

Our Mission Union,

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determined by God's grace to be faithful," though you may be in a humble position. You are familiar with the name of that truly great man, recently deceased, the Earl of Shaftesbury. What do you suppose was the instrument used in starting him in the Christian life. Listen to his own words: "I trace the earliest implanting of the principles which have given stamp to my life to a SERVANT who first taught me, in my earliest years to think of God and his truth. She entered into rest when I was about seven years old, but the recollection of what she said and did and taught, even to a prayer that I now constantly use, is as vivid as in the days that I heard her. The impression was, and is still, very deep that she made upon me; and I must trace under God, very much, perhaps all, of the duties of my later life to her precepts and her prayers. I may safely say that I have ever cherished her memory with the deepest gratitude and affection. She was a special providence to me." Dear reader, don't despise the position in which God may have placed you, but use that position to His glory.

Notes on the International S. S. Lessons.

* [Rev. Mr. McEwen's notes for this week's issue having failed to reach us through some error on the part of the Postal authorities, we are compelled at the last moment to furnish the following notes.—EDITOR.]

[Nov. 22.] **Hezekiah's Good Reign.** (2 Kings) xviii. 1-12

In our last lesson we had faithful preaching and its result Jonah's message was of law. The echoes of grace were very faint. Yet it was a powerful sermon. It stirred the city. It convinced of sin; it led to repentance; it resulted in conversion. Our lesson of to-day is a fit continuation of the subject of conversion, and the subsequent walk of the truly converted one. The sinner, aroused and led to accept of God's conditions, will at once, like Hezekiah, proceed to cast out every idol, all that may be hurtful to self and hateful to God, even though some of those idols may be objects round which there cluster many associations of past benefits. He will not only cast out idols, but he will break from all unholy and forbidden alliances, even at the probable risk of the enmity of powerful personages. Having done so, he will be prepared to enter on the aggressive side of Christianity, and will attack the Philistines. Such warfare conducted in the name of the Lord, with strong trust in the Lord, and the worker cleaving to the Lord, will ever result in victory over the enemy, and the life of the worker will be one of prosperity. The work done by Jonah was that of awakening sinners. That of Hezekiah was the revival of God's people. He was a young king raised to the throne when spiritual death was universal. His father had shut up the doors of the house of the Lord, 2 Chron. xxviii. 24, but Hezekiah commenced his work at ONCE—he lost no time. In the first

year of his reign he opened the doors of the house of the Lord. 2 Chron. xxix. 3. If a work is good it should be entered upon at once. "He did," not he *thought* of doing right. The way to hell is paved with good intentions. The way to Heaven is paved with good actions. "In the sight of the Lord." His right doing was up to the highest standard of right. "He trusted." Trust is the "Assured resting of the mind on the integrity, veracity, justice, friendship, or other sound principle of another person." (Webster.) So Hezekiah had the assured resting upon the Lord, and of course was safely carried through. "He clave." The more I love, or the more I feel the need of a person, the closer will I cling to him; and when others would separate us, I cleave to him. So Hezekiah had much to oppose, much to draw him from God, but "he clave, and departed not." "The Lord was with him." The best friend—the wisest counsellor—the safest guide—the wealthiest banker—was his companion. Can we wonder that he prospered? "Whithersoever he went." Note three words in Bible:—*Whosoever* will may come; when we come, *Whatsoever* we ask; and *Whithersoever* we go. "He smote." The life of faith is a life of victory. Note contrast in vs 9-11:—

Judah would not serve - - ASSYRIA,
Israel was compelled to serve

and the reason is given in v. 12, "They obeyed not,"—"they transgressed,"—"they would not hear,"—"they would not do"

Obedience has its reward. Disobedience has its punishment.

[Nov. 29] **Hezekiah's Prayer Answered** (2 Kings) 20:1-17

The worker is sick. Being a Christian, and an earnest working Christian does not exempt us from trouble or sickness. The sickness is one unto death, and he is told to "set his house in order." The message came from God, and the sick man turns to God. It is not a setting his house in order, but a setting of facts in order before the God of his house. "Remember." It is a grand thing to have lived such a life as to enable us to call upon God to remember the deeds, instead of we ourselves calling to remembrance our sinful omissions and commissions. Note, in vs 5, 6, God's words—I have (2), I will (4), thou shalt (1) In all seven promises, a perfect answer. God never answers by halves. Observe in v. 8 how the desire of Hezekiah comes out. He still *trusts* in the Lord and *cleaves* to the Lord, and his desire still is towards the house of the Lord. In fact we learn from this the truth of 2 Chron. 31: 21—"He did it with all His heart," vs. 12-13. while speaking of the weakness of Hezekiah, are fraught with lessons of encouragement to us. After all he was "a man of like passions with ourselves." We also learn that prosperity is more to be feared than adversity. When Hezekiah received a threatening letter he went to the house of the Lord and spread it before the Lord, 2 Kings xix 14. When he received the complimentary messages he forgot that the Lord should be consulted, and so he shows his precious things; his armies, his treasures, his house, his dominion, and, alas, forgot to say anything about his GOD, to whom he owed the returned health, the prosperity. v. 14. A far country and a people far from God—enemies to God. *What have they seen?* An important question. What has that unconverted man seen when he called to visit you. Has he seen your possessions only, or have you presented Jesus to his view? v. 16. "Hear the Word of the Lord," Prov. 8: 13. "Pride do I hate" and Prov. 29: 23.