

had been guarded with care, because the "lack" of Edenhall was said to be bound up with it. And though the heart be a frail, treacherous thing, yet "out of it are the issues of life." See how it was with Solomon. As long as his heart remained loyal to Jehovah, he did the right and prospered. But now, we are told, "God was angry with him." What Nathan the prophet had been bidden to tell David beforehand now came to pass. 2 Sam. 7. 14. Adversaries rose up against Solomon. The kingdom, which under him had grown stable and powerful and glorious, was doomed to be rent in twain, and the "length of days" which was to be his on condition of his obedience was lost; the close of his life was sad and wonderful, his career blighted and cut short. And all this because his heart had been "turned away from the Lord." Is not the heart worth "keeping with all diligence" when such momentous issues are determined by it.

But our young people may say,

1. That the condition of their hearts is of less importance to them than was the condition of King Solomon's. Is their own happiness, then, of less importance to them than his was? Is it not of the utmost moment to them what becomes of their life, whether it is bright or dark, a success or a failure?

2. That their hearts are not weak. It may be their hearts are strong in the wrong way, strong in the ways of sin. But the heart that is given to God is in itself a poor, weak thing. "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

That crystal "Luck of Edenhall" when broken to shivers could never be repaired. But the heart that has gone astray may be brought back again by the grace of God. Was it so with Solomon? For many reasons we hope it was. Above all we read that the Lord had promised: "My mercy shall not depart from him." 2 Sam. 7. 15. And the grace which can restore is able to keep. The youthful lord in the legend made his great mistake when he took the precious goblet out of its safe resting-place into his light, capricious hands. The mistake of Solomon was that he did not commit the keeping of his heart to God. He retained it in his own grasp. He stood in his own strength. The weak heart is safe in Christ's keeping. The issues of life and death are secure in his hands. "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."

BEREAN METHODS.

Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class.

Show the privileges and opportunities enjoyed by Solomon, as the height from which

he fell.... State the sins of Solomon—what they were, and the circumstances which added to their guilt.... Show the causes which led to these sins, as, 1. Solomon's love of splendour; 2. The tendencies toward mere formality in his religion; 3. The foreign relations leading to foreign customs; 4. The knowledge of Solomon degenerating into laxity of religious opinion; 5. The love of pleasure becoming lust, and leading to sensuality.... Notice the results of Solomon's sin, in 1. God's wrath; 2. God's warning; 3. Loss of privileges; 4. Evil influences set in motion.... What evils in Solomon's time may be found in the world and the Church now? 1. Worldly association; 2. Laxity of opinions; 3. Division of heart between God and the world.... ILLUSTRATIONS. There is an oriental legend that in Solomon's staff, on which he learned, was a worm gnawing secretly, so that the rod at last fell asunder. Such was Solomon's character.... So in the timbers of a great ship there may be a dry rot which corrodes and destroys them, until suddenly in a storm the vessel breaks up and founders.... Hercules died from wearing a poisoned robe given him by one who pretended to be his friend. So the Church is often ruined by wearing the garments offered it by the world.

References. FOSTER'S ILLUSTRATIONS. Ver. 4: 6025, 6094, 6540. Ver. 5: 6532. Ver. 7: 3144. Ver. 8: 12257. Ver. 9: 6669.... FREEMAN. Ver. 5: Ashtoreth and Milcom, 304. Ver. 7: Chemosh, 183.

Primary and Intermediate.

BY M. V. M.

LESSON THOUGHT. *Keeping the Heart.*

REVIEW. To whom was the temple given? Who was asked to come and live in it? Why was it a holy place? Who said, "My name shall be there?" What temple has every child? To whom should it be given? Who wants to come and live in it? How long will he live in it?

LESSON STORY.

God gave Solomon great power, and great wisdom. People talked about him, and went to see him, and Solomon told them that all the riches and wisdom belonged to God. See this watch. The case is all that you see. What is inside? Which is the watch—the works or the case? There is one spring upon which all the wheels depend. Without the mainspring the watch would be good for nothing. God was in Solomon as works are in the watch, to make every thing move right. But there was a mainspring in Solomon's heart. It was OBEDIENCE. As long as he obeyed God all went right. When he disobeyed everything went wrong. What