



ELIJAH FED BY THE RAVENS. —SEE LESSON FOR AUGUST 6.

HOW JESUS IS LIKE A LION.

BY REV. W. F. CRAFTS.

A circus and menagerie came to a certain city. In the crowd which always gathers about such an exhibition there was a man whose little dog had just been beaten in a fight with another dog. The man in a fit of rage seized the bleeding and suffering brute, and hurrying into the circus tent, roughly thrust him through the bars of the lion's cage, expecting of course to see him devoured in a moment. The dog seemed to know his danger, and crouched upon the floor in terror. The lion fixed his gaze upon him, but did not stir, and the dog, at last gathering hope, crawled slowly toward the lion and looked up into his face, as if with a mute cry for mercy. To the surprise of the people the king of beasts, who could have crushed the dog with a single stroke, gently drew the helpless creature to his side, and then raised his lordly head and neck above him

like a wall of protection. Meanwhile the owner of the dog recoiled from his silly anger, and demanded his property. "You put him into the cage, go and get him," was the quiet reply of the keeper.

The man drew near and called the dog, but the dog did not stir. He acted as if he had found a better master and was satisfied with the change. The man called again and again, and whistled and coaxed, and then he began to scold. The lion growled and looked so fierce at the man that he was frightened and moved back from the cage. Then all the people laughed at him, and the two friends, the dog and the lion, were left in peace.

I have told you this story to let you know that lions are not always as fierce as you think they are, but are sometimes gentle and even loving. If you should go on, knowing only about the fierceness and bad ways of lions, you could not understand one of Jesus' names in the Bible,

for we may read of him there as the Lion of the tribe of Judah.

You have heard how a lion kindly cared for a little dog whose best friend was willing to see him eaten up. What may each lonesome, forsaken little child say to himself? "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up."

How many such little ones Jesus is taking care of now, giving his angels charge over them to keep them in all their ways, so that their little bodies may not be hurt, nor their hearts turned to wickedness!

Once a poor woman came to Jesus, who had a very sick little girl at home. Jesus did not seem kind to the woman at first; he told her that people like her were called "dogs." I suppose that was because she did not belong to God's people, the Jews, but was like a wanderer who had no particular place to worship. The woman answered Jesus by saying, "Yea, Lord, but even the dogs eat of the crumbs under the table." She was willing to be called a dog, if Jesus would but give her a few words of comfort and help for her little daughter. Did Jesus speak such words to the mother? Yes, for when she got home, her little girl was already made well.

How full of loving-kindness is this Lion of the tribe of Judah! When he might at any moment punish us for our sins, instead he has died for us that we might be forgiven, and he will save us if we will let him, even from the least to the greatest.

One of the good qualities of a lion is his courage. Nobody likes to see a coward, even among animals. Jesus was like a lion in courage. He stood among rich and proud and wise men, and told them that if they did not repent of their sins they could not go to heaven. Even when they sought to kill him he was both brave and loving, for he prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Now you shall have a third reason why Jesus was called a lion. You have all read at school that the lion is the king of beasts, have you not? He is called so because he is the bravest and strongest of beasts. The Lion of the tribe of Judah is often called the King of kings. He is the greatest of kings. Most kings have a little country, and a few years to reign, but Jesus shall reign for ever, and his kingdom is the whole earth and heaven too. Jesus was not only the greatest king that ever came out of Judah, but he is the greatest king that ever came upon earth.

How wonderful that One so great should be so tender and loving to little children, and say about them, "Suffer little children to come unto me"!

Now, I will give you my text; it comes at the last end of my sermon instead of at the first, "The Lion that is of the tribe of Judah . . . hath overcome." Rev. 5. 5.