

organized at Hamilton last summer, and, doubtless, we shall hear of more being formed in other large centres. But in Montreal, for several years past, there has existed a very active, *undenominational* Female Society, organized mainly through the untiring efforts of Mrs. P. D. Browne, who hoped that we might in time come to have a Woman's Union Missionary Society in Canada. When the movement in connexion with our own Church began, this Society considered the question of altering its organization. But as the other members preferred to retain the undenominational character, the Presbyterian members did not feel inclined to separate from those with whom they had been working so long, and so have remained as they were, while bidding God-speed to all sister societies formed in connexion with our own Church.

The Sabbath School.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

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

ELIJAH AND THE PROPHETS OF BAAL.

FEBRUARY, 11th.—1 Kings 18, 19-29.

Golden Text: 1 Kings 18, 21.

I. *Elijah's command to Ahab.*

AHAB's compliance shows (1) that Elijah had overawed him, and (2) a hope that the drought might be brought to an end.

Place.—Carmel, a many-topped promontory, jutting out into the Mediterranean, lying between the maritime plain of Sharon to the south and the inland plain of Esdraelon to the north-east. See allusions to its beauty, forests, &c., in Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos, Micah.

The assembly was at the eastern end of the ridge, at the foot of which wound the Kishon, beside an ancient altar, v. 30. Probably a well-known sacred 'high place,' 2 Kings 4, 23.

The 400 prophets of Ashtaroth did not obey the King's summons. They were in Jezreel, under the protection of Jezebel.

II. *Elijah's address to the people and proposal to the prophets of the Sun-god.*

He reproaches the people not for their idolatry and apostasy, but for trying to be on two opposite sides at the same time. They had yielded to the fashionable idolatry of the day, yet, considered themselves the

people of Jehovah. Perhaps they thought that they were liberal, and Elijah Puritanical; but when their inconsistency is put in plain words, they are dumb, v. 21. Elijah meets his enemies on their own ground. Baal was the active principle of heat, so he proposes a test by fire. He gives up to them the hours when the sun was at its height in a blazing Eastern sky. They being many might attempt fraud. He could not.

The procedure in preparing the sacrifice is that prescribed, Lev. 1, 6-8.

III. *Elijah's ridicule.*

"Leaped" i.e. danced up and down at the altar as dancing dervishes at this day. Their wild dances, "vain repetitions," self-inflicted tortures, and when worked up, their frenzied prophesyings, were all parts of their religion. It is an awful picture. Elijah's sarcasms were just the excuses that heathen priests make when no answer is given to their prayers.

Lessons.—(1) God is a jealous God, Exo. 20, 5. He will not accept a divided heart, Luke 11, 34-36. You cannot serve two masters. You must be this *or* that, not this *and* that.

(2) Neutrality in religion is impossible, and lukewarmness hateful, Matt. 12, 30. Rev. 3, 15

(3) Be decided. This is the first and indispensable step. "Choose ye this day whom ye will serve," Josh. 24, 15.

(4) Earnestness in religion is not enough. The prophets of Baal showed terrible earnestness, Ro. 10, 2.

ELIJAH AND HIS SACRIFICE.

FEBRUARY 18.—1 Kings 18, 36-46.

Golden Text: 1 Kings 18, 24.

From a perennial well hard by, water is brought to drench the sacrifice, and fill a broad deep trench, that there may be no suspicion of fraud. By the use of 12 stones Elijah shows that Jehovah regarded the 12 tribes as one people with one altar. By the use of the term Israel, he refers to the covenant made with Jacob (Gen. 32, 28-35, 10.) And he waits till 3 P.M., the hour when the evening sacrifice was being offered in the temple at Jerusalem.

I. *The Prayer*—What a contrast to the prayers of the false prophets! The object of all the miracles is stated here,—to reveal Jehovah as the only true God and the prophets as His accredited servants. There is nothing useless or monstrous about Bible miracles. Elijah's faith also anticipates the turning to God of the hearts of the people.

II. *The Answer.*—God had sanctioned by fire the institution of the Mosaic ritual,