

slain, his people carried away captive, and his own sons murdered. His eyes were then put out, and he was borne in chains to a dungeon in Babylon.

School. "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion."

Fifth Scholar. I speak of Daniel, the prophet and the prince. He was a captive in Babylon, but for his graces of mind and body promoted to a place in the palace. Here he lived unspotted amid temptation, temperate though surrounded by drunkenness, and in communion with God while all around were idol-worshippers. At the peril of his life he was faithful to duty, and when thrown among the lions he was guarded by God's care.

School. "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word."

Sixth Scholar. I speak of the three young Hebrews, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. While all the other nobles bowed down before the golden image, they stood erect, for they worshiped God alone. Thrown into the fiery furnace, they were preserved alive, and the form of the Son of God was seen walking in the fire by their side. From them we learn the lesson of fidelity to conscience.

School. "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace."

Seventh Scholar. I speak of Belshazzar, the youth who sat upon the throne of Babylon when it fell. As if to ridicule the enemies who were besieging his capital, he held a great feast in his palace; and as if to cast contempt upon the God of the Jews, he brought the holy vessels from the temple to his banqueting hall, and out of them drank in honor of his gods. But in the midst of the revelry appeared the handwriting on the wall warning him of doom, and in that very night the Persian besiegers entered the palace and slew the king upon his throne. His fate warns us against the sin of irreverence toward the God of heaven.

School. "And this is the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. This is the interpretation of the thing: MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. PERES; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians."

Eighth Scholar. I speak of Zerubbabel, who led the Jews back from the land of their captivity. The first act of Cyrus, the Persian conqueror of Babylon, was to issue an edict permitting the Jews to return. Fifty thousand of the exiles availed themselves of the privilege, and under the leadership of Zerubbabel journeyed back to Palestine. Their first act was to rebuild the altar of God upon its old foundation, and to renew the sacrifices; but it was twenty-one years before the temple was completed. From their leader we learn the lesson of love and labor for the house of God.

School. "And they sang together by course in

praising and giving thanks unto the Lord; because he is good, for his mercy endureth forever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the Lord, because the foundation of the house of the Lord was laid."

Ninth Scholar. I speak of Nehemiah the nobleman, who left a high station in the court of the Persian king, and journeyed twelve hundred miles to unite his fortunes with his depressed people in Jerusalem. By his energy, courage, and tact the wall of the city was built, and Jerusalem arose once more as the capital of the new Jewish nation. He was earnest in prayer, self-denying in liberality, and zealous for the purity of God's people.

School. "Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king's words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work. . . . Then answered I them, and said unto them, The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we, his servants, will arise and build."

Tenth Scholar. I speak of Ezra the reformer. He was a priest who came from Chaiada to Jerusalem in the days of Nehemiah, to instruct the people in the law of God, in which he was a deep student. Through his labors the writings of the Old Testament were gathered together and united into one book. He read the law before a great assembly of the people, and instituted schools and synagogues for its teaching. From his great work, he has been called "the second founder of the Jewish people."

School. "So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading."

Eleventh Scholar. I speak of Esther, the beautiful queen, whose lovely face was the reflection of a more lovely character. She was the queen of Persia, but to save her people she risked her life, and offered herself to die with them if she might not save them. By her act of self-sacrifice she won for herself the love of her people and an undying renown.

School. "So will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish."

Twelfth Scholar. I speak of Malachi, the last of the Old Testament prophets. He lived in the age after Ezra and Nehemiah, when their reformation had spent its strength, and the Jews were outwardly worshippers of God, but in heart following their own ways. Boldly did he rebuke the sins of priests and people, and faithfully did he exhort to paths of righteousness. It was his mission to point toward One who should come as the Messiah of Israel and the Saviour of the world.

School. "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me. . . . Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings."

SINGING BY THE SCHOOL.