

from the sea, and glared on me with fiery eye-balls. When I awoke I found the sun shining in my face, for it had just arisen, and that a storm also had risen out at sea and had rolled the waves upon the shore and extinguished our fires. I awoke the Indians, and, half an-hour after, we found ourselves in Nanaimo. And now I think it is high time to find myself at the end of my story which has spun itself out far beyond my intention.

In my next letter I may treat of the Indians of British Columbia, and draw the attention of the Canadian Church to their condition. Mr. Jamieson received, a few weeks ago, official notice that his request to join this Presbytery has been granted, so that I am much pleased to think that we shall then be all one in reality, as we have been all along in intention.

The Sabbath School.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

BY REV. GEO. M. GRANT, M.A.

THE KINGDOM DIVIDED.

JANUARY 7th.—1 Kings 12, 12-20.

Golden Text: 1 Kings 12, 8.

THE PLACE.—Shechem, the ancient capital, in a plain of surpassing loveliness, between Mounts Ebal and Gerizim, where the waters, flowing westerly into the Mediterranean and easterly into the Jordan, divide. It is the Sychar of John iv; and is now called Nablous, or new City, and has about 5000 inhabitants.

Persons.—Rehoboam, 41 years old now; brought up in a degenerate Court; spoiled by the women of the Zenana and flatterers; ready to blossom out into the true forcible-feeble Eastern despot. As an illustration of the ingrained foolish vanity of the man, see Ch. 14, 27-28.

Jeroboam; concerning him, see Ch. 11, 26-40. He was naturally a great man, a born leader.

The Occasion.—The young king had come to be crowned. The selection of Shechem was a tribute to it and to the tribe of Ephraim. The national representatives appear with their grievances and petition. They had a right to be respectfully answered, and the gravity of the situation was intensified by the natural chafings of the once all powerful tribe of Ephraim against the rule of obscure Judah. (Ps. 78, 67-70.) The revolt of Sheba (2 Sam. 20) and the fears then entertained show how well aware David was of the danger. He did everything to

cement the union of the tribes, and treated Ephraimites with special favours, (1 Chron. 27-10, 14.) His old counsellors saw the necessity of delicately handling the case, but the young insolent courtiers forgetting that Israelites were of all peoples in the world the least likely to submit to tyranny—advocated a policy of "Thorough," and, in an hour, the foolish grandson undid the life-work of grandfather and father.

v. 14 "Scorpions," long scourges knotted with spikes.

Extent of the Disaster.—It was a national revolt, "all Israel" against "the house David." (See also 2 Sam. 2, 8-11.) Four-fifths of the territory and people revolted. Jerusalem, the capital selected by David, remained true to his house. So did Judah, and parts of Simeon and Benjamin; and the priests and Levites (2 Chron. 11, 13-17.) But the Northern Kingdom, called "Israel," or even more emphatically "Jacob," "Isaac," "Joseph," and afterwards "Ephraim" from the chief tribe, or "Samaria" from the capital selected by Omri, must for two centuries after this have appeared the nation. The two prophets of the time, Ahijah of Shiloh and Shemaiah, favoured the revolt, Ch. 11, 29-39; 12, 22-24; 14, 7, 8. "It was from the Lord," v. 15. As David had been substituted for Saul, so is Jeroboam for David's grandson; and Ahijah expected great things of him Ch. 11, 38.

Lessons.—(1.) Listen to the advice of age and experience.

(2.) Beware of braggarts. Their counsel leads to ruin.

(3.) Be courteous, 1 Peter 3, 8:5, 5. Never treat inferiors with disdain.

(4.) Rulers, teachers, ministers, rule well only when they serve well.

(5.) Vast and enduring consequences flow from single words or acts.

THE SIN OF JEROBOAM.

JANUARY 14.—1 Kings 12, 25-33.

Golden Text: 1 Kings 14, 16.

I. Jeroboam as a Statesman.

His ambition is to found a dynasty. All his measures are with a view to that end. (1.) He had first become famous as the builder of Millo and the walls of Jerusalem. He now fortifies Shechem as his capital, and Pennel—to guard his dominions on the other side Jordan, and the great caravan road to Damascus and the East. (2.) He resolves to establish a distinct national church and so break the religious unity of the people. This apparently politic measure was in violation of ordinances of God, prepared the way for greater sins, dishonored him, and—instead of establishing—ruined his house.