

God will favor. We should put down all that is wrong in our laws, and in the carrying out of these laws; and should make it our one inquiry, in matters belonging to our country, "Will God be pleased with it?"

Especially should we do this at the present time, when the question of Prohibition is before the country. God cannot be pleased with our country for having a share in the drink traffic and its profits. Cannot each scholar do something to lead some to vote at the coming Plebiscite against having a share in the drink traffic? All who do not vote against that traffic are responsible for its continuance.

SOME FACTS AND THOUGHTS ABOUT OUR LESSONS FOR THE TWO QUARTERS.

1. While Solomon lived, the taxes had been very heavy, to support the great splendor of his government. The people of Jerusalem and Judah did not object to the heavy taxes, because the money was all spent among them; but the ten tribes, who lived in the north of the country, who had to pay most of the money, but who seldom saw the splendor or got any of the money spent in their part of the country, were growing more dissatisfied every year.

They bore with it while Solomon lived, but when Rehoboam, Solomon's son, came to the throne, they met and told him that if he did not make their taxes lighter they would not serve him. You remember his foolish answer and how they rebelled against him and chose a king of their own, and how they were henceforth two nations, Israel and Judah, sometimes at war against each other, and each going farther and farther astray from God.

He bore with Israel 215 years, and then, 722 B.C., gave them into the hand of the King of Assyria, who carried them away captive, and settled strangers in their land. He bore with Judah 350 years, and then, 606-586 B.C., came the carrying away into Babylon, in three successive carryings, 606, 598, 586.

From this, some of them were sent back by Cyrus, 70 years later, 536, to rebuild the city and temple, and to live there again as a nation until Christ came.

In the 215 years of Israel's history as a separate nation, they had nineteen kings, belonging to nine different dynasties or fam-

ilies, new leaders continually starting up, killing the old ones, and seizing the government.

In the 350 years of Judah's history as a separate nation, they had the same number of kings, nineteen, and one queen. The kings all belonged to one dynasty or family, the royal line of David, showing that there was a great deal more respect for law and order in Judah than in Israel.

While this separation was due to Rehoboam's foolishness, we read that it was of God, 1 Kings 12: 24. He wished to keep the nation to himself. The Northern tribes were more inclined to idolatry, and Judah, with the temple in their midst, would not be so liable to wander when by themselves.

We see, too, that the ten tribes when separated went faster and farther into sin, and were given up by God as hopeless, more than a century before Judah was carried into captivity. This would serve as a warning, an object lesson, to Judah, and make them more careful.

One thing that God did to keep the people from leaving him and worshipping idols, was to send prophets to warn them against idolatry. Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, and many others did all they could, but often they paid little attention to God's messengers.

THE LESSONS FOR THIS QUARTER.

They cover the story of Judah, nearly three and a half centuries, beginning with the division of the Kingdom, 937 B. C., and ending with the "carrying away into Babylon," 606-586 B.C.

There are some Lessons in the Quarter that speak of the Messiah's Kingdom. It is more fitting to have these in connection with Judah than with Israel, for the Messiah was of the tribe of Judah. God wished to keep them as pure as possible until the Messiah came; and to that end he first separated the ten tribes which had such a strong tendency to idolatry, and then he sent Judah into captivity for seventy years, bringing back only the best of them to preserve the Kingdom till Christ should come.

Even then, though they never relapsed into idolatry after their return from captivity, they became very proud and formal, and when Christ came they put him to death.