

SUNDAY-SCHOOL BANNER.

HYMN.

"Thanks be to God."

The Reign of Solomon.

Supt. How does Solomon begin his reign over Israel?

Boys. He summons the people to a great religious festival at Gibeon, and sacrifices a thousand burnt-offerings upon the altar.

Supt. How did God show his approval of such a beginning?

Girls. He appeared to Solomon by night, and said, "Ask what I shall give thee."

Supt. What does Solomon choose?

Boys. Wisdom, to reign justly and righteously.

Supt. What was God's answer to his request?

Girls. "And God said unto him, Because thou hast . . . not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; Behold I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and understanding heart . . . I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honor."

Teachers. "Wisdom is better than rubies." (Golden Text.)

All. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, . . . and it shall be given him."

Supt. What was Solomon's great work?

School. The building of the temple at Jerusalem, the most magnificent sacred edifice of ancient or modern times, and the pride and glory of the Jewish nation.

Supt. When was the temple finished?

School. After eight years and a half.

Supt. When was it dedicated?

School. In the eleventh year of his reign, at the time of the feast of tabernacles, Solomon consecrated it to God amid great rejoicing, and the Lord no longer dwelt in a tent with curtains, but in a house of cedar.

All. "The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him." (Golden Text.)

Supt. What of Israel after the building of the temple?

School. It became one of the richest and most powerful nations in the East, and the fame of Solomon's wisdom and magnificence reached far and wide.

Supt. Who heard of Solomon and came to see him?

School. The queen of Sheba.

Supt. How did she prove his wisdom?

School. With hard questions.

Supt. What did she say when he had shown her the splendors of Jerusalem and the royal palace?

School. "The half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard."

Teachers. "She came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon is here." (Golden Text.)

Supt. What temptation came to Solomon in his greatest prosperity and power?

School. The desire to outshine all other kings in the number of his wives, no less than by his rare wisdom and wealth.

Supt. What commands of God did Solomon disobey in yielding to this desire?

School. The commands forbidding Israel to multiply wives or marry the daughters of heathen nations.

Supt. Into what blasphemous sin did such disobedience finally lead him?

School. The sin of building temples for the worship of heathen gods under the very shadow of the temple of Jehovah.

Supt. "And the Lord was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel . . . which had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods. Wherefore the Lord said unto Solomon,

School. "Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and give it to thy servant."

Boys. "Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall." (Golden Text.)

Supt. What of the nation at the close of Solomon's reign?

School. The people, burdened with heavy taxes for the support of the royal household, are dissatisfied and rebellious. Idolatrous worship is established in the holy city, the ancient liberties of the Israelites are threatened by the king's exaltation of the throne, and Solomon dies knowing that the kingdom will be divided, and that his own son will receive but two tribes, while his servant receives ten.

Supt. So ends the reign of a king to whom were given riches and wisdom more than all the kings of the earth, yet who, failing to keep the commandments of God, brought upon his family and his people sorrow and destruction.

School. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." (Golden Text.)

HYMN.

"How good thou art to me!"

At Home.

. . . There are some Sunday-schools, and there will be more, who use the magic lantern, or stereopticon, as an aid in Sunday-school work. Why should not a series of pictures in the life of Christ, and of places connected with it, be used to illustrate the lessons of the year which we are now beginning? Mr. G. W. Edmondson, Cleveland, Ohio, has prepared a series of lantern-slides, with express reference to the lessons of the first and second quarters of next year. Superintendents and schools interested in this subject would do well to correspond with him.

. . . The Rev. C. E. Dickinson, pastor of the Congregational church at Marietta, Ohio, informed us recently that one of the earliest Sunday-schools in the United States, and certainly the earliest in Ohio, was held at Campus Martius, now Marietta, in the spring or early summer of 1791, and was continued until 1795, when its

founder, Mrs. Mary Bird Leach, removed to a farm eight miles distant. One of the scholars in that Sunday-school, Mrs. Nancy Allison Frost, is still living at Lowell, Ohio, in the one hundred and fifth year of her age. Probably she is the oldest Sunday-school scholar in the world.

. . . A primary teacher in Illinois writes: "I have learned how much time and drilling it takes to get a few facts imprisoned in the little one's brains. This has led me to see how important it is to teach the Sunday-school lesson very simply; to have a few important facts, and to teach them well, drilling over and over again. These facts are: 1. There is one God. 2. He made every thing. 3. He hates sin. 4. We are sinners. 5. God loves us always. 6. We make him sorry by sinning. 7. He sent Jesus to live and die for us to save us. 8. We must believe in him, love, and serve him." This is an excellent series of statements to be taught to the little ones.