

For the Sabbath School.

International S. S. Lesson.

LESSON XI.—JUNE 10.—EX. XIV., 19-29.

(Passage of the Red Sea.)

GOLDEN TEXT.—"By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land."—Heb. xi : 29.

EXPLANATORY—THE ISRAELITES URGED TO GO.—In our last lesson the Israelites were busily preparing for their departure. The time had been set. The hour had come. While they were still engaged in celebrating their first Passover feast, at midnight the Lord smote all the first-born of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh, that sat upon the throne to the first-born of the captive that was in the dungeon (Ex. xii : 29). The last and greatest stroke had fallen. The whole land of Egypt was now in intense excitement. There was a great cry, for there was not a house where there was not one dead. There was no longer a refusal of Moses' request. On the contrary, Pharaoh could not wait till morning before he sent to Moses, and bade him be gone with all the people.

SOME PAYMENT FOR THEIR LONG SERVICE.—The translation of two words in this account, "borrowed" and "lent" (Ex. xi : 2 ; xii : 35, 36), has been peculiarly unfortunate, because it gives an entirely false impression, and charges a dishonest command on the part of God, and a dishonest transaction on the part of the Israelites, at the very time of their most exalted spiritual services. The Israelites did not "borrow" but, "asked for" (as in R.V.), jewels of silver and jewels of gold, and garments. And the Egyptians did not *lend* but *gave*, "let them have" them.

The Egyptians answered these requests abundantly. Thus the Israelites had some reward for their long service, and we understand how they had so much silver and gold in the wilderness.

THE RENDEZVOUS.—The first journey of the Israelites was from Rameses to Succoth (xii : 37). These are not towns but districts. Rameses was "the land of Rameses," which is spoken of as identical with Goshen, or at least with the western portion of it. From all portions of this land the people assembled at Succoth, as their place of rendezvous. Succoth ("a place of tents," or booths) was a district (not a town) lying at the eastern end of the Wady Tumilat, along the line of the lakes. It is difficult to conceive the migration of a whole nation under such circumstances. In illustration of the event, a sudden retreat is recorded of a whole nomadic people—400,000 Tartars—under cover of a single night, from the confines of Russia into their native deserts as late as the close of the last century.

THE TIME REQUIRED.—There is no reason to suppose that all the Israelites arrived at the place of rendezvous in one day. Bishop Colenso says they did, and makes that a difficulty in the way of believing the Bible. But the Bible does not say so. In no instance is it said in the Bible that a day's journey took the Israelites from one station to another, except in the crossing of the Red Sea. They reached the eighth station a month after their departure (Ex. 16 : 1), which would give four days to each station.

THEIR NUMBERS.—They were 600,000 men, besides children, and a mixed multitude (12 : 37). This would naturally imply about 2,000,000 in all. But Prof. Willis J. Beecher, of Auburn Theological Seminary in a lecture not long ago suggested that the enumeration may have been technical just as we count an army. A regiment consists of 1,000 men, while often in various ways not more than 400 or 500 are present, and yet we call it a regiment. 600,000 may be equivalent to 600 regiments, "the thousands" containing but a few hundreds, so that there may not have been more than 300,000 men or a million in all. The same reckoning is used in numbering the houses of Philadelphia and other cities.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.—In the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, and their journey to the promised land, we have a *Parable of our Redemption*. The bond-

age of Egypt is the bondage of sin. Then comes the call of God, a revelation of God ; the bitterness of sin and a desire to escape. The crossing of the Red Sea is conversion ; then follow many trials, a long discipline, bread from heaven, water of life, the giving of the law, the guidance of the Spirit, the crossing of the Jordan into the land of Promise and Hope.

God often leads His people in strange ways, but they are always the best ways.

"God's people find a path of safety cleft for them through the seas of trouble and danger."

The Word and the providences of God have a twofold aspect : a black and dark side toward sin and sinners ; a bright and pleasant side toward those that are Israelites indeed.

SUGGESTIONS TO TEACHERS.—This lesson is of great importance, (1) as one of the most marvellous works of God for His people in all their history ; (2) as an event about which a great deal of discussion has arisen, and many attempts to connect the Bible with the discoveries on the Egyptian monuments ; and (3) as an illustration of a great crisis and event in individual lives.

Christian Endeavor.

Daily Readings.

First Day—By conscience—Job xv : 20-35.

Second Day—By misfortune—Deut. xxviii : 15-25.

Third Day—By loss of joy—Matt. xxii : 1-14.

Fourth Day—By loss of heaven—John v : 24-29.

Fifth Day—Punishment in sorrow—2 Pet. iii : 1-12.

Sixth Day—Punishment in justice—Hos. xiv : 1-9.

Seventh Day—WHY AND HOW DOES GOD PUNISH SIN?—Ps. i : 1-6 ; Rom. v : 12-21.

PRAYER MEETING TOPIC, June 10.—"Why and how does God punish sin?" Ps. i : 1-6 ; Rom. v : 12-21. It is a solemn topic we have to consider this week, but a most important one. The tendency of the day is to ignore the teachings in God's Word concerning sin and its punishment, because they are distasteful to the human heart ; but these are stern, incontrovertible facts to which it is well that we give heed. Sin exists and God punishes the sinner ; he must needs do so because sin is a transgression of His perfect law, and involves rebellion against His supreme authority. The inherent sense of justice in man demands that sin should be punished, and bears testimony to the righteousness of God in doing so. But the justice of God is tempered with marvellous mercy, and He not only offers man a free pardon, but in this life gives him ceaseless opportunity of accepting it. None can accuse God of harshness in punishing the sinner, for nothing less than the rejection of Christ ever sent a soul to Hell ; and who will say that the man who deliberately turns his back on infinite love does not deserve eternal punishment?

BRIEFLY PUT.—Sin is punished by death, Gen. ii : 17 ; Rom. vi : 23. The withdrawal of God's Spirit, Gen. vi : 3. Being blotted out of God's book, Ex. xxxii : 33 ; Rev. xxii : 19. Many sorrows, Ps. xxxii : 10. Loss of peace, Isa. lvii : 21. Blackness of darkness forever, Jude xiii.

Presbyterianism at the Junior Rally.

Presbyterian Endeavorers are to be congratulated on their showing at the recent Junior Rally. College St. Presbyterian won the banner for the largest society having all its members present, and the Church of the Covenant, also Presbyterian, a society only formed last December in one of the city's smallest churches that has already almost doubled its original membership, came second. Cooke's church reported the largest junior society in the Union having one hundred members. We think next time it would be well to hold the meeting in the afternoon instead of the evening.

Last week in the article "How to Reach the Young Men," we were made to speak of Akron, Ont., instead of Akron, Ohio.