

Family Reading.

Ruth.

BY REV. HENRY CROCKER.

We love to read the story Of Ruth, the gleaner fair, Who found 'mid Boaz' harvests A kinsman's faithful care.

The lesson learn and cherish, That the story may not be, Like seed in barren soil, Fruitless of good to thee.

There are broader fields than Judah's, Where modern Ruths may glean, And golden grain more precious Than fell the sheaves between.

There's a Master more observant Than Boaz was of old, And richer far and kinder, Whose love has ne'er been told.

In the fields of souls immortal At least a gleaner be; Follow the reapers closely Till the Master calls for thee.

Till his own hand shall lead thee From the tasks of earthly love, And give the best enjoyment In his own home above.

New Select Serial.

KATHLEEN.

THE STORY OF A HOME.

BY AGNES GIBERNE.

CHAPTER XXVII.

MRS. DODSON'S JOURNAL.

"Rome, Dec. 22.

It is all settled. My lot in life seems to be marked out—such a different lot from what I pictured to myself three months ago.

How little I thought, when first I saw them at Lucerne, what would come of it! If we had not met thus, I suppose my friendship with the Joliffes might never have come on. Would it have been happier for me? How can I tell? My life has been a very happy one so far—not because I have not had many troubles. But I have the gift of a cheerful spirit, to begin with, and so much of love and kindness has always been poured upon me. That's something to be thankful for. The mere fact of being loved seems to bring a glow with it. Not that earth-love can ever fill the place in the heart which is meant for Heavenly love—oh, no, never! But I have had both; the greater and the lesser too.

I do not now see a likelihood of un-mixed brightness. I think I am looking forward a little tremblingly. And yet, if I turned from the life before me, the other life wouldn't any longer be the same that it was before. It could not be. For I know Albert Joliffe now, and I did not know him then. That makes the difference—such a difference. How wonderful it is, the difference a few weeks can make in one's very being! Three months ago I wanted nothing more than I had. Now I feel that to part with him would just leave my life a blank.

I thought I was past such feelings at my age. But I am not, and after all why should I be? I am not sure but that one feels only the more intensely as one grows older.

I don't say I could not bear the other life. I don't say I would not turn from him if I saw it to be right. But why should I? If I can make him happy and he can make me happy, why not?

I think the guidance must have come. I didn't seek this, or wish for it. Step by step I seem to have been led on. When he spoke, I was only just waking to the fact that things were becoming different. Mary says she saw it long before, but I did not.

There have been delays and hesitations enough to try his patience, but I could not help it. I could not clearly see my way to the right and wrong of the matter. No, not even after Kathleen's answer had arrived.

It came very quickly. I would rather she had taken a longer time for thinking it over. I should have felt more sure as to her real feelings. The letter seemed to me written in a hurry, under the quick impulse to say just what she knew her father wanted her to say, with an effort to hide pain and unhappiness.

But it satisfied Albert—how strange it seems not to have to write 'Mr. Joliffe!' He said it could not possibly be more satisfactory. And, as he says, he knows his daughter so well, that he ought to be a good judge. He tells me that it is her way to write in that short sort of style; and as for the headache she speaks of, which I fancied might have been brought on by distress, he thinks nothing of it. She has often suffered so of late, and he looks forward much to my motherly care of her.

Will she let me give it? That is the question. 'It is some days now since that note came. I would not give a fixed answer even then, but asked for another week. Albert yielded of course, for he could not help it, but he seemed harassed and unhappy, and very impatient at the continued delay. I do not think he is a patient man—but then how few men are!

A second letter from Kathleen, however, soon followed the first. It was not much longer, but her father said it was perfectly satisfactory; otherwise I might have had doubts. It was so curiously quiet and measured, just as if every word had been chosen with care. But of course he knows her best; and there certainly was a kind little message to me at the end. I did feel then that it would be wrong to go on hesitating and keeping him in suspense. I could not expect anything more from Kathleen.

So now it is settled. Albert is full of joy and happiness. I ought to feel the same, and indeed I am thankful, but sometimes a dread of the future lies on me.

I have wished Albert very much indeed to hasten home for Christmas; if only to stay a few days. Those poor children will want him badly, and it would be so nice for them to have him all to themselves, this once more. For, of course, they will feel me something of an interloper just at first. How could it be otherwise? My hope and prayer are that the feeling may not last. I wonder if they are as sorry for me as I am for them.

But he will not go. I can't deny a feeling of pleasure. I like him the more, because I cannot turn him. He says he will not go back until I go with him. He said, laughingly, that he was afraid, and wanted my protection. I almost thought for a moment that he really meant it, but that is absurd. I look to him to protect me.

Still, if I am a little pleased at his unwillingness to be away from me, I should be happier if he would go.

The last night of the old year. What a strange New Year is opening upon me!

Albert is very anxious that there should be no needless delay. He has letters to-day from home, and Kathleen speaks sadly of their lonely Christmas, and asks when he will go back. He still says resolutely, not till I go also. I have no real reasons to give for wanting to put the matter off—only a faint dread of the future, which I cannot and will not let Albert see.

The wedding is to take place here. That is quite decided. We both want it to be as quiet as can be. If it were in England, so many friends would expect to be asked—his and mine too. And I do not think his friends and mine would suit one another. No—I feel that, in taking this step. I am saying good-bye to many, many old friends. I shall love them still as dearly as ever, but I shall not see them, and they will think me changed and cold. How little people really know one another in this world!

Viola is to pay visits for a time and to join me at Rocklands, when the first few weeks are over. I feel that this is best. She was upset and vexed at first, and now, though she is more reconciled to the idea, she does not seem in any hurry to see Rockston. Will Kathleen be kind to my Viola? Kind—oh yes, she will be that! But will she be sisterly?

The 24th of January is fixed upon for the wedding-day. We shall not make much of a honeymoon afterwards, only about two or three weeks, I think, and then we mean to go home—to his home and mine.

Rome, Jan. 23. The eve of my second wedding-day. How different from my last! Then

the future looked all sunshine; but more shadows came than I expected. Now I see many shadows before me. Will there be more sunshine than I expect?

Looking forward to this new life ahead of me, my heart sinks a little sometimes. I try to be brave, and to trust in a Father's guiding hand, but now and then I find myself a very coward.

Is it faithlessness? I have not reached this point without prayer for guidance—without waiting and watching to see where God would bring me. I cannot and do not feel that I have acted hastily or wilfully in the matter. Even when things had gone so far, that to have turned from this new life, opened out to me, would have been sore unhappiness, still I think I was willing—still I would have done so, if I had seen it to be God's will.

But I could not see it so. Everything seemed to point just in the other direction.

It may be that I am really wanted in Rocklands, that God has some particular work for me there. The very thought is joy to me. If that be so, I am ready for a few thorns and brambles by the way.

Still, when I look forward, my heart does sink. 'The one trouble that I have never yet had in life, is to be unloved and un-

welcomed. And the one thing, which I have always thought must be hardest of all to bear, is to be surrounded by cold looks and shunning ways.

Strange to say the one real dread I have is of Kathleen, that sweet lovely girl. Yes, I do fear her. Will she ever love me? Will she ever let me be a friend to her? There are other difficulties. I don't shut my eyes to them. Better to look them in the face and be prepared.

There are the children. I should not have a fear in that direction, for I can always win children's love, but for other influences. But there will be Hardwicke. An old confidential servant has power in a house of some sort, and she never liked me from the first. I always think she must have suspected something—before anybody else. Then there will be Miss Thorpe, chosen by the children's own mother, and I suppose quite a fixture. Will she work with me or against me?

I shall need so much of wisdom and of guidance. And they will be given me, meted out minute by minute as I need. I don't think God gives out stores beforehand for a month or a week or even a day. That might seem comfortable, but it wouldn't keep us always in helplessness clinging to His hand.

It is easier, somehow to trust for any and all these difficulties, than for one, and that one is—Kathleen.

When one thinks of that sweet little delicate face, with its violet eyes and gentle smile, my fears seem almost absurd. And yet I know that they are not absurd.

I think it is her manner that I dread her soft quiet highbred manner. One does not often see anything exactly like it. She has such a strange power of keeping one at a distance. I can meet and manage almost anything else, temper, sulkeness, haughtiness, wilfulness, it doesn't matter what. But I cannot come one inch nearer to Kathleen than she chooses.

Our positions will be different now. Not stranger meetings on a journey, but stepmother and stepdaughter, living together. How strange it seems. How will it work? Kathleen is a good girl, thoughtful and conscientious. Will she help me, and let me help her.

I must take myself in hand, and stop this unhappy thinking about Kathleen. If I give way to it any more, I shall just be stiff and unnatural when we meet—the very last thing that I wish to be.

I think I won't write any more in my journal until we are at Rockston. And I will try to expect the best. That is a much happier plan than expecting the worst. If trouble comes, one has at least been spared pain beforehand.

But this is not quite the sort of entry that I ought to make in my journal to-night—the last entry of Mary Dodson before she becomes Mary Joliffe. I should not like Albert to see it, for he would be grieved.

I do not think, however, that I could show my journal even to him. That one thing I must keep to myself still.

The Christian Messenger.

Bible Lessons for 1883.

FOURTH QUARTER.

Lesson VIII.—NOVEMBER 25, 1883.

DAVID AND GOLIATH.

1 Sam. xvii. 38-51.

COMMIT TO MEMORY: Vs. 45, 46.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The battle is the Lord's."—1 Sam. xvii. 47.

DAILY HOME READINGS.

- M. Goliath defies Israel, 1 Sam. xvii. 1-11. T. David's Courage, 1 Sam. xxii. 12-37. W. The Lesson and Context, 1 Sam. xvii. 38-58. T. Praise to God, Psalm xvi. F. Spiritual Enemies, Eph. vi. 10-20. S. Victory of Christ, Matt. ch. 4. S. Victory in Christ, Col. iii. 1-17.

DAVID'S CONFLICT WITH THE GIANT.

LESSON OUTLINE.—I. David's Weapons, Vs. 38-40. II. David's Faith, Vs. 41-47. III. David's Victory, Vs. 48-51.

QUESTIONS.—What was David's first introduction to Saul? What war broke out? Where were the two armies? How did David come to the camp? How did Eliah treat him?

Vs. 38-40.—What did David offer to do? vs. 32. What did Saul decide? vs. 37. How did he arm David? What did David find? What did he do? How was he armed? What are the Christian's weapons? Eph. vi. 13-18.

Vs. 41-47.—What had lately been done to David? What had come upon him? By whom was he moved? In what did he trust? What experience encouraged him? vs. 33-37. How did the giant regard him?

Vs. 48-51.—How was the giant slain? What did David then do? What was the effect of Goliath's death? vs. 51-53. What foes have we? What will result if they conquer us?

Scripture Searchings.—What were the names of Goliath's brothers? What promise to those who resist the devil? What kind of persons lead the procession that goes down to hell?

The scene of the contest between David and Goliath was the Valley of Elah—a broad, open valley about a mile wide, near the border-line between Israel and Philistines. Here the armies of these nations were arrayed against each other. And for forty days Goliath, the Philistine giant, had openly defied Israel to present a man to engage in combat with him. But in vain; for all in Israel's ranks were afraid. At this juncture David appears, having been sent by his father to see his three elder brothers, who were in Saul's army. He hears the boasts of the giant, and offers to go and fight him. His offer is accepted; and our Lesson opens with his donning the armor of Saul.

NOTES.—Vs. 38, 39.—Armed David with his armor. Rather, clothed David with his garments. Put on him his own outer robes, as one chosen and honored of the king to do his work. See Esther vi. 8. Helmet of brass. A bronze cap, or head piece. In the Christian armor (Eph. vi. 17), we read of the "helmet of salvation," as it defended a vital part of the throat to the waist, covered with rows of brass pieces overlapping one another. This must have been like a loose shirt, or it could not have fitted both so huge a man as Saul, and a stripling like David. Girded his sword. That is, Saul's sword; for he had none of his own. Upon his armor. Rather, over his garments. Assayed to go. This was the critical moment with David. Saul's armor was a snare, a device of the evil one to destroy him. Had not proved it (them). Such armor was entirely new to him. David said to Saul. His conflict was with Saul and his armor more than with Goliath. I cannot go with these. Happy decision. To use effectively that heavy armor would have required a long time of drill; and had he gone with it, to please Saul, he would have fallen an easy prey to the giant. David put them off. Not Saul's armor, but God is his trust; and such simple weapons must be used as will prove the battle to be the Lord's.

Vs. 40.—Yet he does not despise means. His staff. A common shepherd's staff, or stick cut from a tree. Such as Jacob's (Gen. xxxii. 10). This he does not appear to have used in the conflict; nor did he, perhaps, design to use it. Chose five smooth stones. Undoubtedly he selected them with care. He chose smooth stones, as they would go most freely out of the sling. But why five? Why more than one? Of course that he might have other chances if he missed; and even David's faith was not perfect. His shepherd's bag, or scrip, would have held many more; but

the weight of many would have cumbered him. His sling was in his hand. A formidable weapon at long range, in the hands of an expert, like David. It is misleading to talk of David having nothing but a sling, as if that were a feeble weapon. It was the very best and surest for his work. It is not necessary for faith to be slovenly and careless in the means it employs. As soon as David had discarded Saul's armor, his victory was assured. See Judges xx. 16, for instance of expert use of the sling. He drew near to the Philistine. Going with a brave heart to meet one before whom all Israel trembled.

Vs. 41-44.—The Philistine came on. He and his armor are described in vs. 4-7. Reckoning the cubit as eighteen inches, and the span as half a cubit, his height was nine and three-quarters feet. Pliny says that, in the time of Claudius Cæsar, there was an Arab named Gabbaris, nearly ten feet high; and Josephus speaks of a certain Eleazar, a Jew, who was over ten feet high. Goliath's coat of mail is reckoned to have weighed one hundred and sixty pounds, and the head of his spear seventeen pounds. "The shield carried before him was large enough to cover him crouching."—Geikie. Warriors were accompanied by shield bearers, whose business it was to protect them from the shafts of the archers. Disdained him. He looked about as if he couldn't see one so diminutive, and scorned such a boyish-looking champion. He was angry at being defied by a stripling with a stick, and cursed David by his gods. But both his wrath and his gods were powerless. I will give thy flesh, etc. Or, I will make carrion of thee. Fowls of the air. Eagles, vultures—birds of prey. Beasts of the field. Wolves, jackals, dogs. Vain boast! For forty days he had defied Israel. Now he meets Israel's God.

Vs. 45-47.—Thou comest to me with a sword. Goliath's whole trust was in his size, strength, armor, valor, his sword, spear, shield. Did David trust in his sling, his expertness, his swiftness of foot? If he had he would have been as weak as Goliath. He calls Jehovah of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, into the conflict, and makes the issue between him and the giant. And the result cannot be doubtful. He does not imitate Goliath in swelling words of vain boasting, but says: The Lord will deliver thee, etc. And his faith sees not only the giant overcome, but the host of Philistines also. The birds of prey and wild beasts shall have a larger meal than the giant proposed to give them; but the carcasses shall have a Philistine flavor. Two great lessons were to be taught in the issue of this conflict. 1. To all the earth, the lesson that there is a God in Israel. 2. To this assembly; i. e., the Israelites, a lesson, which, had they learned earlier, they would not have been cowards before this giant, that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear, and that the battle is the Lord's. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord."

Vs. 48-51.—Stung by David's words, the Philistine came to meet David, eager to join battle, and crush this daring youth. But David was more eager than he, and hastened to meet him. The battle was short. A chosen stone put into the sling as he ran, a powerful twirl of the arm, a whizzing in the air, a crash of skull bones, and a dead giant. The fight was over before Goliath knew it had begun. David's arm must have been a muscular one to hurl the stone with such velocity and force. Goliath, with all his armor, had one point uncovered. So it is with all who fortify themselves, however carefully, against God. There was no sword in the hand of David. No, but there was faith in his heart; and Goliath's sword was there ready for his use in cutting off its owner's head.

SUGGESTED LESSONS. How often the church is hampered by recourse to the world's armor in fighting spiritual battles. Though prayer seems a feeble thing beside the sword, it has gained ten thousand fold more victories. Sin is cowardly. One temptation resolutely met and overcome, and the rest take to flight, like the Philistines at the death of Goliath.

Help for Parents, or for the Teacher of the Primary Class. We noticed at the close of our last Lesson that "the Spirit of the Lord came upon David," but departed from Saul, and an evil spirit troubled him. There is good reason for the difference in the two men. How is he described in ch. xvi. 18? And this while David was still a shepherd, and was subject to his father (xvii. 20). As compared with Saul and Goliath he was however "but a youth"; yet he was not without trying experiences (xvii. 35-37). The principal thought in teaching this Lesson may be the Weapons with which to fight our Enemy, Sin.

Give so much of the previous history as will make the meeting of David and Goliath seem natural. It will also be necessary to describe carefully the combatants, and to make clear that it was not a fight for human ends, but that God's people might be delivered. David was then the agent of God in such deliverance, and this fact he fully recognized. Nothing can be done without the story; hence little or much will be made of it according to the tact and ability of the teacher.

—Abridged from the Baptist Teacher.

Booths' Department.

Original and Selected.

Bible Enigma.

No. 251.

Place the following described names in order. Their initials form the name of a small but very notable town in Judea:

- (1) A blessed name,—a place so called by one Whose bed the cold ground was, his pillow stone; When God revealed to him His gracious face. He made his stony bed a heavenly place. (2) Disciples sad reach home at eventide, And urge a stranger with them to abide; 'Twas on the glorious resurrection day Jesus Himself who met them on the way. (3) And one there was would not believe his word, Till he himself had seen his risen Lord; His hands and feet and bleeding side to view, To be convinced the glorious tidings true. (4) What king and Roman governor agree (Though long estranged) to sign the cruel decree, Delivering up our Lord to crucify, By cruel hands to suffer, bleed, and die? (5-6) Grandmother and mother of one in early youth Made to salvation wise by gospel truth. (7) Now see a conical mountain rising high and grand, Where the tomb of Aaron now is said to stand. (8-9) To talk with Him two men in glory came; To complete my word please now recall each name.

CURIOS QUESTIONS.

No. 144.

Some Bible Birds.

- Find the answers and the texts: 1. What bird did Noah send from the ark, which returned bearing an olive leaf? 2. To what song-bird does the Psalmist compare himself when in trouble? 3. To prevent what bird from defiling Herod's temple was the roof thickly set with spikes of gold? 4. What brilliant birds were brought every year to Solomon? 5. What bird is the symbol of cruelty and forgetfulness? 6. What fowl thrice reminded Peter of his denial of his Master? 7. What domestic fowl does Christ use to illustrate his tender protection?

No. 145.

Word Changes.

- 1. Go from sand to clay in six changes, each of one letter. 2. Go from poor to rich in eight words. 3. Go from came to went in four words. No. 146. How is this? Every lady in this land Has twenty nails on each hand Five and twenty on hands and feet. All this is true without deceit.

No. 147.

A Charade.

My first is to trick;— Hold I don't be so quick, And solve before hearing me through; My second, to reel, To shake a great deal; My whole is now coming to view; It grows by the style, On the Emerald Isle, Now work upon this as a clew. —Watchman. Find answers to the above—write them down—and see how they agree with the answers to be given next week.

Answer to Bible Enigma.

No. 250.

- 1. A ristarchus.....Acts xxvii. 2; Col. iv. 10. 2. B asal-bazr.....2 Sam. xliii. 23-29. 3. I conium.....Acts xiv. 1-3. 4. A bel of Bethmasechah.....2 Sam. xv. 15-22. 5. T irzah.....1 Kings xiv. 17; Cant. vi. 4. 6. H ebron.....2 Sam. v. 5. 7. A nathoth.....Josh. xxi. 18; 1 Kings ii. 26. 8. R abbah.....1 Chron. xx. 1, 2. ABIATHAR.—1 Samuel xxii. 20-23; 1 Kings ii. 26.

ANSWERS TO CURIOS QUESTIONS.

- No. 139. Cap-ricious. No. 140. Pear, spear; lock, block lies, flea; rill, frill; room, broom. No. 141. Gold. No. 142. Child-hood. No. 143. DIAMOND PUZZLE. B V I A B I B L E A L E