

Home, Sweet Home.

BY MATTIE C. NEWARD.

There's a beautiful realm in the far away past,
All lovely with sunshine and flowers,
And voices as sweet as the songs of the birds,
Laugh away the bright, happy hours.
I can hear them now, come echoing back,
As I watch the starry dawn,
And memory bells chime soft and low—
Home, Sweet Home.

There's a coming: now a gentle hand
Rests lightly on my brow—
A whispered word and the sweet care
Call me back to the beautiful now;
To another realm where flowers bloom,
From which nothing can tempt me to roam,
And my heart-throbs chime with voices
sweet—
Home, Sweet Home.

The voices loved so in that long ago,
And those which make music now—
The coming step and the hand whose touch
Lingers gently on the brow—
I hope to greet in that fadeless realm
Beyond the starry dawn,
Where Angel voices welcome breathe, to
Home, Sweet Home.

LESSON NOTES.

THIRD QUARTER.

STUDIES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

B.C. 1222.] LESSON XI. [Sept. 9.

RUTH AND NAOMI.

Ruth 1. 14-22. Commit to memory vs. 16, 17.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.—Ruth 1. 16.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

The blessedness of a part and a lot with God's people.

TIME.—Ruth lived probably in the time of Gideon, B.C. 1222-1182.

PLACE.—Bethlehem, six miles south of Jerusalem. The birth-place of Christ and of David, and home of Ruth. Moab, east of the Dead Sea, and south of the river Arnon. This was the part where Naomi went. The whole of Moab extends east of the Dead Sea and the Jordan, as far north as the river Jabbok.

THE BOOK OF RUTH.—(1) The author is unknown. (2) It was probably written during the reign of David.

PERSONS.—Eliamelech means "my God is king;" Naomi, "lovely," "pleasant;" Mahlon, "sickly;" Orpah, "pining one;" Ruth, "a friend;" Orpah, "a lawn."

THE STORY.—During the times of the judges a great famine arose in Israel, and Eliamelech of Bethlehem emigrated with his wife and two sons to Moab beyond the Dead Sea. Here his sons married two Moabitish women. In the course of ten years all three husbands died. The mother, Naomi, proposed to return to her early home, and the daughters-in-law proposed at first to go with her, and went a little ways. Finally, one returned home, and the other went on and became an Israelite.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.—14. *And they*—Ruth and Orpah, who had gone with Naomi a short distance on her way to Bethlehem. 15. *Her people and her gods*—Orpah partly led into the light by Naomi, went back to be a heathen and idolater. 16. *Entrust me not, etc.*—Ruth chose the people of God and His service. Her choice was a type of the choice of all who become Christians. 20. *Call me Naamah*—i.e., pleasant, happy. *Call me Mara*—i.e., bitter. 21. *Naah afflicted me*—For distrusting God, and going to a heathen land for help. 22. *Barley harvest*—The middle of April. The story of Ruth goes on to relate how she was rewarded for her faithfulness in cleaving to her poor widowed mother-in-law. She marries a rich kinsman, and is the mother of the ancestor of King David and of Christ.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL REPORTS.—The book of Ruth.—The story of Ruth.—Moab.—Bethlehem.—Orpah and her return.—Ruth's choice.—How her choice illustrates what we all should choose.—What it cost Ruth to make the choice.—Her reward.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—When, and by whom, was the book of Ruth written? Who are the principal persons mentioned in it? In what age did Moab live? Where was Bethlehem?

What two renowned persons were born there? Where was Moab?

SUBJECT: THE BLESSED CHOICE.

1. RUTH AND ORPah.—Who was Naomi? Her husband's name? Where was their home? Why did they leave it? Where did they go? Was this emigration to a heathen land a proof of their lack of faith in God? How long did they remain in Moab? What took place during these two years? Who were Ruth and Orpah? Where did Naomi start to go?

2. THE RIGHT CHOICE (verses 14-18).—Why did Ruth and Orpah start to go with Naomi? Who was persuaded to return? From what motives? To what did she return? What did she lose by her choice? What was Ruth's choice? Did it show faith in God? What would make it hard for Ruth to choose thus? Who, in relation to the Christian life, are like Orpah? How does each part of Ruth's reply to Naomi apply to those who choose the Christian life,—where thou goest, I will go? where thou lodgest, I will lodge? thy people shall be my people! thy God my God! where thou diest, I will die? What do we learn from Naomi's ceasing to object when she saw that Ruth's resolution was fixed?

3. RUTH'S REWARD (vs. 19-22).—What were Naomi's circumstances on her return? To what would she change her name? Does she acknowledge that she had done wrong in going away? What qualities are shown in Ruth from her accompanying a sad and poor mother-in-law? At what time of the year did they reach Bethlehem? Relate the subsequent history of Ruth. Was she well rewarded? Do those who choose the Christian life ever regret their choice? What reasons would lead you to become a Christian? Can you use toward Christians the words of Ruth to Naomi?

LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF RUTH.

1. The sure reward of filial devotion and trust in the Lord.
2. God is no rejecter of persons.
3. The overruling providence of God.
4. All of us must choose like Orpah or Ruth.
5. A picture of a model daughter.
6. The difficulties of a right choice.
7. The rewards of a right choice.
8. We should go with Christians in holy deeds, abide with them in worship, love, and rest, make them our friends, serve their God, and die their happy death.

REVIEW EXERCISE. (For the whole School in Concert.)

13. When did Ruth live? Ans. In the time of Gideon, about 1270 years before Christ. 14. Who was she? Ans. A Moabitess, and daughter-in-law of Naomi of Bethlehem. 15. What did she do? Ans. She left her country and her idols, and became an Israelite and a worshipper of the true God. 16. Repeat the words of her choice. Ans. Repeat verses 16 and 17 f. c.

B.C. 1142.] LESSON XII. [Sept. 16.

A PRAYING MOTHER.

1 Sam. 1. 21-28. Commit to memory vs. 26-28.

GOLDEN TEXT.

I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord.—1 Sam. 1. 28.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Children should be devoted to God from their earliest years.

TIME.—About B.C. 1142, 2.

PLACE.—(1) Shiloh, the religious capital of Israel, 17 miles north-west of Jerusalem. (2) Ramah (the hill), called also Ramathaim Zophim (the two hills of the watchmen), 4 miles north-west of Jerusalem. Here was Samuel's birthplace and home.

THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL.—(1) Named from Samuel, their chief character. (2) Their author is unknown, but they are doubtless a compilation from authentic records. (3) They were probably written near the close of David's reign.

SAMUEL.—The fifteenth and last of the judges, and first of the succession of prophets. (1) His name means *asked of God*. (2) He was born at Ramah, B.C. 1148. (3) His father's name was Elkanah, and his mother's Hannah. (4) He died about B.C. 1060, aged 38 years, and was buried at Ramah.

INTRODUCTION.—It was near the close of the period of the judges when a pious woman

went up with her husband to attend one of the yearly festivals at Shiloh where the Tabernacle was stationed. There she asked God to give her a son, and vowed that he should be the Lord's forever. Eli, the high priest, intimated to her that her prayer would be answered. Our lesson to-day begins with the early years of this boy who was an answer to prayer.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.—21. *Elkanah*—A wealthy man of Ramah, and father of Samuel. *The yearly sacrifice*—One of the 3 great feasts which the Jews were required to attend every year, i.e., the Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacle. 23. *Till she weaned him*—At 2 or three years old. 24. *Three bullocks*—One for burnt-offering, one for the sacrifice of the vow, one for a peace-offering. *Ephah*—4½ gallons. *A bottle of wine*—A skin bottle, holding a large amount. Wine and flour accompanied the sacrifices. 25. *Eli*—The high priest and judge. 26. *I am the woman, etc.*—See ch. 1. 28. *Lent him*—Rather: given him. He was to belong to the Lord all his life, and from this time lived at the tabernacle.

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL REPORTS.—The books of Samuel.—Eli.—Hannah.—Life of Samuel.—His early history.—Dedicating children to God.—Shiloh.—Ramah.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—What can you say about the Books of Samuel? In what age did Samuel live? What place was the capital of Israel? Who was high priest at this time? (1 Sam. 1. 9.) Who was the judge? (1 Sam. 4. 15, 18.)

SUBJECT: CHILDREN CONSECRATED TO GOD.

1. THE CHILD SAMUEL.—What were the names of Samuel's parents? Where did they live? When was Samuel born? The meaning of his name? Why was he so called? How far is it right to pray for temporal blessings? How long did Samuel live? What public offices did he hold? Under whose reign did he die? (1 Sam. 25. 1.) Where was he buried?

2. EARLY INFLUENCES (vs. 21-23).—Who was Elkanah? What would you infer as to his character from his attendance at the feasts? What as to his circumstances from his sacrifices? (v. 24.) What yearly sacrifice is referred to? (Deut. 16. 16.) What kind of a woman was Samuel's mother? (1 Sam. 1. 7, 10-15.) What shows that she was an intelligent, gifted woman? (1 Sam. 2. 1-10.) What vow did she make as to Samuel? (1 Sam. 1. 11.) What is meant by "appear before the Lord" and "there abide forever" in v. 22? What kind of home influences should be around children? What difference does it make to them? Did you ever thank God for a praying mother? What can you do toward answering her prayers? Is there a stronger motive for being Christians ourselves than its influence upon the future welfare of the children? Need children be bad because their home influences are evil?

3. DEVOTED TO GOD'S SERVICE (vs. 24-28).—Where was the capital of Israel and the Tabernacle? How old was Samuel when he was taken there? What offering did his parents bring? In fulfilment of what vow was all this done? Who was high priest? What did Hannah say to him? How young should children be taken to church? Is it enough to go to Sabbath School and not to the church service? Why not? How young may children be converted to God? Do they need the same change as older people? Will it be shown in the same way?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

1. Children are among God's choicest gifts.
2. The future of children is largely in the hands of their parents.
3. Children may become Christians very young.
4. Children should be consecrated to God from their infancy.
5. Children should be taken to the house of God.
6. We should attend the great religious gatherings.
7. We should be generous in our offerings to the Lord.

REVIEW EXERCISE. (For the whole School in Concert.)

16. Who was Samuel? Ans. The last of the judges and the first of the prophets of Israel. 17. Where was he born? Ans. At Ramah, near Jerusalem, 1148 years before Christ. 18. What did his mother do for him? Ans. She dedicated him to God from his birth. 19. Where did she take him? Ans. To the house of God, to be the Lord's forever.

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