

PRESBYTERY OF HURON.—This Presbytery met at Seaforth on Tuesday and Wednesday last. There was a good attendance of members and elders. Mr. Cameron was instructed to form a mission station at Hill's Green at his earliest convenience. Mr. Lochhead who accepted the call to Hulett and Londesboro, is to be inducted into his new charge on Thursday, 21st inst., Mr. McLean to preside, Mr. Patterson of Bayfield to preach, Mr. Sieveright to address the minister, Mr. Pritchard the people. Mr. D. D. Wilson gave a report of the Presbyterian Sabbath School Convention lately held at Seaforth, setting forth that it was a very successful one. The session records of Union church, Brucefield, were attested, after being examined, as correctly and carefully kept. A call from the congregations of Manchester and Smith's Hill, in favor of Mr. Pritchard, was sustained, and the congregations of Bluevale and Eadie's are to be cited to appear for their interests at an adjourned meeting to be held at Belgrave, on the 3rd of April at 11 a.m. Thereafter a call was read from the congregation of Belgrave in favor of Rev. Mr. Wilkins, late of Stratford. Said call being unanimous was sustained, and at a subsequent stage accepted by Mr. Wilkins. His induction is appointed to take place on the 3rd of April, Mr. McLean to preside at the induction, Mr. Lochhead to preach, Mr. Jones to address the minister, and Mr. Pritchard the people. There was then taken up a call from the congregation of St. Andrew's church Gananoque, in favor of Rev. H. Gracey. Parties being duly cited, were called, when there appeared Mr. McCuaig, on behalf of the Presbytery of Kingston and the congregation of Gananoque, Messrs. Gardner and Bishop on behalf of Thames Road congregation, Messrs. Somerville and Kirk on behalf of Kirkton, and Mr. Gracey for himself. Reasons for and against translation were read. Parties being heard, and Mr. Gracey accepting the call, when it was on motion of Dr. Ure, duly seconded and agreed that "the Presbytery having heard the pleadings in this case, and Mr. Gracey, accepting the call, agree to translate Mr. Gracey, to the congregation of Gananoque, and instruct him to await the instructions of the Presbytery of Kingston anent his induction. The Presbytery in parting with their brother, Mr. Gracey, which they do with much regret, desire to place on record, as they hereby do, their gratitude to God for the valuable services he has been enabled to render, both as pastor in the congregations over which he has been placed and in connection with the general work of the Presbytery for thirteen years, during which time he has in the discharge of his duties laboured with much ability, zeal and success. The Presbytery will follow their brother to his new field of labour with their best wishes, and their earnest prayers that he may be long spared to work for the Master, and that he may continue to be richly sustained and largely prospered in his work." Mr. Hartley was appointed moderator of the session of Thames Road and Usborne, and to declare the pulpits vacant on the third Sabbath in April. Mr. Ferguson was appointed convener of the Presbytery's Home Mission Committee. Messrs. Cameron, Hartley and Thomson, with their representative elders were appointed a committee to mature and bring up at next regular meeting, a minute regarding the best method of conducting missionary meetings. The next regular meeting of Presbytery is to be held at Goderich, in Knox Church, on the second Tuesday of July, at 11 a.m., the afternoon seditur to be devoted to a conference on the state of religion. Messrs. McLean, convener; Dr. Ure, McQuarrie, and Cameron, were appointed to consider the draft on Ecclesiastical Procedure, and to report at a meeting of Presbytery to be held in Stratford, during the meeting of Synod.

TRIALS—PREVENTIVES OF SIN.—We never know how near we are to danger. We are like blind men wandering near the edge of a precipice, the mouth of a well, or on the margin of a deep pit; and then God, by a severe wrench, it may be, and a violent jerk, that puts us to some pain and gives us a severe shock, plucks us from the ruin that we saw not. Oh, what hair-breadth escapes from destruction, affected perhaps by some distressing visitation, shall we in eternity be made to understand that we experienced on earth. We now often stand amazed at some sore trial; we cannot conjecture why it was sent; we see no purpose it was to serve, no end it was to accomplish; but there was an Omnipotent Eye that saw what we did not and could not see, and He sent forth this event to pluck our feet from the net which had been spread for them. How we shall adore God in heaven for these preventing mercies that came in the form of some dark and inexplicable event, but which filled us at the same time with lamentation and woe!—*J. A. James.*

SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

LESSON XV.

April 14. } *THE SCRIPTURES FOUND AND SEARCHED.* { 2 Chron. xxxiv. 1878. } 14-22.

GOLDEN TEXT:—"Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me."—John v. 39.

HOME STUDIES.

- M. 2 Tim. iii. 1-17. The Scriptures commended.
T. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 14-22. The book found.
W. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 23-33. The book read.
Th. John v. 36-47. Golden Text and connection.
F. 2 Chron. xxv. 1-19. The Passover kept.
S. 2 Chron. xxxv. 20-27. Josiah slain.
S. Lam. i. 1-22. Jeremiah's lamentation.

HELPS TO STUDY.

I. THE BOOK FOUND: Verses 14-17.

Josiah's first work seems to have been to sweep away the idolatrous worship, and restore the service of Jehovah. To do this he travelled from place to place throughout the kingdom, and had the altars broken down "in his presence." (Verse 4.) Then, settling down at Jerusalem, he set about putting the temple in thorough repair; and it was, no doubt, in turning over heaps of long-neglected rubbish that Hilkiah, the high-priest, came upon the precious roll of the law which had once lain in the sacred ark. (See Deut. xxxi. 26.) Whether this was the original manuscript left by Moses, or a copy, we cannot tell. The best scholars agree that it was the original autograph penned by Moses 900 years before and deposited by him in the ark. It is impossible to tell how it was not only lost, but forgotten.

In Josiah's days there was no printing press, and no popular education. How little a general circulation of copies of the law was anticipated by Moses is shown by the direction in Deut. xxxi. 10-13, that it should be read to all the people once in seven years at the Feast of Tabernacles; and the command that each king, on ascending the throne, should make a copy for himself, (Deut. xvii. 18,) points to the same conclusion. In Jehoshaphat's time the Levites were sent round the country with copies, to read to the people, (2 Chron. xvii. 9;) but in the long reigns of bad kings that followed they were probably all lost. Hilkiah, indeed, evidently had access to the sacred writings, (see 2 Chron. xxxiv. 25, 30; xxx. 18;) and doubtless it was in Manasseh's days that the precious roll of the law belonging to the sanctuary got thrown aside. It is plain that such a thing could only come about through inexcusable carelessness or most criminal viciousness. What is lightly prized is easily lost; what is disliked is readily disposed of. When king and people were inclining towards idolatry, the book of the law of the Lord would naturally lie unused; and when king and people were busy in establishing it, this book, so full of reproof and denunciation, would naturally be rejected and thrown aside. The same thing has often happened since, in nations where the Papal church had power; with individuals, who have the Bible in their house and their hands, but not in their hearts or lives. But the result is in every case inevitably the same—degeneracy. God's word is the only conservator of moral life and health.

But now the Book was found and brought to Josiah.

II. The Book read: ver. 18-22. The young king had had but a traditional knowledge of the religion of his forefathers, though he had also the prophetic counsels of Jeremiah and Zephaniah, and of Huldah the prophetess. So that when the very words of God, as written down by Moses, were read aloud in his ears, they had all the power of a new and special revelation.

Observe the effects the finding of the Book had upon the king.

It led to earnest, anxious enquiry and study. He rent his clothes, as the Orientals do in token of alarm and grief. He commanded his officers (Note 1) to enquire concerning the words of the Book, whether they were true, or whether there was any escape from them.

So Hilkiah and those who were appointed by the king went to Huldah the prophetess (Note 2) to learn the will of God. There were male prophets in Judah at this time—Jeremiah and Zephaniah. But the one was living a little north of the city in his home at Anathoth, and the other was in the hill country of Simeon, and neither, at this time, probably, was half so well known as the prophetess Huldah. In such veneration is she held by the Jews that their writers affirm that she and Jehoiada, the priest, were the only persons, not of the royal family, that were ever buried in Jerusalem. Let us look at the answer she gave to the commission and the effect it had upon the king.

It was encouraging as far as he was concerned. God recognized the sincerity of his repentance, and, for his sake, stayed His wrath during his lifetime. He secured acceptance for himself and a respite for the nation. But that was all that he could do. The outlook for the future was very sad. Only his lifetime intervened between Judah and her punishments. And yet he did not sit down and say that it is useless to do anything. He did not declare that, inasmuch as the doom of the nation had been spoken, he would give himself up to enjoyment while his reign lasted. On the contrary, he began to work more resolutely and more vigorously than ever to reclaim the people. He read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant that had so alarmed him, that they, too, might realize the danger in which they stood. He made in their presence a covenant to keep all the commands of that book, and exacted from them a like pledge.

Two results followed on the public adoption of this covenant with Jehovah. (1.) The completion of the work of extirpating idolatry, not only in Judah, but in the territory of the former northern kingdom, especially at Bethel, where Jeroboam's golden calf had been set up. (See 2 Kings xxiii.

15-20.) (2.) The great passover described in 2 Chron. xxxv. kept in full accordance with the Mosaic directions, and said to have exceeded in solemnity all other passovers in the history of the nation for hundreds of years. (See eighteenth verse.)

This lesson ought not to be closed without a reference to Josiah's death, as our next subject carries us many years beyond that. At Megiddo, in the Plain of Esdraelon, the great battle-field associated with the victories of Barak and Gideon, and the defeat and death of Saul, the good king fell, fighting against the ancient enemy of Israel. With his death really ended the kingdom of Judah. The four kings that followed were but the vassals of Egypt or Babylon, and calamity after calamity fulfilled to the letter those predictions of divine judgment which Josiah had read on that memorable day to the listening concourse of his people.

There are several important lessons for us from this history of finding the Book of the Law.

Learn to value God's Word. Do we value it? Think how David loved God's Law. Hear him singing about it (Ps. cxix. 72, 77, 92; xl. 8). To love it is one of the marks of a good man (Ps. i. 2). Think how much more of God's Word we have than David had. Think, again, how Timothy loved it.

Rule your actions by it. What a mistake if we measure a thing by a wrong measure! But God's Word is never wrong. The only true rule for our daily life. [Illustr.—Carpenter measures—*timber too short—what does he do?—lays it aside.*] Just so with any action of ours. Ask, "What does God's Law say?" If it condemn it, give it up.

Ever seen a ship sailing away on a voyage? Picture it far from land. How does the captain do to guide the ship the right way? Looks at his chart. God has revealed to us the way to heaven. The Bible a chart.

Learn to use it well. Not only choose favourite parts. Remember "all Scripture" is God's Word (2 Tim. iii. 16). Old Testament full of Jesus Christ. Psalms sing of Him. All the histories for Christians "learning" (Rom. xv. 4, rep.). Use the Bible daily. Let the chart be well used. In your daily devotions always use some small portion—think over—pray over it. "Open Thine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy Law."

EXPLANATORY NOTES.

1. **Ahikam**, a friend of Jeremiah (Jer. xxvi. 24). **Abdon**, a man of influence at court (Jer. xxvi. 22). **Asaiah**. Nothing more is known of this person.

2. **The prophetess.** This is not the only instance in which a woman has been endowed with extraordinary spiritual and prophetic gifts. Miriam (Exod. xv. 20; Num. xii. 2), Deborah (Judg. iv. 4), the wife of Isaiah (Isa. viii. 3), Anna (Luke ii. 36), were all of them recognized prophetesses; and probably there were many others of whom these are but representative. In the New Testament dispensation, the gifts of the Spirit seem to have been conferred upon great numbers of women (Acts xxi. 9; 1 Cor. xi. 5), and this in fulfilment of ancient prophecy (Joel ii. 28, 29.)

Shallum was "keeper of the clothes;" that is, either the royal wardrobe, or rather perhaps the treasury out of which changes of garment were furnished, according to Oriental custom, for guests; or else, which is more likely, the wardrobe of the sanctuary, containing the sacred vestments of the priests (2 Kings x. 22). In the college. Rather in the second, the word "city" being understood. The name is sometimes written in full, "second city," as in Neh. xi. 9, and is sometimes written in its abbreviated form, "second," as here and in Zeph. i. 10. The "second city," or the new city, was probably the district lying west of Akra, and consequently in the north-west part of the city, which was taken into the city by the new wall erected by Manasseh: see 2 Chron. xxxiii. 14.

"SCIENCE cannot successfully long isolate itself from God. Its life lies in the fact that it is the exponent of the plans and works of the great Creative Will. It must, in spite of itself, serve his purposes, by dispelling blighting ignorance and superstition, by lighting the way to successive triumphs of human skill over the power of nature, and by guarding men from the evils that flow from infringement of natural laws. And it cannot fail, as it approaches nearer to the boundaries of that which may be known by finite minds, to be humbled by the contemplation of the infinite, and to recognize therein that intelligence of which the human mind is but the image and shadow."—*Principal Dawson.*

MEETINGS OF PRESBYTERY.

WHITBY.—At Duffin's Creek, on Tuesday, 16th April, at 11 a.m.

STRATFORD.—In Knox Church, Stratford, on Tuesday, 9th April, at 9.30 a.m.

BARRIE.—At Barrie, on Tuesday, 30th April, at 11 a.m. **LONDON.**—In First Presbyterian Church, London, on Tuesday, 9th July, at 2 p.m.

GUELPH.—In Chalmers' Church, Guelph, on Tuesday, 14th May, at 10 a.m.

GLENGARRY.—At Alexandria, on Tuesday, 9th July, at the usual hour.

OTTAWA.—At Bank Street Church, Ottawa, on the first Tuesday of May, at 2.30 p.m.

TORONTO.—First Monday and Tuesday of May, at 11 a.m.

SAUGEEN.—Adjourned meeting at Durham on second Tuesday of April, at 2 p.m. Next ordinary meeting at Mount Forest, on second Tuesday of July, at 2 p.m.

WHITBY.—At Duffin's Creek, on 16th April, at 11 a.m.

STRATFORD.—In Knox Church, Stratford, on Tuesday, 9th April, at 9.30 a.m.

Births, Marriages and Deaths.

NOT EXCEEDING FOUR LINES 25 CENTS.

BIRTH.

At the manse, Cookstown, on the 27th March, the wife of the Rev. Stuart Acheson, of a son.