

Review Service for the Fourth Quarter.

BY REV. J. L. HURLBUT, D.D.

Leader. To what period of time do these lessons relate?

School. The lessons of the Fourth Quarter embrace a period nearly twice as long as those of the Third, including about 200 years, from the translation of Elijah to the death of Hezekiah in Judah, or from 895 to 700 B. C.

Leader. To what lands do they relate?

School. They relate not only to Israel, but also to Judah, to Syria, and even to Assyria and Chaldea. Thus they require a knowledge of all the lands between the Caspian Sea, the Persian Gulf, and the Mediterranean, or most of the Old Testament world, an area about one fourth that of the United States.

Leader. What historic pictures do they present to us?

School. We see Syria, Israel, and Judah struggling for pre-eminence; while on the north-east Assyria rises, overwhelming and destroying all the nations; and in the south-east Babylon looms up in the distance, not yet an actor in the scene, but foreseen by the prophet as soon to appear upon the stage of events.

Singing.

C. M.

God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the sea,
And rides upon the storm.

Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behold a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.

Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan his work in vain;
God is his own interpreter,
And he will make it plain.

Leader. What four places are prominently brought before us in these lessons?

[*Four scholars come forward, and face the school.*]

First Scholar. Samaria is the first city which these lessons present to us. Here upon the hill of Shemer stood the capital of the northern kingdom of Israel. Here stood Jezebel's temple to Baal, where four hundred idol-priests ministered. Here, in the time of our lessons, reigned Jehoram, the son of Ahab, until he was slain in Jehu's sudden revolution. Here Jehu the fierce reformer destroyed the idols and burned the temple of Baal, slaying the priests upon their own altars. Here the Syrians strove in vain to take the city; but it fell at last under the mightier hosts of the Assyrians, and with it fell the kingdom of Israel, never to rise again.

Second Scholar. Another place brought before us is Jerusalem, the city of the great king. We see it standing upon its four hills, beautiful for situation, and the joy of the earth. At the period represented in our lessons, we look upon the temple

of God on Mount Moriah, restored by King Joash, but desecrated by Ahaz; we behold Hezekiah lying upon his couch in prayer, and rising from it with lengthened life; and we hear the song of Isaiah proclaiming a coming Redeemer.

Third Scholar. The fifth lesson bring us to a scene whose place is unnamed, but it may have been at Jericho, in the Jordan valley. Here the king weeps over the dying prophet, and here the dead bones in the grave stand forth when touched by the ashes of Elisha.

Fourth Scholar. Our lessons carry us far from the sacred places of Palestine to a strange land and a heathen city, to Nineveh, the mistress of the Oriental world, standing upon the Tigris River. It was an aggregation of four cities, surrounded by a common wall more than ninety miles long, and enclosing the palaces, gardens, and dwellings of half a million people. Here Jonah preached, hither the captives from Israel were brought, and from this city the great kings of Assyria went forth to conquer. But soon after the age of our lessons it was destroyed, and its empire gave place to that of Babylon.

Singing.

L. M.

Behold the Christian warrior stand
In all the armor of his God;
The Spirit's sword is in his hand,
His feet are with the Gospel shod;

In panoply of truth complete,
Salvation's helmet on his head;
With righteousness a breast-plate meet,
And faith's broad shield before him spread.

Undaunted to the field he goes;
Yet vain were skill and valor there,
Unless, to foil his legion foes,
He takes the truest weapon, prayer.

Leader. Let us hear accounts of some of the most important persons named in our lessons.

[*A class of six scholars come forward.*]

First Scholar. I speak of Elisha, the man of God, gentle in his character, yet mighty in his deeds. His prayers brought back life to the dead; his sight penetrated to the spiritual world, and enabled him to see armies of angels; his faith made him calm and bold when all around him were in despair. On his death-bed he uttered God's prophecy of deliverance, and in the grave his ashes wrought a miracle.

Second Scholar. I speak of Jehu, the revolutionist, in whom good and evil traits were mingled. He was prompt to obey when God called him to the throne, bold and energetic in his action, and thorough in his destruction of the Baal-worship. But all his schemes were for self, he had no thought of God in all his acts, and though rewarded for his work, his reward was only of this world.

Third Scholar. I speak of Joash, the boy-king of Judah. The crown pressed his brow while he