

trophes of fire visited upon sin, like the burnings of Sodom and Gomorrah, and still there is no turning to God. The prophet cries out to Israel, "Prepare!" He sees the unseen One. He feels the impalpable Presence going by him, throwing up and shaping the great mountains, harnessing the strong winds to the tempest-car, searching in silence the deep places of the soul, then shaking with his solemn tread the high places of the earth. O, solemn coming unto judgment of the great Jehovah!

By Way of Illustration.

BY JENNIE M. BINGHAM.

Verses 4 and 5. The Israelites combined the form of godliness with idol-worship, as if that might save them. The Italian banditti, or highway robbers, are said to be very particular about their devotions. A traveler in Russia saw a votary of the Greek Church devoutly telling his beads with one hand and picking the pocket of a fellow-worshiper with the other.

When Napoleon I. invaded Egypt he destroyed all the forts in his road but one. When they were built of stone, he blew them up; when built of wood, he burned them. The one which defied all efforts was built of mud, in which his missiles would stick fast. Some people get into a fort built of religious profession and church membership which defies all gospel artillery.

"*Yet have ye not returned unto me.*" Afflictions do not of necessity work out salvation. Talmage says: "I stood upon the beach looking off upon the sea, and there was a strong wind blowing, and I noticed some of the vessels were going that way and other vessels were going another way. I said to myself: 'How is it that the same wind blows one vessel in one direction, and the other in another direction?' I found out by looking that it was the different way they had the sails set. And so does trouble come to this world. Some men it drives into the harbor of heaven, and other men it drives on the rocks. It depends upon the way you have your sails set. All the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans of surging sorrow cannot sink a soul that has asked for God's pilotage."

"*Prepare to meet thy God.*" I heard a few nights ago that if you take a bit of phosphorus and put it upon a slip of wood, and ignite the phosphorus, bright as the blaze is there drops from it a white ash that coats the wood and makes it almost impossible to kindle the wood. And so when the flaming conviction laid upon your hearts has burnt itself out, it has coated the heart, and it will be very difficult to kindle the light there again.—A. MacLaren.

It is said of birds that build in steeples, being used to the continual ringing of bells, the sound disquiets them not at all. Thus it is that the com-

monness of the death of others is made but, as it were, a formal thing. Many have grown familiar with death, and when the solemnity is over, the thoughts of death are over also; as soon as the grave is out of sight, preparation for the grave is out of their mind. They go to their worldly business—yea, to coveting and sinning—as if the last man that ever should be buried.—Caryl.

Teachers' Meeting.

Make sketch-map of the kingdom of Israel as Jeroboam II. inherited it (barely reaching from the Jordan to the Philistine border and from upper Galilee to the kingdom of Judah), and another map of Israel as Jeroboam left it to his successor (including the full inheritance of the ten tribes on both sides of the Jordan, besides Syria, Ammon, and Moab).... Effects of this sudden growth.... The royal dynasty—Jehu, Jehoahaz, Joash, Jeroboam II., and Zechariah.... The prophet: his home; his station in life; his auditors; his style; the burden of his message—repent and reform!.... Describe the twofold "sin of Israel" and its consequences: 1. Idolatry (Baal, Molech, etc.), leading to grossest license. 2. Worship of Jehovah under the image of a calf, which included or led to (a) image-worship; (b) rejection of the chosen priesthood; (c) permanent alienation from the Messianic tribe and traditions; (d) hypocrisy; (e) open sins, especially tyranny, covetousness, and selfish luxury.... Follow the lesson outline: 1. Transgression—the irony of verses 4, 5, points to the prevalent wickedness. 2. Discipline—famine, drought, failure of harvests, pestilence. God works to-day, as then, by natural forces. Earthly joys and sorrows all are discipline. 3. Warning. Each Sunday-school teacher should be as faithful as the Tekoan shepherd. We "stand in Christ's stead."

References.

FOSTER'S CYCLOPEDIA. Prose, 1206, 1418, 1725, 3206-3209, 4702-4714, 2914, 5743, 5744, 7850. Vers. 4-12: Prose, 4984, 4962, 4979, 4700, 1961, 1948, 1959, 1970-1974, 1977, 1981-1983, 4993, 5004, 4981.

Primary and Intermediate.

BY MARTHA VAN METER.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Getting ready to meet God.*

Introductory. Make a shepherd's crook on the board. Ask what great Bible king was once a shepherd. Who said "I am the good shepherd?" Who can repeat the first verse of the shepherd psalm? The lesson to-day tells what a shepherd said a long time ago. I will print the name of the shepherd—"Amos." God sent Amos to do an errand for him. He told him what to say. Do you