

THE LACE-DEALER OF HESSE.

The lace-dealer, Jacob Hausen, from Hesse, was much blessed by God in his business. Once, however, as he was returning home from one of his trading journeys, having sold all his goods and carrying a large sum of money with him, his bundle and all his money were stolen from him. Sorrowfully he entered Amsterdam; he did not like to go to his old lodging, to the house of the rich merchant who was his chief creditor, because most of the lace for his last journey had been purchased from his warehouse.

He thought he would wait quietly for a few days. If the merchant of his own accord offered him goods without being asked, he felt it would be God's will that he should continue his business as formerly; if not, he would apply for the situation of attendant to the sick on board a Dutch vessel, and thus earn an honest livelihood in the good service of alleviating his neighbors' sufferings.

A few days after he met the merchant, who asked him why he had not come as formerly to select new goods. Jacob told him of his poverty, how he had lost his hardly-earned money, so that he was not in a position to pay his debts, much less to buy new goods.

"If that is all," said the merchant, "I can trust to your honesty; you may cheer up and come and choose your goods as you used to do, and take as many as you like."

Jacob now made his selection. Other merchants too, who had heard of the misfortune of the honest man, made him similar offers, and almost pressed upon him their best and choicest goods.

By a friend's advice he next went to the fair at Cassel. On the journey the thought fell as a heavy burden on his heart: "Formerly I have always put higher prices on my goods than I meant to take; I have waited for people to bargain, but many have not bargained, and have paid the price I demanded at first. Was this right to ask too high a price, and take the money? A Christian should neither lie nor deceive; this was doing both. O God, in Thy holy presence I promise it shall not so happen again; give me strength faithfully to keep to my good resolutions."

On coming to Cassel, lodging and boarding were very dear, but the demand for such goods as he brought he heard was very great. He hired a stall. On the first day many people came to inspect his goods, asked the prices, and then wished to bargain. But when he told them that what he asked was the lowest price for which he could sell his lace, no one would have anything to do with such a strange sort of man; they turned their backs on him, and that day he did not sell a single yard.

At his inn in the evening, he could not eat for sorrow. "This," thought he, "is the world's recompense for Christian fidelity and Christian honesty—mockery and want—even starvation. It was not so before, when you acted in the old way; God does not wish us to starve, but to eat and live as his other creatures; perhaps I am wrong after all."

"Wrong?" said a better voice within him; "no, that way can't be wrong which accords with God's word and command. Take courage, my heart. God before whose countenance you desire to walk—God, who put the intention to do right into your heart, can and will help you." The poor lace-dealer slept peacefully and awoke with good courage. But on the two following days matters were just as bad.

In the evening, when the other dealers, who lodged at the inn, were joyful by eating and drinking, and reckoning up the money they had earned, poor Hausen had not made a penny; he ate his dry crust in solitude with many a sigh.

Still there was hope in a purchaser—a lady who generally did not bargain, and who would appreciate Jacob's beautiful goods and their cheapness. As yet, she had not come to the fair. At last, on the fourth day, the landgravine really appeared, and among all the lace stalls she came first to Jacob's. His heart beat with joy and expectation when the landgravine chose out many different pieces of lace and put them on one side. She asked the price of the whole, and then wanted to reduce it.

Jacob explained sorrowfully that he had already asked the lowest price, and could not take off a penny. The landgravine, to whom this conduct was quite new, went

away in silence without taking a single piece. At this moment, when his distress was the greatest, God's power, and grace was the strongest in his soul.

"Well," thought he, "I give myself up entirely to Thy will, Thou faithful God. I know of no help for it now, it is all over with my trade. Care for me in Thy own good way." Then his heart was calm and cheerful as it had not been in the preceding days. He knew that God would provide for him and help him.

The landgravine meanwhile had been round to the other lace-vendors. The goods which she found there were much worse, the prices shamefully high as compared with those of Jacob. She remarked this to her ladies, and determined to return to the first stall. Here, then, she bought more than she had at first intended, and openly praised before all her ladies the conduct of this honest man.

All the ladies of the court and of the town then wished to buy of Jacob. That evening he had not a yard left. All was sold. "If," he said, "in the first three evenings of the fair I could not eat for sorrow and anxiety, now I could not for joy. My soul was full of praise and thanksgiving to God."—*Friendly Greetings.*

MISSION BAND RECIPES.

BY RACHEL LOWRIE.

-I suppose all Mission Band leaders get a great deal of help from the missionary catechisms; or, "Questions and Answers for Mission Circles and Bands." How many of you know that there is a "Game of Missions," published by a Band in Ithaca, New York? It is rather advanced for the average child, requiring an amount of general information which might stagger the secretary of the Board of Foreign Missions himself; yet do not be alarmed when I say that only among members of the Board of Foreign Missions could this game be played in a way to reflect credit on the cause.

Lest this should seem trifling, let us pass to something which means solid work. Knowing the charm that young people find in getting up a newspaper of their own, some leaders have started such a paper in their bands. The work of editing even a little manuscript paper is such drudgery that it would be best to have two committees, preparing the paper for alternate months. Of course, the labor of this, as of most other projects, will fall largely on the leaders; but the committee must be taught to take responsibility, and the band at large must co-operate. Envelopes addressed to the editor can be given out, and each member made responsible for at least one item. There will be various departments, such as News from the Mission Field of the Month, Political News from the Mission Field of the Month, Church News, Band News, Announcements, etc. Extracts can be read at your meeting, and the papers can be circulated during the month till all have read them and hailed with delight their own items. The bound copy of the papers at the end of the year will make a valuable addition to your library.

Are you too poor to own a library? Then try the scrap-book plan. Buy a scrap-book each month (it will cost you something the first year), and appoint a boy or girl to take charge of it. Then set every member on the *qui vive* to collect pictures and newspaper clippings relating to the country of the month. In February, let China be uppermost in your minds, and there is no fear but that you will be able to collect some items of interest for your book. Paste into the scrap-book a missionary map of the country by way of frontispiece; and if you paint, color it, and paint the flag of China above it. Keep the book from becoming either a collection of prosy clippings and aimless pictures, or a journal of the miscellaneous doings of the Band. If you hold an entertainment, put in a ticket or a programme as a memento, but see that the object of the book is to collect information. As the scrap-book on China comes around every twelve months for attention, it will grow in value; and there is no reason why future generations of children should not dote on it as a book of reference.

You see that the ideal scrap-book library would be the *Encyclopædia Britannica* of this department. In our China scrap-book is pasted a comic little doll, holding a pro-

fuse pig-tail under his arm. He has proved a blessing to the treasury, and his history is written under him. Once, in hunting through a case of curiosities, I came across a genuine Chinese paper-doll. I borrowed it, thinking it might come into use at the *Cha tsiet* (Chinese tea-feast) which was to be given by a neighboring band. The paper-doll, real pig-tail and all, was easily copied; and our band has had so many orders for them that the Chinese mantu-maker is as hardly used as an American dressmaker.—*Sunday-School Times.*

BAD BOOKS.

Never, under any circumstance, read a bad book; and never spend a serious hour in reading a second rate book. No words can overstate the mischief of bad reading. A bad book will often haunt a man his whole life long. It is often remembered, when much that is better is forgotten; it intrudes itself at the most solemn moments and contaminates the best feeling and emotions. Reading trashy, second-rate books is a grievous waste of time also. In the first place, there are a great many more first rate books than ever you can master; and in the second place, you cannot read an inferior book without giving up an opportunity of reading a first-rate book. Books, remember, are friends; books affect character.

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From International Question Book.)

LESSON VI.—AUGUST 11.

SAMUEL'S FAREWELL ADDRESS.—I Sam. 12: 1-15.

COMMIT VERSES 14, 15.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart; for consider how great things he hath done for you.—I Sam 12: 24.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Obedience to God the way to success.

DAILY READINGS.

M. 1 Sam. 12: 1-15.
T. 1 Sam. 12: 16-25
W. Josh. 24: 1-16.
Th. Josh. 24: 16-23.
F. Deut. 10: 12-22.
Sa. 1 Kings 18: 20-40.
Su. Heb. 3: 1-19.

INTRODUCTION.

Saul had been chosen king, but not a few of the people refused to own his authority. But Saul's great victory over the Ammonites under King Nahash (11: 1-11) established his position. On their return from the pursuit of the Ammonites down the Jordan, the army crossed the fords of the Jordan where their fathers had first crossed into Canaan, and came to Gilgal. Here was held a great assembly, and Saul was owned by all to be their king. The era of the Judges, nearly 400 years long, was now ended. The kingdom had begun.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

1. *And Samuel said:* he here publicly laid down his authority, just as Washington, in a farewell address to his army, gave back his authority as commander-in-chief. *My sons:* see 8: 1-3. 3. *Any bride to blind my eyes:* a gift for the sake of buying the favor of a judge, to persuade him not to see crime in the giver. 6. *It is the Lord:* connect with v. 5. "He is witness, even the Lord," etc. 7. *Stand still:* listen. 9. *Sisera:* the general of the Canaanites under King Jabin, at Hazor, near Lake Merom (Judg. 4: 1-3). *Philistines:* those oppressed Israel many times (Judg. 3: 31; 10: 7; 13: 1; I Sam. 13: 19-22). *Moab:* under Eglon (Judg. 3: 12-30). 10. *Baalim:* see Lesson III. 11. *Jerubbaal:* Gideon (Judg. viii.). *Bedan:* not named in the history, but probably *Barak:* (Judg. 4: 6, etc.). *Jephthah:* Judg. 11. *Samuel:* 1 Sam. 7: 12-15. *Nahash:* see 1 Sam. 11: 1-11. 14. *Then:* read it and. The conclusion is not stated, but was very clear.

SUBJECT: THE CONDITIONS OF SUCCESS.

QUESTIONS.

I. A SUCCESSFUL LIFE (vs. 1-5).—Where did the people assemble on their return from the victory over the Ammonites? (11: 14, 15.) For what purpose? How long had Samuel been before the people? (v. 2.) What kind of a life had he lived? Who witnessed to his words?

What can you tell about the life and history of Samuel? Name his good qualities. What do you find in him worthy of imitation? What lessons can you learn from his life? What influence does such a life have upon the community?

II. THE CONDITIONS OF SUCCESS TAUGHT BY HISTORY (vs. 6-11).—What parts of their past history did Samuel recall to their minds? Tell the story of Sisera. (Judg. 4: 1-24.) Of the Philistines. (Judg. 3: 12-30.) Why were the people allowed to suffer so much oppression? What did God do for them when they repented? What judges were raised up for their help? Does God love to punish those who disobey him? (Ezek. 18: 30-32.) Why does he do it?

III. THE TWO WAYS (vs. 12-15).—Would the change in government make any difference as to the way of success? What five things must the people do if they would prosper? (v. 14.) What truth like this had Moses taught them? (Deut. 28: 1.) What had Joshua taught? (Josh. 24: 14-24.) Is this as true of our own time and nation? Is it as true of us individually? What is a successful life? What becomes of those who disobey God? What can we do to help our nation to prosperity and success? In which of the two ways here described are we walking?

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

Lessons from the life of Samuel: (1) patriotism; (2) unselfishness; (3) a noble character and useful life makes success; (4) the best life is one wholly given to God from childhood.

LESSON VII.—AUGUST 18.

SAUL REJECTED BY THE LORD.—I Sam. 15: 10-23.

COMMIT VERSES 22, 23.

GOLDEN TEXT.

Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king.—I Sam. 15: 23.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

God proves and tests us whether we will obey him or no.

DAILY READINGS.

M. 1 Sam. 13: 1-23.
T. 1 Sam. 14: 1-23.
W. 1 Sam. 14: 24-52.
Th. 1 Sam. 15: 1-23.
F. 1 Sam. 15: 24-35.
Sa. Ps. 51: 1-19.
Su. Ps. 1: 1-6.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

Saul had been sent to destroy the Amalekites, a wild heathen nation south of Palestine, who were injuring God's people. Nothing could make them good. Therefore they were destroyed. 11. *It repenteth me.* That is, God changed his actions toward Saul, because Saul had changed. God was not sorry for what he had done; but he acted as a man would who repented. 12. *Carmel:* not the mountain, but a town seven miles south of Hebron. *Set him up a place:* "a hand," a monument. 15. *And Saul said, They have,* etc.: Saul laid the blame on the people. It seemed a pity to destroy so much wealth. *To sacrifice:* one motive, but they had the sacrifices to eat. Doubtless they wanted the cattle. 22. *Hath the Lord as great delight,* etc.: no gifts or sacrifices could take the place of obedience. The object of the sacrifices was to help the people to obey. *Fat of Rams:* the richest part of the sacrifices. 23. *As the sin of witchcraft:* seeking to find out the future by means of bad spirits. It was a rejection of Jehovah. *Idolatry:* teraphim, household idols. *He hath rejected thee from being king.* He continued king in form for a time, but he became less and less a real king. The kingdom did not remain in his family. Saul developed many bad traits, and died by suicide. SUBJECT: TRIALS AND TESTS IN OBEDIENCE.

QUESTIONS.

I. SAUL'S FIRST TRIAL AND FAILURE (13: 2-15).—What great army was arrayed against the Israelites? (vs. 4, 5.) Where were they, and where was Saul and his army? (Note: Michmash was about three miles north of Gibeah.) How had they treated Israel? (13: 19-22.) How did the Israelites feel? How long was Saul commanded to wait for Samuel? (vs. 8, 13.) What did he then do? What was his punishment for disobedience?

II. SAUL'S SECOND TRIAL AND FAILURE (15: 1-9, 15, 20, 21).—What tribe was Saul commanded to destroy? Why? (Deut. 25: 17-19; Rom. 1: 28-32.) How large an army did Saul assemble? What was his success in the battle? How far did he obey God? In what did he disobey? What great temptation would there be to spare the best of the cattle? Why did God command him to destroy them? (Ans. Probably because God did not want his people to be a warlike people, attacking their neighbors; and the acquisition of wealth from the plunder would tempt them to go on such plundering expeditions.) What are some of the great enemies we are commanded to utterly destroy (as intemperance, etc.)? What course in reference to these would be like Saul's?

III. SAUL'S EXCUSES (vs. 10-21).—How did Samuel learn of Saul's disobedience? (v. 11.) How did he feel about it? What did he do? Is this the true course for us? Where did Samuel find Saul? How did Saul greet him? Was he unconscious of his sin? How was his disobedience revealed? (v. 14.) On whom did Saul lay the blame? Was this mean? Who had acted in the same way before? (Gen. 3: 12.) What reason did Saul give for his disobedience? (v. 15.) Was this the real reason or only an excuse? Is there any good excuse for disobeying God? How are we tested as to whether we will obey? Is this the meaning of much of our lives? (Deut. 8: 2.) Are we being educated by being tested and proved?

IV. THE FRUITS OF DISOBEDIENCE (vs. 22, 25).—What did Samuel say about disobedience? Can any forms or sacrifices take the place of obedience? Why not? To what did Samuel compare disobedience? What was the penalty inflicted on Saul? (vs. 22-23.) Was it just? Was he fitted to be the king of God's people? Did Saul after this grow worse and worse? Did he repent? (vs. 21-30.) Was it too late?

V. NEW TESTAMENT LIGHT.—What kingdom has God prepared for us? (Luke 6: 20.) Will it be forfeited by disobedience? (Matt. 21: 43; I Cor. 6: 9-10.) What parable teaches us about vain excuses? (Luke 14: 16-24.) An example of repentance coming too late. (Heb. 12: 16-17.)

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

I. God has prepared a kingdom for us.
II. He proves and tests us whether we are fitted to use and enjoy it.
III. The great question of life is whether we will obey God or not.

LESSON CALENDAR.

(Third Quarter, 1889.)

- July 7.—Samuel called of God.—I Sam 3: 1-11.
- July 14.—The Sorrowful death of Eli.—I Sam. 4: 1-18.
- July 21.—Samuel the Reformer.—I Sam. 7: 1-12.
- July 28.—Israel asking for a king.—I Sam. 8: 4-20.
- Aug. 4.—Saul Chosen of the Lord.—I Sam. 9: 15-27.
- Aug. 11.—Samuel's Farewell Address.—I Sam. 12: 1-15.
- Aug. 18.—Saul Rejected by the Lord.—I Sam. 15: 10-23.
- Aug. 25.—The Anointing of David.—I Sam. 16: 1-13.