away.  
"Whither away, sweet birds?" I cry;  
"Autumn is come," they make reply.

## DECEMBER.

Keenly, coldly, the north winds blow;  
Silently falls the pure white snow,  
Of birds and blossoms am I bereft,  
One brave, bright robin alone is left,  
And he taps and chirps at my window-  
pane—

"Take heart, the spring will return  
again."

## YOUNG PEOPLE OF EGYPT.

BY J. E. BADDOUR.

The privileges and modes of life enjoyed by young people of both sexes in this country are unimaginable and inconceivable to the young people of Egypt. Surely they are to be pitied for that life which is void of all joy and happiness, but how strange it sounds when I say that they are satisfied with it, and will never change it so long as they are strict believers in the Mohammedan religion, which permeates all their modes of life and makes them mere slaves, following blindly, but strictly, the supposed example of their prophet, Mohammed.

Mohammed know no foreign language, therefore it is a sin to the strict believer to study a foreign tongue or allow his son to master any language but the revealed one of their sacred Koran—the language of God and the angels in heaven, according to the Moslem belief.

Mohammed used no fork or knife, and hence the Moslem indulges in his meals using his fingers, dipping them freely, now into a semi-fluid dish, and then into another of a thicker consistency, conveying their contents to his mouth in a manner curious to behold. In fine, there is nothing that a Moslem does unless it has a precedent in the life of the Prophet or his caliphs, which instructs him in the ways he is to follow from the time he is born till his death.

When a child is born, certain ceremonies must be observed in regard to him. He is taken by a man who shouts in his ear "the call to prayer," which is believed to guard the child from the influence of the "jin," or devil, of whom the Mohammedans are constantly in terror; and very often they desert their houses from the supposition that they are haunted by this terrible "jin."

When the boy attains his second year his head is shaven, leaving only a small tuft at the crown of it. This custom is also prevalent among the older people, who shave the entire head, excepting this tuft and the moustache. It is for a well-founded reason that this tuft is left there untouched, and that is, if the Moslem should fall into the hands of an infidel (all but Moslems are hated infidels) and be slain, the infidel might cut off the head of his victim, and, finding no hair by which to hold it, put his impure hand into the mouth in order to carry it, thus polluting the sacred head of the "believer."

When the boy is able to walk, he is frequently seen playing in the streets, carrying about him all sorts of amulets, blue stones, relics of saints and texts from the Koran enveloped in skin cases. All these are to guard and protect him from injury of every kind, and from the "evil eye" particularly.

It is not uncommon to witness, in the streets of Cairo, veiled women in their black, silky gowns, looking like ghosts while walking and like balloons when they are riding on donkeys' backs, with all sorts of perfumes emanating from their persons, while their children follow barefooted, dressed in girls' habits, with dirty candles in their hands and utterly neglected in regard to cleanliness, so that swarms of flies are continually on their faces and hands and in their eyes, whizzing and buzzing all around them, making their lives a burden. This



ARAB SCHOOL.

is done to guard their dear boys from the "evil eye"; and it often happens that the terrible results of these noxious flies stinging the eyes of the children is partial or total blindness.

When a boy is six or seven years old he is sent to the Maktab, or school, where a sheik takes charge of him and begins to teach him the Arabic alphabet. As soon as it is learned the texts of the Koran are given him to be memorized.

The manner in which the boys are taught to study is very peculiar. They are taught to swing their heads to the right and left while repeating these texts in a musical manner, chanting them all the while, at the same time keeping time with the swinging motion of their heads, which not infrequently collide, and thus awaken their owners to the necessity of conforming to the general swing of the class. These boys are seated on mats, with their legs tucked under them, while the sheik, sitting on a chair before them, watches, with his long stick in hand, and a cigarette perhaps, in the other, and he slouts his threats of whipping any one who "lifts his eyes from his book," as he expresses it.

The poor little boys keep repeating all day long the same text in that wearisome, swinging manner, until they get dizzy, and usually most of them fall asleep in spite of the threatening stick of the venerable sheik, who gets tired of his monotonous watch and in turn falls asleep, too. He thus gives the nimble boys a good chance to have their own way and enjoy themselves; they slip out to the streets, do every mischief they can, and come back to find their good sheik in his deep, usual slumber.

This is the fundamental education which the Moslem boys get at these Maktabs, and it is the ways of study and the perverted ideas which they obtain that stay by them and are eradicated, if at all, with great difficulty when they get to the government schools that are under English supervision, or the other schools under the American, English, or German missions.

The girl presents a different aspect altogether. When a girl is born grief

befalls that house, and often the "sad news" is kept from the mother at the time lest some evil might happen to her. Friends console the father for the misfortune which has come to him, the birth of the innocent girl being regarded hardly less than a misfortune. Among the higher classes a girl is not disliked to the extent manifested by the lower classes of people.

No education whatever is given to the females. The Moslems do not believe in educating their daughters; a female, they say, is not born to become educated and share the privileges of man.

There is no communication whatever between the two sexes, and the young men of Egypt, as well as the young women, are thus deprived of this intercourse so general in Christian countries, and so ennobling and elevating to the character of both man and woman. How long will the female sex be so degraded and maltreated, and when will man look upon her as his equal and companion in life? So long as the Moslem's religion reigns supreme in that country, will this deplorable condition of things continue. No change is possible until Christianity has a firm footing and works vigorously to form minds and renew hearts that will look with faith and reverence toward her and their Creator.—Forward.

## LESSON NOTES.

## SECOND QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE ACTS AND EPISTLES.

## LESSON VII.—MAY 16.

PAUL PREACHING TO THE GENTILES.

Acts 14. 11-22. Memory verses, 21, 22.

## GOLDEN TEXT.

I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles.—Acts 13. 47.

## OUTLINE.

1. False Worshippers, v. 11-13.



MOTHER: "The doctor says you've been such a good, such a very good boy, Harry, that he's going to let you get out of bed just as soon as you've taken every drop of this Cod Liver Oil!"

2. Faithful Witnesses, v. 14-18.  
3. Faithful Workers, v. 19-22.  
Time.—A.D. 46.  
Places.—Lystra, Derbe, and Iconium,  
in Asia Minor.

## HOME READINGS.

M. Work at Iconium.—Acts 14. 1-7.  
Tu. Paul preaching to the Gentiles.—  
Acts 14. 8-18.  
W. Paul preaching to the Gentiles.—  
Acts 14. 19-28.  
Th. God in nature.—Rom. 1. 16-23.  
F. Worship God.—Rev. 19. 6-10.  
S. The Lord delivered me.—2 Tim. 3.  
10-17.  
Su. Glorifying in suffering.—2 Cor. 11.  
21-30.

## QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. False Worshippers, v. 11-13.  
What did the people say?  
What new names were given to the  
apostles?  
What divine honours were offered  
them?  
Repeat our Golden Text.  
2. Faithful Witnesses, v. 14-18.  
What did Paul and Barnabas do?  
What did they say about themselves?  
What about preaching?  
What had God hitherto permitted?  
What evidence of his love had he  
given?  
What greater evidence of love has he  
given? John 3. 16.  
What had the apostles difficulty in  
preventing?

3. Faithful Workers, v. 19-22.

What enemies came to Lystra? From  
whence?How did they show their perversity?  
How much did Paul suffer from human  
perversity? 2 Cor. 11. 24, 25.What occurred while the disciples  
stood about Paul?Who was Paul's deliverer? 2 Tim.  
3. 11.

Where did Paul and Barnabas go?

What did they there do?

What journey did they then take?

What good work did they do?

## PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Where in this lesson are we shown—

1. That wrong religious beliefs are  
dangerous?

2. That public opinion is changeable?

3. That moral courage eventually wins?

Barnes (laying aside a letter)—"I'd  
like t' get this 'ere feller for a hired  
man." Mrs. Barnes—"Why, Josh?"  
Barnes—"Cause he signs himself, 'Your  
obedient servant.'"

They had been discussing the pro-  
nunciation of "oleomargarine," and  
finally agreed to leave it to the waiter;  
but he hedged. "Sure," said he, "I  
have to pronounce it 'butter,' or lose  
my job."

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