

failed in contributing to all the schemes last year, were instructed to take order that no blanks appear in their financial returns in the future. A letter was read from Mr. Sieveright, stating that he accepted an appointment as missionary to Prince Albert, North-West Territory, and tendering the resignation of his charge. In connection with this matter Dr. Ure tendered the resignation of his pastoral charge, giving as his reasons for so doing the following: (1) Because the field as it now is with the country stations united to the town congregation is unworkable by one man; (2) because he thought that the existing arrangements were not favourable to the town charge; (3) because he thought it fitting that he should give those formerly belonging to Mr. Sieveright an opportunity of saying whether he should continue to be their pastor. After some deliberation the Presbytery agreed as follows, on motion of Mr. McDonald, duly seconded: "The Presbytery having heard a letter from Rev. James Sieveright, B.A., intimating his resignation of his charge at Goderich, he having accepted an appointment from the Home Mission Committee to the North-West, and having heard the resignation of Dr. Ure in consequence, express its regret that the usages of the Church have in this case been so far departed from, that the oversight of the Presbytery and the rights of the people have been overlooked; at the same time in the present circumstances the Presbytery agree to overlook the irregularity, to accept of Mr. Sieveright's resignation, to let Dr. Ure's resignation lie on the table, and instruct the Clerk to cite the congregations interested to appear at an adjourned meeting of Presbytery to be held in Knox Church, Goderich, on Tuesday, the 23rd inst., at one p.m., for their interests, and appoint the Clerk to exchange pulpits with Dr. Ure on the Sabbath preceding, to cite the people. On the report of the deputation to Rodgerville and Exeter, the Presbytery agreed to separate the congregation of Exeter from Rodgerville, and Mr. Danby was appointed to declare the pulpit of Exeter vacant on Sabbath first, Mr. Thomson to be Moderator of session, Mr. Hartley remaining minister of Rodgerville. Mr. Pritchard was appointed Convener of the Sabbath School Committee in place of Mr. Sieveright. The committee appointed to examine the session records of Exeter reported that they found several irregularities in said records, whereupon the aforesaid records were remitted to a committee to consider the matter and to report at next meeting.—A. McLEAN, Pres. Clerk.

SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

INTERNATIONAL LESSONS.

LESSON XLVIII.

Nov. 28. } JACOB AND PHARAOH. { Gen. xlvii
1880. } 1-12.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness."—Prov. xvi. 31.

HOME READINGS.

M. Gen. xlv. 1-15 Joseph and his Brethren.
Tu. Gen. xlv. 16-28 Brethren Return for their Father.
W. Gen. xlv. 17: 26-34 Their Journey to Egypt.
Th. Gen. xlvii. 1-12 Jacob and Pharaoh.
F. Prov. xvi. 20-33 The Hoary Head.
S. Ps. xxxix. 1-13 A Stranger and a Sojourner.
Sab. Ps. iii. 1-10 Praise for God's Goodness.

HELPS TO STUDY.

Joseph having made himself known to his brethren, as described in our last lesson, dismissed them once more to the land of Canaan, with instructions to bring their families and their father to Egypt, in order that they might find sustenance there for a time, as the famine—according to the interpretation of Pharaoh's dream—was expected to continue for five years more.

When Jacob's sons presented themselves before their father, and made the unexpected and improbable announcement, "Joseph is yet alive and he is governor over all the land of Egypt," his "heart fainteth, for he believed them not;" and it was only when he saw "the waggon" which his long-lost son "had sent to carry him" and his household that he said, "It is enough; Joseph my son is yet alive; I will go and see him before I die."

On his way to Egypt Jacob halted at Beersheba, where Isaac had dwelt so long; there he offered sacrifices, and obtained from the God of his fathers a repetition of the promise, "I will make of thee a great nation," with a re-assuring clause adapted to his circumstances, "I will go down with thee into Egypt, and I will also surely bring thee [thy descendants] up again."

The meeting of Jacob and Joseph is touchingly described in the closing verses of chapter xlvii.

Our present lesson is occupied with the favourable reception given to Joseph's relatives by the Egyptians and by their king; the interview between Pharaoh and Jacob; and the settlement of the Israelitish patriarchs in the land of Goshen. It may be considered under the following divisions: (1) *The Welcome Immigrants*, (2) *The Patriarch and the King*, (3) *The New Home*, (4) *The Brother Born for Adversity*.

I. THE WELCOME IMMIGRANTS.—Vers. 1-6.—As an executive officer Joseph enjoyed two advantages which seldom go together—the royal confidence and popular favour; hence the kind reception with which his relatives met on their arrival in Egypt. As the news—"Joseph's brethren are come"—(xlv. 16)—spread from one to another throughout the court, "it pleased Pharaoh well, and his servants."

Then Joseph came and told Pharaoh. In those years of hardship no doubt many strangers took refuge in Egypt, and it is reasonable to suppose that Joseph had power to allocate them without consulting the king; but he was too conscientious to employ his position for the benefit of his own family connections without special permission.

And he took some of his brethren, even five men and presented them unto Pharaoh. Joseph was not ashamed of his "poor relations," and the particular Pharaoh who reigned at that time was, from the few glimpses that we obtain of his character, altogether too sensible a man to despise them.

What is your occupation? Pharaoh took it for granted that they had an occupation. Idlers are not welcomed as immigrants anywhere.

Thy servants are shepherds. They were well aware that "every shepherd was an abomination unto the Egyptians" (xlv. 34), and they might have reported themselves as farmers, for they had engaged in agriculture to a considerable extent; in fact Joseph seems to have anticipated their doing so, and he instructed them to call themselves shepherds, "that ye may dwell," said "he, in the land of Goshen," which was well fitted for grazing purposes, and which was also an outlying territory in the direction of Canaan, to which Joseph, knowing and believing the promise, expected the chosen family to return at some future period. To allow his brethren's descendants and his own to mingle with the inhabitants of the land, and thus be lost as a distinct race, would not be in accordance with what Joseph knew of the divine purpose regarding them.

II. THE PATRIARCH AND THE KING.—Vers. 7-10. Jacob blessed Pharaoh. Speaker's Commentary in regard to this, says: "Some here render 'Jacob saluted Pharaoh'—a possible translation, as the Eastern salutation is often with words of blessing; but the natural sense of the word is 'to bless'; and if Jacob had bowed himself to the ground before Pharaoh, according to a familiar Eastern custom, it would probably have been so related in history. More probably the aged patriarch, with the conscious dignity of a prophet and the heir of the promises, prayed for blessings upon Pharaoh."

How old art thou? Apparently struck with Jacob's venerable appearance, Pharaoh asked him this question; the literal meaning is "How many are the days of the years of thy life?"

Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been. Jacob seems to have regarded his life as about ended; he compares its length with that of the lives of Abraham (one hundred and seventy-five) and Isaac (one hundred and eighty), and accounts for the comparative shortness of his own life partly by the evil that had pervaded it—such as his early troubles with Esau, his long servitude in Padanram, the death of Rachel, the dishonour of his daughter, the misdeeds of his sons, the loss of Joseph, etc. But, apart from this, Jacob, Job and others were right in regarding the years of human life in this world as "few and evil," "full of trouble" (Job xiv. 1), and not worthy of having the whole attention devoted to them, to the neglect of making provision for the life which is to come.

III. THE NEW HOME.—Ver. 11. Goshen seems to have been the old name of the territory in which the patriarchs settled, and *Rameses* a name by which it was known when Moses wrote. In Exodus i. 2, we find the Israelitish bondsmen building a treasure city called Rameses, probably after a Pharaoh of that name. It was very different from the hill-sides of Canaan, being flat and somewhat marshy, but it yielded abundance of grass. Even in modern times it is spoken of as "the best of the land." Dr. Robinson identifies Goshen with the province of Esh-Sharkiyeh, and states that in answer to all his inquiries respecting it he was uniformly told that it was the best province in Egypt.

IV. THE BROTHER BORN FOR ADVERSITY.—Did Solomon think of Joseph when he said "A brother is born for adversity?" He could scarcely help doing so. What would have become of Jacob's sons had it not been for the brother whom they had hated and despised and sold so cheap in the days of their folly and wickedness? For five long years he nourished his father, and his brethren, and all his father's household, when they would otherwise have perished from want, and thus he did notwithstanding the outrageous ill-usage he had experienced at the hands of some of them. What a pleasant thing it is to have a brother to go to in time of need—a rich brother, a powerful brother, a kind brother. There are many who, on account of their own poverty and want of influence, are unable to do what they would wish for their relatives; there are others who are too selfish to extend a helping to their nearest kindred; but Joseph was rich, powerful and kind; and that is surely the sort of brother that is "born for adversity." Solomon also says that "there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother," and so there is—One who richer and stronger and kinder than Joseph was;—One who loves the sinful children of men with a warmer love than that of Joseph for his erring brethren; One who is much more ready than Joseph was to reveal himself, in all His loving-kindness, to His Father's perishing children when they come to Him for bread; One who has in these later ages been revealed as the promised Seed—looked forward to by Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph—in whom "all nations of the earth," are being "blessed."

NOTES ON THE SYLLABUS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN S. S. TEACHER'S COURSE OF STUDY—1880.

LESSON VIII.

The Tabernacle Reared and the Service Appointed.

I. MOSES, AARON, NADAB, ABIHU AND THE SEVENTY ELDERS CALLED UP TO THE MOUNT, IN WHOSE PRESENCE MOSES DREW NEAR TO GOD.

(Exod. xxiv. 12.)

1. *A series of impressive and instructive acts.*—"The ten words" from Exodus xx. 1, to verse 23. These are the unchangeable foundations of the covenant.—Matt. v. 17. The book of the covenant is built on this law.—Exod. xxi. xxiii.

The Details of the Covenant.

- (a) Regulations on the construction of altars. Exod. xx. 24-26.
- (b) The rights of persons and property. " xxi. 22; xxiii. 8.
- (c) The Sabbath and the Sabbath year, the seventh day being the basis of the Calendar. " xxii. 9-13.
- (d) The celebration of the three annual feasts. " xxiii. 14-19.
- (e) The ratification of the covenant. " xxiv. 3-8.

Moses, on God's part, is mediator. The elders are representatives of the congregation. The sacrifice and the blood represent God's provided atonement for the people.—Heb. ix. 19-23. Aaron and his sons are the appointed priesthood.

2. *The sacrificial feast on the mount.*—Exod. xxiv. 11. Participating in the peace offering. Reconciliation and fellowship as seen in the passover. This Old Testament covenant illustrates the New, and the New declares what part of the Old is perpetually binding. In the one "the people stood afar off," in the other "we draw nigh to God and He draws nigh to us." The blessed vision and the gracious preservation of the elders.—Exod. xxiv. 11. Moses enters the cloud, which is followed by forty days mystery. Joshua waiting for Moses, and prepared to be his successor.

3. *Egyptian forms of thought and life appear in the ascendant.*—The crime of idolatry punishable with death. Moses is assumed to be lost, and the people rush into idolatry.—Exod. xxxi. 1. They demand a visible representation of Jehovah. Aaron wickedly yields to the clamour by moulding an engraving an image like the sacred ox Maevius, worshipped at Heliopolis; or the sacred bull Apis, worshipped at Memphis, both being representations of the Egyptian deity Osiris.—Exod. xxxii. 8; Psal. cvi. 19-20. Many of them had been idolaters in Egypt.—Josh. xxiv. 14. The great abomination of an idolatrous feast.—Ex. xxxii. 5, 6, 25.

4. *The associated events.*—The Lord is sore displeased.—Exod. xxxii. 10. Moses is deeply affected.—Exod. xxxii. 19. Moses' agonizing intercession.—Exod. xxxii. 11-14. The symbolic act of breaking the tables of the law as Israel had just broken the covenant. The destruction of the idolatrous image, and the people made to drink of it as the suspected woman of the curse water.—Num. v. 24. The summons to loyalty, and retribution.—Exod. xxxii. 26-28. The tribe of Levi responds.

II. THE DIVINE MODE OF REVEALING TO MOSES.

1. In the patriarchal period the Lord revealed Himself by voice and words.—Gen. vi. 13. Appearance as a man.—Gen. xviii. 1-2. Vision and dream.—Gen. xxvii. 12-16.

2. The advanced and symbolic method to Moses.—Exod. iii. 2-6. The flame encompassing the bush.—Lam. iii. 22. The new name of assurance, "I am that I am."

3. The most direct form of revelation in the giving of the law.—Exod. xix. 18-19. Appeared in the fire. "Spake these words." Gave them a permanent and written form.—Exod. xxiv. 12.

(a) God gave the Levitical law, embracing the tabernacle and its appointments.—Heb. viii. 5. A model was presented.—Exod. xxv. 40; xxvi. 30. Details were also given to Moses as to carefulness in following the plan and carrying it out.—Exod. xxv. 9, Num. viii. 4. The repeated caution given in the details enforce upon us the conclusion that God was setting up among men a means of religious instruction, and a channel of obedience, bearing on the education and salvation of the people; also foreshadowing Christ, His work, and His Church in the future.—Heb. ix. 8-9.

(b) The method of answering Moses' prayer.—Exod. xxxiii. 17. Proclaiming, in a richer and sweeter manner, God's character, offices, and sovereignty.

(c) The change of method in Divine communications. A series of evils had ensued. These led to a change in place and manner of God's talking with Moses. Moses' tent was removed from the midst of the camp.—Exod. xxxiii. 7. Moses is consulted only at this place. The cloudy pillar at the door, and God spake face to face.—Exod. xxxiii. 11. Joshua continues to abide with Moses as his minister.

III. THE SACRED PLACES.

The sin of idolatry being forgiven and the promise of Divine presence being assured, with great enthusiasm Israel prepares for the construction and erection of the tabernacle, Moses directing all according to the model shewn him in the mount. Reared on the first day of the first month of the second year. "Thou shalt set up the tabernacle of the tent of the congregation."

The Names Given to the Tabernacle.

- 1. The sanctuary. Exod. xxv. 8.
- 2. The dwelling place.
- 3. The tent of meeting. Exod. xxv. 22.
- 4. The tent of witness. Num. xvii. 7-8.

IV. SACRED PERSONS AND THEIR INVESTITURE.

(1) At a very early time in the transactions of Sinai, Aaron and his sons are set apart.—Ex. xxviii. 1-3; Heb. v. 4.
(2) The Levites are consecrated as a reward of fidelity.—Deut. xxi. 8-10.

V. THE DAILY SERVICE.

- The burnt offering. Exod. xxix. 38-42.
- The meat offering. " " 40-41.
- The morning and evening incense. " xxx. 7-8.

JOHN McEWEN.