

in the middle. There you have it!—"Righteousness exalteth a nation." Encourage conversation on this. Take our own nation as an example; also other Christian nations. Contrast them with Mohammedan and heathen nations. Show also that when our nation has sinned she has gone down; when she has done right, her pathway has been upward.

With the tonic of the righteous nation and its prosperity, the class will be ready for the sad picture of Omri and Ahab, and of Israel under their rule, or rather misrule.

Omri ought to have known and done better. He was a great man (see Exposition, on v. 23). He lived in a beautiful city (see Light from the East); he built a splendid capital, v. 24. (Question about the site and the price, and recall what happened near

there in John 4.) But Omri, although a great man, was weak at one point; he copied the bad qualities of the great Jeroboam, not his good qualities, v. 26.

He died and was buried (v. 28), his opportunity ended, his destiny fixed.

Ahab is now on the throne. His opportunity, like Omri's, is ample, v. 29. How does he use it? Verse 30 is the answer. And then follows a black list of his follies and sins. Count them over—married a heathen wife (Be careful what friendships you make); for his wife's sake built altars for her vile heathen gods (Sin is none the less sin because we do it for those we love); and himself worshipped and served these gods, instead of the true God (We become like what we worship; hence the peril of putting anything in the place of God).

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

In this section will be found further assistance under the several headings.

Lesson Points

Shrewd rulers have an eye to the future, as well as to the present. v. 24.

That "but" is a terrible discount on Omri's greatness, v. 25.

It is "the eyes of the Lord" that count, in estimating the true character of a life. v. 25.

It is a righteous wrath that burns against sin. v. 26.

The city Omri builded became his burial place. Such is life. v. 28.

It is the "good" wife that is "from the Lord." v. 31.

The stronger the man, the more violent is likely to be his transgression. v. 31.

From the Library

The shadow of Queen Jezebel falls dark for many years over the history of Israel and Judah. What the Empress Irene was in the history of Constantinople, or the "She-wolf of France" in that of England, or Catherine de Medicis in that of France, that Jezebel was in the history of Palestine.—Expositor's Bible.

Stand like a knight in armor
When sin assaileth thee;
One error makes life less fruitful
And glorious than it should be

For the knowledge of sin is deadly
And leaves on the soul a stain.

A bird with a broken pinion
Never soars as high again.

—Hezekiah Butterworth.

An Ahab always calls forth an Elijah. Whenever the army of God seems on the verge of defeat, its divine leader takes the direct command. A reflection like this may reinforce our courage in view of the giant evils of our own day.—De Pressensé.

Shakespeare's Lady Macbeth shows many resemblances to Jezebel, and Macbeth to the weak Ahab. The entrance of Diabolus into Maassoul, told in Bunyan's Holy War, also illustrates this lesson.—Peloubet.

Topics for Brief Papers

(To be ready on the day of the Lesson.)

1. "In the eyes of the Lord."
2. The power of an evil example.

Prove from Scripture

That God is angry with the wicked.

Lesson Questions

[From the HOME STUDY QUARTERLY]

Juniors—About which kingdom is the Lesson? Which two kings? Of what sort were they?

23, 24 What good king is named here? Of