

## SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From the International Lessons for 1880, by Edwin W. Rice, as issued by American Sunday School Union.)

## LESSON XIII.

SEPT. 26.]

## A TEMPERANCE LESSON.

ISAIAH'S TEMPERANCE PRINCIPLES.

Isa. 5: 11-21.

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 22-24.

11. Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them.

12. And the harp, and the viol, the tabret, and pipe, and wine, are in their feasts; but they regard not the work of the Lord, neither consider the operations of his hands.

13. Therefore my people are gone into captivity, because they have no knowledge: and their honorable men are famished, and their multitude dried up with thirst.

14. Therefore hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure: and their glory, and their multitude, and their pomp, and he that rejoiceth, shall descend into it.

15. And the mean man shall be brought down, and the mighty man shall be humbled, and the eyes of the lofty shall be humbled:

16. But the Lord of hosts shall be exalted in judgment, and God that is holy shall be sanctified in righteousness.

17. Then shall the lambs feed after their manner, and the waste places of the fat ones shall strangers eat.

18. Woe unto them that draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope:

19. That say, let him make speed, and hasten his work, that we may see it: and let the counsel of the Holy One of Israel draw nigh and come, that we may know it!

20. Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!

21. Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!

22. Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drink:

23. Which justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him!

24. Therefore as the fire devoureth the stubble, and the flame consumeth the chaff, so their root shall be as rottenness, and their blossom shall go up as dust: because they have cast away the law of the Lord of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel.

## GOLDEN TEXT.

He shall not fall nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth.—Isa. 42: 4.

## TOPIC.

The woe of those that follow strong drink.

NOTE.—This chapter begins a new prophecy, which is introduced by the beautiful parable of a vineyard; and then pronounces God's severe judgments upon intemperance, and various other sins of God's people.

LESSON OUTLINE.—(I.) WOE TO THE HABITUAL DRINKER. (II.) WOE TO THE HARD DRINKER.

I. THE HABITUAL DRINKER.—(11.) EARLY... FOLLOW STRONG DRINK. It was especially shameful to drink early in the morning, see Acts 2: 15; CONTINUE UNTIL NIGHT, spend their time in dram-shops, or in revelry and carousals, see v. 12. (12.) REGARD NOT... THE LORD, wine-drinkers, and those delighting in such revels usually scorn religion, and despise the Lord's commands. (13.) CAPTIVITY, these go into bondage both of body and soul, worse than Assyrian bondage; Satan leads them captive at his will. (14.) HELL HATH ENLARGED, this may be used as a frightful picture of the end toward which fashionable drinking tends; yet all these mean to stop on the side of moderate drinking, or at least of safety from the drunkard's doom.

II. THE HARD DRINKER.—(21.) MIGHTY TO DRINK, this is the sixth woe mentioned—the first is against avarice; the second, against early intemperance; the third, against perseverance in sin; the fourth, against confounding right with wrong, and the opposite; the fifth, against self-conceit; the sixth against drunken and corrupt judges; MINGLE STRONG DRINK, with spices, or mix one kind of strong drink with another, to make it more intoxicating (Prov. 9: 2, 5). (23.) TAKE AWAY RIGHTEOUSNESS, in the drunken condition they render unjust judgments; (21.) FIRE, literally, "tongue of fire," that is, flame, which the Rabbins explain resembles a "tongue of fire." Compare Virgil's figure in the *Aeneid*, "with gentle touch the lambent flame glides harmlessly along his hair."

WOE

For early drinking.  
For all day drinking.  
For wine drinking.  
Eternal!

FOURTH QUARTER.  
LESSON I.

Oct. 3.]

## ISAAC'S PROSPERITY.

Gen. 26: 12-25.

COMMIT TO MEMORY vs. 23-25.

12. Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received

in the same year an hundredfold: and the Lord blessed him.

13. And the man waxed great, and went forward and grew until he became very great:

14. For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him.

15. For all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth.

16. And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we.

17. And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.

18. And Isaac digged again the wells of water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham; and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them.

19. And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water.

20. And the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water is ours: and he called the name of the well Esek; because they strove with him.

21. And they digged another well, and strove for that also: and he called the name of it Sitnah.

22. And he removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now the Lord hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.

23. And he went up from thence to Beersheba.

24. And the Lord appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake.

25. And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the Lord, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaac's servants digged a well.

## GOLDEN TEXT.

The blessing of the Lord it maketh rich.—Prov. 10: 22.

## CENTRAL TRUTH.

The blessing of the Lord brings true riches.

INTRODUCTORY.—This is the only lesson from the history of Isaac. While the account of Abraham and his friend Lot fills more than ten chapters of Genesis, the events in the life of his son scarcely fill five chapters (including the offering of Isaac), before the history of Abraham's grandsons begins. A full account of how a wife was secured for Isaac is given; of the birth of his two sons; his sojourn at Gerar; and his denial of his wife, and reproval by Abimelech. This is followed by an account of his prosperity, which is the subject of our lesson. He next sends his son Esau for venison; is deceived into blessing Jacob instead of Esau. Of the last forty years of his life nothing is recorded, except that he lived at Hebron, until the return of his son Jacob, and died one hundred and eighty years old.

TO THE SCHOLAR.—Read attentively each week the text from one lesson to the next, and so obtain a complete view of the whole history. Try to realize that Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph were real men, living and acting just as men do now. The history we are studying is real history, though far removed in point of time and location.

SEARCH the SCRIPTURES, EARNESTLY, ANXIOUSLY, REGULARLY, CONSCIENTIOUSLY, HUMBL Y.

NOTES.—WELLS, the scarcity of water in Bible lands made a well a valuable possession. They were frequently dug through the rock, five or six feet in diameter, and from fifty to one hundred and fifty, and even one hundred and seventy feet in depth. If dug in the soil they were protected by a curbing or lining of heavy stone, and were often covered also by a heavy stone. The water was drawn by buckets or jars let down on a rope, each person carrying his own rope and vessel. Around the wells were stone troughs to water the flocks and herds, as now seen in many places of the East. BEER-SHE-BA, "well of oath," or "well of seven" (*Beer*, in modern Arabic still means a well). One of the oldest cities of Palestine, and at its extreme southern limit. There are now found two large wells with water, and five smaller ones, on the spot; the largest well is twelve and a half feet in diameter, and about forty-five feet to the water; another is five feet in diameter, and forty-two feet to the water. Both are curbed with heavy stones at the top, which are full of grooves made by the ropes used to draw the water for over four thousand years. —ABIMELECH, "father of the king," the name of several Philistine kings, perhaps a common title of them, like Pharaoh among the Egyptians. —GERAR, a Philistine city, probably in the "south country," below Beer-she-ba; its precise location is unknown.

## EXPLANATIONS.

LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) GOD'S BLESSING NEEDED. (II.) MAN'S EFFORTS REQUIRED.

1. GOD'S BLESSING NEEDED.—(12.) THE LORD BLESSED HIM, the "HUNDRED-FOLD" received was in consequence of this blessing, and therefore he became "VERY GREAT." (13.) All true greatness comes from God, but even this may subject the possessor to the jealousy of the king's enemies. (14.) FLOCKS... HERDS... SERVANTS, the common wealth of persons in the East now. The customs have changed but little in that land in four thousand years.

II. MAN'S EFFORTS REQUIRED.—(12.)

SOWED, did not sit still. (18.) DIGGED WELLS. (19.) DIGGED IN THE VALLEY, a good place, and the work richly rewarded. (20.) SPRINGING WATER, running, flowing, really a fountain, ESEK, "striving." (21.) DIGGED ANOTHER WELL... SITNAH, "contention." (22.) ANOTHER WELL, to avoid strife, and because water was so scarce in that region; even now water is so scarce that Bedouins offer milk rather than water to the thirsty traveller; REHO-BOTH, "broad places." (25.) BUILDED AN ALTAR, worship with work; DIGGED A WELL, see Notes.

## THE FAT DOCTOR.

The French papers tell an amusing story of a Parisian doctor, whose skill and experience had gained him a popularity that was not affected by the strange conduct which would have ruined the practice of another physician. Doctor David, in most respects an agreeable man and a favorite in society, became immensely stout, and could not be induced to go upstairs to the sick room. He remained at the bottom of the staircase, and thence made his patient come forth for his professional advice.

"Well," cried he to his wife or nurse,

"how goes our patient?"

"Not very well, monsieur le doctor; he still keeps his bed."

"Tell him to make an effort and come as far as the landing-place."

"Yes, doctor."

Sometimes the patient obeyed, and came forth in his dressing-gown.

"Ah! well, my friend, you are a little better, are you not?"

After some sort of mumbling answer,

"Eh! what?" shouted the doctor. "I do not understand you. Speak louder. A great deal better, are you not?"

"No—no."

"Lean a little over the bannister. Show me your tongue."

The doctor took from his pocket a small opera-glass to examine the tongue, which was put out for him from the second or even the third landing in the staircase.

"Put it out again," said he. "There is nothing much the matter."

Another unintelligible reply.

"Put it out now."

"Can't any further."

"Ah! well, it's all right, this tongue. The paleness is gone. There is certainly improvement. Good evening, my friend. Go and lie down again. I will come again tomorrow."

The patient mutters something.

"What do you say?"

"What must I—?"

"What must you do? Continue the infusion. Good evening."

But sometimes the patient could not leave his bed, he was the prey of a fever. The doctor was informed of it, still at the bottom of the staircase.

"He is right," said he to the nurse; "he must not expose himself to a chill. Keep him warm. How goes his pulse?"

"It beats very fast."

"That is strange. Has he passed the night pretty well?"

"He has scarcely closed his eyes a moment."

"You astonish me."

"What do you prescribe for him, doctor?"

"I am going home. I will send you a prescription immediately."

It is very strange, but it is true, that Dr. David cured most of his patients.

The point of the satire is in this last sentence. The story of the fat doctor, we imagine, is intended to teach the comparative uselessness of drugs in many ailments, and the expediency of leaving as much as possible to the curative powers of nature, aided by nursing. Except when surgical aid is required, it is unhappily too true that medical treatment is in some complaints proverbially uncertain, and that cures are made with various remedies, and as often with none. One practical matter is certain. More attention should be given to Hygienic or Preventive Medicine, on the principle that "prevention is better than cure." Not only ought public Officers of Health to have better recognized and more active functions, but private families ought to "retain" their doctors by annual payment; getting the benefit of their advice and experience on questions of diet, regimen, and other helps to health, instead of merely sending for them in time of discomfort and danger. In India and the colonies it is common to have the medical adviser thus retained by an annual payment, and a similar arrangement would be often useful in this country, especially in schools and other establishments where many are under one roof.—*Leisure Hour*.

## THE REASON WHY.

BY MYRA COPELAND.

I had often wondered why Miss B. never attempted any active Christian work. She had been a member of the church for years; was well educated, pleasing in manner and conversation, and with plenty of leisure, seemed peculiarly fitted to do religious work, and yet she was not at all-regular in her attendance on the services of the church, and I think I never heard her voice in a prayer-meeting; and I wondered why.

Going into a circulating-library one evening, with a friend, we chanced upon a long shelf filled with the writings of a popular sensational novelist. I expressed my disapproval of that class of books quite strongly, but noticing a peculiar smile upon my friend's face, I asked her why she smiled. She answered my question by asking—

"Is Miss B. a member of your church?"

"Yes. Why?"

"She comes in here regularly every Saturday evening, and takes two of those books out for her Sunday readings."

And I thought I knew why she was so inactive in religious matters, why the prayer-meetings had so little charm for her, and why her growth as a Christian woman was so slow and unhealthy. With such food how could one be expected to grow in grace and the knowledge of God, or bring forth any fruit that would yield refreshment to those around her?—*Watchman*.

## A PAINFUL RETROSPECT.

As reported in the *New York Sun*, Mr. S. Stacy, a former saloon-keeper, in an address to some Cadets of Temperance, said:

"I have seen a man take his first glass of liquor in my place who afterward filled a suicide's grave. I have seen man after man, wealthy and educated, come into my place, who cannot now buy his dinner. For eleven years I sold liquor. I had one of the handsomest saloons in New York. Some said it was the best. If it was the best, God help the poorest! I can recall twenty customers, each worth from \$100,000 to \$500,000, and only two of them are now able to buy dinners for themselves."

Such a business it is certainly well to have abandoned, but better still would it have been never to have engaged in it. The liquor-seller's retrospect is indeed a painful one.—*Temperance Advocate*.

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