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### The Sabbath-School.

#### INTERNATIONAL LESSON.

Second Quarter-Lesson IV. — April 23.

##### THE LORD MY SHEPHERD.

—Ps. 23: 1-6.

GOLDEN TEXT.—The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. — Ps. 23: 1.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD.—Ver. 1. The Lord (Jehovah) is my shepherd. To understand all the force of this image, we must remember what the Syrian shepherd was. Alone in those vast solitudes, with no human being near, the shepherd and the sheep feel a life in common. One is the love of the protector; the other the love of the grateful life. The shepherd knows his sheep, and is known of them.

The most telling word of the whole passage is the little word "my." For what would it benefit me to say, "the Lord is a shepherd?" It would mock me. Should not I feel my own destitution and desolation the more if I felt that he was a shepherd to others, and not to me?

SATISFYING EVERY WANT.—Ver. 1. I shall not want. He has all things temporal and spiritual with which to supply every possible want of body or soul. He has perfect love and desire to make all things work together for good.

RESTING IN GREEN PASTURES.—Ver. 2. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures. Pasture grounds of fresh, tender, soft grass where rest and enjoyment are combined.

The soul needs food as really as the body. Whatever enlarges the soul, builds up the character, increases faith, hope, love, knowledge, &c., whatever does these things constitutes the green pastures. The good shepherd leads us into the experiences and discipline which thus feed the soul. He sends the Holy Spirit, who imparts new life and vigor. He brings the power of heaven into our daily life.

BY THE WATERS OF LIFE He leadeth me beside the still waters. Not quiet waters, which would be stagnant, but gently flowing among green fields.

Every person has certain great thirsts of the soul. He is full of wants, of longings, of desires. This world, its works, its ambition, its pleasures, can never satisfy the soul. Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd, by the living waters he gives, satisfies every thirst of the soul. Just as many-sided as man is, so many-sided is Christ's salvation. He transforms the whole life, and makes the desert blossom like the rose.

RESTORING THE SOUL.—Ver. 3. He restoreth my soul. This means to bring the soul back again to itself, to inspire with new life. He does not only give us comfort; that would weaken character. He gives us power; for the true comforter is the strengthener in pain, not the remover of pain. Eastern travellers tell us that the shepherd is much occupied with straying sheep. Only a few keep near him. Similarly, restoration occupies a prominent place in God's economy. God restores us by the promise of his forgiveness, by the gift of his Holy Spirit, by his providence, by thorns and afflictions, by the teaching of his Word.

GUIDANCE. He guideth me in the paths of righteousness. In right tracks, as opposed to delusive tracks. There are many paths in life, but only one right one for us. We are continually coming to the parting of ways, where we need a guide. No one knows where certain paths lead that open before him. But God knows. And those who look to him he will guide, step by step. For his name's sake. Not because of our deserts or claims. But because he loves to guide us. It is for his name's sake "that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Jesus Christ."

COMFORT IN SORROW AND DANGER.—Ver. 4. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death. "Death-shade," a strong, poetical expression for the profoundest darkness. This "valley of death shade" need not be restricted to one's actual death-scene. It is the valley beset with enemies. The valley of the shadow of death. Death in its substance has been removed, and only the shadow of it remains. Some one has said that when there is a shadow there must be a light somewhere, and so there is. Death stands by the side of the highway in which we have to travel, and the light of heaven shining upon him throws a shadow across our path; let us then rejoice that there is a light beyond. I will fear no evil. He does not say that no evil will ever come to him. For he knows well enough that there are many grievous things in life and hard to bear. We may be hurt, but never harmed. For thou art with me. Thou who art stronger than all the powers of evil art ever near. I feel thy presence, I recognize thy protecting love. Thy rod and thy staff. The second of the words "rod and

staff" seems merely explanatory of the first. The shepherd invariably carries a staff or rod with him when he goes forth to feed his flock. With this staff he rules and guides the flock to their green pastures, and defends them from their enemies. They comfort me. It means far more than simply to console. It signifies to tone up the whole nature, to strengthen a man so that all his energies can be brought to bear.

VICTORY OVER ENEMIES.—Ver. 5. Thou preparest (or spreadest) a table before me in the presence of mine enemies. He can sit down and eat in perfect security, though surrounded by enemies.

JOY AND PLENTY. Thou anointest my head with oil. It is an act of great respect to pour perfumed oil on the head of a distinguished guest. Ointment to the Jews was a symbol of joy. My cup runneth over. The cup that holds God's blessings and mercies is overflowing. God's love and mercy are free and abundant.

GOODNESS AND MERCY.—Ver. 6. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me. Goodness and mercy only—nothing else—will follow me. He need not seek anxiously for them as an illusive blessing; they will pursue him, and overtake him, if only he is a true sheep of the Good Shepherd. God loves to give good things to his people. And every blessing we receive is a new proof of his goodness, and we need not be troubled about the future, for the goodness and mercy shall follow all the days of my life.

FOREVER IN GOD'S THRONE. And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. The dwelling in God's house here, the abiding in his worship, under all the divine influences, prepares us to dwell in his heavenly home. A member of Christ's family here will be a member there.

W. C. T. Union.

OUR MOTTO.—If God be for us who can be against us.

#### Playing Saloon—Why He Quit.

"I hear that Smith has sold out his saloon," said one of a couple of middle-aged men, who sat sipping their beer and eating a bit of cheese in a S. N. street saloon last Friday night.

"Yes," responded the other, rather slowly.

"What's the reason? I thought he was coming money, there."

The other nibbled a cracker abstractedly for a moment, then said: "It's a rather funny story. Smith you know, lives on Mount Washington, right near me, where he has an excellent wife, a nice little home and three pretty children as ever played out doors. All boys, you know, the oldest not over nine and all about the same size. Smith is a pretty respectable sort of a citizen, never drinks or gambles, and thinks the world of his family.

"Well he went home one afternoon last week, and found his wife out shopping or something of that sort. He went on through the house into the back yard, and there under an apple tree were the little fellows playing. They had a bench and some bottles and tumblers and were playing 'keep saloon.' He noticed that they were drinking something out of a pail, and that they acted tipsy. The youngest, who was behind the bar, had a towel tied around his waist, and was setting the drinks up pretty free. Smith walked over and looked in the pail. It was beer, and two of the boys were so drunk that they staggered. A neighbour's boy a couple of years older, lay asleep behind the trees.

"My God, boys, you must not drink that," he said, as he lifted the six-year-old boy from behind the bench.

"We're playin' s'loon, papa, an' I was sellin' it just like you," said the little fellow. Smith poured out the beer and carried the drunken boy home, and then took his boys and put them to bed. When his wife came back she found him crying like a child. He came back down that night and sold out his business, and says he will never sell or drink another drop of liquor. His wife told him about it, and she broke down crying while she told it."

This is a true story; but the name was not Smith.—Pittsburgh Dispatch.

#### Reflections after reading Report of M. Blouet's Cause for Woman.

BY EVELINE W. NELSON.

In strong contrast with the lad, who upon hearing the Scripture, "Ye must be born again," wailed, "I dinna want to be born again, I might be born a lassie," is the statement of M. Blouet, better known by his nom de plume Max O'Reil. The French visitor in his comparative analysis of woman on the continent and in America, says that if he were to be born again and could choose nationality and sex, he would ask to be an American woman.

While rendering the women of

each great nation due appreciation, he pays the American woman this high compliment, "a man forgets he is talking with a woman and is simply conscious that he is in the presence of an intellectual being who clearly understands all that he says on whatever subject." This lack of self-consciousness he thinks constitutes the charm of her personality.

And what gives woman this charm? We all believe that in soul-dom there is no sex; that as we come nearer the Infinite in spirit intelligence and heart-force measure more and sensual things less. Is it not true then that the extent to which this charm prevails indicates our uplift from the harem state? Independence of man for support and the development of soul consequent upon the release from a galling position have given this grace. So long as the average woman knows that the degree of comfort with which she may surround herself depends upon her ability to win in marriage, so long will she resort to arts based upon thought of sex to secure high position. Banish that so-called necessity, as witnessed in America the present century, and lo, woman's advancement is marvelous. Go farther; give her political and religious equality, and hand in hand the brother and sister souls will continue their course heavenward.

A BANQUET was given, recently, at the brilliant Auditorium Hotel, Chicago. Speeches were made by men of talent not now in office but who aspire to be, in the party now in power. Gen. Alger was there, Hon. John M. Thurston, et al. The report of their sayings fills six columns of The Inter Ocean, which informs us that "two hundred and fifty gentlemen sat down to dinner." The same report says: "At the quartet's own request it sang 'Annie Laurie' to the ladies behind the gallery screen." This comes in naturally enough as a sequel to the statement that "the after-dinner exercises began when cigars had been lighted." Compare this condition of things with the latest news from Kansas where the state convention of the Prohibition party has just been held and five women are among the number chosen. Mrs. John P. St. John's name being enrolled alongside that of the Ex-Governor. Compare it with the People's Party and its women delegates and leaders. Compare it with the Sherman House Prohibition banquet recently, where women and men were guests and, seated side by side, responded to toasts in most amicable fashion. Meanwhile, at Republican banquets they sit "behind the screen" in the gallery, inhaling the tobacco smoke of their lords, and at Democratic banquets they are not present at all. We have not a harsh thought of our brothers who exclude women that they may include cigars. They are "in their conditions," that is all. But we of the new world cannot but smile in contemplation of these fading glories of a world that hastens to be gone. Buoyant with the sturdier life of the society and politics that have banished alcoholics and tobacco, those two great separatists between women and men, we can but bewail the condition of those fume bewildered ladies "behind the gallery screen."

We are foolish, and without excuse foolish, in speaking of the "superiority" of one sex to the other, as if they could be compared in similar things. Each has what the other has not; each completes the other, and is completed by the other: they are nothing alike, and the happiness and perfection of both depends on each asking and receiving from the other what the other only can give.—Ruskin.

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