



A TREE-CLIMBING FISH.

BY GRANT ALLEN

Of all land frequenting fish by far the most famous is the so-called climbing-pitch of India, which not only walks but swims out of the water but even climbs trees by means of special spines near the head and tail, so arranged as to stick into the bark, and enable it to wiggle its way up awkwardly, something after the same fashion as the "looping" of caterpillars.

The tree climber is a small scaly fish, seldom more than seven inches long, but it has developed a special breathing apparatus to enable it to keep up the stock of oxygen on its terrestrial excursions, which may be regarded, to some extent, the exact converse of the means employed by divers to supply themselves with air under water. Just above the gills, which form of course its natural hereditary breathing apparatus, the climbing perch has invented a new and wholly original water-chamber, containing within it a frilled bony organ, which enables it to extract oxygen from the stored up water during the course of its aerial peregrinations.

While on shore it picks up small insects, worms, and grubs; but it also has vegetarian tastes of its own, and does not despise fruits and berries.

The Indian jugglers tame the climbing-perches, and carry them about with them as part of their stock-in-trade. Their ability to live for a long time out of water makes them useful confederates in many tricks which seem very wonderful to people accustomed to believe that fish die almost at once when taken out of their native element. - Popular Science Monthly.

LESSON NOTES.

THIRD QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

LESSON II.—JULY 9.

DANIEL IN BABYLON.

Dan. 1. 8-21. Memory verses 17-20

GOLDEN TEXT.

Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself. Dan. 1. 8.

OUTLINE.

- 1. True to God, v. 8-16.
- 2. Honoured of Men, v. 17-21.

Time.—About 598 or 597 B.C.
Place.—Babylon.

Daniel was one of the best of the old Jewish prophets. He was a statesman at a foreign court, he was a man of prayer. True piety marked him from his youth upward. He was enslaved and taken to Babylon, but he never forgot the home of his early days nor Jehovah and his people. The book he wrote is partly historical, as is seen in the first six chapters, and is partly prophetic, as is seen in the last six chapters.

LESSON HELPS.

8. "But Daniel purposed in his heart." A young man with a purpose and a conscientious one, and so strong he could not be laughed or threatened out of it. "That he would not defile himself with the king's meat"—He was true to the Mosaic regulations, and therefore would not eat meat (1) ceremonially unclean, (2) or which had been offered in part to idols. "The prince of the eunuchs"—Was a chief officer at court.

9. "God had brought Daniel into favour"—Not by miracle, but by bringing out the noble part of his nature. He was favoured, for he was worthy of favour.

10. It was a mistake to fear that plain food would make their "faces worse liking" than others. Gluttony and costly luxuries do not promote physical beauty. "Endanger my head"—For the heads of king's servants were taken off

for trifling offences, and sometimes to please the whims of a tyrant king. "Meizar"—An officer under Ashpenaz whose duty it was to attend to the food and clothing of the royal captives.

12. "Prove"—That is, make test or trial of. "Thy servants"—Or slaves, though well-treated ones. "Pulse"—That is, seed or grain. There was doubtless a special blessing on such a diet, because prompted by religious motives. "Water to drink"—The best beverage is water, pure, abundant.

13. "And as thou seest, deal with thy servants"—If they thrive under such fare for ten days, let them continue to have it.

15. "The king's meat"—Good in itself, but not good to those who had conscientious scruples. Conscience should be the guide, yet every effort should be made, as with a watch, to regulate and keep it accurate.

17. "As for these four children"—Young men or youths would be a better translation. Understanding in all visions and dreams—Such as were inspired, for most dreams are from a deranged state of the body or a disturbed state of the mind.

18. "Nebuchadnezzar"—Then the reigning king in Babylon.

20. "Astrologers"—Men who studied the stars, partly from a scientific motive, partly to read in their movements the destinies of men. Astronomy had its birth in astrology.

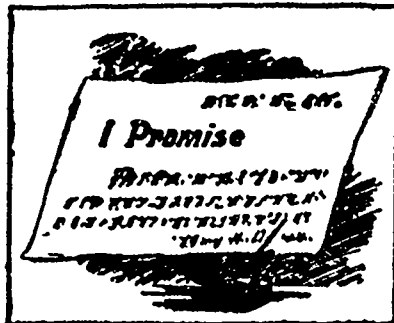
HOME READINGS.

- M. Captivity.—Dan. 1. 1-7.
- Tu. Daniel in Babylon.—Dan. 1. 8-21.
- W. Prosperity from God.—Gen. 39. 1-6.
- Th. The safe way.—Psalm 1.
- F. The upright way.—Prov. 16. 1-9.
- S. Temperate in all things.—1 Cor. 9. 19-27.
- Su. The Rechabites honoured.—Jer. 35. 12-19.

How long did Daniel remain at court? What promise does godliness hold forth? 1 Tim. 4. 8.

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

- Where in this lesson are we taught—
- 1. To be true to conscience?
- 2. To be courteous to all men?
- 3. To be diligent in business?



A primary temperance lesson is based upon the subject of "keeping the body under." This, however, is to present the negative side of the primary temperance question. Presenting its positive side, we should promise God to keep ourselves pure. How blessed are we when we acquire a splendid training of body, mind, and soul!



(See S. S. Lessons for June 2.)

Let us call our lesson topic "Bible Invitations." From the nine verses of our



DEATH IN THE BOTTLE.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

- 1. True to God, v. 8-16.
 - What was Daniel's settled purpose?
 - Golden Text.
 - How does this purpose show that he was true to God?
 - What request did he make?
 - What mark of favour had God given Daniel?
 - What favour may all expect who please God? Prov. 16. 7.
 - What did the prince of the eunuchs fear?
 - What were the names of Daniel's three young friends?
 - To whom did Daniel propose a test?
 - How long a test did he ask?
 - What was the test?
 - What was the result of the trial?
 - What food was given to Daniel and his three friends?
 - What rule should govern Christians in eating and drinking? 1 Cor. 10. 31.
- 2. Honoured of men, v. 17-21.
 - What gifts did God bestow on these captives?
 - What further skill had Daniel?
 - Before whom were the Hebrews brought?
 - Who surpassed all their companions?
 - What reward had they?
 - How did they compare with the magicians?

lesson text we glean the invitations: "Return to the Lord," "Ask him to receive." Our invitation says, "I will heal," "I will love," "I will be as the dew," and asks us to "grow as the lily," with the promise that we shall "dwell under his shadow."

DEATH IN THE BOTTLE.

This is not a very pretty picture; but it is just as pretty as the hideous traffic it depicts. Death as a gaunt and grinning skeleton is pointing to the coffin hidden in every whiskey or brandy bottle. There's death in the cup; there's poison in the bowl. Did you ever think that the word intoxicate means to poison? The following lines describe the picture better than we can:

"Oft have you seen attractive signs That told of old and costly wines, Or couched in terms to catch the eye And lure the thoughtless passer-by; You have beheld the devil's bait Concealed in showy cards, that state How whiskey, brandy, rum, or gin May all, and more, be had within; And you have smiled and caught the hook, Nor thought to give a second look. But turn the glass; 'twill well define The shape of each deceitful sign."

One is a coffin, one a tomb, That wait the toper's early doom; While near at hand, beside the wall, There stands the drunkard's waiting pall.

Fit things, indeed, to lure the blind; Make sure a grave is close behind."

God's Ways.

BY REV. J. B. RANKIN, LL.D.

God's ways are not like human ways; He wears such strange disguises: He tries us by his long delays, And then our faith surprises. While we in unbelief deplore, And wonder at his staying, He stands already at the door, To interrupt our praying.

He takes his leader from the Nile, Where mother hands have laid him; Hides him in palaces the while, Till he has right arrayed him. He sends him to the desert's hush, With flocks and herds to wander, Then meets him in the burning bush, New mysteries to ponder.

Why should we doubt his care or grace, As though he had forgotten; As though time's changes could efface What love has once begotten; As though he'd lost us from his thought, And moved on now without us, Whose love has always goodness wrought, And constant been about us?

Spiritual ploughman, sharpen thy ploughshare with the Spirit! Spiritual sower, dip thy seed in the Spirit, so shall it germinate, and ask the Spirit to give thee grace to scatter it, that it may fall into the right furrows! Spiritual warrior, whet that sword with the Spirit, and ask the Spirit, whose word is a sword indeed, to strengthen thy arm to wield it!—Spurgeon.

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