

GOLDEN TEXT.—"A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways."—James 1: 8.

Central Truth.—God can make unholy lips witness to his truth.

The Israelites are now no longer in "the great and terrible wilderness." They are close upon their promised inheritance. Moving northward from the point where we last saw them, they have passed Moab on their left, and repelled and driven before them the opposing forces of Sihou, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan, and taken possession of their country. They are now on the eastern side of the Jordan and Dead Sea, and thus within a part of the land toward which they have been journeying.

One effect of the victories of Israel was to strike terror into the heart of Balak, king of Moab. Naturally enough, he feared for his own possessions. But he had seen too much to venture a direct attack upon so powerful a people. Accordingly he resorted to what seemed a craftier way. In those days people and rulers had great faith in diviners. Much power was thought to lie in their blessing or their curse. The soothsayers, who practised the art of divination, were believed to be in close relations with the gods and able to influence them. This was in Balak's mind, and he looked about for some one who could help him by cursing the people he feared.

Of the soothsayers of that time, Balaam was, so far as we know, the most famous. His home was in the far East, near to the Euphrates, in the city Pethor. It is evident that he had some knowledge of the true God, the God of Israel; and this may have been one reason for Balak's sending for him. That he ever truly worshipped Jehovah, or served him with undivided heart, does not appear. He had noble powers and an eloquent tongue. God made use of him as a channel of true prophecy. But like Simon Magus, he practised sorcery or divination for money. Avarice was his ruling passion. The New Testament describes him as "loving the wages of unrighteousness." He desired to "die the death of the righteous," but was too selfish and mercenary to live a righteous life. He could speak noble words, but had not the spirit which moves to worthy deeds.

In the chapters preceding the lesson we are told how Balak, by means of gifts and promises, finally prevailed upon this man to come, as he imagined, to his help. Much as Balaam desired the reward, he did not dare go beyond the divine permission. One is here reminded of the saying of Carlyle, that Balaam had no desire to do it; that is, that he did not care either to gratify Balak or curse Israel, or "to do anything so much as a nothing that would look like a something and bring the wages in." The result was, that, restrained and overruled by God, he pronounced upon Israel a blessing, instead of a curse.

The first great point, in the particular verses selected for our present study, is Balak's anger. So long as he hoped to be able to use Balaam against God's people, he was profuse in gifts and honors. But, finding that he could not do it, his love turned to hate. In this, Balak has many counterparts. Men, hostile to God's people or his truth, are eager to enlist others in their opposition. To gain the desired end, they may resort to great professions of friendship, if not to honors and gifts. But the safe way is neither to follow nor to trust these people. When it appears to them to be certain that they cannot use you, they will turn against you. Their professed respect and affection has no depth, no reality.

Another point to be noted is Balaam's reply to Balak's angry threat and taunt. Had it come from the heart, it would have been noble indeed. When he said, "I cannot go beyond the commandment of the Lord," he doubtless meant that God would not suffer him to do it. He wanted the gold and the silver; nothing so hard to resist as an offer of such a kind; but already, on the way to Balak, God had met him, and made him feel the power of his displeasure. He dared not do as he would. But he might have used the "cannot" in a better sense. It might have been the expression of his conscience and heart. On some lips it would have been. Men have counted all things but loss, and suffered the loss of all things; have been afflicted and tormented; have gone to the stake and the rack, rather than "go beyond the commandment of the Lord." This saying of Balaam is a good one for old and young to remember, and to make their own. It is a noble stand to take. Hereafter, if not here, it will be seen to be safe.

The one other leading point to be

considered is Balaam's prediction of the future of God's people. Here God's Spirit spake through him. The vision he had, of things that were to be, was given him by the Almighty. What he saw was a star and sceptre rising out of Israel and smiting Moab from corner to corner, and destroying all the children of Sheth, of "sons of tumult." In Scripture language, the star and sceptre stand for royalty. The vision of Balaam was thus of Israel's conquering might; and was fulfilled in part in David's victories and dominion over Moab and Edom. But its final fulfilling has been thought to be in the person of Israel's greater King, the Messiah. In this last view, Moab and Edom would stand for any and all enemies of God's people, over whom Christ shall finally triumph. It is not necessary to suppose that Balaam himself knew far-reaching and glorious his prophecy was. Nor are we to think of the victories to be won by Christ as those of violence and death. Chiefly he conquers by love. As such a conqueror he is now advancing.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

- 1. There was nothing surprising in Balak's anger; bad men commonly hate those whose help in wickedness they have vainly sought.
2. Balaam had no one but himself to blame that he was now the object of threats and taunts; dalliance with temptations gives the tempter an advantage which he seldom fails to use to our humiliation and terror.
3. Balaam's ruling passion and cherished sin was avarice; it was this which now involved him in shame, and, so far as appears, proved his ruin; ours may be something else, but for that reason, it may be no less wicked and dangerous.
4. In this world obedience to God may cost self-denial, and loss of wealth and honor; nevertheless in the end it will be seen to be the good way, over against which a house full of silver and gold would be nothing.
5. Fine words do not make a true saint, nor do noble impulses, or spiritual visions, or gifts of prophecy. True religion is a matter of the heart and the life. No man could utter loftier sentiments than Balaam; few have been slaves of baser passions.
5. Attempts to serve God and Mammon can never succeed; God requires the whole heart. Our Saviour has uttered solemn warnings against wavering or divided service: "No man can serve two masters."
7. The Divine kingdom is sure to triumph. To be in it, and of it, is to be on what shall by and by be seen to be the glorious winning side.

THE CITY OF KINGS.

CONGRESSMAN COX'S FIRST VIEW OF THE HOLY CITY OF JERUSALEM.

Congressman Sunset Cox, writing from Jerusalem under date of October 11, sends the New York Express the following graphic account of the Holy City:

"Latrone is only three miles from the famous valley where Joshua pursued his enemy, but as we approach it the moon throws its light and shadows upon the foot hills and valleys, and we cannot clearly discern, except under its veil of witchery, the olive groves, and cactus hedges, and wild scenery, which should show signs of the fruitful water and soil. From the balcony of our hotel at Latrone we take a survey of leads of lunar silver, amidst the enchanted rocks and hills. We forget under its magical sheen that the very name of our place indicates that it is named after a thief; but was he not the good thief? and has not his 'penitence' removed from his supposed birthplace the stigma of stealing? This place has further and less dubious significance. It is only a mile from the Castle Emmaus, which the Crusaders built to command the pass to the Holy City. All about us are the historic spots of the heroic Maccabees—in one word, it is the fighting-ground and the highway to Jerusalem.

To the distant and pious reader, everything tending toward Jerusalem is interesting, and, therefore, it is not frivolous to say that our driver was a French woman. Her sex, owing to the mode of dressing her, we never suspected until we began our second day's journey, when we found her on the box, coaxing, rather than lashing, her team. Our baggage tied fast, and our equestrian guide on his prancing barb, at daylight, the exhilaration of the bracing dawn was enhanced by the near prospect of the approach to the city of our hopes. But no pen can describe the beauty of that morning. On a projecting spur of the mountain—bathed in roses which we looked for in vain in the vale of Sharon—is a little village of square stone houses. It was not because the "Lion-hearted" Crusader encamped here, seven hundred years ago; it was not because the mountains of Judah began to quiver with all the arrows of Apollo under the pink Aurora; nor because each gray, rocky mountain became under its influence a picture—or a statue, rather—forever indurated in the mind. But it was because through yonder winding glens holy men of God, with grandest thought and emotion, passed upward to the city of our hope! Up, up, still up, winding

UNDER THE GLEAMING GLARE

of the once-terraced elevations, through desiles that would not be so comfortable after nightfall for lonely travelers,

we pursue our morning drive. At length we reach a point of vantage, and cast our eyes to the west. The blue sea is there in measureless content. It is thirty miles away, and the light falls on its bosom, invoking its subtle minstrelsy. This sings of hopes long deferred. Shall these hopes be disappointed? Our guide, ever vigilant, and with chapter and verse for each spot, curves about our carriage. What are the rocky caves and glens, and the long, terraced slopes—terraced by regular and natural limestone ranges, and once terraced artificially and usefully by man; with vine, olive, pomegranate and fig? What are the gray, sombre rocks, tinged ruddy with iron? what the pretty intervals, full of the old, twisted olives, whose trunks are full of hollows and holes, as if riddled and stormed by the ages? what the lively little lizards, shimmering as they run into crevices over dusty rocks? what the blanched beauty of those desolated and bleak mountains, covered with prickly scrub-oak and shrubs of ilex? what the "animated nature," in the shape of the lop-eared pied goats, mixed with the large camels, cattle, and Arabs, as they pass, heavily laden, desertward? what the lonely low houses, made of dried mud, stuck about the acclivities and in the glens? what the castles, which top the topmost heights, and the stores of sheiks, like Aher Ghauah, who once commanded and robbed from them? what the succulent grapes which old Kirjath-Jearim furnishes for our dusty throats, and the strange sight of a Gothic minster in ruins in this land of the Gibeonites, this boundary between Judah and Benjamin? What all these? Are we not approaching the city of our Hope? Did not the ark of the covenant rest on yonder hill, in the House of Abinadab? Was it not borne hence to Jerusalem by King David, out of whose loins came those simple yet grand teachers and descendants, whose marvels of morality and miracles of heaven have moved mankind? Roman roads are here, and old pavements, and

ARCHES STILL SPRING BUOYANTLY

over dry torrents-beds; these are remnants of that Ramon power which worshipped to god Terminus; but these are of mere passing interest, for yonder upon our right do we look upon the birthplace of John the Baptist, in the "hilly country of Judea." All around are signal and lofty points, gesturing heavenward, and associated forever with the greatest names of the Hebrews, Samuel the Judge and David the King, and all pointing to the city of our long deferred Hope. As we look to the South and North, and through zigzags and glens, birth and burial places, fighting and praying ground of soldier and king, prophet saint, command attention; while to the West we bid farewell to the azure sea, whose line is now marked by a long, steadfast range of white clouds above, but parallel with, its horizon. We prepare for the descent. Still more windings, Samuel, the Judges, and the Acts rain in upon us from our biblical genius upon the back. These sacred memories have a sudden confirmation by the instantaneous appearance of a venerable graybeard, in gown of religious foldings. He has a grand escort. He turns around one of the zigzags as we turn down, and lo! the dignified form of the Coptic Bishop of Judea, upon a white mule! His attendants also appear; one bearing his silver-mounted stick, the mace of his authority. This vision appears as suddenly as if it had emerged from one of the many caves which come forth out of the heart of Carmel. Our solutions are reverently made; and we drive with fresh impatience over a rolling plateau, at the top of the mountains, which begin to tell us in many ways that we are near the city of our Hope! The road grows more populous with beasts of burden. Arab woman with blue tattoo upon their ugly faces, and dignified Arabs in their togas of striped brown and dirty white, come and go. The terraces show more cultivation. The cactus again appears to shelter the gardens. Baskets of fruit, under green leaves, decorate the heads of the pedestrian woman and load the dusty donkeys; and we rest, in disillusion and impatience, in front of a Greek restaurant, whose sign of "Liquors and Billiards" would disturb the Oriental vision but for the sweet blush of the pomegranates out of the orchards, which give their tints to the rich garniture of the gardens. We are allowed to understand from our guide, not that David was anointed or that Joshua fought here, but that General Grant here lunched in a snow-storm in February! A few lazy folk in trousers are about, to help our French female driver water the horses, while the unseen proprietor is making wine in his cellar, unconscious of our sacred antiquities. A cup of coffee and a fresh start, and only five miles to the city of our Hope! Allons!

A WONDERFUL SCENE.

There is little time now to listen to Scriptural texts as to prominent localities. Rags, refugees and Russians, men of one religion or another, and of all qualities and costumes, are mixed up heterogeneously upon the through-road, along with goats, sheep, camels and donkeys. Water-carriers, bearing their sweating goatskins, are trudging into the city precincts; but this only signifies a denser population. We perceive the Convent of the Holy Cross, a conspicuous object, and the new Jesuit college and an orphan asy-

lum. We quicken our pace. Then the suburbs—long blocks of Jewish houses, newly built, outside still of the city—appear; but these only serve to conceal, and not to show, the view of the city. Then the Russian establishment, within walls, like a fortress, and with its splendid appointments, for pilgrims and sick, for poor and rich; and then, a town itself, still outside the walls, from which you catch glimpses of the green slopes of the valley of Hinnom, and the old dusty graveyard and empty pool of Gihon, and the ancient aqueduct; and there, right before us, the far-famed Jaffagate, with its moving mass of people. Then the western walls of Jerusalem, with their old gray stones and battlements; and far off, shining and seething in heat and light, and as regular in its sublime masonry as a wall built by the hand of man, full fifty miles away, is the splendid range of Moab.

The shops and market, and building going on about the Jaffa gate, and the groups of all nations which take their way to and from it, or saunter and jabber about it, do not impress one with any feeling of sanctity; but this one picture, nay, these two pictures, do! One is the weird, Moabitish mountain well of the Desert, far off, stuck about the Dead Sea and the Jordan! The other is an unexpected, dramatic, and strange spectacle in the midst of the road. In sight of this Holy City, on the first view, we perceive over a hundred pilgrim priests and their friends—all in black apparel—fall prostrate in the dust! As we pass they chant their prayers and kiss the earth. Who are they? Whence come they? They are pilgrims from the far-off Peninsula of Spain. Their wives, sisters, mothers, and parishioners have caught the vision of the heavenly city, which their Saviour made the marvel of history, and they lie "silent as a nun in adoration," and then arise, giving glory, before the precious and hallowed home of the Incarnate Son of God!

WHAT WONDERS, INDEED.

It is said that Time never works. It only eats and consumes, rots and rusts. But it does work; and such wonders! Out of this little span of Judean land, fifty by two hundred miles only, and during the lapse of two thousand years—what wonders! Beyond yonder hills, now in our view, was born in the manger the God-Man—mystery of mysteries. These solemn, dark-eyed priests of Spain, in their reverent way, recognize the wonders, even as the magi who came from the East. Suppose this gave not the beautiful earthly vision of the Sacred City; suppose the approach from the Jordan or from Damascus would enhance more the material attraction—was it not here that? and swelling hearts of the Crusaders first beheld the city of their hope and their powers? If they could sail and march, so far, under helmet and mail, and all privation, to rescue the Holy Sepulchre from the Paynim, what wonder now that these from the realm of "Isabella the Catholic," who gave her jewels to enlarge the Kingdom of Christ upon our planet, should fall prostrate before the walls of that city which contained the grave whence came the Redeemer! We pondered much this strange spectacle. Pilgrims from far-off America, whose geography was not known until the jewels of Spain found it—not known when these great transactions of salvation were here enacted—we could not refrain from sympathetic tears at the prospect of a city so hallowed by sacrifice, and so sanctified by time. S. S. Cox.

Anecdote of Hancock.

Brave and grand men are never above or below emotion. I have loved to dwell upon the heroism and patriotism of our great Democratic leader Winfield Scott Hancock; his incorruptibility, his soldierly self-sacrifice, his fearlessness in battle, his perfect equisoppe during an exciting political campaign, and, more recently, his noble attitude while his successful opponent in that campaign lay dying. Now there comes to me an incident showing him, apart from his honors and achievements, touched by the gladness of his mother's mingled love and patriotism, touched even tears. I heard the story from the lips of an old friend, an eloquent clergyman and ring-bating Republican, who for years had known and admired Hancock.

In June, 1864, the Methodist church at Norristown was in great need of seven hundred and fifty dollars. The clergyman who related the story preached in that church one summer Sunday for the purpose of "begging," as the Methodists call it, the needed amount. Six hundred dollars were raised without much difficulty, but here generosity seemed to pause. The name of Hancock was very dear to the hearts of that congregation that morning. On entering the pulpit the preacher had received a request that thrilled him and them. That request was from the mother of General Hancock, that her son, who lay in hospital suffering from his old Gettysburg wound, might soon be sufficiently restored to again appear at the head of his corps. "Now, brethren and sisters," said the preacher, "let us give fifty dollars in one dollar subscriptions toward relieving the burden on this house of God and let it be given in the name of that noble son of a noble mother." The words were scarcely spoken when with enthusiasm and prayers and tears it was done. Under that impulse the remainder was raised

in the name of two other Union Generals and the church was saved.

There is a sequel to this memorable scene. In April, 1865, when the nation mourned for its martyred Lincoln the same clergyman was in Washington as the representative of his fellow-clergyman's grief and sympathy. While there he called on General Hancock at military headquarters, and was given a private audience.

When the sad topic that filled all minds and hearts had been referred to, he turned to the General's mind to that Sabbath morning scene in June, 1864, and asked:

"General, did you receive an engrossed subscription list giving the names of those who had subscribed fifty dollars in your name toward the debt of that church?"

"Yes," replied Hancock, with feeling, "and when I received it, and understood what it was, a purse of five hundred dollars would not have pleased me half so well as to know I was remembered in so beautiful a way at home."

"But, General," said the clergyman, "it was not of that I came here more particularly to speak. I wish to tell you that on entering the pulpit that day I found a request from your mother for the prayers of the congregation, that you might be sufficiently restored to again take your place at the head of your corps. Ah! General what a noble woman, what a noble mother! I have read of the Spartan mother who sent her sons to battle with blessings on their heads, bidding them bear back their shields with honor or let those shields bare them back, but I have never known a parallel to the Christian patriotism of a mother asking for a congregation's prayers that her well beloved son might be able to again ride his horse, a mark for the bullets of the enemy."

The brave General listened, touched and silent, and when the clergyman ceased the man who could stand immovable amid the shock of battle could answer only with heaving breast and falling tears.

GOV. SPRAGUE'S MISFORTUNE.

HOW HIS ENORMOUS FORTUNE WAS BUILT UP AND LOST.

From the St. Paul Pioneer Press.

PROVIDENCE, Nov. 3.—As I was sitting in the smoking room of the Narragansett Hotel this afternoon conversing with a prominent lawyer of the city, I observed my companion bow to a short portly-built, dark complexioned gentleman who had just entered the room. It struck me that I had seen the gentleman before, and I questioned my companion as to his identity.

"Why," replied he, "that is, perhaps, the most noted man in Rhode Island to-day. He has been Governor of the State and a United States Senator, and at one time could write a check for millions without impoverishing his credit. He is the originator of that once popular saying, 'It will make the rich richer and the poor poorer,' a sentence that was uttered in the United States Senate, and which has been quoted, perhaps, as many times as any like sentence. He is ex-Gov. William Sprague, a man who once politically owned Rhode Island, but who, through the changes that time has wrought, has been stripped of his power and riches, and is reduced to that degree of penury known as shabby genteel. His personal history illustrates perfectly the fickleness of fortune. I have known him for many years, and am probably as conversant with the story of his wrongs as any man living. I have seen him when the question of money was but secondary with him, and now to-day he is in comparative poverty. The troubles of the last few years have left indelible traces upon his face. He is aging fast, and I fear before the cases in which he is interested are settled he will be a wrecked man. I think his dark cloud of trouble possesses a silver lining, and that it is gradually rolling away.

"Gov. Sprague is a man possessed of great capabilities, especially for conducting business, as is attested by the success in which he carried on the enormous interests of the Sprague manufacturing concerns founded by his father, and which have made millions of dollars for their owners through his management. His father, Amasa Sprague, laid the foundation of calico printing in America in 1828, erecting the first mill on the site of the present Cranston Print Works. The story of how Amasa acquired the knowledge of manufacturing calico is an interesting one. He had experimented hundreds of times, and had ruined thousands of yards of cloth in the vain endeavor to discover the great secret. Becoming discouraged at his many unsuccessful attempts, but only more determined to possess the secret, he went to England with the intention of obtaining the secret from the manufacturers there at any cost. He could not buy the secret, however, and the only way open to him was to enter the mills as a day laborer at a few shillings a day, and gradually work up until he could be in a position to steal the secret. At last he obtained a position in the coloring room of a great English print establishment, and the secret was his. He returned to Rhode Island and started his print works. The business was a prosperous one, and he laid the foundation of the Sprague great fortune. In 1857 William Sprague assumed charge of the property, which was one of great responsibility, al-

though scarcely twenty-five years of age.

"On the breaking out of the war Sprague reaped a fortune of many millions by the great advance in prices. He placed his whole credit at the Government's disposal, and was the first to send troops to the war, which he fully equipped. After his term as Governor he was elected to the United States Senate, and it was while holding this position, in 1873, that his business became embarrassed, the principal cause being the failure of the house of Hoyt, Sprague & Co., of New York. The assets of the Spragues were \$8,000,000 more than the liabilities, and the creditors united in placing the property in the hands of a trustee, Zachariah Chafee, of Providence, to be managed until all debts were dissolved. Three quarters of the stock in the Quindnick Company were owned by Mrs. Sprague, Mrs. Fanny Sprague, Amasa Sprague, and William Sprague, respectively aunt, mother, and brother to William. This stock was transferred as collateral security for the payment of the notes of the A. & W. Sprague Manufacturing Company, and trust notes were issued and placed under the control of Chafee. An agreement was then entered into by which the Quindnick Company should furnish the material to carry on the A. & W. Sprague Manufacturing Company and sell its goods. Mr. Chafee was appointed treasurer, while William Sprague became the president, remaining in that position until 1879, when his relations with Chafee were of such a nature as to render it impossible to continue longer as such. This left Chafee master of the field, for after that William Sprague was not allowed to interfere with the business.

"When the Sprague Manufacturing Company first failed its assets were worth \$8,000,000 more than its liabilities. Notes against the estate were valued at par at that time, but the value of the estate depreciated so much that the market value of the notes descended to from sixteen to twenty-six cents on the dollar. Finally the Spragues 'pooled the issues,' and engaging Gen. Butler, of Boston, and Pryor, of New York, and other lawyers, entered a petition in the Supreme Court of Rhode Island for Chafee's removal as trustee. The petition was continued, and at last, under the advice of Gen. Butler, ex-Gov. Sprague, as president of the Quindnick Company, displaced Chafee, and appointed B. G. Chace in his place. Chafee had the Quindnick property attached for \$500,000 by William J. King & Son, the New York cotton brokers of whom Chafee purchased cotton, the firm claiming that the Quindnick company owed them that sum for cotton. The Sprague concerns were stopped by Chafee, who intended to sell them and close up the affairs, throwing 10,000 people out of employment. The case has been in our courts for a long time, and last Thursday one phase of it was settled in the Supreme Court by which the Quindnick Company, which is the Spragues', will be enabled to realize upward of \$1,500,000 from the Sprague estate.

"Then you think that the Spragues will eventually regain the larger portion of their once large fortune?" I said.

"Yes, I do," he answered. "I think that they will recover enough to start them once more on the road to make a fortune equal to that which they once possessed, that is, if the ex-Governor will put his heart and mind into the matter. He has the ability to replace the Sprague manufacturing interests in the position which they once occupied in the manufacturing world. But I fear he will not. The trouble with which the whole country is acquainted has greatly humiliated him, and he is not the same man he once was. In fact, his family affairs have troubled him more than his money affairs have, and I believe that is what has driven him to the use of liquor. However, I hope to see him once more placed upon his feet, as I consider him to be a man who has been unjustly treated."

Solar Heat.

Professor S. P. Langley, of the Allegheny Observatory, who went to California in July last to measure from the summit of Mt. Whitney the amount of solar heat radiated to the earth, has returned, and the results of his experiments will soon be given to the Government in the form of a report. The general conclusions, however, seems to be that the "solar constant," or absolute amount of heat the earth receives from the sun is very much larger than that determined by Herschel and other previous observers. Further, that the distribution of this heat to the earth, and its effect in producing all the changes of the climate, and its importance as affecting all the interests of agriculture, depend on forces which are only now, for the first time, becoming fully known. Among the incidental attainments of scientific interest may be mentioned that conclusions have been reached which will probably be accepted as finally settling the long dispute among physicists concerning the trustworthiness of Tyndall's observations as to the effect of water vapor, and will also bring nearer to us the probable utilization of the sun's heat as a source of power. It is not stated whether Prof. Langley's experiments confirmed his previous surmises that the true color of the sun is blue.