

DR. TALMAGE'S SERMON

An Obnoxious Diet.

"And these are they which ye shall have in abomination among the fowls; the owl, the vulture, and the bat. . . These also shall be unclean unto you among the creeping things that creep upon the earth; the chameleon and the snail."—Lev. 11: 13-30.

The Bible offers every possible variety of theme, of argument, and of illustration. We are not much in what kind of a place the water of life is brought, it is only the clear, pure water. God gave the ancients a list of the animals that they might eat, and a list of animals that they might not eat. These people lived in a hot climate, and certain forms of animal food corrupted their blood, and disposed them to scrofulous disorders, depraved their appetites, and bemused their souls. A man's food, when he has the means and opportunity of selecting it, suggests his moral nature. The reason the wild Indian is as cruel as the lion is because he has food that gives him the blood of the lion. A missionary among the Indians says that by changing his style of food to correspond with theirs, his temperance was entirely changed. There are certain.

FORMS OF FOOD

that have a tendency to affect the moral nature. Many a Christian is trying to do by prayer that which cannot be done except through corrected diet. For instance, he who uses swine's flesh for constant diet will be diseased in body and polluted of soul—all his liturgies and catechisms notwithstanding. The Gadarene swine were possessed of the devil, and ran down a steep place into the sea, and all the swine ever since seem to have been similarly possessed. In Leviticus, God struck the calf off the table of His people, and placed before them a bill of fare at once healthful, nutritious, and generous.

But, higher than this physical reason, there was a spiritual reason why God chose certain forms of food for the ancients. God gave a peculiar diet to his people, not only because he wanted them to be distinguished from the surrounding nations, but because certain birds and animals, by reason of their habits, have been

SUGGESTIVE OF MORAL QUALITIES.

By the list of things from which they were to abstain, God wished to prejudice their minds against certain evils; and in the list of lawful things given, he wished to suggest certain forms of good. When God solemnly forbade His people to eat the owl, the vulture, the bat, the chameleon, and the snail, He meant to drive out of His people all the sins that were thus emblemized.

I take the suggestion of the text, and say that one of the first unclean things the Christian needs to drive out of his soul is

THE OWL.

The owl is the melancholy bird of night. It hatches out whole broods of superstitious. It is doleful and hideous. When it sings, it sings through its nose. It loves the gloom of night better than the brightness of the day. Who has not slept in the cabin near the woods, and been awakened in the night by the dismal "too-hoo" of the owl? Melancholy is the owl that is perched in many a Christian soul. It is an unclean bird, and needs to be driven away. A man whose sins are pardoned, and who is on the road to heaven, has no right to be gloomy. He says: "I have so many doubts." That is because "you are lazy." Go actively to work in Christ's cause, and your doubts will vanish. You say: "I have lost my property"; but I reply: "You have infinite treasure laid up in heaven." You say: "I am weak and sickly, and going to die." Then be congratulated that you are so near eternal health and perpetual gladness. Catch a few morning larks for your soul, and stone this owl off your premises.

As a little girl was eating, the sun dashed upon her spoon, and she cried: "Oh, mamma, I have swallowed!"

A SPOONFUL OF SUNSHINE!

Would God that we might all indulge in the same beverage! Cheerfulness—it makes the homeliest face handsome; it runs the looms that weaves buttercups and rainbows and auroras. God made the grass black? No: that would be too sombre. God made the grass red? No: that would be too gaudy. God made the grass green, that by this parable all the world might be led to a subdued cheerfulness. Read your Bible in the sunshine. Remember that your physical health is closely allied to your spiritual. The heart and the liver are only a few inches apart, and what affects one affects the other. A historian records that by the sound of great laughter in Rome, Hannibal's assaulting army was frightened away in defeat. And there is in the great, unobscured joy of a Christian soul that which can drive back any infernal besiegement. Rats love dark closets, and Satan loves to burrow in a gloomy soul. "Rejoice in the Lord. O ye righteous, and again I say, rejoice!"

Hoist the window of your soul in this the 12 o'clock of your spiritual night. Pat the clock to your shoulder, and aim at the blood jug from which the hooting comes, pull the trigger, and drop that creaking, loathsome, hideous owl of religious melancholy into the bushes.

Again, taking the suggestion of the text,

DRIVE OUT THE VULTURE

from your soul. God would not allow the Jews to eat it. It lives on carcasses; it fattens among the dead; with leading wing it circles about battle-fields. Will you, the American ornithologist, count two hundred and thirty-seven vultures around one carcass. If crossing the desert when there is no sign of wing in the air a camel perish out of the caravan, immediately the air begins to darken with vultures. There are many professed Christians who have a vulture in their souls. They prey upon the character and feelings of others. A doubtful reputation is a banquet for them. Some rival trade or profession falls, and the vulture puts out its head. These people revel in the details of a man's ruin. They say: "I told you so!" They rush into some store and say: "Have you heard the news? Just as I expected! Our neigh-

bor has gone all to pieces! Good for him!"

That professedly Christian woman, having heard of the wrong-doing of some sister in the church, instead of hiding the sin with a mantle of charity, peddles it all along the streets. She takes the afternoon to make her long-neglected calls. She

TELLS THE STORY TEN TIMES

before sundown, and every time tells it larger. She rushes into the parlors to tell it, and into the nursery to tell it, and into the kitchens to tell it. She says: "Would you have thought it! Well, I always said there was something wrong about her. Why, I should not speak to her if I saw her in the street. Is it not horrible? But better not say anything about it, because there may be some mistake. I do not want my name involved in the matter. I guess I will just go over and ask them at No. 263 whether they have heard it. Guess it must be so, for Mary Ann says that her husband saw a man who heard from his business partner that his blind old grandmother had seen something that looked very suspicious!"

The most loathsome, miserable, God-forsaken wretch on earth is a gossip. I can tell her on the street, though I have never seen her before. She walks fast, and has her bonnet-strings loose, for she has not had time to tie them since she heard that last scandal. She looks both ways as she passes, hoping to see new evidences of depravity in the windows. I think that when Satan has a job so infinitely mean that in all the world he cannot find a devil mean enough to do it, and all bribes and threats have failed to get one willing for the infernal crusade, he says to one of his sergents: "Go up to Brooklyn, and in such a street, on such a corner, get

that gossiping woman, and she will be glad to do it." And sure enough, like a hungry fish, she takes the hook in her mouth, and Satan slackens the line, and leads her out farther and farther, until after a while he says: "It is time to haul in that line," and with a few strong pulls he brings her to the beach of fire. What do you say? That she was a member of the church? I cannot help that. When Satan goes a-fishing he does not care what school the fish belongs to, whether it is a Presbyterian mackerel or an Episcopalian salmon. Amidst the thunder-crash of Sinai God said: "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." And in Leviticus He says: "Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer."

Take not into your ear that scum of hell that people call tittle-tattle. Who-soever willingly listens to a slander is equally guilty with the one who tells it, and an old writer says they ought both to be hung, the one by the tongue and the other by the ear. Do not smile upon such a spaniel, lest, like a pleased dog, he puts his dirty paw upon you. Throw back the shutter of your soul, oh Christian men and women! and see if there be within you a vulture with filthy talons and cruel beak. Let not this unclean thing roost in your soul, for my text says: "Ye shall hold in abomination the vulture."

Again, taking the suggestion of the text,

DRIVE OUT THE BAT

from your soul. No wonder God set this bird among the unclean. It is an offence to every one. Let it fly into the window of a summer night, and all the hands, young and old, are against it. It is half bird, half mouse. It seems made partly to walk and partly to fly, and does neither well, and becomes an emblem of those Christians who try to cling to earth and heaven at the same time. They want to walk on earth in worldliness, and yet fly toward heaven in spirituality; and their soul, between feet and wings, is constantly perplexed. Oh, my brethren, be one thing or the other! Choose the world, if you prefer it, and see how many dollars you can win, and how large a business you can establish, and how grand a house you can build, and how fast a span of horses you can drive. You may be prosperous until you can fall for five hundred thousand dollars, instead of having the disgrace of falling for only ten thousand, as some unenterprising people do. It is quite a reward to be able for ten or twenty years to be called one of

THE SOLID MEN OF BROOKLYN or Boston; and then, to make your fortune last as long as possible, we will give you a splendid funeral, and you shall have twenty-five carriages following you, with somebody in the most of them, and your coffin shall have silver handles on the sides, and we will mourn for you in splendid pocket-handkerchiefs bound with crape, and with bombazine, twenty fully long trailing half-acre sea parties, so that all the company may stand upon it, and we will write our letters for the next six months on paper edged with black. But, my friends, your worldly fortunes will not last. I will buy out now all that you will be worth in worldly estate seventy-five years from now. I have the money in my pocket with which to do it. Here it is! Two cents! It is a large sum to offer for all you will possess at the close of seventy-five years. Choose the world, if you want to; but if not, then choose heaven. That estate lies partly on this side of the river, but mostly on the other. It is ever accumulating. The prospect of it makes one independent of earthly misfortunes; so that Rogers, the martyr, slept so soundly that night before his burning, that they violently shook him in order to get him awake in time for the execution; and Paul exults at the thought of the "joy unspeakable and full of glory." Oh,

CHOOSE EARTH OR HEAVEN!

Make up your mind whether you will walk in earthly joys, or fly with heavenly expectations. Be not a bat, fit neither to walk nor fly, having just enough of heaven to spoil the world, and so much of the world as to spoil heaven. Christ says that your present condition nauseates Him to positive sickness: "Because thou art neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of My mouth!" In the ruins of Pompeii there was found a petrified woman, who, instead of trying to fly from the destroyed city, had spent her time in gathering up her jewels. She saved neither her life nor her jewels. There are multitudes

making the same mistake. In trying to get earth and heaven, they lose both. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." Be one thing or the other. Tread the earth like a lion, or mount the air like the eagle; for my text says: "Ye shall have in abomination among the fowls the bat."

Again, taking the suggestion of the text,

DRIVE OUT THE CHAMELEON

from your soul. There is some difference among good men as to the name of this creeping thing which God pronounced unclean, but I shall take the opinion which seems best suited to my purpose. The chameleon is a reptile, chiefly known by its changeableness of color, taking the color of the thing near, and sometimes gray, but always the color of its surroundings, a type of that class of Christians who are now one thing in religious faith, and now another, just to suit circumstances, always taking their color of religious belief from the man they are talking to. They go to one place, and are first-rate Unitarians. "Jesus was a good man, but nothing more." They go to Princeton, and they are Trinitarians, almost willing to die for the divinity of Jesus. Among the Universalists they receive the idea of future punishment, and, going among the Presbyterians, they announce that there is a hell with a gusto that makes you think they are glad of it. Drive out that unclean chameleon from your soul. Do not be ever changing the color of your faith. My friends, liberal Christianity, falsely so-called

BELIEVES IN NOTHING. God is anything you want to make Him. The Bible to be believed, in so far as you like it. Heaven a grand mixing up of Nero and Pauls. The man who dies by suicide in his right mind in 1888, beating into glory by ten years the Christian man who dies a Christian death in 1898—the suicide proving himself wiser than the Christian. Oh, my friends, let us try to believe in something! An infidel was called to the bedside of his daughter. The daughter said: "Father, which shall I believe, you or mother? Mother took the religion of Christ, and died in its embrace. You say that religion is a humbug. Now I am going to die, I am very much perplexed; shall I believe you, or take the belief of my mother?" The father said: "Choose for yourself." She said: "No; I am too weak to choose for myself; I want you to choose for me." "Well," said the father, after much hesitation and embarrassment: "Mary, I think you had better take the religion of your mother." The time will come when we shall have to believe something. We cannot afford to be

ON THE FENCE IN RELIGION. Truth and error are set opposite to each other. The one is infinitely right, and the other infinitely wrong. In the Judgment-day we must give an account of what we believed as well as for what we acted. The difference between believing truth and believing error is the difference between paradise and perdition. I beg you, in the light of the Bible, and on your knees before God, to form your religious opinion and then stick to it, though business companions scoff, and with caricature, and the air crackles with the fires of martyrdom. Surely truths in behalf of which Christ died, and angels of God trooped forth, and the whole universe is marshaled, are worth living for and worth dying for. Amidst the most unclean things is this ever-changing chameleon of religious theory. Away with the reptile! God abhors it with an all-consuming abhorrence.

Once more taking the suggestion of the text,

DRIVE OUT THE SNAIL

from your soul. God has declared it unclean. It is an animal to be found everywhere between the coldest north and the hottest south. There are fifteen hundred species of the snail. They have no backbone, and they are so slow that their movement is almost imperceptible. You see a snail in one place to-day; to-morrow and you will find it has advanced only a few inches. It becomes an emblem of that large class of Christian people who go to work with a slowness and sluggishness that is wonderful. They are stopped by every little obstacle, because, like the snail, they have no backbone. Others mount up on eagle's wings, but they go at a snail's pace.

Oh child of God, arouse! We have apotheosized Prudence and Caution long enough. Prudence is a beautiful grace, but of all the family of Christian graces I like her the least, for she has so often been

MARRIED TO LAZINESS. Sloth and Stupidity. We have a million idlers in the Lord's vineyard, who pride themselves on their prudence. "Be prudent," said the disciples to Christ, "and stay away from Jerusalem"; but he went. "Be prudent," said Paul's friends, "and look out for what you say to Felix"; but he thundered away until the ruler's knees knocked together. In the eyes of the world, the most imprudent men that ever lived were Martin Luther, and John Oldcastle, and Wesley, and Knox. My opinion is, that the most imprudent and reckless thing is to stand still. It is well to bear our Commander's voice when he says "Halt"; but quite as important to hear it when he says "Forward!" This Gospel ship, made to plough the sea at fifteen knots an hour, is not making three. Sometimes it is most prudent to ride your horse slowly, and pick out the way for his feet, and not strike him with the spur; but when a band of Shoshone Indians are after you in full tilt, the most prudent thing for you to do is to plunge in the rowels and put your horse to a full run, shouting "Go! go!" until the Rocky Mountains echo it. The foes of God are pursuing us. The world, the flesh, and the devil are after us; and our wisest course is to go ahead at swiftest speed.

When the Church of God gets to advancing too fast, it will be time enough to use caution. No need of putting on the brakes while going up-hill. Do not let us sit down waiting for something "to turn up," but go ahead in the name of God, and turn it up.

THE GREAT DANGER TO THE CHURCH now is not sensation, but stagnation. Oh that the Lord God would send a host

of aroused and consecrated men to set the Church on fire, and to turn the world upside down. Let us go to work and catch the last snail in our souls. With Divine vehemence let us stamp its life out; for my text declares: "These also shall be unclean to you among the creeping things that creep upon the earth; the chameleon and the snail."

I have thus tried to prejudice these Christian men and women against gloominess, and slander, and half-and-half experiences, and changeableness, and sloth. Our opportunities for getting better are being rapidly swallowed up in the remorseless past. This moment may we drive out all the unclean things from our souls—the vulture, and the bat, and the owl, and the chameleon, and the snail; and in place thereof bring in the Lamb of God, and the Dove of the Spirit! The case is urgent. Arouse! before it be eternally too late! "Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it!"

CAPTURING A SWORDFISH. A Vicious Monster, Being Wounded Pierces a Block Island Boat.

A man stands on a little platform in front of the bow rmed with a harpoon having a sharply and deeply barbed point, so that in piercing the fish, if it goes in far enough, it cannot be easily got out, let the fish be as ugly as he may. The iron is so arranged, in connection with a pole and cord, that the cord can be detached from the harpoon, the pole pulled back, and the harpoon left firmly fixed in the now maddened fish—the line, a very strong rope, 300 feet long, being fast to the iron and the other end secure on the vessel. This is immediately fastened securely to an empty barrel, which is then thrown overboard, and it marks the course and position of the engaged fish.

It also enables the vessel to send out a life boat to haul in, tire out and, if possible, capture the ugly fellow. And ugly he is, if he is a young fish. If he is old and heavy, he is much quieter—even with a harpoon in him. It is the younger, livelier fellows that are so full of ugly courage—that attack and kill whales, and attack, indeed, pretty much everything in the ocean, unless it may be the sea-serpent and the devil fish.

That they will attack a man, even a bather, who is in a water not over his head, and kill him too, unless he can make wonderful time in getting into shallower water, has proved a few years ago in the case of a young Catholic priest who was attacked while bathing on the California shore, in water just above his hips; he was fearfully gashed and nearly killed before he could get ashore. Sometimes, in its fury at being harpooned, it rushes at a small boat and thrusts its ugly sword up through the boat's bottom. Woe to the man it hits!

Our harpooner fastened to a fish that was secured, as if happened, with little trouble, though the harpoon only penetrated a little way into his big carcass. He proved to be 6 feet 5 inches long, and weighed undoubtedly 450 pounds. Much larger ones have been caught, but rarely. We also secured two others, not so large. And it was with the second one that there was an exciting time. He proved to be "a young man" among his blows, and an ugly young fellow too.

Having him well harpooned, and the barrel going darning at a great rate against the wind—for it is a curious and hitherto unexplained fact that a swordfish, when harpooned, always rushes out to windward—the life boat put out to secure him after duly "playing" him. In it went a Block Islander belonging to the vessel, and two courageous passengers. By the time they reached the bar, they were a mile from the vessel, and could be seen, with a glass, pulling in on the line.

They worked the fish a good while. When a swordfishing himself harpooned and helplessly held, really gives up the fight, he suddenly turns and goes to leeward. The men at the line understand what that movement means. They are still "playing" this fellow, and exhausting him, when, having several times had him hauled in close to the boat, and that his big figure was distinctly visible, and as often permitted him to go 10 feet or more, something happened which caused the captain of the steam yacht a mile off, looking through his glass, to exclaim: "They're in trouble! he has struck the boat!"—and to order an instant start for them.

He was none too soon. The enraged fish, withdrawing some sixty feet, had made one of those arrowlike rushes upon the boat, which can be equalled in its velocity by no other fish in the sea. The sword pierced the bottom of the life boat on the side of the keel, near the center—coming up nearly two feet. Fortunately he had learned ere now not to sit down in a boat engaged in hauling in a swordfish. By standing (as well as they can) their feet present a smaller surface, and hence a diminished chance of being hit. Last year one man's boot heel was partly hit, knocking him headlong.

In the present instance one of the men had a narrow escape of hardly ten inches. But the men were saved. Indeed, the boat, being a shell lifeboat, would hardly have sunk, although it was already half full of water and the men hard at work bailing when the steam yacht reached them. The vicious fish was repeatedly lanced through the head and neck till he got comparatively quiet, when, in hauling him up the side, with the harpoon purchase at the shoulder and the long grappling hook at the tail, a slipknot was successfully got over his wide forked tail—and then—we had him. But for this last grip he would have turned the boat over. But the way he lashed the sea with that tail was a caution.

EXPIATORY.—Waiter—What would you like for your breakfast this morning?

Young Noodle (who was out late the night before)—I guess you can bring me a cup of coffee and, er—some chopped ice and a bucket of water.

A new electrical system is to be introduced in the underground system of London. Large electrical engines will be built.

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1893.

Death of Samson. LESSON TEXT. Judg. 16: 21-31. Memory verses, 23, 29.

LESSON PLAN.

TOPIC OF THE QUARTER: God's Promises Fulfilled.

GOLDEN TEXT FOR THE QUARTER: There is no might in any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass.—Josh. 21: 45.

LESSON TOPIC: Regaining Lost Strength.

Lesson 1. 1. Without Strength, vs. 21, 23-25. Outline: 2. Seeking Strength, vs. 26, 28, 29. 3. Exerting Strength, vs. 29-31.

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

DAILY HOME READINGS: M.—Judg. 16: 21-31. Regaining lost strength. T.—Judg. 13: 8-25. Samson's parentage. W.—Judg. 14: 1-20. Samson's marriage. T.—Judg. 15: 9-20. Samson and the Philistines. F.—Judg. 16: 4-20. Samson and Delilah. S.—1 Cor. 1: 17-31. Comfort for the weak. S.—2 Cor. 12: 1-10. Strength in weakness.

LESSON ANALYSIS. I. WITHOUT STRENGTH.

I. Abused: The Philistines laid hold on him, and put out his eyes (21). They carried him forth, . . . and stoned him with stones (1 Kings 21: 13). They will scourge you (Matt. 10: 17). In the world ye have tribulation (John 16: 33). They were stoned, they were saw as under (Heb. 11: 37).

II. Imprisoned: They . . . bound him with fetters; . . . he did grind in the prison (21). Herod . . . shut up John in prison (Luke 3: 20). Haling men and women committed them to prison (Acts 8: 3). And made their feet fast in the stocks (Acts 16: 24). Yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment (Heb. 11: 36).

III. Reticulated: He made sport before them (25). Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head (2 Kings 2: 23). They kneeled down before him, and mocked him (Matt. 27: 29). They laughed him to scorn (Mark 5: 30). Others mocking said, They are filled with new wine (Acts 2: 13).

1. "The Philistines laid hold on him, and put out his eyes." (1) The illustrious captive; (2) The cruel captors; (3) The brutal abuse.

2. "Our God hath delivered, Samson our enemy into our hands." (1) The idolaters' god; (2) The idolaters' triumph; (3) "He made sport before them." (1) The place of revelry; (2) The occasion of rejoicing; (3) The object of sport.—(1) God's enemies triumphant; (2) God's servant humiliated.

II. SEEKING STRENGTH. I. By Renewed Allegiance: The hair of his head began to grow again (22). All the days of his vow . . . there shall no razor come upon his head (Num. 6: 5). No razor shall come upon his head (Judg. 13: 5). If I be shaven, then my strength will go from me (Judg. 16: 17). She called for a man, and shaved off the seven locks (Judg. 16: 19).

II. By Strategic Action: Suffer me that I may feel the pillars (26). They uncovered the roof; . . . they let down the bed (Mark 2: 4). Came in the crowd behind, and touched his garment (Mark 5: 27). He . . . climbed up into a sycamore tree to see him (Luke 19: 4). The same came unto him by night (John 3: 2).

III. By Earnest Prayer: Strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God (28). But now, O God, strengthen thou my hands (Neh. 6: 9). Wait on the Lord: be strong (Psa. 27: 14). Remember me, and visit me, and avenge me (Jer. 15: 15). Ask, and it shall be given you (Matt. 7: 7).

1. "Suffer me that I may feel the pillars." (1) The pillars; (2) The prayer; (3) The purpose.

2. "Samson called unto the Lord." (1) Samson's dire emergency; (2) Samson's fearful purpose; (3) Samson's earnest prayer.

3. "Remember me, . . . and strengthen me, I pray thee." (1) Remembered of the Lord; (2) Strengthened of the Lord; (3) Conquering through the Lord.

III. EXERTING STRENGTH. I. Self-Sacrificingly: Let me die with the Philistines (29). If not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book (Exod. 32: 32). I ceased not to admonish . . . night and day with tears (Acts 20: 31). I could wish that I myself were anathema from Christ (Rom. 9: 3). Christ also pleased not himself (Rom. 15: 3).

II. Powerfully: He bowed himself with all his might (30). Go in this thy might, and save Israel (Judg. 6: 14). The people had a mind to work (Neh. 4: 6). Do it with thy might (Eccl. 9: 10). I press on toward the goal (Phil. 3: 14).

III. Effectively: The dead which he slew at his death were more—(30). Into the land of Canaan they came (Gen. 12: 5). So we built the wall (Neh. 4: 6). The Lord added to them day by day (Acts 2: 47). Ye know that your labor is not vain in the Lord (1 Cor. 15: 58).

1. "Let me die with the Philistines." (1) The appointed doom of the

Philistines; (2) The accepted fate of Samson.

2. "The dead which he slew at his death were more." (1) Samson's achievements in life; (2) Samson's achievements at death.

3. "His brethren . . . buried him." (1) His marvelous career; (2) His tragic end; (3) His sad burial.

LESSON BIBLE READING. THE PHILISTINES AND SAMSON.

1. The Philistines: Their ancestry (Gen. 10: 13, 14; 1 Chron. 1: 12). Early home (Jer. 47: 4; Amos 9: 7). Made conquest of western Canaan (Deut. 2: 23). Called it Philistia (Psa. 87: 4; 108: 9). Ruled by five lords (Josh. 13: 3; Judg. 3: 3; 1 Sam. 6: 16). Occupied various cities (1 Sam. 6: 17). Were eminently warlike (1 Sam. 13: 5: 17; 1-11; 29: 1-2). Given to the Israelites (Josh. 13: 1: 2; 15: 29, 45-47).

2. Samson: A deliverer from the Philistines (Judg. 13: 5; 1 Sam. 7: 13). Intermarried with the Philistines (Judg. 14: 1, 19). Slew thirty near Ashkelon (Judg. 14: 19). Burnt their fruits (Judg. 15: 3-5). Avenged on them his wife's murder (Judg. 15: 6-8). Slew a thousand Philistines (Judg. 15: 14-17). Overcome by them (Judg. 16: 21). Avenged on them at his death (Judg. 16: 26-30).

LESSON SURROUNDINGS. The wonderful story of Gideon's campaign is narrated in Judges 7: 9 to 8: 21. But while the land had rest during his days (Judg. 8: 28), the spoils he had received were perverted to idolatry, used another release to heathenism, followed after his death (Judg. 8: 23-35).

The short, bloody, and tumultuous reign of Abimelech his son is described in Chapter 9. Two judges, Tola and Jair, are named in Judges 10: 1-5, and the remainder of the chapter describes the cruel oppression of the entire people by the Ammonites. The deliverance wrought by Jephthah, and his vow, with its sad result, are narrated in Chapter 11. An interregnum was followed between the Ephraimites and the Gileadites (Judg. 12: 1-6). The three succeeding judges were Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon; but in each case the period of rule was brief.

The next oppression of Israel was by the Philistines. It lasted for "forty years" (Judg. 13: 1), but it is uncertain how this period is reckoned. The next judge was Samson, of the tribe of Dan, whose birth and Nazarete life was foretold (chap. 13). His attempted marriage with a Philistine woman (chap. 14) led to a conflict in which he so subdued the Philistines as to secure temporary deliverance (chap. 15). His fall through Delilah is graphically depicted in Judges 16: 4-20, immediately preceding the lesson.

The place was Gaza, near the seacoast, about fifty miles south-west of Jerusalem.

The time is near the close of the period of judges. If, as is probable, Samson was a contemporary of Eli, the death of Eli may have preceded the death of Samson, and the time would then be shortly before B. C. 1129. But the longer chronology would assign the date to a point at least forty years earlier.

Church Hospitality. Hospitality is a virtue that can be shown in a church-home as well as in a private house. And there are as many and as varied degrees of warmth and heartiness in a welcome into the one place as into the other. The Christian Register has made a suggestion of a mechanical appliance in this direction, which is an improvement on the methods in vogue in some churches, and which is improved on in some others. Here is its description: "A machine for performing the offices of church hospitality. It is to be placed in the vestibule of the church. The stranger drops a five-cent nickel in the slot. A metallic hand, fed by a current of ice-water, drops from a concealed arm and is extended to the visitor, while a photograph, set in motion by the same nickel, welcomes the stranger in a few mechanical phrases. An automatic fuser, operated by a cold chisel, generated from an internal refrigerator, conducts the stranger to his seat. We were about to apply for a patent on this invention, but learned that with slight modifications, the invention has already been in use in some churches for a good many years, the unimportant difference being that the nickel is put into the contribution box instead of in a box at the front door." This description clearly does not apply to all churches; but there are churches enough where it does apply to prevent its being recognized as specifically individual.

Drill of the German Army. A new book of instructions for drill has been issued to the German army, by which there will be established the greater simplicity and lesser number of movements which various military authorities, notably Lord Wolseley, have favored for several years. All evolutions are likely to be needed in battle done before had it not been for the unwillingness of the old Kaiser to see swept away numerous details which had accompanied the progress of the German arms during his lifetime. No new drills are introduced, only some old ones cut. Captains are made responsible for their companies' proficiency.

EVIL ASSOCIATIONS.—Mrs. Nibbs—I am shocked, Willie Bibbs, to hear you use such awful language, positively shocked. I think it's high time your mother took you in hand.

Willie—Yes, m'm, she has. She told me this morning I must stop 'sociating with your little boy, 'cause he was makin' me as bad as himself.

The stable door should be locked before the horse is stolen.