

The Sabbath-School.

INTERNATIONAL LESSON.

Fourth Quarter-Lesson XI.—Dec. 16.

DEATH OF SAMSON.—Judg. 16 : 21-31.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Great men are not always wise.—Job 32 : 9.

We pass over another interval of a century and a quarter, containing several interesting events. There have been many departures from God, and much evil, and yet on the whole there must have been not a little progress toward true religion.

THE PHILISTINE OPPRESSION.—In the Maritime Plain on the southwest of Palestine, between the Mediterranean and the Hills of Judah, lay a very rich country. This country was held by the Philistines. Towards the close of the wild and stormy period of the Judges, the Philistines were the most active and aggressive nation of Palestine.

This warlike nation had overrun the southwestern part of Israel's possession for 40 years. It was against such an enemy that Samson was raised up.

SAMSON, ISRAEL'S HERO DEFENDER.—Samson means sun-like, the sun-hero; or, the destroyer. He was born at Zorah, in the tribe of Dan, close to the country of the Philistines. His birth was announced by an angel, as if he were to have some special mission. He was miraculously endowed with strength. He tore a lion to pieces with his hands; he carried off the city gates of Gaza; he slew a thousand warriors with the jaw-bone of an ass.

SAMSON'S REPENTANCE AND TRIUMPHANT DEATH.—Vers. 26-31. And Samson said unto the lad. Being blind, a boy was employed to lead him about by the hand. Suffer me that I may feel the pillars. He probably was weary with his dancing. Whereupon the house standeth. It appears that there was a flat roof, from the top of which, as well as under it, spectators could see what was being done, and that this roof was mainly supported by two pillars.

SAMSON'S FALL.—Vers. 21-25. Samson was designed for great things. If he had been true to himself and to God, he might have risen to any height. Four times it is declared that "the Spirit of the Lord came upon him" in connection with his feats of strength. He was powerful because God was specially with him and in him.

The cause must be sought in himself. He yielded to his own blind passions, and trampled on the law of his God. Morally, a man falls of his own will. Satan himself cannot hurl him down the heights of virtue against his own will.

Falling in love with a woman named Delilah, he became infatuated by his passion. The princes of the Philistines determined by means of it to get possession of his person. Delilah, by many temptations and blandishments, learned from Samson the secret of his strength. A moment of weakness disclosed to her the fact that it lay in his hair.

relation to God as a Nazirite; and the preservation of his hair unshorn was the mark and sign of his Nazariteship, and a pledge on the part of God of the continuance of his miraculous physical powers. If he lost this sign of his consecration, he broke his vow, and forfeited the thing signified. God abandoned him, and he was thenceforward no more in this respect than an ordinary man. His treacherous paramour seized the first opportunity of putting his declaration to the test. She shaved his head while he lay sleeping in her lap; and he was instantly arrested by his enemies lying in wait.

When he broke his Nazirite vow he lost his strength, and was taken captive. This was to teach the Israelites that all their strength lay in consecration to Jehovah, and that they had lost it by departing from their vows of allegiance. It teaches us the same lesson. His weaknesses were providentially overruled so as to exhibit to Israel and to us the folly as well as the sin of such indulgences. We learn the perils of bad company. Whosoever goes willingly into bad company is already more than half fallen.

Those who are unfaithful to God will most likely prove unfaithful to us. Sinful pleasures, like a common Delilah, lodge in our bosoms and tempt us to sin. The sins of Christians bring dishonor upon God. God remembers the penitent and hears his prayer. Only by self-sacrifice can the greatest victories be won.

The Calcutta Missionary Conference has resolved to organize a Temperance League. The British Women's Temperance Association has now 400 branches and 25,000 members. Forty-two out of sixty-one places for registering selected by the authorities in Detroit were in saloons. The Church of Ireland Temperance Society comprises 100 local associations with over 24,000 members. Of the recently elected Aldermen of New York it is said one is a brewer and eleven others are liquor-dealers.

judge quite young, as the Philistine oppression lasted but forty years, and he was born after it began. His office of judge was probably confined to the southwestern part of Canaan, to Dan, and the neighboring tribes.

LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF SAMSON.

God uses even imperfect instruments for accomplishing his end. Christians, like Samson, are separated from the world, consecrated to God.

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MAILS CLOSING CITY TIME.

On and after Monday, 26th inst., mails will close as follows:—For St. John, St. Stephen, St. Andrews, Woodstock, Grand Falls, the United States and all points West, at 6.30 A. M.

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Place of Meeting, Divisions, Numbers Night of Meeting, and name of Deputies.

St. Stephen; Howard, 1; Friday; S. Webber; Milltown, St. Stephen; Wilberforce, 3; Monday; H. McAllister.
Market Building, St. John; Gurney, 5; Thursday; John P. Bell.
Orange Hall Portland; Portland, 7; Monday; A. Y. Paterson.
Market Building, St. John; Albion, 14; Monday; E. A. Everett.
Gagetown; Queens, 21; Saturday; H. J. DeVeber.

Upper Gagetown, Queens Co.; Oxford, 130; Saturday; James E. Coy.
Benton, Carleton Co.; Garibaldi, 151; A. F. Campbell.
St. Martins, St. John Co.; St. Martins, 164 Tuesday; Samuel Osborn
Moncton; Moncton, 183; Monday; F. W. Steeves
Douglas, York Co.; Dunphy's W. O. Farmers 190; Saturday; Arthur W. Ross.