

over-drawn ; for nothing is said of a harem, nor of the bloody cruelties that disgrace despotic rule. A good reign may bring content ; but what of bad reigns (v. 18) ?

Apply the Lesson in a practical talk on patriotism. Even in a satisfactory reign, like that of Victoria, or King Edward, ideal conditions are not necessarily reached in the mere elaboration of a constitutional form of government, however good. It may not be hard to show that a limited monarchy, like ours, has fewer evils than a democracy ; but that in itself counts for little, if Christ's sovereignty be repudiated, Col. 1 : 12, 13 ; 1 Tim. 1 : 17. National prestige is really the resultant of individual character.

No ideal of greatness that is entirely built on a desire to be "like the rest of the world" (v. 20), can exalt a nation. To be unlike the world in a full, sincere, constant recognition of the divine government, is the true ideal, Titus 2 : 13, 14. We Canadians cannot have it too much before us in our present era of national expansion.

### For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

By Rev. R. Douglas Fraser, D.D.

The link with the previous Lesson will prove an interesting one. That Lesson came six months ago, at the end of 1907 : the boy Samuel's absolute readiness to do any duty, hard or easy, which God laid upon him, grown up to be the upright judge, who feared God, and was respected by all men.

A long lifetime now, Samuel had been prophet (ch. 3 : 19-21) and judge. How had he "held out" ? A brief look ahead will answer the question, ch. 12 : 2-4,—a blameless record. Samuel had made good.

But he had his sorrows. Question these out : (1) In vs. 1-3 of the Lesson chapter,—the saddest of all heart-breaks, sons that "go wrong". (2) In vs. 4-6. Make clear why Samuel was displeased : not because the people did not wish his sons as their rulers, but because they wanted a king, instead of judges. Again, make the point quite clear,—the Lord was their ruler. The judges were "raised up" (chosen) by the Lord, as they were needed. By and by He was to give them a king, and a king of the right sort, Deut. 17 : 14-17. The time had

not come. But the people were restless : they wanted their own way, not God's way. Point out, and illustrate, by instances, the peril of, say, a child determined to have his own way, in the face of all that older and wiser people may say.

How Samuel meets the case : the last clause of v. 6. Have the scholars read the apostle James' prescription in a like instance, Jas. 1 : 5.

What the Lord says, vs. 7-9. Talk this over with the class. The gist of it is, God will force no one. If we *will* have our own way, He will let us have it. But the blame is ours, not His : we must take the consequences of our own acts. So merciful, however, is God, that He will not let even the most determined go astray without warning—see v. 9. Have the scholars tell how prophet and apostle and the blessed Son of God Himself warned and pleaded with men to turn from their own evil ways and to take God's way.

The manner of the king, vs. 10-17. The Exposition, and Light from the East, and the QUARTERLIES and LEAFLETS give abundant detail of explanation. The picture is full of color : see that this is brought out, a king that will want everything for himself, and take what he wants,—the young men forced to be his body servants (v. 11) ; the men drafted into the army, and into the king's harvest fields and workshops (v. 12) ; the young women set at work in the royal kitchen (v. 13) ; property snatched from the rightful owners and given to the king's favorites (vs. 14-17). TYRANT is writ large over this description of the king.

What will befall the people, v. 18 ? Compare Prov. 1 : 24-31 ; Luke 19 : 27.

A sad word, "Nevertheless", v. 19. "Nay, but we *will*": fully determined they are, on their own way, even though this be to defy God. A tremendous risk to run. And for what ? Have the scholars name the reasons in v. 21 : to be like other nations, and to have a king who can fight ; rather than to be God's people and have God fight for them. Show the folly of it.

The dismal ending. They wanted their way, and got it. By way of contrast, have the class read Prov. 1 : 33 ; 3 : 5, 6.