

## TEACHING HINTS.

Have the class notice these things in regard to the Book of Esther.

(a) It gives a vivid picture of life in an Eastern court,—king, queens, courtiers, banquets, the gallows, favorites clad in gorgeous array,—all are sketched in strong colors.

(b) It affords a glimpse of the methods of rule, and the ways of communication-between different parts of the empire—the sudden advancement and as sudden fall of Haman; the influence of Mordecai and Esther in the court; the decree signed with the king's signet; the swift "posts" on mule and camel-back carrying the decree to the distant provinces.

(c) There is no mention of the name of God, and yet it is all a most striking illustration of God's care of His people.

There are two lessons from this charming old book. That of to-day describes

## THE HATCHING OF A DASTARDLY PLOT

We have

1. *The Chief Plotter*, Haman, contemptuously styled "the Agagite," suddenly advanced to honor, a veritable "beggar on horseback." The teacher will do well to make Haman, the prince, quite real. To this end, study closely vs. 1, 2; also, for the setting of the picture, ch. 1: 1-7.

2. *The Stout-hearted Non-conformist*. No!

Mordecai would do no reverence, when doing reverence meant compromising his religion (vs. 2-4). He feared God, and because he feared God, he feared none else.

3. *The Plotter and his Victims*. An angry man was Haman, because his race prejudice and his pride were touched. This beggarly foreigner, who was he, that he should not do reverence to Haman? Haman was "full of wrath" (v. 5); so full, that he will crush every Jew, as well as the wretched Mordecai himself (v. 6).

Very superstitious,—the heathen are all and always superstitious, because they live in the dark and not in the light—Haman casts lots for the right day for the slaughter (v. 7).

Then he victimizes the king. The arguments of vs. 8, 9 are worthy of a Machiavelli or of a Mephistopheles, for that matter,—an appeal to the race prejudice; an accusation against the Jews of disloyalty; and then the bribe direct.

It is pitiful to see how the king's kingliness dissolves under Haman's necromancy. The father of all his people, as a king should be, yields up his children to be destroyed.

Wrong is apparently triumphant; as so often befalls.

But STANDETH GOD WITHIN THE SHADOW; as the next lesson will reveal.

## TOPICS FOR BRIEF PAPERS

(To be assigned the Sabbath previous. Only one topic should be given to each scholar. Sometimes all may be asked to write on the same topic. The papers to be read out in the class).

1. How Esther became Queen.
2. Revenge, its terrible nature—as illustrated in Haman.
3. Bribery, its odiousness, its peril to the state.

## BLACKBOARD REVIEW

## God's People in Peril

A WRATHFUL PRINCE

AN ALL-POWERFUL MONARCH

A BLOODY DECREE

But God Guards His Own