

SCHOLAR'S NOTES.

(From the International Lessons for 1876 by Edwin W. Rice, as issued by American Sunday-School Union.)

CONNECTED HISTORY.—The Book of Ecclesiastes, or "The Preacher," is generally supposed to have been written by Solomon, near the close of his life.

LESSON XII.

SEPTEMBER 17.]

A GODLY LIFE. [About 977 B. C.] READ Eecl. xii. 1-14. RECITE vs. 1, 13, 14.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Godliness is profitable unto all things.—1 Tim. iv. : 8.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—"In the way of righteousness is life."

DAILY READINGS.—M.—Eecl. xii. 1-14. T.—Matt. xix. 13-29. W.—Job xiv. 1-22. Th.—2 Sam. vii. 18-29. F.—Ps. cxxxix. 1-24. Sa.—John xv. 1-20. S.—2 Peter iii. 1-14.

TO THE SCHOLAR.—It would be well to commit this entire chapter to memory; and as you study it pray that you may follow the wise counsels given in vs. 1, 13.

NOTES.—In the first seven verses of this chapter the preacher uses a number of poetical figures or illustrations to urge the importance of early piety.

EXPLANATIONS AND QUESTIONS.

Lesson Topics.—(I.) GODLY LIFE BEST FOR THE YOUNG. (II.) GODLY LIFE URGED BY THE EXPERIENCE AND WORDS OF THE PREACHER. (III.) BY THE COMING JUDGMENT.

I. GODLY LIFE BEST FOR THE YOUNG.

(1.) While, that, or so that; evil days, evil will not come to the godly. Prov. xii. 21; Ps. xci. 10. (2.) sun, etc., a picture of feeble old age. (3.) house—that is, man's body, here compared to a house; grinders, the teeth; those that look, the eyes. (4.) doors, probably the lips; rise up . . . bird, even a bird singing awakens feeble old persons; daughters, the sound of "grinding" in this verse may refer to dulness of hearing, and "music" to loss of voice in the aged. (5.) almond tree, white hairs of the aged, compared to the flowering of the almond tree; grasshopper . . . burden, so feeble are the aged; long home, "eternal home."—(7. Lewis.) (6.) silver cord, as we say "thread of life;" golden bowl, means a vessel for holding oil, as a lamp; wheel, which raises the bucket. (7.) dust return (Gen. iii. 19), feebleness of age and nearness of death urge to youthful piety.

II. GODLY LIFE URGED BY THE EXPERIENCE AND WORDS OF THE PREACHER.

(8.) Vanity, fleeting, quickly passing away. (9.) proverbs, as in last five lessons. (10.) acceptable, pleasant, agreeable (Ps. xix. 10); upright, correct, true. (11.) goods, to urge us to duty; nails fastened, as we say "the speaker hit the nail." (12.) admonished, warned, counselled; many books, or "many chapters."—(7. Lewis.)

III. BY THE COMING JUDGMENT.

(13.) conclusion, the sum of all these teachings; Fear God (Deut. x. 12; Rev. xiv. 7); whole . . . man, "all of man."—(7. Lewis.) Matt. xvi. 26. (14.) into judgment. See Acts xvii. 31; Rom. xiv. 10; 2 Cor. v. 10; Rev. xx. 12.

III. Questions.—

What is the sum of all these teachings? v. 13. What is the first reason given for fearing God? The second reason? What did Jesus say of the end of the wicked and the righteous? See Matt. xxv. 43. How may we be prepared to meet such a judgment in peace? Recite the "Golden Text."

Illustrations.—

At the judgment day, Judas would receive his bribes; Esau cast up his pottage; Achan cast down his gold; Gehazi refuse his gifts; Balaam would be faithful, and the prodigal a true son; Herod may wish he were John the Baptist; Pharaoh that he were Moses; Saul that he were David; Haman that he were Mordecai; Nebuchadnezzar that he were Daniel, and Pilate that he were the penitent thief.—(Henry Smith.)

Godliness.—

Some angel guide my pencil while I draw
What nothing less than angel can exceed,
A man on earth devoted to the skies;
All the black cares and tumults of his life,
Like harmless thunders breaking at his feet,
Excite his piety, not impair his peace.

Behold a sun he spies a Deity;

What makes them only smile makes him adore;
Where they see mountains he but atoms sees.
An empire in his balance weighs a grain,
They things terrestrial worship as divine;
His hopes immortal blow them by as dust
That dims his sight.—(Edward Young.)

LESSON XIII.

SEPTEMBER 24.]

REVIEW.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.—Prov. iv. : 23.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—"Godliness hath the promise of this life, and the life to come."

DAILY READINGS.—M.—Prov. iv. 1-27. T.—2 Chron. i. 1-17. W.—1 Kings viii. 5-30. Th.—1 Kings x. 1-29. F.—Prov. vi. 6-22. Sa.—Prov. xxiii. 29-35. S.—Eecl. xii. 1-14.

TO THE SCHOLAR.—The life of Solomon is worthy of careful study, and may teach us the safety of a soul when pious and obedient to God, and the danger to the same soul when prosperity, riches, and great honor lead to forgetfulness of God and to idolatry.

Plan of Review.—(I.) SOLOMON'S PIETY. Lessons I. to IV.—(II.) SOLOMON'S WISDOM. Lessons VI. to IX.—(III.) THE LESSONS OF EXPERIENCE. Lessons X. to XII.

I. Questions.—With whose death did our last lesson in the Old Testament close? State five chief events in David's life which followed Absalom's death. Who tried to succeed David? How? 1 Kings i. 5-10. Who was told of his plan? To whom did Bathsheba take the news? What order did David give? 1 Kings i. 32-34. Who succeeded David as king? Whom did he charge Solomon to obey? How? What was he to build?

When he was king, where did Solomon go to worship? Who went with him? Who appeared to him at Gibeon? What offer was made to Solomon? What did he choose? What answer did he gain? Why did he get more than he asked for?

When did Solomon begin to build the temple? How many years was he in building it? Who gave him the plan of it? With what was the most holy place overlaid? About how much gold is he supposed to have used on the temple? What pillars did he put up? Give the meaning of their names.

What sacrifices were offered at the dedication of the temple? Where was the ark placed? By whom? What was it the ark? What filled the house as the priests came out of the holy place? How did Solomon explain it? 1 Kings viii. 12, 13. What facts did Solomon mention at the dedication? See Lesson IV.

Who offered the prayer at the dedication of the temple? Who were present? What did he say of God's faithfulness? What did he ask for the temple? 1 Kings viii. 29. What for the people? 1 Kings viii. 30.

II. Questions.—State the title of Lesson VI. The name of the queen who came to visit him. The object of her visit. The presents she brought. The things she saw. How her questions were answered. What she thought of Solomon's wisdom. What did she say of his servants? What is said of the value and preciousness of her presents?

Give the title of Lesson VII. The book from which it is taken. Why so called? Who is said to speak in this lesson? Where? To whom? Why did she warn them? Of what? How would they be punished? Who would be safe from evil?

Give the title of Lesson VIII. To whom addressed? State what wisdom offered. How is the Lord to be honored? What reward is promised for this? Whom does the Lord correct? What is better than fine gold? Why?

State the title of Lesson IX. To whom addressed? From what animal is he to learn industry? State some of the sins to which idleness leads. The seven things the Lord hates. The joy of doing right.

III. Questions.—What sin does Lesson X. point out? What are some of its effects? Its final effect? To what sins may it lead? To what dangers? How are these described? How is the power of this habit spoke of in the lesson?

Give the title of Lesson XI. Who spoke these words? Prov. xxxi. 1. By whom were they taught to the king? What is said of the value of such a woman? State the four things which should make her husband love her. The eight things which show her industry. How she cares for the poor. For her household. How her husband is known in public. Her reward.

Give the title of Lesson XII. The book from which it is taken. The "Golden Text." State what the first seven verses of the lesson describe. How many illustrations are used in them? For what purpose? What lesson do they teach us? State the preacher's conclusion. Why is it wise to fear God? What reason does the preacher give? When will God so judge every person? Who only will be free from guilt? Why free?

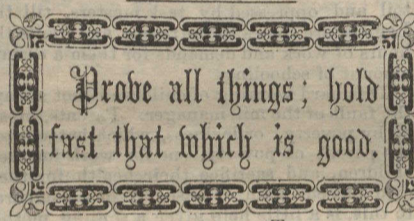
Here have we no continuing city.

HER. 13. 14.

THRIFT.

Mr. Smiles' book is full of illustrations of thrift. If it seems to bear upon a class, that is due to peculiar conditions. The lesson need not be confined to them. The principle is the very simple one that wanting things is not civilization, but the thoughtful effort to obtain them of which thrift is the basis. A boy wanting a college education will work what seems to his mates a miracle. Anybody can tell you that it costs from \$1,600 to \$4,000 to go through college, and yet there are hundreds of boys going through college now on nothing whatever. That is to say, they work their way through by combining industry with close living. A pampered clerk receives two thousand dollars, lives in debt, and complains that he cannot marry, while there are thousands of young women far above him in culture, refinement, and sagacity saving money out of one-third of his wages, and living quite as well as he does, too. "Needless self-indulgence," is the great foe of thrift and the great cause of many human miseries, especially of all that class of sorrows that arise from unexpected poverty. No man is guiltless who exposes his own young children to the dangers pauperism or dependence upon uncertain charity.

The independence of Englishmen of the middle classes is a direct result of habits of thrift. "Passing rich at forty pounds a year" was Goldsmith's curate; and though that is no longer true of curates, yet at twice forty pounds a year many an Englishman knows the luxury of perfect self-reliance. Among ourselves the small farmer is the corresponding person. Less cultured himself, he still sends his sons to college, educates and dresses his girls in good taste, and lays up a little money. He is, under God, lord of himself, and his self-possession is worth struggling for. It is the very foundation of manliness, and a man can scarcely begin to be a Christian until he enters the school of thrift.



THES. 5. 21.

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J. DOUGALL & SON, Publishers, Montreal. JOHN DOUGALL, 2 Spruce street, New York.

The NORTHERN MESSENGER is printed and published on the 1st and 15th of every month, at Nos. 213 and 220 St. James street, Montreal, by JOHN DOUGALL & SON, composed of John Dougall, of New York, and John Redpath Dougall and J. D. Dougall, of Montreal.