

The Teacher

Who advised her pupils to strengthen their minds by the use of Ayer's Sarsaparilla, appreciated the truth that bodily health is essential to mental vigor. For persons of delicate and feeble constitution, whether young or old, this medicine is remarkably beneficial. Be sure you get Ayer's Sarsaparilla.

"Every spring and fall I take a number of bottles of Ayer's Sarsaparilla, and am greatly benefited."—Mrs. James H. Eastman, Stoneham, Mass.

"I have taken Ayer's Sarsaparilla with great benefit to my general health."—Miss Thirza L. Crerar, Palmyra, Md.

"My daughter, twelve years of age, has suffered for the past year from

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"About a year ago I began using Ayer's Sarsaparilla as a remedy for debility and neuralgia resulting from malarial exposure in the army. I was in a very bad condition, but six bottles of the Sarsaparilla, with occasional doses of Ayer's Pills, have greatly improved my health. I am now able to work, and feel that I cannot say too much for your excellent remedies."—F. A. Pinkham, South Moluncus, Me.

"My daughter, sixteen years old, is using Ayer's Sarsaparilla with good effect."—Rev. S. J. Graham, United Brethren Church, Buckhannon, W. Va.

"I suffered from

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with lame back and headache, and have been much benefited by the use of Ayer's Sarsaparilla. I am now 89 years of age, and am satisfied that my present health and prolonged life are due to the use of Ayer's Sarsaparilla."—Lucy Moffitt, Killingly, Conn.

Mrs. Ann H. Farnsworth, a lady 79 years old, So. Woodstock, Vt., writes: "After several weeks' suffering from nervous prostration, I procured a bottle of Ayer's Sarsaparilla, and before I had taken half of it my usual health returned."

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"Tell Jesus."

Is there a shadow resting on thy brow
Cause by the daily cares that none may
know;
Trials which, little though they seem in one
Of thy life as water frets the stone?
Tell Jesus.

Is there a chord within thy aching breast
More sensitive to pain than all the rest,
That oft is struck by cruelty and wrong,
Until thou fain wouldst cry, "O Lord, how
long?"
Tell Jesus.

And does thy spirit grieve o'er doubts and
sin,
Thick clouds without and fiery darts with-
in,
Poor tempted one, there is an eye above,
Marking thee daily with a pitying love.
Tell Jesus.

And when dark waves of tribulation roll
In wild and surging billows o'er thy soul,
Oh, think, amid the tempest's might,
Of One Who crieth in that dark hour, "Thy will be
done;"
Tell Jesus.

And dost thou moan in solitary mood,
Sighing because thou art not understood;
That in the world there is no spirit tone
To echo the sweet music of thine own?
Tell Jesus.

Oh, may this thought sustain thee in thy
grief,
Though earthly sympathy give no relief,
Yet there is One who bends from courts
above
To sound all depths of human woe and
love.
Tell Jesus.

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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.

This is shown by what is revealed
to us in the story of Ruth, and by
the general condition of the nation
under Samuel, and the marvellous
development of the kingdom under
David.

THE PHILISTINE OPPRESSION.—
In the Maritime Plain on the south-
west of Palestine, between the
Mediterranean and the Hills of
Judah, lay a very rich country.

This country was held by the Phil-
istines. Towards the close of the
wild and stormy period of the
Judges, the Philistines were the
most active and aggressive nation of
Palestine. Their cities were rest-
less centres of every form of activity.

Their commerce was widely extend-
ed. Their skill as smiths and armor-
ers was noted; the strength of their
cities attests their success as build-
ers. But they were pre-eminently
devoted to war.

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 DEFEND-
ER.—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 Philis-
tines. His birth was announced
by an angel, as if he were to have
some special mission. He was mir-
aculously endowed with strength.

He tore a lion to pieces with his
hands; he carried off the city gates
of Gaza; he slew a thousand war-
riors with the jaw-bone of an ass.
Samson's great strength was an en-
dowment from God on condition of
his living the life of a Nazarite,
"one separated." It required
(Num. 6: 2-5) total abstinence from
grapes, wine, and all intoxicating
liquors; that the hair should go un-
cut; and that all contamination
with dead bodies be avoided. It was
usually a temporary vow, but Sam-
son's was perpetual. John the Bapt-
ist was perpetual Nazarite. The
meaning of the vow was probably
"entire consecration to God."

Living in a region exposed to the
raids of the Philistines, Samson
was for 20 years a bulwark against
their incursions. He raised no
armies; he organized no warfare,
but only performed feats of heroism
and prowess. He was engaged to
marry a young Philistine woman of
Timnah. At the seven days' wed-
ding feast, he gave a riddle, derived
from his finding a swarm of bees in
the carcass of a lion he had slain.

In consequence of this riddle he
makes an incursion upon the Philis-
tines. With a gift which might
have been of great use, he was yet
morally weak. But we must judge
of his immorality by the light of a
corrupt age, which had scarcely a
rebuke for the kind of sins he com-

mitted. He was generally devoted
to the cause of his people.

SAMSON'S FALL.—Vers. 21-25.
Samson was designed for great
things. If he had been true to him-
self 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. But from
this exalted position he fell. He
departed from God, and then "the
Lord departed from him."

The cause must be sought in him-
self. 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. He did not
fall at once. His descent was
gradual, and almost imperceptible
to himself. He tampered with ap-
petite and gratified his animal de-
sires; and thus gradually he lost his
power.

Falling in love with a woman
named Delilah, he became infatuat-
ed 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. Not
that his strength really lay in his
hair, for this, in fact, had no natural
influence upon it one way or the
other. His strength arose from his
relation to God as a Nazarite; and
the preservation of his hair unshorn
was the mark and sign of his
Nazaritishness, 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 ordi-
nary man. His treacherous para-
mour 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 in-
stantly arrested by his enemies ly-
ing in wait. He is made to reap as
he had sown. But the Philistines
took him, and put out his eyes: in-
stead of putting him to death.

Thus, as they thought, preventing
any future mischief on his part.

To disable a rival, or an enemy by
blinding his eyes, has ever been a
common expedient in the East.

Even to-day it is not unknown.

And bound him with fetters of brass:

rather, copper. Common prisoners
were bound with ropes or thongs.

And he did grind in the prison house.

This grinding was performed by
hand-mills. This task was usually
performed by female slaves. To
grind corn for others, was, even for
a woman, expressed the most de-
graded and oppressed condition.

But it is more probable that Samson
was degraded to the state of a beast,
and made to turn such a mill as
that usually turned by asses or
mules. *Houbert the hair of his head
began to grow again.* And it is im-
plied that his strength grew with
it. From the return of his strength
with the growth of his hair, we can
only understand that he repented,
and renewed voluntarily the vows
which had been imposed upon him
before his birth, and which he had
broken. Then the lords of the Philistines
gathered them together unto Dagon
their god: a sea idol described in
1 Sam. 5: 4. *Our god hath deliv-
ered.* They regarded the idol as
superior to Jehovah. They praised
their god. Samson now saw with
shame and sorrow how the name of
the Lord had been dishonored
through his misconduct. Call for
Samson that he may make us sport:

dance and make music. He was
probably known to be an accom-
plished dancer. The sexes were
mingled in the ancient Eastern
dance. And they set him between
pillars: in full view of the people.

He was made to stand there, after
the dancing, to receive the jests of
the feasters.

SAMSON'S REPENTANCE AND TRI-
UMPHANT DEATH.—Vers. 26-31.

And Samson said unto the lad. Be-
ing 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 dan-
cing. 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. The lords and principal
persons seem to have sat within,
under the roof, while the people, to
the number of 3,000, stood on the
flat roof. And Samson called unto
the Lord. This is evidence of his
repentance. *That I may be at once
avenged of the Philistines for my
two eyes.* It must be borne in mind
that the words of Samson are not a
mere vindictive imprecation on those
who had injured him. If he had
had no higher or worthier motive
than this, the Lord would not have
answered as he did. He makes ap-

peal to God in his representative
character, that he would vindicate
his own honor. *Let me die with the
Philistines:* I am willing to die,
if only I can accomplish this victory.
He knows that if his deed be suc-
cessful, he cannot escape. But he is al-
so ready to die. He is reconciled
with his God. Samson no more
committed suicide than does a brave
general when, with certain death
before him, he rushes into the thick-
est battle, confident that his fall
will save his country from a hated
foe. And the house fell. When
the pillars were removed, the weight
of 3,000 people brought the roof
down with a fearful crash, and
those above fell upon those below,
together with the stones and timbers,
and a great slaughter was the
result, Samson himself perishing
under the ruins. Upon the lords.

They are mentioned first because
their death was of great political
significance. The great numbers
who perished would have had little
effect upon the relations of the Phil-
istines and the Israelites, if among
them had not been the leaders.

The dead which he slew at his death.

If three thousand were on the roof,
there were doubtless as many more
below. Eshtael: a village near
Zorah. Judged Israel twenty years.

He must have begun his career of
judgment quite young, as the Philis-
tine 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 neighbor-
ing tribes.

LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF SAMSON.

God uses even imperfect in-
struments for accomplishing his end.

Christians, like Samson, are sepa-
rated from the world, consecrated to
God.

Strength of body or mind or spirit
is a blessed gift of God.

When he broke his Nazarite 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 providenti-
ally 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 com-
pany. 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 dis-
honor upon God.

God remembers the penitent and
hears his prayer.

Only by self-sacrifice can the
greatest victories be won.

How To Do To Get Along.

Mr Vanderbilt pays his cook \$10,-
000 a year, my boy, which is a great
deal more than you and I earn—or
at least it is a great deal more than
we get—because he can cook. That
is all. Presumably because he can
cook better than any other man in
America. That is all. If Mon-
sieur Saucegravi could cook toler-
ably well, and shoot a little, and
speak three languages tolerably well,
and keep books fairly, and sing
some, and understand gardening
pretty well, and could preach a
fair sort of a sermon, and knew
something about horses, and could
telegraph a little, and could read
proof tolerably well, and could do
plain house and sign painting, and
could help on a threshing machine,
and knew enough law to practice
in the justices' courts of Kickapoo
township, and had once run for
the legislature, and knew how to weigh
hay, he wouldn't get \$10,000 a
year for it. He gets that just be-
cause he knows how to cook, and
it wouldn't make a cent's difference
in his salary if he thought the
world was flat and that it went
around its orbit on wheels. There's
nothing like knowing your business
clear through, my boy, from withers
to hock, whether you know any
thing else or not. What's the good
of knowing everything? Only the
sophomores are omniscient.—Bur-
dette in Brooklyn Eagle.

"CHRIST IS MY SUMATANGA."

So said a native Christian in India,
expressing in his own way the com-
fort he found in the Saviour. But
what is a "Sumatanga?" In some
parts of India there are provided
along the road resting places for
those who carry heavy loads on the
head, as many have to do. These
rests have a high shelf, upon which
the man can easily shift of the heavy
burden that he is carrying. Then
beneath there is a shaded seat,
where he can sit down and rest for a
season until his strength is renewed
to go forward and carry his burden
to the place for which he is bound.
It was with reference to one of
these rests the native Christian ex-
pressed his faith in the words,
"Christ is my Sumatanga."

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