

LESSON IV—October 25th, 1896.

The Proverbs of Solomon. PROV. I : I-19.

(Commit to memory verses 7-10).

GOLDEN TEXT: "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not." Prov. I: 10.

PROVE THAT—We should listen to our parents. Prov. I: 8.

SHORTER CATECHISM. Questions 49, 50, 51, 52.

LESSON HYMNS. *Children's Hymnal*—Nos. 15, 117, 83, 116.

DAILY PORTIONS. *Monday.* The proverbs of Solomon. Prov. I: I-19. *Tuesday.* The way of understanding. Prov. 2: I-9. *Wednesday.* Better than rubies. Prov. 8: I-11. *Thursday.* Wisdom and folly. Prov. 10: I-14. *Friday.* Looking to the end. Prov. 14: I-12. *Saturday.* Rejecting reproof. Prov. 15: I-12. *Sabbath.* Good and evil. Prov. 15: 20-33. (*The I. B. R. A. Selections.*)

HELPS IN STUDYING.

INTRODUCTORY. The collection of proverbs that passes under the name of Solomon is the work of many authors at different periods. To those originated by the wise king, or edited under his direction, others have been added at later periods the whole retaining the title which they originally bore.

LESSON PLAN. I. Wise Words. vs. I-9. II. Warning Words. vs. 10-19.

Solomon compiled his proverbs in order to enable his readers to become wise in the affairs of life. If books were all written for this purpose, and if readers sought only profit from their perusal, how much better it would be for everybody. Many books teach but little wisdom. Few of the popular story-papers and novels of the day make anyone more pure-minded and charitable. The great end of all reading should be to cultivate the mind and heart.¹ We learn from the more experienced how we ought to think and feel and so grow up into well-informed, right-principled men and women. We ought never to think that our education is finished, and that we know enough. Those who are not trying to learn more are losing what they have acquired.² We soon forget the facts and precepts that we do not put to practical use. The first lesson we have to learn, if we would live aright, is how to love and reverence God.³ There is no other duty so important as this, and no one can instruct us so wisely as He. The second lesson to be mastered is obedience to parents and attention to their loving counsels.⁴ The first step in an evil course of life is disregard of the pious instruction received at home. Those who heed well the advice of father and mother will grow up to be admired for their virtue and discretion.⁵

The secret of moral strength in youth lies in the power to say "No" when tempted to do wrong.⁶ Never hesitate, or argue, when invited to do what you know is evil. If you venture to discuss the question you may be deceived by false reasoning and yield to the tempter, but if you resolutely tear yourself away from him, you put yourself out of harm's way. He may say "nobody will ever know," but you may be sure God knows, and you will know. Your own conscience will upbraid you, and in the end you will be discovered. He may say "See how much we will gain by it," riches, pleasure, honor, etc., but Paul counted all things but loss that did not help him to win Christ. How can anything be a real gain that offends Jesus? He may say, "We will all share alike," but you will share the guilt as well as the profit;—it will be little comfort when called to endure the consequences of your own sin to know that others are suffering too. Never listen to any argument or persuasion whatever, but put your fingers in your ears and run away. Those who wrong others are doing themselves most harm. Those who sin against God sin against their own happiness. The dishonest man cheats himself out of heaven. The murderer slays his own soul.⁷

¹ Heb. 5: 14. ² ch. 9: 9; Mark 4: 25. ³ Ps. 111: 10; Job 28: 28; Prov. 9: 10; Ecc. 12: 13. ⁴ Eph. 6: 1-3; Col. 3: 20; Prov. 30: 17. ⁵ Prov. 23: 15, 16, 24, 25; Ps. 112: 2; Isa. 44: 3-5. ⁶ Ps. 1: 1; Eph. 5: 11; Ps. 119: 101. ⁷ ch. 15: 27; 1 Tim. 6: 10.

LESSONS. 1. It is wise to heed those who are older and have more experience than ourselves. 2. Those who try to act rightly every time will grow wiser and wiser. 3. It is very foolish as well as very wicked to disregard the advice of parents. 4. Do not be afraid to say "No" when tempted to do wrong. 5. It never pays to break God's commandments.