

stances where help was not to be had, nursing their sick wives, cooking the family meals, washing the dishes, sweeping the house, and doing women's work generally; were these men "unmanly?" Forbid the thought. Then, from the other side of the Rockies comes the news that John Chinaman is the domestic servant there; and a very good servant, too. Is he unmanly? We wouldn't like to tell him so. So we have heard of women who ploughed, sowed, reaped; nay, memory recalls our own old nurse, whose tender hands have bathed our fevered heads, prepared our delicate meals, arranged our sick-room, tended our darling babes, and this woman ploughed, sowed, reaped, threshed, her own little acre lot, tended her cow, pigs and chicken, lectured careless husbands, scolded gossiping wives, mixed medicines, set broken bones, laid out the dead, expressed her opinion at parish meetings, indeed did everything that came in her way to do, and was still as "womanly" a woman as ever we knew.

It is not three months since we were talking to a lady from the banks of the Thames, Ontario, who mentioned in the course of conversation her occupation as a farmer in the absence of her husband, whose profession kept him away from home during most of the summer weather. How she managed the men, saw that the stock were properly cared for, looked after the outbuildings and had new ones erected, rode to market to sell her produce, banked her accounts, in short did all that her husband would have done had he been at home, even to driving the hay-rake when the work was hurried, and she was, nevertheless, a lady who filled all the duties and displayed all the accomplishments of an educated woman.

Taking another view of the matter, how often does Shakespeare show us his heroines in male attire, and do we ever think of calling them "unwomanly?" On the contrary, the great poet uses the "mannishness" so artistically that it becomes a foil to the delicacy of the maidens he depicts for us and makes them more charming than ever. Now we do not admire masculine habiliments for women in any circumstances, but we believe if masculine occupations—if there be such exclusively—in the way of woman's duties she is perfectly "womanly" to perform them; or if there be any employment now in the hands of men solely, which she feels capable of performing, she has a perfect right to do so, despite all prejudice. The advocates of "womanliness" as the only sphere for woman could not admire Jeanne d'Arc, the Maid of Sargossa, Florence Nightingale, nor our own Canadian Laura—we have lately learned on the best authority, that the heroine's name was not Mary—Laura Secord. For according to their theories no "womanly" woman would endure masculine armour even to save her country, nor mount a gun to defend her native city, nor go amid blood, and fire, and smoke, to heal wounded soldiers, nor walk twenty miles alone through virgin forest tenanted by wolves and rattlesnakes, and with the risk of being discovered by soldier enemies, though it were to save a valuable military post and the lives of thirty lonely men, miles away from any other help. And yet women have done all these things and will do them again, and God bless them for it. And they will heal the sick, as they have done before, and preach salvation and defend the laws, and cast their political votes; perhaps fill places in Parliament. But they will do all these things as "womanly" women, and who shall dare call them "unwomanly?"

This world belongs to the energetic.

LABOUR is the Divine law of our existence; repose is desertion and suicide.

THE qualities we possess never make us so ridiculous as those we pretend to have.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

There is a form of Sunday dissipation indulged in by people who feel a sincere regard for religion, and who are, at least, uncomfortable if they do not spend a portion of the day in church. It is so common that it excites no particular notice. "I did not see you yesterday—were you ill?" is the inquiry put by one friend to another. "Not at all. I went to hear Mr. So-and-So. He is wonderfully eloquent." will be the reply. The desire "to hear" men of whom the popular voice speaks favourably, is not in itself reprehensible, but when it is yielded to till it becomes the Sunday habit, till it is quite as likely the church member will be absent from his own place, and forming one of the throng of strangers in another place, it is no longer innocent. It is a form of Sunday amusement-taking. The wish to be entertained is with many a far stronger motive than the wish to be instructed. Many have forgotten that the pulpit has a higher mission than merely to charm away an hour with beautiful rhetoric, and though their pastor speak to them of the noblest themes in the simplest way, they ask for something more. They want to be delighted, astonished, and electrified by strains of dulcet or of fiery eloquence. Their unfaithfulness is at this very time rendering it almost an impossibility for their own minister, depressed and grieved by a vista of empty pews, to deliver his own message with life and enthusiasm. The decreased feeling of personal responsibility, on the part of the pews, reacts inevitably on the pulpit.

There are hundreds who appear to attend church, mainly from æsthetic motives. You listen, as they go home after a very moving discourse, and it is not of that they speak. No. It is, "I wonder who that new tenor is. I never heard a finer voice, not even at the opera." "How deliciously sweet was that soprano solo!" "How execrable the rendering of the chants!" "I wish Miss B. would not flat so—I was tortured."

Musical culture is desirable, but musical culture should be subordinate, not superior, to a spirit of worship on the Sabbath. There is nothing praise-worthy in wretched music in church. We ought to have the best to which we can attain. The sweet, well-trained choir and the vast wave of congregational singing, alike should contribute to the service. Yet, if the artistic and critical predominate in thought, we have lost more than we have gained, even in the church where the music is most exquisite.—Margaret E. Sangster.

Do not begin by devoting attention to those who seem to want reformation most; select the best informed and best disposed—improve these, and use them as your instruments in reforming their neighbours. If you had a promiscuous pile of wood to kindle, where would you apply your light—to the green stick or to the dry?—Archbishop Whately to a young clergyman.

INTERNATIONAL S. S. LESSON.

December 11th.

(From Sunday-School World.)

LESSON XI.

THE LAST DAYS OF MOSES. Deut. xxxii.

44-52.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."—Ps. xc. 12.

This lesson is solemn and impressive in a high degree. Death in any form is touching, but the mode of this departure is without parallel. More striking, however, than the end of this great man and the picturesque accompaniments of it is the display of the "Divine" attributes—the holiness that turns away from sin

in even the most saintly, the tenderness that mingles love with chastisement, and the judicial faithfulness that maintains truth and righteousness in every direction. We are to look with deep interest on departing Moses, but with yet deeper on the unchangeable Jehovah.

V. 44. The Hoshea of this verse is of course the Joshua of the margin and of the next book. He was Moses's minister, attendant, deputy, filling a confidential place higher than that of secretary to a modern ruler, and in constant communication with his chief, so as to know his methods and be prepared, as in this instance, to succeed him. His name is "Jesus" in Greek, meaning "whose help is Jehovah." The revised New Testament properly puts Joshua for this name in Hebrews iv. 8. Oshea, Jehoshua, and Jeshua, are other forms of the name. He was the son of Nun, of the tribe of Ephraim (1 Chron. vii. 27) His name was changed by Moses from Oshea to Joshua (Num. xiii. 16.) (His personal history will be studied at a later time in the lessons.)

Having been invested with authority as Moses's successor (Num. xxvii. 18), and received a charge from God through the lips of Moses (Deut. xxxi. 14-23), he was naturally with his great leader when he uttered his "song" (Deut. xxxi. 30 and xxxii. 1-43) in the ears of the people.

V. 45 simply states that Moses "made an end." His work was now done. Of course the narrative of Moses's death is by a different writer, who here uses the original name Hoshea (help) instead of that which he had come to bear. If Joshua wrote the passage, it was not unnatural for him modestly to call himself by his original name as Moses's "minister." The presence of his successor showed the people the close relation between them, and would prepare them for receiving Joshua as Moses's successor. It was of God's ordering. (See Deut. xxxi. 14.) The all-wise Ruler is not indifferent to details.

In vs. 46, 47 we have the spoken words of the great leader after the "song." He beseeches his people to set their hearts to the truth of what he testifies, or rather with which he closes his testimony. (See Deut. xxxi. 21, 26.) They were to remember and act upon all these words, and to impress them upon all their children. A true Church of God must always feel the need of training the children in God's ways. It is the clear fore-runner of coming ruin when the children are left to themselves, and the only real care is how to secure their "getting on in the world."

No words can too strongly urge this. "It is not a vain thing"—not a thing of passing importance—but "your life." (See this fully stated in Deut. xxx. 20.) God is the life of His people. "God is in Christ," and we have the life in Him. (See John xiv. 6 and 1 John v. 12, 20.) But a true knowledge of God implies respect for His law and the doing of His will. So it is said in our lesson, "it is your life." That is true of the nation. It lived while it obeyed the Lord; died when it apostatized. The loss of the land was the outward sign of God's anger. So it will be with us. It is no less true of the individual. (See Rom. x. 4-9.)

V. 48 shows that this was the last day's work of Moses. "That selfsame day" the final direction was given to him.

V. 49. To "Abarim" (before which the article is always put—the Abarim, as we say "the Highlands"), of which Nebo (in Deut. xxxiv. 1) was a peak, called also Pisgah, a mountain or hilly range (see Num. xxxiii. 44, margin), not yet much explored, on the east of Jordan, in the land of Moab, and over against Jericho, Moses is to go. This range is mentioned in Numbers xvii. 12, and xxxiii. 47, 48. From this height and similar heights a portion of the land could be seen, in-

cluding Jerusalem and Bethlehem, according to Buckingham. Moses had intimation of all this before. (See Deut. iii. 27.) Now God speaks in the form and with the tone of command: "Get thee up;" "die there." He is supreme; the issues of life are with Him; He fixes the time and place of our end.

V. 50. So God says, "die in the mount;" but the brighter aspect of the event is not forgotten: "be gathered unto thy people." They were not in Nebo but in another and higher region. We could not make this word a positive proof of immortality. It was not meant, primarily, to teach it. It is, however, true on the assumption of immortality. (See our Lord's reasoning to the Sadducees in Luke xx. 38.)

The Lord recalls the death of Aaron in Mount Hor (recorded in Num. xx. 25-28) as in part explaining this command, and in part recalling the occasion for it. He is doing with one brother in this regard as He did with the other. The occasion of this line of action was the same to both, and is recalled in

V. 51. The whole transaction is reported in Numbers xx. 7-12, which should be examined. The element of sin in the matter appears to be that the brothers yielded to an impatient temper, used "we" where God's name should have been used, and probably under the influence of the impatience struck the rock twice where God only enjoined speaking. (Compare v. 8 with v. 11.) They did not "sanctify," give the due place to, the Lord. They spoke as if the matter were in their hands. The carrying out of the divine sentence upon Aaron is reported in the same chapter (vs. 22-29).

V. 52 reports the mitigation of the sentence: "Yet thou shalt see the land," etc. Judgment is God's strange work. He delighteth in mercy. It is fit that His glory should be upheld. It is fit that His word should be carried out, and that the faults of even His most eminent servants should be noted and dealt with. It is not fit that any Israelite should feel that he suffered where the leaders escaped. It is fit that men who were to set an example to the children of Israel should be rebuked when they fail to honour God's name among the people. God is just when He judges and clear when He condemns, and not one word of complaint or remonstrance is uttered by Moses. The further details are given in chapter xxxiv.

The following points deserve notice in the summing up of the lesson:

(1) Moses is, like a true servant of God, intent on his work to the very last. It fills his hand, his thoughts, his time, his heart.

(2) There is no weak favouritism in God's dealings with His servants. If Moses, Aaron, David, Peter, sin, there will be suffering—not, indeed, such as comes on the impenitent, but such as will show God's estimate of sin.

(3) All the details of the life and death of God's servants are settled by Him in infinite goodness and wisdom. "He stayeth," etc. (Isa. xxvii. 8).

(4) His people are to accept His appointments in true submission of soul. "Thy will be done." They "see in part" the fulfilment of God's word of promise. They are to expect confidently the fulfilment of the rest.

(5) Where we die and are buried is of little account. The great thing is that we die in the faith, and go to the general assembly and church of the firstborn.

Where we but see the darkness of the mine,
God sees the diamond shine;
Where we can only clustering leaves behold,

He sees the bud they fold.
We only see the rude and outer strife;
God knows the inner life.

And those from whom, like Pharisees, we shrink,
With Christ may eat and drink.