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Autumn.

With shy brown eyes she comes again,
With hair a sunny, silken skein,
As full of light as golden-rod;
Love in her voice, love in her nod,
She treads so softly no one knows
The time she comes, the time she goes.

The grass is brown, the leaves begin
Their gold and crimson dyes to win,
Each cricket sings as loud as ten
To drown the noisy locust, when
You come, O maid, to bid us cry
To Summer sweet a long good-by.

And when you go the leaves are gone;
The aster's farewell scent is flown;
Poor Cupid puts away his wings,
And close to cosy corners clings.
And rude winds usher, with a shout,
The Winter in, the Autumn out.

There's sadness in her shy brown eyes,
Though gay her gown with tawny dyes;
Love's in her voice—but telling most
Of one who's loved, but loved and lost.
She treads so softly no one knows
The time she comes, the time she goes.

—Selected—

The Sabbath-School.

INTERNATIONAL LESSON.

Fourth Quarter-Lesson VI.—Nov. 10

DAVID'S GRIEF FOR ABSALOM.—2 Sam. 18: 18-33.

GOLDEN TEXT.—A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him.—Prov. 17: 25.

ABSALOM'S REBELLION.—In our last lesson we saw Absalom scheming against his own father. In view of his father's ill health, the ungrateful son, determined to take matters into his own hand, and having arranged for a simultaneous uprising all over the kingdom, he was proclaimed king at Hebron, and marched with his army to take possession of the capital and the throne.

DAVID'S RETREAT.—King David, sick in body, sick at heart at the conduct of his son, sick in soul with the consciousness of past sin, knowing how strong the conspiracy was in the capital itself, unprepared with an army of defence, and loath to make war against his own son, retreated from the city. David, with all his family (except ten women left to keep the palace), accompanied by his famous guard of 600, left Jerusalem, and proceeded down into the valley of the Kidron, amid the wailings of the people. The high priest brought the Ark of the Covenant to take it with David, but the king sent it back to its place on Mount Zion, both because that was the place for it, and David would not disorganize the whole religious system of the nation for any private advantage. As they began to descend the Mount of Olives to the northwest, Ziba met them with bread, fruit, and wine and declared that his master, Mephibosheth, Saul's grandson, took sides with the usurper. David believed him, and hastily and unjustly gave him all his master's property. Further along, down towards the Jordan valley, at Baharim, Shimei, another member of the house of Saul, walked on the other side and shouted bitter curses upon David and threw stones and dust at him. There was so much in what he said that was true to David's conscience that he forbade his servants to kill him as they desired. David and his company camped at night in the plain of the Jordan, and awaited news from the capital.

ABSALOM TAKES POSSESSION OF THE CAPITAL.—Absalom and his army, marching from Hebron, take possession of Jerusalem and the palace that day. A council of war was called, and Ahithophel advised an immediate attack upon David. But Hushai, secretly David's friend, argued against this course and advised Absalom to wait till he could gather a great army. The latter advice was taken. Then Ahithophel, seeing that Absalom, by not following his advice, was doomed to failure, and in that case he himself would be executed as a traitor when David was restored, went home to Giloh and hanged himself.

DAVID MAKES A TEMPORARY CAPITAL AT MAHANAIM.—A messenger was despatched to David telling him what might take place. That same night he broke camp and crossed the Jordan, out of immediate danger. He proceeded to the fortified town, Mahanaim, which he made his temporary capital. Here an army of Israelites was organized, and three neighboring chiefs sent in provisions. David and his people began to recover from their panic.

THE DECISIVE BATTLE.—Absalom soon followed his father across the Jordan, David prepared to receive the attack. The armies met in "the forest of Ephraim," in Mount Gilead, where the tangled ground was most unfavorable to the untrained hosts of Absalom. They were overthrown with a slaughter of 20,000 men.

THE DEATH OF ABSALOM.—Absalom was separated from his men, and as he fled from a party of the enemy, the mule on which he rode carried him beneath the low branches of a spreading terebinth and left him hanging by the head, probably in a forked bough. Perhaps, also, his long, thick hair got

entangled, but there is nothing to support the common idea that he was suspended merely by the hair. The first soldier who came up spared his life because of the king's command, and went to tell Joab. The unscrupulous chief hurried to the spot, and thrust three javelins into Absalom's heart. Now Absalom in his lifetime had taken and reared up for himself a pillar. This is mentioned to show how the plans of the wicked are disappointed. Absalom was buried in a pit in the forest of Gilead, and covered with a heap of stones, while he had thought to rest under a beautiful monument near the capital, known and praised of all. In the king's death. The place is unknown. I have no son. His three sons must have all died young.

DAVID RECEIVING TIDINGS FROM THE BATTLE-FIELD.—Vers. 19-32. Zadok. The high priest; David's friend in Jerusalem. Let me now run, and bear the king tidings. He wished to go in order to tell him the good news, how his kingdom was saved, and to break to him gently the news of Absalom's death. Thou shalt not bear tidings this day. Joab wished to save the young man from carrying news which he knew would hurt the king's feelings. Cushite. Most probably "the Cushite" he did not scruple to expose to David's anger. Let me....also run after Cushite. Joab consented to his going because he thought that the Cushite had the start and would get there first. Ahimaz ran by the way of the plain. A longer but level route, so that he could get along faster than the Cushite, who went over the hills and through forests.

In the days when there were no telegraphs or railroads, no stage-coaches, no mail routes, runners took their place, and developed a high degree of speed and endurance. And David sat between the two gates. The two gates are the outer and inner gate of the fortified city wall, between which there was a small court, where David was sitting. He waited with intense anxiety the result of the battle. The watchman went up to the roof over the gate. There was usually a tower over the gate-way, and on its roof the watchman could see a long distance. If he alone, there is tidings. David concluded that if his army had been beaten, the highways would have been crowded with fugitives. But one alone implied the swiftness of a trained runner with tidings. Called upon the porter. The "captain of the gate," who had it in charge. Behold, another man running along. The Cushite. The two thus followed one another so quickly implied important news. Is like the running of Ahimaz. There is a great deal of individuality in running, and practised foot-racers are known and recognized at a distance by their gait. And the king said, He is a good man. David had reason to think well of him, for the bold and faithful service he performed in carrying from Jerusalem to the Jordan the plans of Absalom. Cometh with good tidings. David concluded that he would not be the first to run in the defeat; hence he must be a bearer of news of victory. All is well: literally, peace. "Peace" meant victory; the enemy overthrown. Is the young man Absalom safe? His first thought, after he knew that the kingdom was safe, was for the fate of his wayward son.

Is the Young Man Safe? This is a question every parent and every friend of young men should ask. Is the young man safe from intemperance, from bad companions, from bad books, from dishonest conduct, from bad habits? Is he safe in Jesus Christ? Is he safe in a good home and among good influences? Is he safe for this world? Is he safe for eternity? Ask yourself also what you are doing to make him and keep him safe.

DAVID MOURNING OVER HIS DEAD SON.—Vers. 33. And the king was much moved. His bodily frame could scarcely bear the burden of his loss. And went up to the chamber. To be alone in his sorrow. And wept. Tears are the safety-valves of the heart. O my son Absalom! There is not in the whole of the Old Testament a passage of deeper pathos than this. Would God I had died for thee. So Moses and so St. Paul would have sacrificed themselves, had it been possible, to save others. His wish to die in Absalom's stead was no mere extravagance of grief. David knew his own peace was made with God; he could die at any time. If Absalom were spared in life, he might yet repent.

PRACTICAL HINTS.
One of the saddest sights in the world is the one who misuses great advantages and powers for the ruin of himself and the injury of others. Better have left a good name than a good pillar.

The manner of doing an act is often almost as good an index of character as the act itself.
Is the young man safe? What can you do to make him safe? What must he himself do to be safe?

David professes desire that he had died for Absalom. He ought to have lived more for Absalom.

The saddest deaths are of those who have done only evil in life, and have no hope beyond the grave.

Those who seek to have influence and position, not by fitness for the place, but by iniquitous methods, are almost certain to be disappointed.

A wicked man is reckoned according to his deserts when history makes up its final verdict. Any one who goes in these modern times to Jerusalem will find the men and women and boys still flinging stones against what is called the Tomb of Absalom, to show their detestation of a rebellious child.

Rebellion against God, whether in the heart or in the world, must end in failure.

An Icelandic Farm-house.

The Icelandic farm-house outside the few seaports, with isolated exceptions, consists of a series of one-story structures placed longitudinally side by side, with broad intervening walls of sods rising up to the gables. The side and rear walls are composed of long strips of turf, from twenty inches to two feet in width, laid one upon the other to the height of perhaps six or eight feet. Stones also are frequently used in connection with the turf, and not rarely the bone of sheep. Upon these walls rest the rafters, and on these in turn, cross-boards sufficient to support similar strips of sod. The front of the house may be constructed altogether of turf, or of turf and stones (this is rare), or of turf and boards, or wholly of boards. This space is pierced with one, two, or more windows. The roof turf, of course, soon forms one whole, verdant or withered, according to the conditions of the atmosphere, and very likely dotted with flowers. Similarly the turf walls. A raven or a dog perched upon the end of the roof, and forming an animate ornamental addition thereto, is not an uncommon sight. The main entrance is usually through a structure standing midway in the group, often merely a roofed passage. Stepping down, you find yourself in a broad unfloored space, lighted only from the low entrance. You grope forward, turn to one side, and, after passing through an interim of darkness, a door opens and you enter the chief room (guest room). This is at times quite pleasantly furnished, though of course with exceeding simplicity and rude taste, but usually it is almost entirely bare. Its furniture consists of a narrow bed occupying one corner of the room, often, also, a case of books, a table, and perhaps a certain number of chairs and benches, besides the painted wooden chests. As a rule, however, there are only the latter, and perhaps stationary benches along the sides of the room. Almost invariably this room, at least, has a wooden flooring; but in one instance this was not the case. Occasional the farm-house is entirely destitute of a room such as we have described, and sitting and dining-rooms being coincident with the so-called "bath-stofa." At other times this room is used only as sitting and dining-room, and there are bed-rooms opening off from it, reminding one of heroic days.—October Scribner.

Excited Horses.

The best thing and the only thing to do when your horse is excited is to calm him. In a high state of excitement, the horse does not comprehend what you want. Everyone has seen a team when one horse would go forward and the other falls back. All the whipping and "holing" that a hundred men can do will not start such a team once in one thousand times. The team is excited. The horses show that by every action; and lashing and loud talk only make matters worse. Time will be saved, if half an hour is taken to quiet an excited horse; an excited horse is just like an excited child. We have seen a child scolded and "jaded" at until it could not comprehend what was wanted of it to save its life. Stop scolding, and calm the child, and the work you desire of it will soon be done. It is idle to expect an animal to do your bidding as long as it cannot understand your wishes.

Sabbath-Taking a Sign of Grace.

Dr. Aird, the venerable moderator of the Free Church of Scotland, tells a good story about a minister who, in the old days of patronage, was forced upon a congregation at Alass. The minister was coldly received, as may be imagined; but he began to visit the people, and one day called upon an old elder, who greeted him very gruffly. The minister, however, took a chair, and in a little while took out his snuff-box. "Oh," said the elder, "ye tak snuff, dae ye?" "Oh, yes," "Weel," said the elder, "that's the first mark o' grace I've seen in ye." "How do you make that out?" asked the minister. "Dae ye no read o' Solomon's temple," replied the elder, "that the snuff-box were of pure gold?"

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