

PAGES

MISSING

SUNDAY SCHOOL BANNER

for
TEACHERS
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE.

VOLUME XVII.]

AUGUST, 1883.

[No. 8.

Trusting.

"I will trust, and not be afraid,"

I WILL trust my tender Saviour,
Though the way be rough and wild;
For He walketh close beside me,
And He loveth well His child;
And He knows each upward pathway
That is difficult and steep,
So I lean upon His promise,
That He there my feet will keep.

Should He give me aught to carry,
I will bear it for His sake;
Feeling sure, when very weary,
He will then my burden take.
For He tells me I may ever
Cast my burden upon Him.
So I will not think of trouble,
In the future gray and dim.

I will trust, if work be given
That appears too hard for me,
For I know that He hath promised
"As thy day thy strength shall be."
I will take that sweet assurance,
Nor allow a doubt to rest,
With its gloomy, dark foreboding,
Traitor-like, within my breast.

For I know the Lord will help me,
Day by day, as duties rise,
For He never is unmindful
Of His needy children's cries.
I shall only have to ask Him,
And He then will prove His power
To deliver and to comfort
In the sternest, darkest hour.

Then I will not be disheartened,
But with footsteps firm and free,
I will tread whatever pathway
He shall please to choose for me;
Looking ever upward, onward,
Not afraid whate'er shall come,
For I know that He will lead me,
By the best way home, right home!

Only.

ONLY a word for the Master
Lovingly, quietly said;
Only a word,
Yet the Master heard
And some fainting hearts were fed.

Only a look of remonstrance,
Sorrowful, gentle, and deep;
Only a look,
Yet the strong man shook,
And he went alone to weep.

Only some act of devotion,
Willingly, joyfully done;
"Surely 'twas naught,"
(So the proud world thought),
But yet souls to Christ are won.

Only an hour with the children
Pleasantly, cheerfully given;
Yet seed was sown
In that hour alone,
Which would bring forth fruit from heaven

"Only"—But Jesus is looking
Constantly, tenderly down
To earth, and sees
Those who strive to please,
And their love He loves to crown.

OUR PUBLICATIONS.

Christian Guardian, 8 pp. folio, weekly . . .	\$2 00
Methodist Magazine, 96 pp. 8vo., monthly . . .	2 00
Christian Guardian and Methodist Magazine together	3 50
The Wesleyan, Halifax, weekly	2 00
S. S. Banner, 32 pp. 8vo., monthly, under 6 copies	0 65
Over 6 copies	0 60
S. S. Scholar's Quarterly	0 08
Quarterly Review Service. By the year, 24 cents a dozen: \$2.00 per hundred; per quarter, 6 cents a dozen; 50 cents per 100	
Home & School, 8 pp. 4to., Semi-monthly, single copies	0 30
Less than 20 copies	0 25
Over 20 copies	0 22
Over 500 copies	0 20
Pleasant Hours, 8 pp. 4to., Semi-monthly, single copies	0 30
Less than 20 copies	0 25
Over 20 copies	0 22
Over 500 copies	0 20
Berean Leaves, 100 copies per month	5 50
Sunbeam, Semi-monthly, less than 20 copies 25 copies and upwards	0 15 0 12

Address—

WILLIAM BRIGGS,
Publisher, Toronto.C. W. COATES,
2 Bleury Street,
Montreal, P.Q.S. F. HUESTIS,
Wes'n Book Room,
Halifax, N.S.**The Sunday School Banner.**

W. H. WITTHROW, D.D., Editor.

TORONTO, AUGUST, 1883.

Sunday-School Interests at the Conferences.

MUCH time was given to these important interests at the three Western Conferences, which we had the pleasure to attend, and we presume also at the Eastern Conferences. Vigorous and efficient Conference Sunday-school Committees, composed of practical and zealous Sunday-school workers, held several sessions, revised the Conference Sunday-school work, and brought in important reports, recording remarkable progress and making important suggestions. The Editor of the BANNER was kindly accorded the privilege of meeting two of these committees, and taking counsel with them as to the best method of promoting Sunday-school work. Time did not permit him to meet the third. We were greatly

pleased with the deepening and broadening interest exhibited in everything connected with this important department of our Church operations. Never were the statistical reports so full, so accurate, so encouraging. The number of schools and officers is largely increased. The amounts of money raised for school and missionary purposes, and for the Sunday School Aid and Extension Fund are also largely in advance. Many thousands of scholars are being recorded as being enrolled in Temperance Societies. And best of all, by the blessing of God upon the labours of the teachers and officers, many hundreds of conversions are reported in the schools, and many thousands of scholars are meeting in class. As soon as we receive the Sunday-school statistics from all the Conferences we shall tabulate them and present the results for the encouragement of our readers.

The Sunday-school Editor was very cordially received at all the Conferences which he had the pleasure of visiting. Many testimonies were received of the appreciation of the improved character of the Sunday-school periodicals, and of the great benefit that is being done by the Sunday-school Aid and Extension Fund, in helping poor schools and planting new ones in places where none had previously existed. As one result of the increased circulation of our own periodicals, the London Conference alone reports a decrease of 4,000 in the circulation of foreign periodicals, their place being taken by our own connexional papers. The most cordial co-operation has been given by the ministers on the circuits, or this gratifying result could not have been reached; and with the continuation of that co-operation still greater progress in the future may be anticipated.

The important subject of Methodist Union occupied much time. The discussion was, with scarce an exception, of a very frank and brotherly character. Although differences of opinion were manifested, the bond of brotherhood was unbroken. The result of the vote was recognized as the voice of God bidding us "go forward," and His guiding hand, we are confident, will lead His Church into a field of enlarged usefulness and prosperity,

and will
the sco
school

Ch
THE
ing pre
taining
meetings
Societies
certs, an
ous to
annual
C. L. S.
Canada
ested, w
when th
sprinkl
pass un
the "S
An excu
in Toron
expecte
good fo
can be g
from T
will be
be obtai
Drawer

Openi

WE I
BANNER
exercise
there is

I. S
II. R
Supt.
unto his
beauty
School
house in
in thy
holy ten
Supt.
consider
he is G
earth be
School

and will, we doubt not, greatly increase the scope and efficiency of our Sunday-school operations.

Chautauqua S. S. Assembly.

THE programme of this annual gathering presents a formidable appearance, containing, as it does, lectures, sermons, meetings of the numerous Chautauqua Societies with their cabalistic names, concerts, and other entertainments too numerous to be all mentioned. The second annual commencement exercises of the C. L. S. C., in which so many of our Canadian readers are particularly interested, will take place on the 18th August, when the class of 1883, containing a fair sprinkling of Canadian members, will pass under the arches and be received into the "Society of the Hall in the Grove." An excursion is being organized by friends in Toronto; the fare for the round trip is expected to be four dollars, with tickets good for ten days. If a sufficient number can be got together at any point distant from Toronto, special railway facilities will be given. Further information may be obtained on application to L. C. Peake, Drawer 2559, Toronto.—*Guardian*.

Opening and Closing Services for Third Quarter of 1883.

WE have been requested to give in the BANNER a form for opening and closing exercise, and will have pleasure, when there is room, in doing so.

OPENING SERVICE.

I. Silence.

II. Responsive Sentences.

Supt. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name; worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.

School. As for me, I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy, and in thy fear will I worship toward thy holy temple.

Supt. Know therefore this day, and consider it in thine heart, that the Lord he is God in heaven above and upon the earth beneath.

School. Who will have all men to be

saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

Supt. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

School. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

III. Singing.

IV. The Ten Commandments, or Apostles' Creed.

V. Prayer, followed by the Lord's Prayer in concert.

VI. Scripture Lesson.*

VII. Singing.

LESSON SERVICE.

I. Class Study of the Lesson.

II. Singing Lesson Hymn.

III. Recitation of the Title, Golden Text, Outline and Doctrinal Suggestion, by the school in concert.

IV. Review and Application of the Lesson, by Pastor or Superintendent.

V. The Supplemental Lesson.†

VI. Announcements (especially of the Church service and week-evening prayer-meeting).

CLOSING SERVICE.

I. Singing.

II. Responsive Sentences.

Supt. Take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life.

School. I will delight myself in thy statutes; I will not forget thy word.

Supt. What doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

All. Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of thy name; and deliver us, and purge away our sins, for thy name's sake.

III. Dismission.

* Either the International Lesson for the day, or some suitable portion of Scripture.

† Special Lessons in the Catechism may here be introduced.

The Church Lyceum.*

THE Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States provides, that in connection with each of their congregations a Church Lyceum shall be organized for mental improvement and social intercourse. The volume under notice is designed to point out the advantages of such institutions, and the best methods for their management. With every religious awakening there comes an intellectual quickening. "A new heart seems almost to make new brain." It is wise for the Church to seek to guide and mould this quickened intellect. It is said that the Churches do not hold the young people. The Lyceum will help them to do so, and to draw within its influence many whom it could not otherwise reach. It will greatly help the individual members. It will cultivate a love of good reading, to the exclusion of that which is frivolous and pernicious, and will guide the inexperienced in the selection of good books. It will be of advantage to the Church, as training up more intelligent members and workers in the Sunday-school. It will cultivate the social relations, under religious influence, of the members, and change an assembly of comparative strangers into an assembly of friends. The Church has too long been telling its young people what they must not do. By this means it can tell them what to do. It will often brighten otherwise cheerless lives, and give direction to the energies of otherwise purposeless or frivolous minds.

The plan suggested is to adopt a course of reading in history, science, literature, and Bible topics, somewhat after the Chautauqua idea, but simpler and less extensive, such as any boy or girl from fourteen could follow. In connection with this should be weekly meetings for the purpose of reading essays on the subjects studied, and debates or free conversations, with music and elocutionary readings. For instance, there might be a Longfellow, Tennyson, or Shakespeare night, with an essay on the poet's life and

* *The Church Lyceum: Its Organization and Management.* By the Rev. T. B. NEELY, M.A., pp. 216. New York: Phillips & Hunt. Toronto: Wm. Briggs. Price \$1.

genius, and readings and songs from his works. Special classes in the languages, science or art, might be organized, and the Church made the centre of the intellectual and social life of its members, as well as of their spiritual life.

Our author asks, "Does the Lyceum prevent young people from being drawn into sin? Does it interest them, and prevent them wandering away from the Church? Does it attract other young people to the Church?" Experience has shown that it does—that it stimulates the intellect, guides and regulates the studies, leads to the diffusion of good books, saves the wasted hours, and makes the barren moments blossom into wisdom and beauty, and has led many to go through college and enter the Christian ministry. It has the endorsement of the Bishops and leading educators of the Church.

The last General Conference of our own Church, on the motion of the present writer, unanimously adopted the following resolution, which is quite in harmony with the Lyceum movement:—

"That this Conference strongly recommends the formation, wherever practicable, in connection with the congregations of our Church, of Mutual Improvement Societies, having for their object the promotion of the study of the words and works of God, and His Providential dealings with the race. And that this Conference further recommends, as a most valuable assistance in the promotion of this object, the adoption of some such approved and definite lines of reading and study, as shall at once cultivate the intellectual and moral powers, and promote friendly and social relations among the membership of our Church, and shall guard their public and private entertainments against frivolous and dissipating tendencies."

We hope that many of our Churches will adopt this recommendation. The volume above noted will be found full of invaluable suggestions to pastors or others willing to co-operate in this great work.

We have received from James Campbell & Son, of this city, specimen pages of their new series of "Royal Readers." The selections are generally of a high order of

literary reading included in the program of the Royal Canadian Exhibition. We should like to see the book.

We have received from the Rev. J. B. Dr. T. of the school.

We have received from the Rev. J. B. Dr. T. of the school.

The Colours of the Sons of the Fishers issue of the Str volume the aut book I sede al never histori "noble Colum Ameri Every ting st

literary excellence, and well adapted for reading lessons. We suppose we must include in this remark an extract from the present writer's book on the Catacombs of Rome. The illustrations and mechanical execution of the books leave nothing to be desired. When we have an opportunity to examine the series more fully we shall have something more to say about it.

We have before us the Report of the XVIIth Provincial S. S. Convention, held in Brampton last October. A book of 160 pages, as full of instruction, Sunday suggestions and discussions, as an egg is full of meat. The addresses of Dr. Vincent, Prof. Sherwin, Rev. H. M. Parsons, J. Burton, J. C. Antliff, J. McEwen, Dr. Thomas, and others, will be found of great advantage to every Sunday-school worker. Send twenty cents to the Rev. J. McEwen, Toronto, for a copy.

We have also received from the New Church Board of Publication, a neatly printed Manual of Religious Instruction, containing, in simple words, Bible Stories, from Genesis to Revelation. Illustrative quotations from Biblical authorities are also freely given.

The Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus. By WASHINGTON IRVING. Illustrated. 8vo., pp. 325. Stratford Edition. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. Toronto: Wm. Briggs. Price \$1.75.

The Putnams were the original Publishers of Washington Irving, and they issue his works in several editions. One of the neatest and cheapest of these is the Stratford Edition. The three 8vo. volumes on Columbus were condensed by the author into this single one. Of this book Lord Jeffrey said: "It will supersede all other works on the subject, and never itself be superseded;" while the historian Prescott describes it as the "noblest monument to the memory of Columbus." Of the literary merit of this American classic it is superfluous to speak. Every school-boy should read this fascinating story.

Once More.

A WORD FOR THE DAYS OF PRAYER.

"Prayer, like Jonathan's bow, returns not empty. Never was faithful prayer lost at sea. No merchant trades with such certainty as the praying saint. Some prayers, indeed, have a longer voyage than others; but then return with the richer lading at last."—*Old Writer.*

WHEN Daguerre was working at his sun pictures the great difficulty was to "fix" them. The light would print the figure in the camera, but as soon as the tablet was withdrawn the picture would vanish. This is the failure in our efforts. We cannot "fix" the image of Jesus upon the souls under our care.

Our scholars, many of them, mean to be good while under the light we throw in upon them, but as soon as they leave us the impressions fade out. What then, is to be done? The power of the Holy Spirit alone can "fix" Christ's image upon the soul. Asking Him and trusting Him to do this will make much more of our work permanent.

Let every teacher be "endued with power from on high," and who shall measure the results? With their opportunity for impressing those upon whom impressions can be made, oracular as they may be to their scholars, with such truth as they have to teach, with the power of Omnipotence at the command of their faith, they ought right speedily to bring on the time when a nation shall be born to the Lord Christ in a single day.

Once more, then, we call upon ministers, Sunday-school teachers, and churches, to pray for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the young of our charge. That Spirit inspired the word which we teach; and only through His direct enlightenment can any human being, be he infant or sage, get at the significance of God's utterances. This is the key to the position.

We ourselves cannot comprehend God's truth without Divine help, much less of ourselves teach it to others. The more certainly we are "filled with the Spirit," the surer are we of success.

Let us, then, "continue instant in prayer." The answer will come; "though it tarry, wait for it;" persevere, for in due season "ye shall reap, if ye faint not."

Wayland, in his "Life of Judson," relates that, while engaged in his missionary work in India, that eminent servant of God became intensely interested in behalf of the Jews, and desirous of establishing a mission to Palestine. But this plan met with no favour, his prayers seemed of no avail, and his efforts appeared to be at an end.

Long afterwards, however, and only two or three days before he embarked on his last voyage, and not a fortnight before his death, Mrs. Judson read to him a paragraph from Dr. Hague's Journal, relating an interesting fact that a tract had been published in Germany, giving some account of Dr. Judson's labours at Ava, which had fallen into the hands of some Jews, and had been the means of their conversion, and that he had awakened a spirit of inquiry among the Jews at Trebizond, where a request had been made for a missionary to be sent to them from Constantinople.

At the relation of these facts Mr. Judson's eyes filled with tears. "A look of almost unearthly solemnity came over him, and" says Mrs. Judson, "clinging fast to my hand, he said, 'Love, this frightens me; I do not know what to make of it.' 'What?' 'Why what you have just been reading. I never was interested deeply in any object—I never prayed sincerely and earnestly for anything—but it came, at some time—no matter how distant a day—somehow, in some shape—probably the last I should have devised—it came. And yet I have so little faith! 'If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.'"

Something Besides Teaching.

No doubt, the great business of the Sunday-school teacher is to teach; and never was such splendid equipment all carefully made ready for the teacher's use. Never did learning shed so clear and benignant a light; never was there so much of sanctified scholarship in the world; and all that wealth of scholarship has been made subservient to a better understanding of the Word of God.

We have not only ponderous and costly volumes of Biblical exegesis, but almost innumerable cheap, compact, and beautiful Sunday-school helps all intended to illuminate the lessons as we come to them; while our great religious weeklies, and even our secular daily papers, vie with each in furnishing material that may be helpful in the study of the sacred page.

Never were teachers so well provided for, and never was there less excuse for teachers that appear before their classes without proper preparation. We have every reason to believe that the number of this latter class is "growing small by degrees and beautifully less;" and we hope, ere long, to see it reach "the vanishing point."

But, in the midst of the intellectual and spiritual activity incident to the preparation and inculcation of the lesson, we do well to remember that there is something besides the lesson for the teacher to consider; and if that something, or, rather, if those somethings be neglected; if the teacher content himself with filling himself with the lesson, and then just pouring out what he has thus poured in, it requires no prophet's vision to predict an early and ignominious failure. "Is the sermon done?" asked some one of an old man, who was wending his way homeward from the meeting-house. "No, no," said the old man; "it is preached, but not done."

And so, our work is not done, when we have simply taught the lesson. To drop deftly into the water handsome hocks, daintily baited; or to lower costly nets down into the depths of the sea, and leave them there, is not enough. We must haul in, and draw out, and see what we've got, and make sure of it.

The teaching of the lesson must be reinforced by an earnest life, and followed up by earnest work—walking with the scholars, talking with the scholars, outside of the school-room, alone or at home—a week-day interest in them, that will make them feel that the Sabbath work is not all professional and perfunctory; and if something does not come of it—something beautiful and beneficent, something that will fill the teacher's heart with joy—then all experience is at fault, and all observation goes for nothing.—*Baptist Teacher.*



unawa
they sh
blood.

4 A
cities
of the
ears of
him in
place,

5 A
him, t
into h
unwitt

6 A
dstand
until t
in the
come t
unto th

7 A
mount
Ephra
in h th

8 A
eastwa
upon t
j Ram
k Gola

9 T
childr
sojour
any pe
not di
until l

Seve
ites cr
Canaa
Beth-
enemi

INTERNATIONAL BIBLE LESSONS.

THIRD QUARTER—STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

AUGUST, 1883.

NOTE.—The Scripture verses to be committed to memory are indicated by an index [☞] at the side,

B.C. 1444.

Aug. 5.

LESSON VI.—THE CITIES OF REFUGE.

Joshua 20, 1-9.



☞1 The Lord also spoke unto Joshua, saying,

☞2 Speak to the children of Israel, saying, Appoint a out for you cities of refuge, whereof I spake unto you by the hand of Moses :

a Exod. 21. 13; Num. 35. 6, 11, 14; Deut. 19. 2, 9.

☞3 That the slayer that killed any person unawares and unwittingly may flee thither: and they shall be your refuge from the avenger of blood.

4 And when he that doth flee unto one of those cities shall stand at the entering of the *b* gate of the city, and shall declare his cause in the ears of the elders of that city they shall a take him into the city unto them, and give him a place, that he may dwell among them.

b Deut. 21. 19; Ruth 4. 1, 2; Job 5. 4; Jer. 38. 7. —a Gather; Psa. 26. 9.

5 And if the avenger of blood pursue after him, then they shall not deliver the slayer up into his hand; because he smote his neighbour unwittingly, and hated him not beforetime.

c Num. 35. 12.

6 And he shall dwell in that city, until he stand before the congregation for judgment, and until the death of the high-priest that shall be in those days: then shall the slayer return, and come unto his own city, and unto his own house, unto the city from whence he fled.

d Num. 35. 12, 25.

7 And they b appointed e Kedesh in Galilee in mount Naphtali, and Shechem f in mount Ephraim, and g Kirjathbar, which is Hebron, in h the mountain of Judah.

e Sanctified.—e Chap. 21. 32; 1 Chron. 6. 76.—f Chap. 21. 21; 2 Chron. 10. 1.—g Chap. 14. 15; 21. 11, 13.—h Luke 1. 39.

8 And on the other side Jordan by Jericho eastward, they assigned Bezer i in the wilderness upon the plain out of the tribe of Reuben, and j Ramoth in Gilead out of the tribe of Gad, and k Golan in Bashan out of the tribe of Manasseh.

i Deut. 4. 43; chap. 21. 36; 1 Chron. 6. 78.—j Chap. 21. 38; 1 Kings 22. 3.—k Chap. 21. 27.

9 These i were the cities appointed for all the children of Israel, and for the stranger that sojourneth among them, that whosoever killeth any person at unawares might flee thither, and not die by the hand of the avenger of blood, until he stood before the congregation.

l Num. 35. 15.

GENERAL STATEMENT.

Seven years have passed away since the Israelites crossed the Jordan, and now all the land of Canaan, though not occupied, is conquered. At Beth-horon and Merom Joshua has overcome the enemies upon the battle-field; at Makeddah he

has placed his feet upon the necks of their prostrate kings; over Hebron the aged Caleb has raised his flag of conquest. The mountain region has been possessed, save here and there a village where the Amorites are lurking; the land has been portioned out among the tribes, Judah on the south, Ephraim in the central highlands, Naphtali in the north, and the other tribes between. But before Israel enters upon the possession of cities which her enemies have builded, and vineyards which they have sown, the command of the Lord concerning the cities of refuge is to be fulfilled. The passion of revenge for blood shed needs to be curbed, and the rude people are to be taught self-control and submission to law. Six places are set apart in the land, to which the slayer of his fellow-man may escape from the hand of the avenger. At the gate of the city he is to be tried, and, if guilty, given over to death, even though he were clinging to the horns of God's altar. But if innocent of evil purpose, he is to be assigned a place in the city where he may live free from the sword of his foe. There he must remain until the high-priest's death, by which is symbolized his own. Then, in the eye of the law no longer living, he may return to his own home. In all this we can see a foreshadowing of Him who is our Refuge from the storms of wrath, who saves us from the just penalty of sin.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verses 1, 2. The Lord also spake. At the close of the war of conquest, when the land was ready to be possessed. Unto Joshua. Either through the high-priest, or by a direct impression on the mind of Joshua. Speak to the children of Israel. Joshua was directed to confer with the people through their representatives, the elders. This is one indication among many that the theocratic government was not despotic in form, but admitted the people to a share in the rule. Appoint out. The Israelites were to make the selection of cities on the west of Jordan, as those on the east had been appointed during the life-time of Moses. Cities of refuge. Literally, cities of reception. Their purpose will be explained under the next verse. Spake by the hand of Moses. By the instrumentality of Moses; the hand being the organ for executing most purposes. The command is given in various places, in Exodus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, and the reference to it here shows the truthfulness and genuineness of the Pentateuch, here cited as a work well known.

3. That the slayer. Among all Asiatic races is found the custom of blood revenge, by which the nearest relative of a murdered person is recognized as his avenger, having the right to slay him without trial and wherever found. Such is the universal usage among the Arabs at the present time. The ancient custom made no distinction between accidental killing and wilful murder, so that the institution of the cities of refuge was a great alleviation of a custom too deeply fixed to be entirely removed. **Killeth any person unawares.** The city of refuge was not to screen criminals from justice, and thereby breed crime, but to save the innocent from wrong, and to check sudden passion. Hence the guilty person might be taken out of the city, or even from the altar itself, and handed over to the avenger for execution. The similar places, called asylums by the Greeks, gave shelter to all criminals, and hence became nests of abomination, like Ephesus in Asia Minor, and the precincts of certain cathedrals in the Middle Ages. **The avenger of blood.** The nearest relative of the slain person, who considered it a sacred duty to slay the manslayer, and was looked upon as the officer of the law. 1. The violated law of God is an avenging fury, pursuing every sinner who fails to find the only true refuge.

4. He that doth flee. In later Jewish times the law was made more explicit, requiring a road of definite width, and free from obstructions, to be built to the city of refuge, and signboards inscribed "Refuge" to be placed at its intersection with other roads. **Stand at.... the gate.** The gate of the city, being a shaded place arched over by the wall, is often the place of business and for the meeting of courts in the East. Here the slayer was to stand for a preliminary hearing of his case before he could enter the city. **Elders.** The heads of the family lines, corresponding to chiefs of clans in Scotland, from earliest times a ruling body among the Israelites. **They shall take him.** Provided he could make his innocence appear plain. 2. Their refuge was for the innocent only, but what would be the fate of the world if God had not provided a refuge for the guilty?

5. If the avenger....pursue. It was almost certain that the avenger would pursue the unfortunate manslayer, for such was the custom. **They shall not deliver.** The slayer, if found guilty, was surrendered, not directly to the avenger, but to the elders of the village where the murder had taken place, and by them to the avenger; so that every precaution was taken to insure justice to both parties.

6. He shall dwell in that city. He was allowed to go one thousand cubits outside the wall, but beyond it could be slain by the avenger. **Until he stand before the congregation.** That is, for a further trial on appeal of the case, if it were necessary. The congregation was probably the general assemblage of the elders who represented all Israel. **Until the death of the high-priest.**

On the human side, this was a provision to alleviate the hardship of the innocent slayer's life; on the divine side, a prefigurement of Christ, our High priest, who by his death sets men free from the penalty of their sins. 3. The reality is larger than the type, as the Gospel is more gracious than the law; for Christ is a refuge for the sinful. **Then shall the slayer return.** The high-priest's death was thus regarded as representative, setting the man free from penalty. 4. We are looked upon as dead when our substitute dies. The Jews state that in order that the exiles in the city of refuge might not pray or hope for the high-priest's death, they were presented with many gifts by his family.

7. Kedesh. A city in the north of Palestine, now called Kades, north of Lake Merom. The name means "holy." **In Galilee.** The word meaning "ring" was then applied to a small circle of villages among the mountains of Naphtali; but in after ages it became the name of the northern province. **Shechem.** "Shoulder," the ancient city, now called Nablus, situated in the centre of Palestine, between Mounts Ebal and Gerizim. **Mount Ephraim** was the designation of the hill-country in the central section, largely occupied by the tribe of Ephraim, **Kirjath-arba.** The ancient name, from the ancestor of its early inhabitants. **Hebron.** One of the most ancient cities in the world, the burial-place of the patriarchs, situated west of the Dead Sea.

8. On the other side. East of the Jordan. **Bezer.** A town about twelve miles north-east of Heshbon. **Ramoth in Gilead.** An important place, often the scene of war in Israel's after-history. Here King Ahab was slain, and his son was wounded. It is now known as Es-Salt. **Golan.** A city not certainly located, but north-east of the sea of Galilee. **Bashan** was the name given to the region east of the Sea of Galilee.

9. These were the cities. It is to be noticed that these cities were all on mountains, or near them, and in prominent positions, and were so located as to be accessible from all parts of the land. **The stranger.** The foreigner sojourning in the land was to enjoy the same privileges as the Israelite; in this respect a great advancement upon ancient customs, which treated all foreigners as enemies. 5. See how God was educating his chosen people up to the knowledge of salvation for the Gentile world.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Who have fled from refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us. Heb. 6. 18.

OUTLINE.

1. The Avenger of Blood. v. 1-6.
2. The Cities of Refuge. v. 7-9.

HOME READINGS.

- M.* The cities of refuge. Josh. 20. 1-9.
Th. The law of the refuge. Num. 35. 16-34.
W. A refuge needed. Psa. 142 1-7.

Th. A
 F. A
 S. A
 S. A

Time
 quest

Place

the plac

Conn

the Gib

Beth-h

Josh. 1

and cor

1-23. 4

twelve t

Exp

custom,

East, c

killed,

nearest

a right

and wit

up this

to make

comman

in the

Canaan

cities w

situated

location

of refuge

When a

night g

was trie

der, he

certain

avenger

went els

was not

to be h

put to d

the city

Then he

dwell in

represent

the pena

safe, an

No. 1

O

T

V

T

T

T

O

T

T

T

- Th.* A refuge provided. Psa. 46. 1-11.
F. A refuge accessible. Heb. 6. 10-20.
S. A secure refuge. Psa. 31. 1-16.
S. A refuge for the righteous. Isa. 33. 15-24.

Time.—B. C. 1444, at the close of the conquest.

Place.—The Israelites were now at Shiloh, the place of the tabernacle.

Connecting Links.—1. The treaty with the Gibeonites. Josh. 9. 1-27. 2. The battle of Beth-horon, and conquest of southern Canaan. Josh. 10. 1-43. 3. The battle of Lake Merom and conquest of northern Canaan. Josh. 11. 1-23. 4. The division of the land among the twelve tribes. Josh. 13-19.

Explanations.—There was a very ancient custom, which is still almost universal in the East, called *blood revenge*. If any man was killed, whether by murder or by accident, his nearest relative was the *avenger of blood*, and had a right to kill the slayer wherever he found him, and without trial. It was impossible to break up this ancient custom among the Israelites, but to make it less severe and more just, God's law commanded that *cities of refuge* should be chosen in the land of Israel. As soon as the land of Canaan had been conquered and divided, these cities were set apart by Joshua. They were situated in prominent places, and in such central locations that from any place in the land a city of refuge could be reached in less than six hours. When any man killed another by accident, he might go to one of these cities. There his case was tried, and if found innocent of wilful murder, he could stay safely in the city, or within a certain distance of its walls. While there the avenger of blood could not touch him; but if he went elsewhere, he was liable to be slain. This was not a protection for the guilty murderer, who was to be given up to the avenger of blood to be put to death. The innocent manslayer stayed in the city of refuge until the *high-priest died*. Then he was permitted to return home, and to dwell in safety. The *city of refuge* was also a representation of Christ, who is our refuge from the penalty of sin, and who is a near, accessible, safe, and perfect refuge for all mankind.

LESSON HYMNS.

No. 126, *New Hymn Book*. 7s & 6s.

O Lamb of God! still keep me
 Near to thy wounded side;
 'Tis only there in safety
 And peace I can abide.
 What foes and snares surround me!
 What lusts and fears within!
 The grace that sought and found me
 Alone can keep me clean.
 'Tis only in thee hiding,
 I know my life secure;
 Only in thee abiding,
 The conflict can endure;
 Thine arm the victory gaineth
 O'er every hurtful foe;
 Thy love my heart sustaineth
 In all its cares and woe.

No. 64, *Dominion Hymnal*.

Jesus, Saviour, to thy side,
 From the avenger I would flee;
 Let me safely there abide,
 Let thy grace my refuge be.

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
 Let me hide myself in thee.

Whereso'er my tent is spread,
 There will I thy name make known;
 Israel, by one Shepherd led,
 Ever more in him are one.

To thy loving side, each hour,
 Close and closer would I cling;
 Shielded by thy mighty power,
 Trustful may I ever sing—
 Rock of Ages, &c.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. **The Avenger of Blood**, v. 1-6. What persons in trouble are spoken of in this lesson? What is stated as the cause of their trouble? What is the ancient custom of "blood revenge" here referred to? Who was the "avenger of blood"? How did this custom show the hardness of men's hearts? For what purpose were the cities of refuge appointed? Who was allowed to stay in the city? How long was he required to stay there? ver. 6. What is the chief cause of our troubles? Rom. 5. 12. How did the high-priest represent Christ? Heb. 9. 11, 12.

2. **The Cities of Refuge**, 7-9. What were the three cities west of the Jordan? What were the three east of the Jordan? Why were they carefully chosen? Who is our refuge from trouble? Can we be safe anywhere else? Acts 4. 12. How may we find refuge in him? [GOLDEN TEXT.]

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where does this lesson show—

1. That God values human life very highly?
2. That God protects the innocent?
3. That we must fly to the refuge which God has given us?

The Lesson Catechism.—(For the entire school.) 1. For whom were the cities of refuge appointed? For the innocent slayer of a man. 2. From whom was the innocent manslayer to find refuge? From the avenger of blood. 3. How long was he to remain in the city? Until the death of the high-priest. 4. How many cities of refuge were chosen? Six. 5. Who is our refuge? Christ.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—Security in Christ.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. **The Avenger of Blood**, v. 1-6. What penalty had God pronounced against manslaughter? Gen. 9. 6. What persons were to be exempt from this penalty? Exod. 21. 13. What provision was now made for the safety of such persons? From whom did danger threaten the fugitive? Who were to be the judges of his admission? Before whom was he to be tried? On what condition was his safety to be assured?

What event restored the fugitive to perfect safety? What event gives hope of safety to the sinner? What refuge is there from the penalty of sin?

2. **The Cities of Refuge**, v. 7-9. What three cities west of the Jordan were made cities of refuge? Name the three cities of the east? To what tribe had these cities been assigned? Who besides Israelites were admitted to these cities? Before what great congregation will all men be judged?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Where in these lessons do we learn—

1. That men shall be held accountable for their doings?
2. That God tempers judgment with mercy?
3. That men have a refuge in the hope set before them?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

What is a refuge? A safe place. Who often gave commands to Joshua? The Lord. What did he now tell him to do? To appoint cities of refuge. What is God's law against murder? "Thou shalt not kill." What did men often do? Break this law. What right had the nearest male relative of the dead man? To put the murderer to death. What was this relative called? "The avenger of blood." Did the slayer always deserve death? No; sometimes he killed by accident. What were the cities of refuge for? For such cases as this. What could the slayer do when he had killed a man by mistake? Run to the nearest city of refuge. How long was he safe there? As long as he stayed in the city. How many such cities were there? Six. What refuge have all sinners now? The Lord Jesus Christ. Who find safety in him? All who go to him. How long are they safe? As long as they stay with him.

WORDS WITH LITTLE PEOPLE.

Why do we need a refuge?—

We all have wicked hearts.

We all do many wrong things.

We can never deserve God's mercy.

Therefore, we need just such a Saviour as Jesus.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

Christ our Refuge.

I. A DIVINELY CHOSEN REFUGE.

Whereof I spake unto you. v. 1, 2.

"A man . . . hiding place . . . covert." Isa. 32. 2.

"God gave his only begotten Son." John 3. 16.

II. A REFUGE FOR SINNERS.

The slayer that killeth unawares. v. 3.

"Christ died for the ungodly." Rom. 5. 6.

"When we were enemies. . . reconciled." Rom. 5. 10.

III. A REFUGE FROM DANGER.

Refuge from the avenger of blood. v. 3.

"Wages of sin is death. . . gift. . . life."

Rom. 6. 23.

"Free from the law of sin and death."

Rom. 8. 2.

IV. THE ONLY REFUGE.

Flee unto one of those cities. v. 4.

"None other name given under heaven."

Acts 4. 12.

"One mediator between God and man."

1 Tim. 2. 5.

V. A SECURE REFUGE.

They shall not deliver the slayer. v. 5.

"Secret place of the Most High. . . refuge." Psa. 91. 1, 2.

"No evil befall thee. . . any plague." Psa. 91. 9, 10.

VI. AN ENDURING REFUGE.

Until the death of the high-priest. v. 6.

"Ever liveth to make intercession." Heb. 8. 25.

"Thou art a priest for ever." Heb. 7. 17.

VII. AN ACCESSIBLE REFUGE.

These were the cities appointed. v. 9.

"Not far from every one of us." Acts 17. 27.

"The word is nigh thee." Rom. 10. 8.

VIII. A UNIVERSAL REFUGE.

Children of Israel. . . stranger that sojourneth. v. 9.

"No difference between. . . Jew and Greek." Rom. 10. 12.

"Whosoever will, let him take." Rev. 22. 17.

ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL LESSONS.

The Divine Plan of Salvation.

1. God provides a plan of salvation before the need of it has transpired. v. 1.

2. The plan of salvation is divine in its origin, coming from God and not from men. v. 1, 2.

3. God's plan of salvation recognizes man's danger, and requires man to realize it. v. 2, 3.

4. God's plan of salvation requires man to act for his escape from danger, and to act before it shall be too late. v. 3, 4.

5. God's plan of salvation requires that man in danger from the offended law shall, in escaping, pursue a certain fixed and unvarying course if he would be saved. v. 4.

6. God's plan of salvation requires that man to be saved must not only look toward the refuge provided, but enter it. v. 4, 5.

7. God's plan of salvation requires, not only that man shall enter the refuge provided, but remain in it. v. 6.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

16. How does Satan tempt men to sin?

Satan tempts men to sin by putting evil

thoughts and desires into their minds, to which they willingly yield.

1. *What is redemption?*

Redemption is the deliverance of man from the guilt, power, pollution, and punishment of sin, and his restoration to the favour and image of God.

ENGLISH TEACHER'S NOTES.

BY SARAH GERALDINA STOCK.

We might almost say that this lesson needs no illustrating, for the passage before us is all illustration, and that of the most vivid and interesting kind. The aim of the teacher must be to bring out vividly, and to impress deeply, the solemn and blessed truths which it represents. The lesson falls naturally into two parts: danger and deliverance.

1. *Danger.*

In a primitive state of society vengeance is one of the ordinary customs of life, and is executed by individuals. Nay, more; it is considered a duty. He who has taken life has no protector. An Afghan who was murdered left no son behind him; his next of kin was a daughter; the girl rushed upon her father's murderer, and slew him with her own hand. Where a "blood-feud" exists between one Arab tribe and another there can be no peace between them. Any individual of the one tribe is in danger from those of the other tribe; for they are all bound to avenge their kinsman. There can be no more striking picture of a man in danger than one whom the "avenger of blood" is seeking, and whom he has sworn to destroy.

And this is the Bible illustration of a soul in danger—danger always threatening—danger which, though put off for a time, cannot be finally averted—danger real, sure, and terrible. The "avenger of blood" might not be in sight, might be actually far off, but would it be safe to linger until overtaken by him? Surely not. The only wise course would be flight, provided there were any safe place to flee to. And the passage suggests another picture—a man fleeing in hot haste before his adversary—suffering nothing to detain him, but bending all his energies to this one aim, the attainment of a refuge.

Man is bidden in God's word to "flee from the wrath to come,"—wrath real, sure, and terrible. But young people are apt to think of it (if indeed they think of it at all) as something far away in the distance, something about which they need not trouble themselves for a long time to come. And yet they cannot count upon one day, or even one hour's safety. No "avenger of blood" ever drew near so swiftly or so stealthily as death may come to any one of us. Macbeth thought he was safe

"Till Birnam Wood shall come to Dunsinane,"

and suddenly it had come!

But some imagine there can be no wrath for them since they are not great sinners. Such reasoning would have been of no use to a man who had "slain his neighbour unawares." He might plead that his character was amiable, that he had no intention of injuring his neighbour. But he had done it, and was liable to the avenging sword. Just so, however amiable and blameless among men, each one has "sinned and come short of the glory of God." Each one is, by nature, in danger, and the only wise course is flight. For God has provided a refuge.

2. *Deliverance.*

The doomed man was not to perish without a hearing. For him who had killed his neighbour unintentionally a place of safety was provided. The latter knew that if he could reach a "city of refuge" and state his case there, he was saved. It was God's provision. I am not aware of anything similar being found among other nations. No such mercy was planned by man. Then, it was easy of access. There were six cities chosen, three on each side of the Jordan, so that none might be too far off the place of refuge. And yet it had to be sought. The man who was in danger could not go on living as he had done before. No fence was built up around him: He must come forth in order to be saved! And again, it had to be claimed by confession. The man might not slip unperceived into the city and remain there unknown. He must declare his case to the elders, who had the right and power to grant the asylum. And it must not be quitted. It was not the having been there that made a man safe, but the being there. Only within these gates was there security for the slayer.

So with the only Refuge for the sinner. God himself has provided it. God sent his Son to die for man. It is easy of access. All may come: "I bring near my righteousness; it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry." Isa. 46. 13. But it must be sought. "We cannot continue in sin and be saved. "Let the wicked forsake his way. . . . and let him return unto the Lord," etc. Isa. 55. 7. It must be claimed by confession. Whom does Christ receive? "This man receiveth sinners." Luke 15. 2. And it must not be quitted. It is not enough to say that you once came to Christ. The question is: Are you now sheltered by the blood? Are you in Christ now? There is no safety but in him.

But the picture is not yet complete. Residence within the precincts of the "city of refuge" was but a poor type of the full deliverance wrought by Christ, and the cost of

place of refuge by some simple story, as of boy chased by fierce dog. He sees a door open, runs into it, and is safe. Lead children to speak of things they fear, as fire, storm, wild animals, etc., and then tell of inside foes which are far more dangerous. The "Avenger" is Satan, who is pursuing us, and who will destroy us if he can.

WHERE TO FIND REFUGE.

Make square, printing above, "Our City of Refuge." Make cross inside, and roads leading toward it. What do we remember when we see the cross? That Jesus bore our sins upon it, and that therefore he is our City of Refuge into which we may run and be safe whenever we see the serpent Sin coming toward us. Name some of the roads to our city of refuge, as "Remembering Jesus," "Obeying Jesus," "Running to Jesus," etc. The man who had killed another could not go to the city of refuge unless he remembered that there was such a place, obeyed the directions about getting to it, and started to find it. Children must learn all they can about Jesus, so that they may know how to find him when in trouble. Never forget to start at *once* when you need to run to the city of refuge.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

There is a man lying on the ground. Accidentally he was struck down, and he is dead! See, there is a man fleeing away, the unhappy slayer of the dead! But there is a second running, and he is chasing that fugitive. It is the dead man's nearest of kin, the avenger of blood. Across the plain, over the hills—their forms sharply outlined against the clear, blue sky, down into the valley, and so on and on run the fugitive and the avenger of blood. But ahead are walls and an opened gate! It may be Kedesh, or Shechem, or some one of the six cities of refuge. If the panting fugitive can only reach that opened gate! He turns and for one moment looks anxiously back. The avenger is gaining on him! Almost within a spear's throw! The next moment that spear may be whizzing toward him. He makes one last, intense effort, and panting, dust-covered, the perspiration rolling down his cheeks, he leaps over the threshold of the gate! The avenger of blood quickly follows, his face scowling and full of hate, but the fugitive is safe! O city of God's mercy, open thy gates and be a blessed refuge to our sin-pursued souls!

B.C. 1427.

LESSON VII.—THE LAST DAYS OF JOSHUA.

August 12.

Joshua 24. 14-25.



24 Now *a* therefore fear the LORD, and serve him in *b* sincerity and in truth: and put *c* away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in *d* Egypt; and serve ye the LORD.

a Deut. 10. 12; 1 Sam. 12. 24.—*b* Gen. 17. 1; 20. 5; Deut. 18. 13; Psa. 119. 1; 2 Cor. 1. 12; Eph. 6. 24.—*c* Lev. 17. 7.—*d* Ezek. 20. 7.

25 And if it seem evil unto you to serve the LORD, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served, that were on the other side of the flood, or *e* the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell; *f* but as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.

e Exod. 23. 24; Deut. 13. 7; Judg. 6. 10.—*f* Gen. 18. 19.

26 And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the LORD, to serve other gods;

17 For the LORD our God, he *it is* that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed:

18 And the LORD drave out from before us all the people, even the Amorities which dwelt in the land: *therefore* will we also serve the LORD; for he is our God.

19 And Joshua said unto the people, *g* Ye cannot serve the LORD: for he is an *h* holy God;

he is a jealous God; *i* he will not forgive your transgressions nor your sins.

g Matt. 6. 24.—*h* Lev. 19. 2; 1 Sam. 6. 20; Psa. 99. 5, 9; Isa. 5. 16.—*i* Exod. 23. 21.

20 If *j* ye forsake the LORD, and serve strange gods, *k* then he will turn and do you hurt, and consume you, after that he hath done you good. *j* 2 Chron. 15. 2; Ezra. 3. 22; Isa. 1. 28; Jer. 17. 13.—*k* Isa. 63. 10; Acts 7. 42.

21 And the people said unto Joshua, Nay; but we will serve the LORD.

22 And Joshua said unto the people, Ye *are* witnesses against yourselves that *l* ye have chosen you the LORD, to serve him. And they said, We *are* witnesses.

l Psa. 119. 173.

23 Now therefore *m* put away, said he, the strange gods which *are* among you, and incline your heart unto the LORD God of Israel.

m Gen. 35. 2; 1 Sam. 7. 3.

24 And the people said unto Joshua, The LORD our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey.

25 So Joshua *n* made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem.

n Exod. 15. 25; 2 Kings 11. 17.

26 And Joshua *o* wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took *p* a great stone, and *q* set it up there under an oak that was by the sanctuary of the LORD.

o Deut. 31. 24.—*p* Judg. 9. 6.—*q* Gen. 28. 18 chap. 4. 3.

27 And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a *r* witness unto us;

for s it hath heard all the words of the LORD which he spake unto us: it shall be therefore a witness unto you, lest ye deny your God.

Gen. 31. 48; Deut. 31. 19.—s Deut. 32. 1.

28 So Joshua let the people depart, every man unto his inheritance.

29 And it came to pass after these things, that Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being an hundred and ten years old.

GENERAL STATEMENT.

The war of conquest is now a recollection of the past, and the children of Israel are scattered to their homes in the land. Joshua is now an old man, soon to ascend from the scene of his triumphs to the companionship of his great leader in heaven. But his eager eyes perceive the gathering dangers which will break all too soon upon his people after his departure, and the hidden evils which poison their national life. He knows that concealed among the people are hereditary tendencies to idol-worship, cherished secretly through all the centuries of their history, and now, from the contact of the native tribes yet dwelling in Israel, soon to break forth into open sin. He knows how prone is the heart of man to forget the mercies of God, and how necessary are all influences which shall keep God ever before their eyes. Therefore, as his last public act, the aged general now calls all Israel to an assembly, where he reviews God's dealings with his people during all the centuries of their history. He renews their vows of fidelity to their God, and, as a visible token, plants a monumental stone under the very oak where Abraham built his first altar on entering the land, and where Jacob had renewed the covenant long afterward. Upon that sacred spot the oaths of faithfulness are repeated, and the venerable chieftain lays down the authority which he received from Moses so long before. Followed by the love of the people, he goes to his own home on the hills of Ephraim, there to remain a few honoured years, and then to enter the goodly fellowship above.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 14. Now therefore. Joshua has been enumerating the grounds for their gratitude to God. **Fear the Lord.** No one word expresses precisely the Bible meaning of this term. It does not mean terror nor awe on the one hand; nor regard and respect on the other; but a feeling of reverence leading to obedience. **Serve him in sincerity.** Professedly, the Israelites were servants of God; but their service was mixed with superstition or weakened by neglect. Joshua urges them to be whole-hearted and loyal. **Put away the gods.** Idolatry still lurked among the Israelites, as might have been expected, since they came of idol-worshipping ancestors, and were surrounded by heathen peoples. **Your fathers served.** From Gen. 31. 19, it appears that Jacob's favourite wife carried away the "household gods of her father Laban." **Other side of the flood.** The great river Euphrates, on the east of which had lived their ancestors. **In**

Egypt. The stay of the Israelites in Egypt, during several generations, had resulted in their adoption of Egyptian objects of worship, as the idolatry of the golden calf showed. **The Lord.** In Hebrew, *Jehovah*, the great name by which God revealed himself to his people. 1. How deeply lurks the poison of sin in God's people! 2. How strange that a people who have God should turn after idols!

15. **Seem evil.** Undesirable. **Choose you.** 3. God accepts only a free service of the will of man. **Amorites.** One of the principal races in Palestine before the conquest, here named as representing all. They lived in the mountains, on both sides of the Jordan, while the Canaanites occupied the lowlands. **In whose land.** A hint that if the gods of the Amorites could not save their people, they were unworthy of Israel. **Me and my house.** Joshua, in behalf of his own family, speaks as its head. 4. How much a father can do to influence his family toward God!

16, 17, 18. **The people.** Assembled with their elders. **God forbid.** An expression of utter abhorrence. **Forsake the Lord.** They recognize themselves as belonging to the Lord, and under obligation to serve him. **Brought us up.** Every step of the pilgrimage showed God's power exerted in behalf of Israel. **Great signs.** The rending of the sea and the river; the fiery cloud, the waters supplied, etc. **Preserved us.** From Egyptians, Amalekites, and Edomites in their journey. **Drive out.** It is evident from various texts that the native races had suffered some calamities before the arrival of the Israelites, which had greatly weakened them. **He is our God.** Since God has done such great things for Israel, Israel should greatly serve God.

19. **Joshua said.** His aim was not to discourage the people, but to awaken their strongest will, but showing the difficulties of the service. **Ye cannot.** Cannot by your own power only, or in any half-hearted state of the will. **Holy God.** He is pure, and hates sin; hence none can serve God while loving evil. **Jealous God.** Everywhere the Scriptures represent the relation between God and his people as that of a husband and wife, with the strongest obligation to constancy. 5. God demands the undivided affection. **Will not forgive.** Rather, "will not overlook, or tolerate." 6. It is a great mistake to imagine that God cares but little for the individual acts of men.

20. **Strange gods.** Hebrew, "gods of the stranger, or foreigner;" the idols worshipped by other nations. **He will turn.** Not that God's character is fickle, but that he is ever the same in hate of sin and love of righteousness; therefore when man turns, God will turn from gentleness to severity. **Consume you.** Punish you. **After....done you good.** Notwithstanding all his past mercies God will punish those who reject them. 7. It is dangerous to tamper with religious privileges.

21. themselves all the again stand you pr

23. Through conqu Once, calf w relent Now t in a la with m Israeli streng heart, power.

24. third obey. their G cover by all t tion to place w ning of on acco central

26. here give in the Joshua, added t which great memori vow. probabl which A In Gen Moreh " Gen. 35 Abraham his cov the tabe sacred p ferred to

27. 2. reference stand. and to whi the pe from the aries, to

29. last act tain how vant o deserved uncompr service th Timmath has been

21, 22. We will serve. They pledged themselves to be faithful to God, notwithstanding all the difficulties in his service. **Witnesses against yourselves.** "This promise will stand on record as a testimony against you if you prove unfaithful."

23. Put away the strange gods. Through all the years of the wandering and the conquest idolatry was maintained in secret. Once, indeed, it rose to power, when the golden calf was erected; and though then put down relentlessly, its elements were still in existence. Now that peace and rest have come, especially in a land full of idolatrous reminiscences, and with many of its people remaining among the Israelites, there was danger of its arising to new strength. **Incline your heart.** 8. The heart, rather than the mind, has the secret of power.

24, 25. The people said. For the third time repeating the vow. **Will we obey.** They promised that the Lord should be their God, and his word their law. **Made a covenant.** An agreement, solemnly ratified by all the people, containing a vow of consecration to God's service. **In Shechem.** The place where the law had been read at the beginning of the campaign, and now chosen as well on account of its hallowed recollections, as of its central location.

26. Wrote these words. This account, here given, and perhaps the history of the people in the land as contained thus far in the book of Joshua. **In the book of the law.** He added this record to the existing manuscript, which was kept in the tabernacle. **Took a great stone.** Which should stand as a memorial and a reminder of the occasion and the vow. **Under an oak.** "Under the oak;" probably the very one, then standing, under which Abraham and Jacob had worshipped God. In Gen. 12, 6, where the words "plain of Moreh" should read "oak of Moreh," and in Gen. 35, 4, this same place is referred to. Here Abraham built his first altar, and Jacob renewed his covenant. **By the sanctuary.** Not the tabernacle, for that was in Shiloh, but the sacred place of Abraham's worship already referred to.

27, 28. It hath heard. A figurative reference, which all the people would understand. **A witness.** To remind the people, and to be the testimony before God of the vow which they had now four times uttered. **Let the people depart.** They had come up from their homes, in their allotted tribe-boundaries, to attend this service.

29. After these things. This was the last act of Joshua's public life, but it is uncertain how long he lived afterward. **The servant of the Lord.** A noble title, and well-deserved, for not even Moses was more earnest, uncompromising, loyal, and vigilant in God's service than Joshua. **Died.** He was buried at Timnath-serah, in a sepulchre, which some think has been recently identified. **One hundred**

and ten. So that he must have lived sixteen years after the conquest.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Choose you this day whom ye will serve.
Josh. 24, 15.

OUTLINE.

1. **The Appeal,** v. 14, 15.
2. **The Decision,** v. 16-18.
3. **The Warning,** v. 19-20.
4. **The Covenant,** v. 21-29.

HOME READINGS.

- M.* The last days of Joshua. Josh. 24, 14-29.
- Tu.* The choice at Sinai. Exod. 32, 19-35.
- W.* The choice of Ruth. Ruth 1, 1-18.
- Th.* The choice at Mizpeh. 1 Sam. 7, 1-13.
- F.* The choice of Solomon. 1 Kings 3, 4-14.
- S.* The choice at Carmel. 1 Kings 18, 20-39.
- S.* The choice of the disciples. John 6, 53-69.

Time.—[The date of Joshua's death] B.C. 1427.

Place.—Shechem, between mounts Ebal and Gerizim.

Connecting Links.—1. The return home of the warriors from the east of Jordan, and the building of the altar of incense. Josh. 22, 1-34.
2. Joshua's warning to the people. Josh. 23, 1-16.

Explanations.—This lesson contains Joshua's appeal to serve God. It was given when he was an old man. *The gods which your fathers served*—The idols worshipped by the Mesopotamian ancestors of Abraham. *Other side of the flood*—The great river Euphrates is here called "the flood." *In Egypt*—The Israelites had worshipped the Egyptian idols. *Seem evil unto you*—If you prefer not to worship the Lord. *Choose you*—He did not mean that it would be right for them to choose idols. *Brought us up*—God's mercies to Israel were a motive to his service. *The Amorites*—Here named for all the people of Canaan. *Cannot serve the Lord*—Cannot unless you are whole-hearted and have help from God. *He will not forgive*—Meaning, "He will not overlook or pass by." *Strange gods*—Idols. *Put away the strange gods*—Some of the people had already begun to worship idols. *Covenant*—An agreement. *Statute and ordinance*—A law. *This stone shall be a witness*—The stone should stand to remind them. *It hath heard*—The law was read by the stone, which stood as a token of the people's pledge to obey it.

LESSON HYMNS.

No. 208, *Dominion Hymnal.*

There is a glorious world of light,
Above the starry sky,
Where saints departed, clothed in white,
Adore the Lord most high.

Soon must our earthly course be run,
Our mortal frames decay;
Parents and children, one by one,
Must fade, and pass away.

Great God, impress the solemn thought
This day on every breast,
That both the teachers and the taught
May gain thy heavenly rest.

No. 228, *Dominion Hymnal.*

Gathering homeward from every land,
Gathering one by one;
Pilgrims are joining the heavenly band,
Gathering one by one;
Each brow's enclosed in a golden crown,
Their travel-stained robes are all laid down,
Gathering homeward from every land,
Gathering one by one.

Home, home, sweet, sweet home,
Home, home, sweet, sweet home.

We, too, shall come to the river-side,
Gathering one by one;
Nearer its waters each eventide,
Gathering one by one;
Oh, Jesus, our fainting strength uphold,
The waves of that river are dark and cold;
Gathering homeward from every land,
Gathering one by one.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. **The Appeal**, v. 14, 15. Who made this appeal? What three things were the Israelites urged to do? How were they urged to serve God? What does Christ say of the true worshipper in John 4: 24? What choice did Joshua present to them? What did he say was his decision?

2. **The Decision**, v. 16-18. What was the decision of the people? Why was it a good decision? Why should we make the same decision? Have you made that decision?

3. **The Warning**, v. 19, 20. What was the warning about God's service, and its meaning? Who will help us to serve the Lord? Isa. 41: 10. What three things did Joshua say of God? How may we have our sins forgiven? Eph. 1: 7. What was the warning against forsaking God?

4. **The Covenant**, v. 21-29. What is a covenant? What covenant did the people make? What was the promise made by the people? What was made a witness to the covenant? How was it a witness? How long did Joshua live? Wherein did he deserve the name given to him in ver. 29?

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where in this lesson do we find—

1. How we should serve God?
2. What is the character of God?
3. A promise to obey God?

The Lesson Catechism.—(For the entire school). 1. What did Joshua call upon the people to do? To fear and serve the Lord. 2. What did the people say of the Lord? "He is our God." 3. What did Joshua then command them to do? To put away the strange gods. 4. What did Joshua and the people make in Shechem? A covenant to serve the Lord. 5. What did Joshua set up at Shechem? A stone of witness.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The divine attributes.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. **The Appeal**, v. 14, 15. What kind of service was urged upon the Israelites? What duty was enjoined upon them? Between what false gods did Joshua give them choice? What was his own determination? What is your choice?

2. **The Decision**, v. 16-18. What decision did the people make? What reasons for this choice were given?

3. **The Warning**, v. 19, 20. Against what kind of service did Joshua warn the people? Matt. 6: 24. Of what particular sin had they been guilty at Sinai? Exod. 32: 8. What character does Joshua ascribe to the Lord? What would be the consequence of departure from his service?

4. **The Covenant**, v. 21-29. What was the decision after this warning? What act of consecration was required by Joshua? In what words did the people renew their covenant? How was a remembrance of it secured? Of what was this stone to remind them?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Where in these lessons are we shown—

1. That the service of God means complete surrender?
2. That the service of God secures his favour?
3. That the memories of past mercies should impel to present service?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

From whom had Joshua learned wisdom? From God. What had he now become? An old man. To whom did he speak before he died? To the rulers and elders of Israel. Of what did he remind them? Of God's goodness to them. What had they once been? Slaves in Egypt. To what had God brought them? To a good land. What did God ask of them? Their love and service. Whom did they sometimes want to serve? Other gods. What did Joshua tell them to do? To choose. [Repeat GOLDEN TEXT.] What had Joshua and his house chosen? To serve the Lord. What did the people say? "We will serve the Lord." Against what did Joshua warn them? Against breaking their promise. What follows those who forsake God? Evil and sorrow. What was set up as a witness to the people? A great stone. Who are the truly wise in this world? Those who serve God and him only.

WORDS WITH LITTLE PEOPLE.

Why God chooses us—

1. He made us.
2. He loves us.
3. He wants our love.

Why we should choose God—

1. We cannot be good without him.
2. We cannot be happy without him.
3. We cannot live in heaven without him.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

How to Serve God.

I. SERVE GOD REVERENTLY.

Fear the Lord and serve him. v. 15.
 "Fear of the Lord...beginning of knowledge." Prov. 1. 7.
 "Fear the Lord, ye his saints." Psa. 34. 9.

II. SERVE GOD SINCERELY.

Serve him in sincerity and in truth. v. 14.
 "Must worship...in spirit...truth." John 4. 24
 "Worship God in the spirit." Phil. 3. 3.

III. SERVE GOD ONLY.

Put away the gods...serve ye the Lord. v. 14.
 "With my whole heart...I sought thee." Psa. 119. 10.
 "Sought him with their whole desire." 2 Chron. 15. 15.

IV. SERVE GOD INTELLIGENTLY.

Choose you...whom ye will serve. v. 15.
 "Thy people...and thy God my God." Ruth 1. 16.
 "Lord, to whom shall we go?" John 6. 68.

V. SERVE GOD GRATEFULLY.

He it is that brought us up. v. 17.
 "Goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance." Rom. 2. 4.
 "Thy servant...thou hast loosed my bonds." Psa. 116. 16.

VI. SERVE GOD RESOLUTELY.

Nay, but we will serve the Lord. v. 21.
 "I have chosen thy precepts." Psa. 119. 173.
 "Avouched the Lord to be thy God." Deut. 26. 17.

VII. SERVE GOD OBEDIENTLY.

His voice will we obey. v. 24.
 "Thy word have I hid in mine heart." Psa. 119. 11.
 "His delight is in the law of the Lord." Psa. 1. 2.

ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL LESSONS.

Motives to the Service of God.

1. We should serve the Lord, because he is the only Being who is worthy of our service. v. 14, 15.
2. We should serve the Lord, because he commands our service, though he does not compel it. v. 15, 16.
3. We should serve the Lord, because he is our God, and has chosen us to be his people. v. 17.
4. We should serve the Lord, because of the mercies and blessings and providential care which he has bestowed upon us. v. 17, 18.
5. We should serve the Lord, because of his character, and the influence it will have upon our own conduct. v. 19.

6. We should serve the Lord, because of the penalties which are sure to follow from forsaking his service. v. 19, 20.

7. We should serve the Lord, because we have pledged ourselves to his service, and his vows are upon us. v. 24, 25.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

2. *Who is the Redeemer of man?*

The Redeemer of man is our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.—Matthew 1. 21.

We have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins.—Colossians 1. 14.

Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.—1 Thessalonians 1. 10.

ENGLISH TEACHER'S NOTES.

BY SARAH GERALDINA STOCK.

THERE are many various shades of meaning in the idea of serving. The most common of these is that of executing work for an employer. And even in this sense there are different kinds of service. A slave serves, but he does so because he is compelled by the will of another; he has no choice about the matter. A servant serves, compelled, generally speaking, by circumstances. He may exercise choice as to the conditions of service, but could he follow his own inclination he would perhaps not serve at all. And now and then one is found who serves of free choice; out of affection for his master and interest in his master's business.

But there is another kind of service. A rich man may serve a poor man. A strong man may serve one who is weak and helpless. The superior may serve the inferior. But this service is of the nature of help. It is performed, usually, according to the will of the server, not of the served.

And there is yet another kind. "They also serve," Milton tells us, "who only stand and wait." This is part of the service of subjection or allegiance. The service of subjection does not consist in working, though working may often be included in it. It consists in being ruled by the will of another, in acknowledging that will as our guide. Such service is rendered by a dutiful child to its parents, and by a loyal subject to his sovereign. It is expressed in the command, "Honour thy father and thy mother," and "Honour the king." It is the service of the will and attention, and is near akin to worship. Which of these services does God require? It cannot be the second, for no being in the universe could render that to God. Neither is it the service of a slave or a hireling. Such could be of no value in His sight, who needs not the assistance of man.

What God requires is the subjection or allegiance, which will find its expression both in lowly waiting and in willing work—the service of the mind and the heart as well as the body.

Such was the service which Joshua desired to see the people of Israel, now settled in their own homes and possessions in the land which God had given them, render to him. His address to the elders shows that he thoroughly realized two great facts:

He might have put it before them that they were bound to serve the Lord, and have warned them of the penalties which would come upon them if they withheld the service that was due. But he knew that God must be served, not in the spirit of bondage and fear, but with the willing, deliberate choice of the soul.

He might simply have placed before them the happiness of serving God, and have exhorted them to follow in the course upon which he had himself determined. But he knew that there was but one other alternative. He knew that man must serve some one or something. And so he set before them that alternative: "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land ye dwell." It must be either the service of God or idolatry.

Three times did the people solemnly affirm their choice: "We will serve the Lord." They recognized the fact of there being but one other alternative: "God forbid that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods." They recognized God's claims upon them. Ver. 17, 18. But they did not sufficiently realize the kind of service which he required. They seem to have expressed themselves as though it were a matter of course—such a thing as Joshua need hardly have put before them so seriously. And therefore came the warning: "Ye cannot serve the Lord; for he is an holy God;" the exhortation: "Put away the strange gods that are among you, and incline your heart unto the Lord God of Israel;" and the setting up under the oak of the "stone of witness."

It would be well if all young people recognized as much as the Israelites did. "But the truth is that—

Many do not recognize the fact that they must serve something. They think the matter lies between serving God and pleasing themselves. All history and all daily life show that this is a delusion. When the Romans gave up the belief in the gods they had worshipped, they directly lent their ears to wizards and jugglers. When the French revolutionists gave up the worship of God, they set up a woman as the Goddess of Reason! When

even a child fancies he is pleasing himself, he is letting himself be bound with the cords of sin at the will of the great Tempter, and by and by he finds that his "own way" brings him anything but happiness. Many a drunkard who used to take his glass to please himself would gladly break the chains that now bind him if only he could do so. But the master he chose to serve has him in his grasp. Choose ye whom ye will serve!

Many do not recognize God's claims upon them. They forget their Maker, Preserver, and Benefactor. They care nothing for their Redeemer. They think it hard that they must be troubled with religion. They think that at least one day in the week, and a few minutes out of each day, ought to suffice him! They forget that he keeps them every moment, that all they have comes from him, and that he so loved them as to give his Son for them!

But while they recognize these two facts many forget the nature of the service God requires. They think that, as a matter of course, they should serve God, and fancy they can and do serve him, without any real choice of the heart, without any definite turning to him. And for such the warning of Joshua is needed: "Ye cannot serve the Lord." He requires more than you with your unrenewed, sinful nature can possibly perform. "He is an holy God; he will not forgive your transgression and your sin," save in the name and for the sake of his Son, Jesus Christ, and "if any man be in Christ he is a new creature," has begun a new life, a life of true heart-service.

BEREAN METHODS.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Open with a word-picture of the assembly at Shechem; twin mountains; people; warriors; elders; aged chieftain leaning upon his staff; oak of Abraham, with moss-grown remains of his altar; stone of remembrance, etc. . . . What was the purpose of this meeting? . . . Notice the danger of God's people to neglect God: 1. From inherited tendencies, v. 14, "Your fathers;" 2. From inbred sin; 3. From unworthy association, "In whose land ye dwell;" 4. From forgetfulness. . . . See what are the traits of God as here revealed—1. A mighty God; 2. A merciful God; 3. A holy God; 4. —; 5. —; 6. — Notice the motives here presented to serving God. (See Additional Practical Lessons.) . . . Notice the service which God requires. (See Analytical and Biblical Outline.) . . . Read through the lesson, and select some significant sentences, like "Serve him in sincerity and in truth," v. 14. "Choose you this day," etc., v. 15. "As for me and mine house," etc., v. 15; and other expressions to impress upon the class. . . . ILLUSTRATIONS. These

are
to c
etc.
ous t
and
land
ness
said
Chri
there
to th
in ou
over
moon
Moun
ple b
haps
foun
into
peopl
great
freed

Re
Prose
9062.
9043.
2510.
12246
Monu

T
J
t

DIR
tree,
green,
make,
work.

APP
OUR VO

BLACK

" Fen
" As
Lord."
" Ye
" Ch

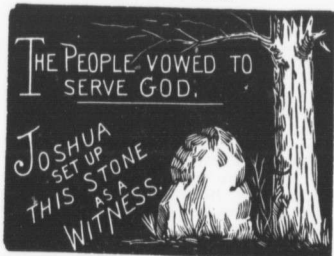
Last
Joshua

are families in which lurks a predisposition to certain diseases, as consumption, scrofula, etc. So there dwells in every heart a dangerous tendency to idolatry, which must be curbed and watched against. We see it in Christian lands as well as pagan, in men placing business or pleasure in the place of God. . . . It is said that even now among the civilized and Christianized natives of the Pacific islands there are many who in times of trouble pray to the *shark-gods*, as did their ancestors. So in our lands the desire to "see the new moon over the right shoulder" is a relic of ancient moon-worship. . . . Compare the scene on Mount Carmel, when Elijah called the people back to God's service. 1 Kings 18. Perhaps a good illustration of this lesson may be found in the circumstances of General Washington's Farewell Address to the American people. This was the farewell address of the great general who had led the Israelites to freedom and to victory.

References. FOSTER'S ILLUSTRATIONS. Prose, 5289. Ver. 15: Prose, 1400, 1401, 7910, 9062. Ver. 16: Prose, 1393. Ver. 17: Prose, 9043. Ver. 19: Prose, 2509. Ver. 20: Prose, 2510, 7916, 8999. Ver. 27: Prose, 11671, 12246. . . . FREEMAN'S HAND BOOK. Ver. 6: Monumental stones, 49.

Blackboard.

BY J. R. PHIPPS, BSG.



DIRECTIONS. With brown chalk draw the tree, except the leaves, which make with green. Draw the rock with white chalk, and make, with the green, grass for a ground-work.

APPLICATION. Do our lives witness daily our vows to serve God?

BLACKBOARD SENTENCES FROM THE LESSON.

"Fear the Lord and serve him in sincerity."

"As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

"Ye are witnesses."

"Choose you this day whom ye will serve."

Lesson Word-Pictures.

Last things must come some time, and Joshua must say his last words to the people.

He may have stood before the tabernacle, old like himself, its hangings faded and rusty. Over him may have fallen the shadow of the green oak that stood by the sanctuary of the Lord. Before him are Israel's elders, heads, judges, and officers. A fitting thing in him, an old man, his last official act, to take the hands of the people, join them in his grasp, and lift them once more to God's hands to be joined in close and loving compact. Hark! Hear Israel's shouts of allegiance to God. Joshua is writing in the book of the law of God. That is one witness of the covenant made to-day. There must be a second witness. A man, a woman! Yes, Israel, and yet a third kind is needed. Roll that great stone into the shadow of the oak and set it up, we seem to hear Joshua say. There under the stretching boughs is this strange witness. Joshua and the people depart. The night comes down. There under the oak, eyeless, earless, mouthless, is that witness.

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHTS. Choose this day.

Review briefly the lessons of the quarter, bringing out clearly the good life and work of Joshua. Now that he was old, and knew that he should soon die, he called all the people to a great meeting. Tell the object of the meeting. Children often forget and do wrong things. The Israelites had forgotten God, and done very wrong things. Teach that when we forget God, we are sure to do wrong. Show an idol, or an image of some kind, and teach that when the Israelites were in Egypt they learned to worship the gods of the Egyptians; and when they left Egypt, they carried away gods with them. Is God pleased with people who forget to worship him? Teach that God had been so good to these people that it was very bad for them to forget him. Ask if he has been good to us, and if it is bad for us to forget him. Put the lesson under three heads: *The wrong way. The right way. The choice.*

1. Teach that the Israelites called themselves the Lord's people, yet they sometimes worshipped idols; they often complained, and often forgot to worship and serve God. Tell how they complained of Moses in the wilderness, and wanted to go back to Egypt, and how, even after they entered the Promised Land, they had turned from the Lord and worshipped idols. Let children tell why all this was wrong, and then show that we are just as wrong when we love anything more than God. Teach that we may have idols, though they are not images, and name some of them.

2. Make word-picture of an Israelite who believes in God, listens to what he says,

always obeys him, turns away from idols, and tries in every way to keep God's law. Then describe a child who remembers God in his work, in his play, at home, at school, giving simple illustrations, and who does this because he loves God for all he gives him, and all the love he shows him. Contrast with forgetful, fault-finding, idol-worshipping people.

3. Print "Wrong" over a crooked line,

B.C. 1427.

LESSON VIII.—ISRAEL FORSAKING GOD.

Judges 2, 6-16.



6 And when Joshua had let the people go, the children of Israel went every man unto his inheritance to possess the land.

7 And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that *a* outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD that he did for Israel.
a Prolonged days after Joshua.

8 And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, *b* being an hundred and ten years old.

9 And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the mount of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Gaash.

10 And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers. And there arose another generation after them, which *a* knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.

a Exod. 5, 2; 1 Sam. 2, 12; 1 Chron. 28, 9; Jer. 9, 8; 22, 16; Gal. 4, 8; 2 Thess. 1, 8; Titus 1, 16.

11 And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim:

12 And they *b* forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed *c* other gods, of the gods of the people that *were* round about them, and *d* bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger.

b Deut. 31, 16; Josh. 24, 20; 1 Chron. 28, 9.—
c Deut. 6, 14.—*d* Ex. d. 20, 5.

13 And they forsook the LORD, and served Baal and Ashtaroth.

14 And *e* the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and *f* he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and *g* he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that *h* they could not any longer stand before their enemies.

e Chap. 3, 8; 2 Chron. 7, 19; Ps. 78, 58-62; 89, 30; 106, 40; Isa. 1, 25.—*f* 2 Kings 17, 20.—*g* Chap. 3, 8; 4, 2; Ps. 44, 12; Isa. 50, 1.—*h* Lev. 26, 37; Josh. 7, 12.

15 Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for evil, as the LORD had said, and *i* as the LORD had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed.

i Lev. 26, 14, 31; Deut. 28, 15-68.

16 Nevertheless *j* the LORD raised up judges, which *b* delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them.

j Chap. 3, 9; 1 Sam. 12, 11; Acts 13, 20.—*b* Saved.

"Right" over a straight one. Between the two, print "Choose." Ask who shall choose, and teach that God has chosen the straight path for us. Will we say Yes to God's choice? Help children to name some of the good things that come from following the right way, printing them as they are named; also, the evil that comes from following the wrong way. Warn them against saying with the lips that we love God, and denying it in the life.

Aug. 19.

GENERAL STATEMENT.

The ship of State is now launched, and on its way over the Sea of Time. What is the state of Israel in that critical period, when, the war ended, and the conqueror in retirement, the people are left to work out their own destiny? They are in partial possession of an alien country. The mountains are theirs, though even here are cities in possession of their foes, like Jebus and Bethel; and under them everywhere lie the conquered people, ready to rise against their oppressors. From the heights they can look down upon the Philistines on the southern plain with their five powerful cities; while the Jordan valley and the plains of Esdraelon and of Sharon are occupied by the Canaanites. These are the elements of peril in their borders, and beyond them are Amalekite and Edomite on the south, Moabite, Ammonite, and Bashanite on the east. Israel stands alone among the nations and in equal danger from their enmity and their friendship. We scarcely wonder when we realize the temptations around, and the lusts within, that the people of God soon forget their high vocation and their glorious history and sink into the embraces of sin. They long for a visible object of worship like the people about them; they are charmed with the splendid rites and are led astray by the seductive fascinations of idolatry. Israel forgets his own Almighty Jehovah and bows the knee to Baal! Sin brings helplessness, for Israel without God is weaker than Samson shorn of his power. Wave after wave of oppression sweeps over the land, each in turn rolled back by the deliverers whom God, in mercy for his people, and in remembrance of his covenant, raises up in the hour of need.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 6. Let the people go. As related at the close of the last lesson. Went every man. The tribes returned to their several borders, and the new epoch began, of rest in the land, in place of war, and of tribal government in place of the personal rule of Joshua. To possess the land. To complete the work of conquest, since in many places the native races still held a foothold.

7. Served the LORD. Mindful of the promise made in the last lesson. All the days of Joshua. About twenty-five years

after the entrance into the land, while the example of the conqueror stood before them. **Elders that outlived Joshua.** Those who had participated in the stirring events of the conquest and had grown up under the influence of Moses. **Who had seen.** Their personal intelligence strengthened their own faith, and their testimony the faith of others. 1. See here the power of good examples to guide in right ways. 2. See, too, the power of experience in religion.

8. 9. The son of Nun. Nun was an unknown Ephraimite, born in bondage, and perhaps dying in the wilderness. **The servant of the Lord.** See notes on the last verse of the last lesson. **Timnath-heres.** By the transposition of a letter called Timnath-serah in the last lesson. At Kefr Haris, nine miles south of Shechem, is a place shown by the Samaritans as the tomb of Joshua, and supposed by the late investigators to be the correct locality. **Hill Gaash.** A location well known when the book was written, but now forgotten.

10. That generation. The main body of those who participated in the conquest. **Were gathered to their fathers.** In the grave with their ancestors: though their fathers were buried in the desert and their grandfathers in Egypt, yet all were regarded as in the place of the departed together. Some find here a hint of a belief in a state of departed spirits. **Another generation.** Dr. Steele remarks acutely, "The transition from that low faith, grounded on the senses, to that higher faith grounded on testimony is always a critical period." **Knew not the Lord.** Had not the personal acquaintance with God's workers in behalf of Israel, and that sense of dependence upon God, possessed by their fathers. **Nor the works which he had done.** They had not seen the fiery pillar, nor the heaped up waters of Jordan, nor the falling walls of Jericho. 3. Was there not a lack of early training of their children on the part of those who were so busy in war and in occupation?

11. Did evil in the sight of the Lord. The set phrase, so often repeated in this book, and expressive of the fact, that with God's eyes on them and the divine standards before them, Israel yet fell into sin. 4. All sin is in God's sight, for God's law is the measure of righteousness. **Served Baalim.** The plural form of the word Baal, which was the name of the chief male divinity worshipped by the nations surrounding Israel, and hence was used in its plural form as a general term for all idolatry.

12. Forsook the Lord. The word here is Jehovah, the lofty name of God, as if to mark the contrast with idols. **Of their fathers.** Thus by their backsliding they dishonoured the memory of their noble ancestors the patriarchs. **Brought them out.** They forsook the God that wrought their salvation, and followed the idols which could not save their own lands! **Followed other gods.** The motives of

their idolatry were: (1) The craving of the human heart after a visible object of worship, for example, see the Romanist adoring the crucifix. (2) The influence of association, "following the fashion." People dislike to be singular, and Israel was often taunted by other nations as having no gods. The feasts and debaucheries connected with idol-worship had a fascination for corrupt hearts, especially when drunkenness and licentiousness could be veiled under the name of religion. 5. How many influences unite to lead hearts astray from God! **The people that were round about.** On the shore of the Mediterranean on the south were the Philistines, new-comers like themselves; on the north the Phœnicians, rich and cultured; in the Jordan valley the still unconquered Canaanites; in the heart of the country the Jebusites and the Hivites, under tribute, but existing as elements of danger; east of the Dead Sea were the Moabites, who had already corrupted their morals at Beth-peor, and on the south their kinsmen the Edomites. All these worshipped Baal under various names. 6. Even yet God's people stand alone in a world whose enmity and whose friendship are equally dangerous. **Provoked the Lord to anger.** Not an irregular passion, but a just indignation against wickedness. 7. There is a mighty heart at the core of the universe.

13, 14. Baal. See note on Baalim above. **Ashtaroth.** The plural form of the Hebrew Ashtoreth, in Greek Astarte, the feminine of Baal. She represented the female, receptive forces of nature, and was worshipped in rites of the grossest obscenity. **Anger of the Lord was hot.** As God loves righteousness, so he must hate wickedness, and all the more intensely when it is among his own people. **He delivered them.** As their success had been gained only by God's help, when he left them to themselves they could meet with nothing but failure. The only basis of unity in Israel was their common worship and law; and when these failed to influence them, the twelve tribes were dissevered and helpless, without a bond to unite them. **Sold them.** An expression denoting a renunciation of ownership: "he gave them up, as no longer his." **Could not stand.** Because God was no longer on their side.

15. Withersoever. Both in foreign wars, and in their relations with the subject peoples under them. **Against them for evil.** Not because God hated them, but would discipline them. **As the Lord had said.** They had received due warning of the results sure to follow from sin. **Distressed.** Reduced to the lowest condition, as the history of the four centuries after shows.

16. The Lord raised up. By the promptings of his Spirit, and the call of opportunity. **Judges.** These were not ordinary rulers, nor dictators, nor despots; but deliverers, divinely raised up, as religious reformers and military leaders. They appeared generally in times of calamity, ruled by force of character, and did not transmit their authority to suc-

cessors. 8. There is hope for a people when God still sends them leaders in righteousness!

GOLDEN TEXT.

And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers. Judg. 2. 12.

OUTLINE.

1. Good Days in Israel, v. 6-10.
2. Evil Days in Israel, v. 11-16.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Israel forsaking God. Judg. 2. 6-16.
 Tu. The sins of the people. Isa. 1. 1-9.
 W. The power of idolatry. Psa. 106. 21-38.
 Th. Results of sin. Isa. 17. 4-11.
 F. Repentance required. Isa. 1. 10-20.
 S. The lust of the world. 1 John 2. 12-18.
 S. Separation from the world. 2 Cor. 6. 11-18.

Time.—This lesson contains a general statement of the condition of Israel from the death of Joshua, B.C. 1427, during the period of the judges, about three hundred and thirty years.

Place.—The land of Israel.

Explanations.—*Let the people go*—From the meeting referred to in the last lesson. *Children of Israel*—The descendants of Jacob, divided into twelve tribes. *To possess the land*—It had been conquered fifteen years before. *All the days of Joshua*—While they were under his influence. *Elders that outlived Joshua*—Those who were young men during the conquest of Canaan. *Seen all the great works*—Such as the crossing of the Jordan, the taking of Jericho, and the victories over the Canaanites. *They buried him*—The exact place of his burial is not known. *Mount of Ephraim*—No one mountain is referred to, but the land of Ephraim, which was mountainous. *Another generation*—Children or grandchildren of those who had lived during Joshua's time. *Knew not the Lord*—They were not a religious, God-fearing people. *Served Baalim*—The supreme male divinity of the Phœnicians and Canaanites, corresponding to *Ashtaroth* as the female. *Forsook the Lord*—God, who had given them their land. *Followed other gods*—Idols, which were no gods. *The Lord to anger*—God's anger is a wrath against sin. *Hot against Israel*—It was a just anger, and God's dealings with the people were righteous, for with all his anger he loved Israel. *Spoilers*—Enemies who conquered, ruled over, and oppressed them. *Sold them*—That is, he gave them into their power. *As the Lord had said*—God had warned them of this as the sure result of their sins. *Raised up judges*—These were heroes whom God called forth from time to time among the people. They led the people to turn back to God, and gave them freedom from their oppressors. Fifteen judges are generally given, including Abimelech, "the bramble-king." They were not in direct succession: sometimes a generation passed without a judge, sometimes more than one ruled at the same time in different parts of the land.

LESSON HYMNS.

- No. 267, *New Hymn Book*. 6-8s.

Weary of wandering from my God,
 And now made willing to return,

I hear, and bow me to the rod;
 For thee, not without hope, I mourn:
 I have an Advocate above,
 A Friend before the throne of Love.

Thou know'st the way to bring me back,
 My fallen spirit to restore;
 O for thy truth and mercy's sake,
 Forgive, and bid me sin no more!
 The ruins of my soul repair,
 And make my heart a house of prayer.

No. 278, *New Hymn Book*. C. M.

O why did I my Saviour leave,
 So soon unfaithful prove?
 How could I thy good Spirit grieve,
 And sin against thy love?

Put O, how soon thy wrath is o'er,
 And pardoning love takes place!
 Assist me, Saviour, to adore
 The riches of thy grace.

My humbled soul, when thou art near,
 In dust and ashes lies;
 How shall a sinful worm appear,
 Or meet thy purer eyes?

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. **Good Days in Israel**, v. 6-10. What made them good days? How long did the good days last? To what is the one who serves God compared in Psalm 1. 3? To what is God's service compared in Prov. 4. 18? How long did Joshua live? Where was he buried? What people appeared after Joshua's death? In what sense did they not know the Lord? How might they have learned about God? How may children be kept from forgetting God? Psa. 78. 4.

2. **Evil Days in Israel**, v. 11-16. What made them evil days? Find in verse 12 three evil things which the Israelites did. Why was it ungrateful in them to forsake God? What other gods did they serve? Why was such a service folly? Psa. 115. 4-8. What were the names of the idols which they worshipped? How did the Lord regard their idolatry? Repeat the commandment which they broke. What idols do men worship now? How did God punish the people for their crimes? Was this because God hated them or loved them? How did God show his love for Israel during those times? Who were these judges?

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where are we taught in this lesson—

1. How easily men forget God's mercies?
2. To what men are led when they forsake God?
3. How God shows his mercy to those who forget him?

The Lesson Catechism.—(For the entire school). 1. How long did the Israelites serve God? While Joshua lived. 2. What did they do after Joshua and the elders died? They forgot God. 3. What other sin did they commit? They followed idols. 4. How did they suffer for this? They were oppressed by their enemies.

5. How did God still show them mercy? By raising up judges.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The evil results of sin.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. **Good days in Israel.** v. 6-10. What followed Joshua's dismissal of the tribes? How long were they faithful to their covenant? Of what had they been witnesses? What was Joshua's age at his death? Where was he buried? What is meant by "gathered to their fathers"? What change in the people did time accomplish?

2. **Evil days in Israel.** v. 11-16. How did the new generation show their forgetfulness of God? What was Baalim? Of what had God especially warned his people? Deut. 28. 1. What was fulfilled in the distresses of this people? Josh. 23. 16. How did the Lord show his mercy toward the transgressors?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Where are we taught in this lesson—

1. That God secures to his people their inheritance?

2. That forgetfulness of God's promise leads to departure from his service?

3. That the threatenings and promises of God are alike sure?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

What promise did the people of Israel make? To serve and obey God. How long did they keep it? As long as Joshua lived. What did many of the people forget? The great things God had done for them. Whom did they then begin to serve? The gods of the people about them. What does this show us? The danger of being in bad company. Where did the Israelites' sin begin? In not being true to God. To whom did God leave them? To their enemies. Why did he do this? To show them their sin. [Repeat GOLDEN TEXT.] What did they soon suffer? Great trouble. Whom did they seek in their trouble? The Lord. What did he give them? Leaders, called Judges. Why were they so called? They judged the people in God's name. Did the people deserve God's help? No; for they willfully forsook him. When do we forsake God? When we do not obey him. To what should his goodness lead us? To sorrow for our sin.

WORDS WITH LITTLE PEOPLE.

Little people sometimes forget—That God sees all their acts. That God knows all their thoughts. That God hears all their promises to him. That if any forget him he will let them suffer.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The Downward Steps of God's People.

I. EARTHLY CARES.

Every man unto his inheritance. v. 6.

"Cares of this world . . . choke the word." Mark 4. 19.

"Having loved this present world." 2 Tim. 4. 10.

II. FORGETFULNESS OF GOD.

Another generation, which knew not the Lord. v. 10.

"Profess . . . know God . . . works deny him." Titus 1. 16.

"Vengeance on them that know not God." 2 Thess. 1. 8.

III. FELLOWSHIP WITH THE WORLD.

The people . . . round about them. v. 12.

"Friendship of the world is enmity with God." James 4. 4.

"Love not the world . . . things . . . in the world." 1 John 2. 15.

IV. FORSAKING GOD.

Forsook the Lord. v. 13.

"Will forsake me, and break my covenant." Deut. 31. 16.

"Beware lest thou forget the Lord." Deut. 6. 12.

V. FOLLOWING IDOLS.

Served Baal and Ashtaroth. v. 13

"Mingled among the heathen . . . learned their works." Psa. 106. 35.

"Sacrifice to devils, and not to God." 1 Cor. 10. 20.

VI. WEAKNESS FROM SIN.

Could not . . . stand before their enemies. v. 14.

"Thou . . . goest not forth with our armies." Psa. 44. 9, 10.

"Without me ye can do nothing." John 15. 5.

VII. SUFFERING FROM SIN.

Lord . . . against them . . . greatly distressed. v. 15.

"Iniquities . . . between you and your God." Isa. 59. 2.

"Refuse and rebel . . . devoured with the sword." Isa. 1. 19, 20.

ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL LESSONS.

The Dangers of God's People.

1. God's people are in danger when the period of active and special work is followed by a period of rest and ease. v. 6.

2. God's people are in danger from the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, in the enjoyment of earthly possessions. v. 6, 7.

3. God's people are in danger when they depend upon men as leaders, without the power of direct, personal relation to God. v. 7.

4. God's people are in danger when the age of faith, proceeding from knowledge, is succeeded by an age of faith dependent upon testimony. v. 10.

5. God's people are in danger when parents who know God become so busy in worldly affairs as to fail to instruct their children diligently in knowledge of God. v. 10.

6. God's people are in danger from the association and friendship of the world leading them astray. v. 12.

7. God's people are in danger when earthly and sensual objects come between them and their God. v. 12.

8. God's people are in danger from the lusts of the fleshly nature in alliance with the influences of the world. v. 12, 13.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

3. Who is Jesus Christ?

Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God, and the second Person in the glorious Trinity, who became man, and so was, and continueth to be, God and man, in two distinct natures, and one person, for ever.

There is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.—1 Timothy 2. 5.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.—John 1. 1.

The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.—John 1. 14.

ENGLISH TEACHER'S NOTES.

BY SARAH GERALDINA STOCK.

INHERITANCE is one of the laws of nature. From an ear of wheat we expect hundreds more to spring. The fields of waving corn, the sturdy oak, the evergreen pines, inherit the beauty, strength, and fertility of that from which they sprang. Certain casts of feature, certain traits of character, and even certain talents, often descend from parent to child. Shakespeare makes Cassius excuse himself to his friend Brutus on account of "that rash humour which his mother gave him." And men have, very naturally, carried this law of inheritance still further. A son is considered the rightful successor to his father's property, and, in some cases, to his position, rank, title, and office. The son of a wealthy father is in no haste to earn his own living; he expects to succeed to his father's fortune; he looks upon it as partially his already, seeing that it is his prospectively.

But there is one thing which cannot be inherited. No man can bequeath it to another. It must be a personal thing to each individual. This one thing is knowledge. It must be acquired by each man for himself. A man may be greatly benefited by the knowledge of another, but it can never be his own. He can only have what he himself gains. He cannot read Greek because his father read it.

He cannot name to you every star in the heavens because his father knew them all. And though he may often have heard about some friend of his father's, yet if he has never seen him, never spoken to him, never corresponded with him, never had any communication with him at all, he cannot possibly know him.

We noticed last time the resolve and promise of the Israelites to serve the Lord. After this solemn vow had been made, "they went every one to his inheritance to possess the land." And they kept their vow and served the Lord. But when that generation had passed away there was a change. The inheritance of each man was transmitted to his sons after him; but there was something else which could not be transmitted. "There arose another generation which knew not the Lord, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel." It could not be that these Israelites were ignorant of the history of their fathers, of their deliverance from Egypt, their journey through the wilderness, the passage of Jordan, and the conquest of the Land. All this was handed down from father to son, and carefully remembered. But it was to them the story of their fathers' deliverance, not theirs; of what God had done for their fathers, not for them. They did not look upon these things as having a personal interest for themselves. They did not consider what they owed to their Divine Deliverer. He was to them the "Lord God of their fathers," but not their God. They knew him not for themselves.

But might they not have known? Truly these wonders were historically past; but the fruits of them were actually present. Truly God had done these things in the days gone by; but he was the living God, who preserved them every moment. From hearing about him they should have advanced to the actual acquainting of themselves with him. Job 22, 21. They may have valued the benefits that flowed to them as the children of those whom God had delivered and blessed. But they never seem to have thought that, if they would retain these as their own, the God of their fathers must be their God, and they must choose his service as their fathers had done.

Their neglect of this bore bitter fruit. They could not withstand the temptations round about them. Very soon "they were mingled among the heathen and learned their works." Psa. 106. 35. And after that wonderfully touching remonstrance made by the "Angel of the Lord," (ver. 1-3) which seems to have had effect only for a time, the warning given by him was fulfilled, and they who should have been the people of God were given into the hands of their enemies, that chastening might bring them to repentance.

The needed Lord truly,

It is parent who lo a great you know peace. for you Unless surren guaran tempta greater draw fathers you fr dren o bitter

It i Many the sin not sav sin lai bleedin faith t Saviour

Hint

Drav aries of nations Mark tions of the lar (See n the dar people, tical L the Ch ... W led into to them sin sho 3. Fol Israel, with th What t the evi ILLUSTR differer "durin ... T place; turbid, terming all the a pictu

The warning of this history is not unneeded. Unto how many is God simply "the Lord God of their fathers!" A blessed title, truly, but not enough for man's personal need.

It is not enough to be the child of godly parents, and to be brought up among those who love the Lord. This is a great privilege, a great help, but it will save no one. Unless you know the Lord yourself you have no true peace. Unless you choose the Lord's service for yourself, he cannot recognize you as his. Unless you have come to him personally and surrendered your soul to him, you have no guarantee of safety. Your path is full of temptations; you are surrounded by enemies, greater and mightier than yourself, who will draw you away from "the God of your fathers," though they never could separate you from your own God. How many children of godly parents have had to suffer the bitter consequences of sin!

It is not enough to believe in the past. Many believe that Christ died long ago for the sins of the world. But that belief will not save them. It is only as I see my own sin laid upon Christ—Christ bearing my sin, bleeding for my sin, that I become united by faith to him, the Living One, the Present Saviour.

BEREAN METHODS.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Draw a map of Palestine; show the boundaries of the land as conquered, and the heathen nations which surrounded the Israelites. . . . Mark on the map in coloured letters the locations of the heathen natives, and the places in the land which were held by the nations. (See notes on v. 12 for locations.) . . . Show the dangers to which the Israelites, as God's people, were exposed. (See Additional Practical Lessons.) . . . To which of these perils is the Church of God now exposed, and how? . . . Why were the Israelites so constantly led into idolatry, and what were its dangers to them? (Note on v. 12.) . . . How did their sin show: 1. Forgetfulness? 2. Ingratitude? 3. Folly? Notice the downward steps of Israel, and illustrate them by drawing a stairs, with the names of sins on successive steps. . . . What results followed Israel's sins? . . . Name the evils against which this lesson warns us. . . . ILLUSTRATIONS. This lesson illustrates the difference in the condition of the Church "during the revival" and "after the revival." . . . The Rhone and the Saone unite at one place; two rivers, the one pure, the other turbid. For a time they flow on without intermingling, but soon they mix together, and all the river afterward is black and muddy: a picture of fellowship with the world. . . .

Said an old sailor, "I tell you what, messmates, Almighty God has fixed this world so that it about pays to do right!" . . . Cole's celebrated series of paintings, "The Voyage of Life," represents for its second picture a youth on a vessel seizing the helm, while his guardian angel watches from the shore. That is Israel in the first part of this lesson. The next picture shows the vessel on the edge of a cataract, with darkness and storms around, the youth in terror, and the guardian angel in the heavens above. Such was Israel in the latter part of this lesson.

References. FOSTER'S ILLUSTRATIONS: Prose, 2535, 6669, 6672. Ver. 12: Prose, 261. Ver. 13: Prose, 258. Ver. 14: Prose, 3529. Ver. 16: Prose, 1435, 1436, 6678. . . . FREEMAN. Ver. 11: Baalim, 222. Ver. 13: Baal, 184; Ashtaroth, 304.

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. *The One True God.* To be taught: That associating with bad people leads to evil. That God lets us suffer so that we may see our sin. That if we forsake sin, God will be pleased.

1. Tell that Joshua, and all the men and women who knew him, were now dead. The Israelites lived in a land where many of the people were heathen. Tell of some of the idols which these people worshipped. Did the Israelites know better than to worship these dumb idols? Yes, for they were God's people. God himself had taught them. Speak of some of God's lessons, as the manna, the pillar of fire and of cloud, etc. How could they forget that God only was to be worshipped? Illustrate by little boy who had been taught to fear and pray to God, but who had got into bad company, and learned the ways of bad boys, and so denied God. The Israelites began to do as their heathen neighbours did, which was very wrong. Show that we cannot handle black coal without soiling the hands; so we cannot associate with bad people without soiling the heart.

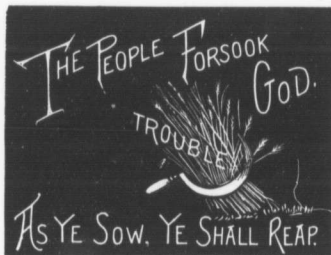
2. Tell story of a little girl who was always wanting to play with fire, though she was told that she would burn herself. She would not believe what was told her, until she had put her hand on the hot stove one day and burned it badly. After that she remembered; the pain helped her memory. It helped her, too, to see the sin of disobedience. Tell how God let the Israelites suffer. Their heathen neighbours fought against them, conquered them, and ruled over them very severely. God will let wicked people trouble us, if we are not obeying him; he will let our evil hearts rule us, so as to make us see how bad they are. Let children help to name some of our spiritual foes, as pride, laziness, falsehood, etc.,

printing them as they are named. Teach that these foes may become our masters, and will, unless we bring them to God.

3. Print Lesson Thought, and teach that when the Israelites got into trouble they began to call upon the One God. Ask if idols can hear, and why not? Then ask why they think God can hear, and get, if possible, some texts on prayer. Ask children if they have ever been heard and answered, and encourage belief in God as a Father, who is always ready to help his penitent children. Print "We will forsake," ask who the Israelites forsake, and contrast forsaking the Lord and forsaking sin.

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, ESQ.



This lesson is to teach us that whatsoever we sow, that shall we also reap. The Israelites forsake God, sowed the seeds of sin, and reaped trouble.

B.C. 1249.

LESSON IX.—GIDEON'S ARMY.

Judges 7. 1-8.



1 Then a Jerubbaal, who is Gideon, and all the people that were with him, arose up early, and pitched beside the well of a Harod: so that the host of the Midianites were on the north side of them, by the hill of Moreh, in the

c valley.

^a Chap. 6. 32.—^b Josh. 3. 1: 6. 12; Eccl. 9. 10.
—^c That is, Trembling.—^c Gen. 12. 6.

2 And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel devour themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me.

^d Deut. 8. 17; 9. 4; 1 Sam. 17. 47; Psa. 33. 16, 17, 18; 44. 6, 7; Prov. 25. 6; Eccl. 9. 11; Isa. 10. 13; Jer. 9. 23, 24; Zech. 4. 6; 1 Cor. 1. 29; 4. 7; 2 Cor. 4. 7; 16. 17.

3 Now therefore go to, proclaim in the ears of the people, saying, Whosoever is fearful and afraid, let him return and depart early from mount Gilead. And there returned of the people

SOWING.

THE PEOPLE

Did evil.

Forsook God.

Followed other Gods. Was against them.

Provoked the Lord.

Served Baal.

REAPING.

THE LORD

Delivered them to the spoilers.

Sold them to their enemies.

Was against them.

And they were greatly distressed.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

Did a long, dark funeral-train, bearing the body of Joshua to its resting place, go by the tabernacle, the sharp wail of the mourners cutting the air? Then the great stone under the oak witnessed that scene. As the years went on, Joshua was forgotten. The promise of Israel to its God was forgotten. Were there few that went to the tabernacle with offerings? Did the fires on the altar burn low? Did few come to solemn fast or glad festival, and the tabernacle seem more and more lonely, more and more neglected? All this the great stone under the oak witnessed. Not far from the deserted tabernacle, Israelites may have been bowing before a hideous idol, kissing it in adoration. They danced before the idol, capering as if mad, yelling, and slashing themselves with knives. All this the great stone witnessed. Past the tabernacle, may have filed columns of Israel's warriors. Noisy, boastful, perhaps with a sneer at the tabernacle, they went out to fight the Canaanites. They came back in shame and tears, with thinned ranks, broken arms, and a defeated cause. All this, the great stone witnessed. What wonder if it had found a voice and cried aloud to God!

August 26.

and de
let all
place.

8 Sc
and th
Israe
three
was be

Two
the con
sunligh
we, in
an Ehu
have no
Gideon.
lower u
and in
figure s
upon th
of an a
delivere
ing the
Lord.
that he
fleece, w
from its
Israel a
trumpet
and a lit
Mount G
wide-sp
army see
verance
until at
remain.
made, it
of Gide
and liber

EXP

Both the

vers

Both the

that cuts

struction

Jerubba

is, Baal's

ance by a

try. 7.

vice. T

As the c

of these

Manasseh

Rose u

prompt a

made a m

the we

spring at

Am Jahu

it probabl

blers" of

ites. A

the desert

in arms a

descended

Moreh.

and deliver the Midianites into thine hand : and let all the *other* people go every man unto his place.

⁷Sam 14. 6.

8 So the people took victuals in their hand, and their trumpets : and he sent all the *rest* of Israel every man unto his tent, and retained those three hundred men. And the host of Midian was beneath him in the valley.

GENERAL STATEMENT.

Two centuries have passed since the days of the conquest, centuries of mingled darkness and sunlight ; darkness from Israel's wandering and woe, intermingled with bursts of splendour when an Ehud or a Deborah arose like a meteor. We have now come to the times of the fifth judge, Gideon. Never had Israel's condition been lower under its enemies than when he appeared, and in all the annals of the heroic age no other figure so noble and so statesmanlike as his stands upon the stage of Israelite history. At the call of an angel he boldly steps forth as his nation's deliverer, and begins at his own home by destroying the image of Baal, and rearing an altar to the Lord. So close is his communion with the Lord that he ventures to test his power, and in the fleece, wet and dry by turns, but ever different from its surroundings, sees the type of his own Israel among the nations. In answer to his trumpet-call, his tribesmen rally around him, and a little camp is formed upon the heights of Mount Gilboa, while below in the valley are the wide-spreading tents of Midian. Small as his army seems, it is too large for God's plan of deliverance ; so by successive stages it is reduced, until at length three hundred worthies alone remain. With these the midnight assault is made, its war-cry, "The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon !" Midian is routed and destroyed, and liberty returns to Israel.

EXPLANATORY AND PRACTICAL NOTES.

Verse 1. Jerubbaal, who is Gideon. Both these names are significant. Gideon is "he that cuts down," referring doubtless to his destruction of Baal's image. (See previous chapter). Jerubbaal is "one who contends with Baal," that is, Baal's open enemy. Gideon began his deliverance by an uncompromising opposition to idolatry. 7. God wants men of decision in his service. **The people that were with him.** As the oppression was heaviest in the north, these were mostly from the northern tribes, Manasseh, Naphtali, Asher, and Zebulun. **Rose up early.** An expression showing prompt and earnest action, and perhaps that they made a march early in the morning. **Beside the well of Harod.** Probably the large spring at the foot of Mount Gilboa, now called *Ain Jalud*. The word means "trembling," and it probably received its name from the "tremblers" of verse 3. **Host of the Midianites.** A powerful tribe of Arabians, inhabiting the desert border east of Palestine, and frequently in arms against the Israelites, though, like them, descended from Abraham. **By the hill of Moreh.** The mountain "Little Hermon,"

north of Gilboa, now called *Jebel ed Duhy*. **In the valley.** The Midianites were at the foot of the hill, the Israelites on the slope of Mount Gilboa.

2. The Lord said. Gideon, like most of the judges, lived in constant communion with God, receiving divine impressions. **Too many for me.** Israel's army was 32,000, Midian's 135,000, or more. Yet there were too many for God's purpose ; because he wished the victory to be stamped with the seal of divine power, and to show that it came, not from their own prowess, but God's gift. 2. God will have all the honour, and so saves, not of works, but by his grace. **Lest Israel vaunt themselves.** The victory would be of little avail if the victorious people should forget God and lean on themselves. 3. God's people need to learn well the lesson of humility.

3. Go to. An exclamation like our "Come, now." **Proclaim in the ears of the people.** This proclamation was enjoined by the law (Deut. 20. 8) to strengthen the warriors in battle, by removing the cowardly. But now it was to show Gideon how weak were the human instrumentalities on which he was leaning. **Fearful and afraid.** Such would add nothing to the power of the army, but might dispirit others. 4. **Half-heartedness gives weakness to God's army.** **From Mount Gilead.** A singular expression, for we should expect to read "Mount Gilboa." Perhaps it is an error from an ancient copy ; or the sentence may be the customary war-cry of Manasseh, the tribe to which Gideon belonged, whose principal seat was in Mount Gilead, east of the Jordan. **Returned...twenty and two thousand.** They were unskilled in war, and crushed by oppression ; and their hearts sank as they looked upon the outnumbering host of Midian encamped below them. Yet the army was stronger after they had departed.

4. Yet too many. God was testing Gideon's faith while trying the material of his army. **Bring them down to the water.** The command was given without explanation, and not until they arrived at the spring was the method of testing disclosed. **Of whom I say, This man.** 5. God knows each individual worker in his cause, and for just what he is adapted. 6. Often God seems to weaken his Church by weeding it out by trial, when in reality he is strengthening it. 7. God not only chooses his own plan, but the men who carry it out.

5. He brought down the people. Leading them down the mountain as if about to make an attack upon the enemy. **Every one that lappeth.....boweth down.** Some would stop in their march beside the spring, and kneel down to drink ; while others only paused in passing long enough to catch up a handful of the water and hold it to their lips. **Set by himself.** Gideon was to stand by the fountain, watch the men, and make the division. 8. However slight may seem the distinctions by which God divides men, yet they rest upon great principles.

6. Number of them that lapped. The act, small as it seemed, was an index of character. 1. It showed earnest men, who were single-hearted in their warfare, and would not pause to gratify love of ease. 2. It showed cautious men, who would not drop shield and spear, cast themselves on the earth, and expose themselves to sudden attack, but stood erect, alert, and ready for the enemy. 3. Perhaps also it showed religious men. Idolators were wont to worship prostrate on their faces; servants of God worshipped in a standing posture, and the momentary act showed who were loyal Israelites. 9. How small are the tokens which will serve as unerring tests of character!

7. By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you. Because with God the number of men was of far less consequence than their fitness for the work. 10. Men may value numbers, but not God. Will I save you. The salvation was to come from God, and not from men. Let all the other people go. Though they did not make the attack, they probably joined in the pursuit of the flying Midianites after the victory. 11. How their dismissal must have tried the faith of their leader and their comrades!

8. Took victuals... and trumpets. The sense of the original is that they took the victuals or food of all the army (meaning as much as they had need), and their trumpets also, so that each of the chosen three hundred had a trumpet. Sent all the rest. The words, "all the rest," are not in the text. He sent all Israel to their tents, that is, home, free from military duty. Host of Midian was beneath. The three hundred and their leader were on the steep sides of Mount Gilboa, and the Midianite camp was spread out on the plain at their feet. The attack was made at night, in three divisions, each from a different quarter. The Israelites carried lamps concealed in pitchers which they broke suddenly, showing lights all around the host. At the same time they raised a cry, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon!" A sudden terror seized the Midianites; they fled down the valley to the Jordan, where multitudes were slain in crossing. Several more victories were won in the pursuit, and the Midianite power was forever crushed. See the verses and chapter following the lesson.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon. Judg. 7. 20.

OUTLINE.

1. The Many. v. 1-3.
2. The Few. v. 4-8.

HOME READINGS.

- M. Gideon's army. Judg. 7. 1-8.
 Tu. The Midianite oppression. Judg. 6. 1-10.
 W. The call of Gideon. Judg. 6. 11-24.
 Th. Gideon's fleece. Judg. 6. 25-40.
 F. Gideon's victory. Judg. 7. 16-25.
 S. Gideon's pursuit. Judg. 8. 4-21.
 S. Strength for the upright. Psa. 37. 23-40.

Time.—B. C. 1240.

Place.—The hill of Moreh, now known as Little Hermon, near Mount Tabor.

Connecting Links.—1. Mesopotamian oppression; Othniel the first judge. Judg. 3. 1-11, 2. Moabite oppression; Ehud the second judge. Judg. 3. 12-20. 3. Philistine oppression; Shamgar the third judge. Judg. 3. 31. 4. Canaanite oppression; Deborah the fourth judge. Judg. 4. 1-5. 31. 5. Midianite oppression; Gideon the fifth judge. Judg. 6. 1-40.

Explanations.—The Midianite oppression was the hardest of all which the Israelites had yet endured. See the account of it in chap. 6. 1-10. God called Gideon, a brave warrior, to set Israel free. Read his call and how it was received in chap. 6. 11-24. He began by breaking down the altar of Baal, and rearing in its place an altar to God, on which he offered sacrifice. Chap. 6. 25-27. See why Gideon was named *Jerubbaal*, (which means, "Let Baal plead"), in chap. 6. 28-32, and the story of Gideon's fleece in chap. 6. 36-40. He called upon the northern tribes to revolt, and a large army gathered round him near the *well of Harod*. But when they saw the vast *host of the Midianites* encamped on the side of the *hill of Moreh*, now called Little Hermon, they were afraid, and two-thirds of the army went to their homes. God wished to deliver Israel in a way to show that it was by His own power, and verse 5 shows the test by which He chose the men who were best fitted for His work. Gideon marched His army of *ten thousand men* down to the water, and all drank. Nearly all of them laid aside their weapons, knelt down by the brook and put their lips to the water, more eager for a drink than for the war. But *three hundred men* scarcely stopped, only caught up a handful of water in their hands while passing, thus showing themselves single-hearted in their warfare. With these three hundred Gideon made a night attack on the Midianites, and utterly destroyed their great army, so that Israel was set free from their oppressions.

LESSON HYMNS.

No. 104, *Dominion Hymnal*.

We're marching to Canaan with banner and song,
 We're soldiers enlisted to fight against the wrong,
 But, lest in the conflict our strength should divide,

We ask, who among is on the Lord's side?

Oh, who is there among us, the true and the tried,
 Who'll stand by his colours—who's on the Lord's side?
 Who, who is there among us, the true and the tried,
 Who'll stand by his colours—who's on the Lord's side?

The sword may be burnished, the armor be bright,
 For Satan appears as an angel of light;
 Yet darkly the bosom may treachery hide,
 While lips are professing, "I'm on the Lord's side."

No. 103, *Dominion Hymnal*.

Am I a soldier of the cross,
 A follower of the Lamb,
 And shall I fear to own his cause,
 Or blush to speak his name?

Mu
 W
 C
 Ar
 M
 I
 T
 Sur
 I
 I'll
 S

QU

1. T
 chap. 6
 chap. 6
 was it?
 12? W
 army?
 was it r
 of the p

2. T

left of
 about th
 Gideon
 this tes
 earnest
 Gideon
 How did
 mise?
 about G
 TEXT sh

TE

Where d

1. Ho
 2. W
 3. An

The

school).

from the

people c

Thirty-t

this arm

4. How

Three hu

the three

DOCTR

God.

QUEST

1. TH

had the

array his

ance was

tions di

What re

being ta

the army

confesse

2. TH

passed up

was the

test was

What wa

Must I be carried to the skies
On flowery beds of ease,
While others fought to win the prize,
Or sailed through bloody seas?

Are there no foes for me to face?
Must I not stem the flood?
Is this vile world a friend to grace
To help me on to God?

Sure I must fight, if I should reign,
Increase my courage, Lord;
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by thy word.

QUESTIONS FOR HOME STUDY.

1. **The Many**, v. 1-3. Who was Gideon? chap. 6. 11-14. What is related of Gideon in chap. 6? How large was his army, and where was it? What is said of his enemies in verse 12? What was the Lord's objection to Gideon's army? What is said in 1 Sam. 14. 6? How was it reduced in number? Why were so many of the people willing to go away?

2. **The Few**, v. 4-8. How many were still left of Gideon's army? What did God say about them? What trial did God command Gideon to make? What was the result of this testing? How did this test show their earnestness? What promise did God make to Gideon? What did God say in Zech. 4. 6? How did Gideon show his faith in God's promise? Read the rest of the chapter, and tell about Gideon's victory. How did the GOLDEN TEXT show faith in God's power?

TEACHINGS OF THE LESSON.

Where does this lesson show—

1. How God helps his people?
2. Whom God chooses for his work?
3. An example of faith in God's promise?

The Lesson Catechism.—(For the entire school). 1. Whom did God call to deliver Israel from the Midianites? Gideon. 2. How many people came at his call to fight the Midianites? Thirty-two thousand. 3. What did God say of this army? "The people are too many." 4. How many did God choose out of them? Three hundred men. 5. What did God do by the three hundred? He delivered Israel.

DOCTRINAL SUGGESTION.—The sovereignty of God.

QUESTIONS FOR SENIOR STUDENTS.

1. **The many**, v. 1-3. What two names had the leader of Israel? Against whom did he array his forces? By what direction and assurance was this done? Judges 6. 14. What objections did the Lord make to his preparations? What reason was given? What great lesson was being taught to Israel? Psa. 83. 18. How was the army to be reduced in numbers? How many confessed their lack of courage?

2. **The Few**, v. 4-8. What judgment was passed upon the number remaining? By whom was the further reduction to be made? What test was given? How many were selected? What was Asa's testimony in his prayer for help?

2 Chron. 14. 11. What is the Christian's reliance in his weakness? Phil. 4. 13. With what were the little army furnished?

PRACTICAL TEACHINGS.

Where in this lesson are we shown—

1. That great spiritual danger lies in easy victories?
2. That the service of God requires courage?
3. That success in God's work depends not on numbers, but on the divine presence?

QUESTIONS FOR YOUNGER SCHOLARS.

Who was one of the greatest of Israel's judges? Gideon. What made him great? His faith in God. Who now ruled the Israelites? The Midianites. Why did God permit this? Because his people had forsaken him. Who will rule us if God does not? Our enemies. What did Gideon call the people to do? To fight the Midianites. How many came at his call? Thirty thousand. Why was this too many? They would trust their own strength. Who were told to go home? All who were afraid. How many were then left? Ten thousand. What did God say? That there were still too many. What did Gideon tell them to do? To drink of the brook. Whom did he then choose to fight? Those who caught only a little water as they passed. What did this show? Their eagerness to serve God. Whom does God choose for his service? Those who are whole-hearted.

WORDS WITH LITTLE PEOPLE.

Our enemies—

- Hearts that do not believe God.
- Hands that do Satan's work.
- Feet that run on Satan's errands.

Our friends—

- Trials that make us think of God.
- Weakness that makes us trust God's strength.
- Ignorance that sends us to God for wisdom.

ANALYTICAL AND BIBLICAL OUTLINE.

The Chosen Leader in God's Cause.

I. A MAN OF DECISION.

- Jerubbaal, who is Gideon. v. 1.
- "Throw down... Baal... build an altar." Judges 6. 25, 26.
- "Who is on the Lord's side?" Exod. 32. 26.

II. A MAN OF ENERGY.

- Rose up early. v. 1.
- "Blew the trumpets... brake the pitchers." Chap. 7. 19.
- "Earnestly contend for the faith." Jude 3.

III. A MAN OF COURAGE.

- Pitched beside the well. v. 1.
- "Thou mighty man of valour." Chap. 6. 12.
- "Speak, boldly as... ought to speak." Eph. 6. 20.

IV. A MAN OF COMMUNION WITH GOD.

The Lord said unto Gideon. v. 2.

"Gideon said unto God . . . fleece," Judg. 6. 36-40.

"Our fellowship is with the Father."
1 John 1. 3.

V. A MAN OF OBEDIENCE TO GOD.

Bring them down . . . he brought. v. 4, 5.

"Fear God and keep his commandments."
Eccles. 12. 13.

"Prepared his heart . . . to do . . . to teach."
Ezra 7. 10.

VI. A MAN OF FAITH IN GOD.

He sent . . . every man unto his tent. v. 8.

"The sword of the Lord and of Gideon."
Chap. 7. 20.

"Time would fail . . . of Gideon." Heb. 11. 32.

ADDITIONAL PRACTICAL LESSONS.**God's Chosen Warriors.**

1. God's chosen warriors are those who have heard his call, and voluntarily come forth upon his side. (Chap. 6. 35.)

2. God's chosen warriors must be humble, willing to give God all glory. v. 2.

3. God's chosen warriors must be fearless, however powerful may be their enemies. v. 3.

4. God's chosen warriors must be whole-hearted, not divided between God's service and the world. v. 5. 6.

5. God's chosen warriors must be faithful, with no lurking taint of idolatry lingering in their hearts. v. 5. 6.

6. God's chosen warriors must be trusting, having confidence in God, even in the face of seeming impossibilities. v. 7.

7. God's chosen warriors must be submissive, obedient to orders, and ready to follow their leader's will.

CATECHISM QUESTION.

4. How did Christ, being the son of God, become man?

Christ, the son of God, became man by taking to himself a true body and a reasonable soul, being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the Virgin Mary, and was born of her, yet without sin.

ENGLISH TEACHER'S NOTES.

BY SARAH GERALDINA STOCK.

WHEN we hear a finished musician play upon a very perfect instrument, our admiration is given to both. None but the player we say, perhaps, could have brought such tones out of the instrument; but, on the other hand, no meaner instrument could have produced such tones. But should the instrument be rough and rude, or old and worn-out,

we bestow all our admiration on the player who is able to make it discourse with such wonderful sweetness. I have heard the same player perform upon a lovely American organ and an old and indifferent pianoforte. I much enjoyed the first, but the second gave me a yet higher estimate of the musical powers of the performer. The performance on the poorer instrument did him the most honour. But one thing I must mention. Although the pianoforte was an old one, there were no notes wanting in it; every key answered to the touch of the player. If here and there had been a mute key in the instrument, his musical purpose could not have been carried out.

It is the same with tools. It has been said that only a bad workman complains of his tools; and certain it is that many wonderful works have been accomplished with very rough instruments, doing really more honour to the hand that used them than if they had been finished and perfect.

Our lesson to-day is about instruments—instruments in the hand of the Lord, the mighty Worker. Our Golden Text well introduces the subject: "The sword of the Lord" there is the Worker, "and of Gideon"—there is the instrument.

Of course, there is this great difference between the use of an instrument by man and the use of an instrument by God: Man cannot accomplish his purposes without the aid of instruments; God needs them not. But we find that it is his will and pleasure to work by means of the instruments he has himself created. He could have dispersed the Midianites without the medium of man at all; but he chose to use Gideon and his army. "The sword of the Lord" would have been all-sufficient, but he chose to associate Gideon and his little band in the work of deliverance, and to make of them instruments whereby it might be wrought. And the story shows us what kind of instruments God chooses.

1. The leader called by God from the threshing-floor had gathered around him an army tolerably strong in numbers, though, of course, greatly inferior to the host that lay stretched out below them, "like grasshoppers for multitude." And it may be that Gideon congratulated himself upon the force he had brought together. But God could not use this heterogeneous assembly. He saw that the army, as a whole, was depending upon its own strength, and it may be that the braver spirits were looking forward to win fame and honour by their gallant achievements. If the Lord gave the victory into their hand, they would take the credit to themselves instead of honouring him, the Deliverer. And so the word came to Gideon that the ranks must

be thi
army b
it wou
shoul
depart,
portion
must
how gr
he was
that he
ished f
that G
as will
which
ascrib
have b
and wh
come?

2. E
thousa
knew t
tion of
ness to
down to
ed the
temper
their k
ing dra
what w
keeping
fulness.
dent wh
which
the call
own de
so the
hundred
the Lor
uses su
purpose

That
ites has
the Lor
against
then, us
ing out
use?

(a) E
those w
humble
does use
are "pe
know a
alone, n

(b) E
sit loose
even to
Those
Those w
alert to

be thinned. The timid and fearful in an army being frequently a source of weakness, it would be without much regret that he should see the "twenty and two thousand" depart, although the discovery that so large a portion of the army were lacking in courage must have been a real disappointment. But how great must have been his surprise when he was told that there was yet too many, and that he must still further weaken his diminished force! But in this way he learned that God makes use only of such instruments as will magnify him. Had the deliverance which he proposed to work for Israel been ascribed to their strong army, where would have been their gratitude and praise to God, and where their trust in him for the time to come?

2. Every one knew why the twenty-two thousand had been sent back, but only Gideon knew there was to be a yet further diminution of the numbers. In perfect unconsciousness to the tests set them, the warriors went down to the water. In drinking they followed the natural dictates of their character and temperament, some throwing themselves on their knees, thoroughly to enjoy the refreshing draught, the others catching up hastily what was sufficient for their need, while still keeping the attitude of readiness and watchfulness. This slight difference made it evident which were the men to be relied upon, which were ready in a moment to respond to the call of their leader, and, disregarding their own desires, to carry out his designs. And so the decision was given. "By the three hundred men that lapped," was the word of the Lord to Gideon, "will I save you." God uses such instruments as fully respond to his purpose.

That battle-cry of Israel against the Midianites has not yet died away. "The sword of the Lord and of his warriors" still goes out against the enemy. For the Lord, now as then, uses human instruments for the carrying out of his purposes. But whom will he use?

(a) *Humble Instruments.* Not necessarily those who are poor in this world's goods, or humble in this world's esteem, though he does use multitudes of these; but those who are "poor in spirit," humble in mind, who know and confess that the power is in him alone, not in them.

(b) *Responsive Instruments.* Those who can sit loose to this world's interests and pleasures, even to such of them as are lawful and good. Those who can put aside their own ease. Those who are quick to hear His voice, and alert to answer the call. To such only is

given the honour of being "labourers together with God." 1 Cor. 3. 9. Is it not an honour worth seeking?

BEREAN METHODS.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Very briefly name or call forth from the class the oppressions and judges of the two hundred years between Joshua and Gideon. . . . Show the condition of Israel at this time. . . . Draw a map of the region here referred to: Mount Tabor; Hill Moreh; Mount Gilboa; Plain of Esdraelon, etc. . . . Show the relative positions of the two armies. . . . How Gideon came to lead the movement for freedom. . . . The testing by the water, what it showed. (See note on vers. 5, 6). . . . How the victory was gained. . . . Results of the victory. . . . Notice the character of a true leader in God's cause. (See Analytical and Biblical Outline). . . . Show illustrations of Gideon's character from the events of his life, both before and after the lesson. . . . Notice its teachings concerning those who are in God's warfare or work. (Gideon's three hundred. See Additional Practical Lessons). . . . Notice how God honours and rewards faith. . . . ILLUSTRATIONS. Small things may lead to great teachings. Prof. Agassiz was shown a petrification of a single fish-scale, and from it described, fully and precisely, the fish to which it belonged, though none had yet been discovered. Years afterward a petrified fish of the same kind was found in Kansas, and found to be just as the scientist had declared. So a small act, a look, the gait, or a feature, will reveal secret character. . . . "One man with God on his side is a majority," said a great reformer. . . . Cromwell's advice, "Trust in God, and keep your powder dry."

References. FOSTER'S ILLUSTRATIONS. Prose, 2114, 6561. Ver. 3: Prose, 1122, 1123, 2256, 2264, 2272, 8707. Ver. 7: Prose, 1846, 1901, 1905, 4080, 7292, 9175; Poetical, 2157. Prose, 2985, 6043, 7227, 7228, 11370.

Lesson Word-Pictures.

"Crazy Gideon!" That is the opinion of an old warrior among Gideon's men. And see! Look off from the top of this hill down upon the tents of the invading Midianites. What a noisy, confused, vast grasshopper-swarm of idolaters! And beside the well of Harod, there is little Israel! "And yet our numbers are too large!" says the old warrior. "All the timid to go home! They might stay and help make our show respectable. Crazy Gideon!" Off they hurry. All day long they are going, by twos, by threes, by the score or hundred. Gideon's army all day is dropping

in pieces and melting away like the ice in a spring brook. Only ten thousand with which to oppose Midian's vast host! "Another order from our crazy leader," says the old warrior. "We are all to go down to the water and each take his turn and drink! What for, and what next?" Did an army ever go through such a drill-exercise as that? There are Gideon's men at the water, some "lapping" as they "put their hand to their mouth," and others are down upon their knees to drink. And those who bowed down are to go home! Strange! Gideon is a wilder lunatic than ever. Only three hundred, and their weapons to be oily lamps and old pitchers and trumpets! How Midian would laugh if he knew it! Stop! God is in the three hundred. Count again. Gideon's three hundred and God's millions, billions—a countless number! It is a single drop re-enforced by the ocean. It is the finite enlarged by the infinite. What wonder at the result!

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHELPS, HQ.



Draw the banner, and the words on each side of it, but leave the other words to be written during the review of the lesson.

BLACKBOARD SENTENCES.

"God is great."
 "My help cometh from the Lord."
 "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon."
 God with us. Victory!
 Without God. 000,000.
 With God. 1,000,000.

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. *The True Soldier.*

GIDEON AND HIS ARMY.

Tell that the Israelites were having a sad time again. What caused all their trouble?

Yes, sin; the sin of unbelief. Moses and Joshua had now been dead more than two hundred years, and they had no great captain to help them. Tell of the great army of heathen that came to fight against Israel from Midian and Amalek. The shepherds and farmers went away and hid among the hills, leaving their pleasant homes and rich fields to their enemies. Now God chose a captain for them: Gideon, a good, brave man, who believed in God and obeyed him. When the people heard this, thirty thousand came and joined Gideon's army! They were ready to go and fight the heathen, they thought, but when God said all who were afraid might go home twenty thousand went away. God said ten thousand are still too many. Tell of the drinking test, and show that this proved the selfishness of the nine thousand seven hundred. How many were cowards? Talk of the three hundred brave, unselfish men left, the great army they were to fight, their strange weapons, and the midnight battle. This is a thrilling story, and can be made intensely interesting with the aid of the sounding horns, the flashing lights, and the mighty shouts. Let children help to imagine the joy over the great victory.

JESUS AND HIS ARMY.

Print "The Great Captain," and ask what he needs soldiers for? Speak of the foes in our own land, drunkenness, profanity, Sabbath-breaking, dishonesty, etc., and teach that our Captain needs all the brave, unselfish boys and girls to help fight in his army. What weapons shall they have! Draw a trumpet, or pin up one cut from paper. Teach that the sound of a trumpet calls attention. Jesus' soldiers have something to tell about his power and grace. Tell how the earthen pitchers hid the lights. Ask what light is hidden in the heart of a soldier of Jesus? We are like earthen vessels, but the light will shine out when God calls us to fight. Impress the truth that it is God's power acting through his soldiers that wins battles. Ask how we may know what children belong to the Lord's army, and teach that all who do not must belong to Satan's army. Sing, "Never be afraid."

LESSONS FOR SEPTEMBER, 1883.

- SEPT. 2. The death of Samson. Judg. 16. 21-31.
 SEPT. 9. Ruth and Naomi. Ruth 1. 14-22.
 SEPT. 16. A Praying Mother. 1 Sam. 1. 22-28.
 SEPT. 23. The Child Samuel. 1 Sam. 3. 1-19.
 SEPT. 30. Third Quarterly Review.