

TOBACCO IN SCHOOL.

The danger of the use of tobacco by children cannot be too strongly presented. The subject is somewhat difficult, because "the weed" is in such general use. But the testimony of physicians as to its effect on immature bodies and minds, is practically uniform. If a boy or girl (for girls are learning to use cigarettes) reaches the age of sixteen without beginning to use tobacco, the chances of his using it in after life are greatly lessened. It is the cigarette-smokers of six to ten years, the little fellows who deliberately smoke into each others' open mouths, the pale, enfeebled children who inherit the appetite for narcotics, and come from homes steeped in tobacco-smoke, the boys who think it manly to smoke, and cowardly not to acquire the habit, it is such as these who will become, to a large extent, the drunkards, criminals, and paupers of the next generation.

Try to ascertain,—for your private knowledge,—the personal experience of your class concerning tobacco. One earnest teacher adopted with success the plan of asking his scholars to promise not to use alcohol and tobacco, while members of the school, without first requesting the principal to withdraw their names from the pledge roll.

"The pledge is loose," writes this faithful teacher: "perhaps the 'easiest to take' of any you ever saw but therein lies its strength, for when a student wishes to be released, it gives mean opportunity to labor with him personally. I have had four requests to be 'let off' on the tobacco part, but I persuaded all but one to let it alone."

The New Hampshire legislature has just enacted a law forbidding the sale or gift of tobacco in any form to persons under sixteen years of age. Tell the pupils of this, and show them that the state has a right to protect herself against future citizens who shall be weak; mentally and physically. In accord with this is the action of the national Government in connection with the United States Naval Academy at Annapolis. The board appointed by the Government to consider the subject of the use of tobacco by the cadets of the academy, report as follow: "No doubt exists among medical men as to the injurious effects of tobacco upon the growing organisms and mental powers of the young..... The board are of opinion, therefore, that the regulations against the use of tobacco in any form cannot be too stringent; and, further, that while smoking should be wholly interdicted, especial care should be taken to prevent the introduction of chewing, the more deleterious practice."

Tobacco has a specific effect on the bones, stunting their growth, and threatening us with a coming generation of inferior stature, as well as of enfeebled mental powers.—Alice M. Guernsey, in N. E. Journal of Education.

"UP WI' YE."

I remember a little incident that happened many years ago. When I was in Cornwall, in 1854, I visited the mine where the incident occurred. Carlyle refers to the story in one of the chapters of his "Life of Sterling." Two men were sinking a shaft. It was a dangerous business, for it was necessary to blast the rock. It was their custom to cut the fuse with a sharp knife. One man then entered the bucket, and made a signal to be hauled up. When the bucket again descended, the other man entered it, and, with one hand on the signal rope and the other holding the fire, he touched the fuse, made the signal, and was rapidly drawn up before the explosion took place. One day they left the knife above, and, rather than ascend to procure it, they cut the fuse with a sharp stone. It took fire. "The fuse is on fire!" Both men leaped into the bucket, and made the signal, but the windlass would haul up but one man at a time; only one could escape. One of the men instantly leaped out, and said to the other, "Up wi' ye; I'll be in Heaven in a minute." With lightning speed the bucket was drawn up, and the one man was saved. The explosion took place. Men descended, expecting to find the mangled body of the other miner; but the blast had loosened a mass of rock, and it lay diagonally across him; and, with the exception of a few bruises and a little scorching, he was unhurt. When asked why he urged his comrade to escape, he gave an answer that sceptics would laugh at. If there is any being on the face of the earth I pity, it is a sceptic. I would not be what is

called "a sceptic" to-day for all the world's wealth. They may call it superstition and fanaticism, or whatever they choose. But what did this hero say when asked, "Why did you insist on this other man's ascending?" In his quaint dialect he replied, "Because I knowed my soul was safe; for I've gie it in the hands of Him of whom it is said that 'faithfulness is the girdle of His reins,' and I knowed that what I gieed Him He'd never gie up. But t'other chap was an awful wicked lad, and I wanted to gie him another chance." All the infidelity in the world cannot produce such a signal act of heroism as that.—Word and Work.

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From International Question Book.)

LESSON I.—JANUARY 3.

JOSIAH AND THE BOOK OF THE LAW.—2 KINGS 22:1-13.

COMMIT VERSE 13.

GOLDEN TEXT.

He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord.—2 Kings 22:2.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

The Bible lost and found.

DAILY READINGS.

- M. 2 Kings 22:1-20.
T. 2 Kings 23:1-30.
W. 2 Chron. 34:1-33.
Th. 2 Chron. 35:1-27.
F. Jer. 2:1-13.
Sa. Zeph. 1:1-18.
Su. Ps. 81:1-16.

TIME.—The book of the law was found B.C. 622, the 18th year of Josiah.

PLACE.—Jerusalem, the capital of Judea.

RULERS.—Josiah, king of Judah, B.C. 610-609. Assurbanipal (Sardanapalus), King of Assyria. Psammetichus, king of Egypt.

PROPHETS.—Jeremiah, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Nahum, and Huldah the prophetess.

PARALLEL ACCOUNTS.—Josiah's reign recorded in 2 Kings, chaps. 22, 23, is also recorded in 2 Chron., chaps. 34, 35. The first twelve chapters of Jeremiah belong to Josiah's reign, as do the prophecies of Zephaniah, Nahum and Habakkuk. The fourth book of the Psalter (Ps. 90-100) was composed or compiled at this time. Ps. 80 was probably composed for the great Passover of Josiah.

CIRCUMSTANCES.—Sixty years have passed away since the death of Hezekiah, about whom we studied in our last regular lesson of last year. Most of this time Manasseh, Hezekiah's son, reigned. He allowed idolatry to flourish again in Judah, and all heathen sins and abominations came with it. He was punished by the Assyrians, who carried him away captive. He repented, but idolatry still flourished. Amon, his son, next reigned two years, and every evil triumphed. He was slain, and his young son Josiah became king.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

1. JOSIAH—the good son of a bad father. (See vs. 1, 2 of 2 Chron. 34:1-3.) HIS MOTHER'S NAME, JEDIBAH—the meaning is "the beloved of Jehovah," and his grandmother's name, Adiah, means "honored of Jehovah." Probably his mother was a religious woman, though his father, Amon, was an idolater. 2. HE DID RIGHT—he was converted when 16 years old, began his great work of reform when 20. (2 Chron. 34:3, 3.) 3. EIGHTEENTH YEAR—of his reign. The repairs and reforms of these next verses and 2 Chron. 34:3-8 were begun six years before. These words "eighteenth year" are connected with v. 8. 8. FOUND THE BOOK OF THE LAW—the temple copy of the Pentateuch, the first five books of our Bible. It had probably been hidden away during the idolatrous reign of Manasseh, and was found in some hidden chamber of the temple. 10. READ IT BEFORE THE KING—father, read from it; no doubt the blessings and curses in Deut., chaps. 28-32. 11. RENT HIS CLOTHES—the oriental way of showing grief and repentance. Josiah repented, he entered more earnestly on the reforms casting out all idols and heathen leaders and practices; he sent priests all over the land to teach the people, and instituted the Passover, which had been neglected. It was a great revival of religion.

LEARN BY HEART one or more of the following verses.—2 Tim. 3:16, 17; Ps. 19:7, 8; Ps. 119:105; Isa. 40:8; Ps. 1:1, 2.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—About what king was our last lesson in the Old Testament history? How many years intervened between Hezekiah and Josiah? Who reigned during this time? What was the state of the kingdom religiously when Josiah began to reign? (2 Kings 21:5-12; 19-22.) Give the time, place, rulers and prophets at this time.

SUBJECT: THE BIBLE FOUND AND STUDIED.

I. KING JOSIAH (vs. 1, 2).—Who were Josiah's parents? Where did he live? How old was he when he became king? How long did he reign? What three dates in his reign are specially noted? (2 Chron. 34:3, 8.) What was the general character of his reign?

II. HIS CONVERSION.—How old was Josiah when he was converted to God? (2 Chron. 34:3.)

III. A REVIVAL OF RELIGION (vs. 3-7).—How long after his conversion did Josiah begin to reform the religious condition of his kingdom? (2 Chron. 34:3.) How old was he? What two things did he do? (2 Chron. 34:3 and 8.)

IV. THE BOOK OF THE LAW FOUND (vs. 8-16).—What did the high priest find one day? In what place? What part of our Bible was this book of the law? What did Hilkiah do with it? Who took it to the king?

How could such a book be lost? Were Bibles as plenty then as now? In what ways may we lose the Bible (as by neglect, disobedience, etc.)? In what ways may we find the Bible?

V. THE EFFECT OF FINDING THE BIBLE (vs. 11-13).—What part of the book of the law was read to the king? (v. 13, and Deut., chaps. 28-32.) What did the king do when he heard these words? Of what was reading the clothes a sign? Of whom did the king seek help? What did finding the Bible lead the king to do for the people? (2 Kings 23:1-3.) What evils did he abolish? (2 Kings 23:4-7.) What religious institution did he renew? (2 Chron. 35:1-18.)

LESSON II.—JANUARY 10.

JEREMIAH PREDICTING THE CAPTIVITY.—JER. 8:20-22; 9:1-16.

COMMIT VERSES 20-22.

GOLDEN TEXT.

The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.—Jer. 8:20.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Salvation is lost by neglect and by sin.

DAILY READINGS.

- M. Jer. 1:1-10.
T. Jer. 2:1-13.
W. Jer. 3:12-10.
Th. Jer. 5:1-6.
F. Jer. 7:1-14.
Sa. Jer. 8:1-22.
Su. Jer. 9:1-16.

TIME.—In the later years of King Josiah, after the last lesson, B.C. 622-609, or early in the reign of his son Jehoiakim.

PLACE.—Jerusalem, at a gate of the inner court of the temple, where the prophet stood and addressed the people in the outer court. (Jer. 7:1, 2.)

BOOK OF JEREMIAH.—A collection of the records of Jeremiah's prophecies made at various times. The collection was begun by Baruch (Jer. 36:2-8), B.C. 604.

JEREMIAH.—(1) Name, "exalted of Jehovah." (2) Parentage, son of Hilkiah, probably the high priest of the last lesson. (3) Birth, about B.C. 648, the same time as King Josiah. (4) Home, born at Anathoth, a small town three miles north-east of Jerusalem in Benjamin. (5) He was never married. (6) Character, he is called the weeping prophet, sad on account of the hopeless sins and miseries of the people. He was timid, retiring, tender-hearted, never morose, always brave, with an outlook of hope. (7) Work, Jeremiah began to prophesy in the thirteenth year of Josiah, B.C. 627, and continued through five reigns, till after the destruction of Jerusalem, B.C. 586. He was carried captive to Egypt after that, and tradition says he was stoned to death there, aged 60 or 70 years.

CIRCUMSTANCES.—Our lessons change from Kings to Jeremiah, because he prophesied at the period whose history we have been studying, and his words throw light on the history. After the last lesson the excitement died away, many were untouched by the revival, and the people grew very bad, as described in to-day's lesson. Jeremiah was sent to warn and entreat them lest they perish on account of their sins.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.

21. I AM BLACK—father, I go mourning. 22. BALM—balsam used for medicine externally and internally. IN GILEAD—where it grew in abundance. There was abundant help for the people in God, but they refused it. 3. THEIR TONGUES LIKE A BOW—lives were the venomous arrows they shot from their tongues. 7. MELT AND TRY—as metals, which are thus purified from dross. 9. SHALL I NOT VISIT THEM—with punishment. The six warnings were fulfilled by the three devastating of the kingdom, and final destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, of Babylon. 1. DRAGONS—better, jackals. 14. BAALIM—plural of Baal, the idol of their neighbors the Philistines.

LEARN BY HEART.—Jer. 8:20, 22; Is. 55:6, 7; Heb. 4:7.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—Why do we change our lessons from Kings to Jeremiah? When did Jeremiah live? Where? His father's name? Give some account of his life? What kind of a man was he? What can you tell about the Book of Jeremiah?

SUBJECT: LOST OPPORTUNITIES.

I. THE OPPORTUNITIES LOST (vs. 20-22).—What promises did God make to the children of Israel? (Gen. 26:4; Joshua 1:4; 2 Chron. 17:9-12.) What blessings did he want them to enjoy? (Deut. 28:1-13.) Repent v. 20 of the lesson. What harvest was past? What is meant by "the daughter of my people"? What hurt is referred to? (See 2 Kings 23:20-33; 21:10-14.) What is balm? What is it good for? Where was it found in plenty? What does the prophet mean by this verse?

II. THE SINS BY WHICH THEY ARE LOST (vs. 1-9).—How did Jeremiah express his grief over the sins and miseries of his people? (v. 1, 2.) How many different sins are mentioned in these eight verses? Which of the ten commandments were broken by them? Name the Beatitudes which were contrary to these sins. What sin is mentioned oftener? Why is deceit and lying one of the most deadly of sins?

III. THE CALAMITIES THAT FOLLOWED (vs. 9-11).—What should befall the country? (v. 10.) What should become of the city? (v. 11.) Read a description of the fulfillment of these warnings. (2 Chron. 36:5-7, 15-20.) What punishment will fall on all who continue in sin? (Rom. 2:8, 9; Matt. 7:2, 19; 25:41-46.)

IV. THE REASON OF THESE CALAMITIES (vs. 12-16).—Who would understand the cause of these troubles? What was the cause? What is meant by wormwood and gall in v. 15?

Why should we grieve over the sins of our country? Was the punishment of the Jews the natural effect of their sins? Is our punishment the natural effect of our sins? Is this all? Is punishment certain to follow sin? Does God punish in love? Is punishment meant to make men better? What is taught by the fact that the wormwood and gall in v. 15 were not only bitter but medicinal?

LESSON III.—JANUARY 17.

THE FAITHFUL RECHABITES.—JEREMIAH 35:12-19.

COMMIT VERSES 18, 19.

GOLDEN TEXT.

For unto this day they drink none, but obey their father's commandment.—Jer. 35:14.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

Obedience and temperance the way to a long and happy life.

DAILY READINGS.

- M. Jer. 35:1-11.
T. Jer. 35:12-11.
W. Prov. 3:1-18.
Th. Prov. 1:8, 9; 6:20-23; 30:17.
F. Prov. 23:29-35.
Sa. Eph. 6:1-12.
Su. Gal. 5:16-25.

TIME.—B.C. 604-5, fourth year of Jehoiakim.

PLACE.—Jerusalem, in one of the courts of the temple.

RULERS.—Jehoiakim, king of Judah, B.C. 609-598. Nebuchadnezzar, son of the emperor of Babylon, now commander of the Chaldean army in Judah, becomes emperor, B.C. 604.

CIRCUMSTANCES.—A few years pass away since the warnings in our last lesson. The end is drawing near. Nebuchadnezzar's army is devastating Judah and approaching Jerusalem; but the people have grown worse and worse. And now Jeremiah makes one more effort to persuade them to a better life. THE RECHABITES.—(1) A branch of the Kenites, who were a part of the Midianites descended from Abraham to Keturah, who lived once in Southern Arabia. Moses married one of them. Then a portion moved into Canaan, and a part settled in Southern Judah (Judg. 1:16; 1 Chron. 2:55), and a part in Northern Israel, above the sea of Galilee (Judges 4:11). (2) Their name was derived from Rechab, an unknown ancestor. (3) Jehonadab (or Jonadab) was their great reformer in the time of Jehu, B.C. 881 (2 Kings 10:15-27). (4) Their creed was (a) to drink no wine or strong drink; (b) to live in tents, and not in houses; (c) to cultivate no land; (d) they believed in the true God.

JEREMIAH'S OBJECT LESSON.—See Jer. 35:1-11. The Rechabites came into Jerusalem because Nebuchadnezzar with his fierce soldiers was destroying the country. Here they still lived in tents. Jeremiah takes them into a frequented court of the temple, and placing wine before them, asks them to drink. They refuse, because Jonadab two hundred and seventy-five years before had so commanded. So, says Jeremiah, you should obey God, your Father.

THEIR REWARD.—(1) Rechabites continue to exist to the present day. (2) Some joined the tribe of Levi, and continued to serve in their temple. (3) Every true temperance person is a spiritual descendant; such have always existed.

LEARN BY HEART.—Eph. 6:1-3; Prov. 3:1-4; Prov. 23:31, 32.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—How long a time between this lesson and the last? What evil had Jeremiah foretold in that lesson as the punishment of the people's sins? Had his warnings begun to be fulfilled? Who was devastating the country at this time? (Jer. 35:11.) Who was king of Israel?

SUBJECT: OBEDIENCE AND TEMPERANCE.

I. THE RECHABITES.—Give some account of the history of the Rechabites. Where did the Rechabites live? What were their curious beliefs and practices? (Jer. 35:6-10.)

II. JEREMIAH'S OBJECT LESSON OF OBEDIENCE (vs. 12-15).—Why did these Rechabites come into Jerusalem to live for a time? (Jer. 35:11.) Where did Jeremiah take them? (Jer. 35:3, 4.) What did he offer them? (Jer. 35:5.) Did they yield to the temptation? (Jer. 35:6.) What reason did they give? Was all this done publicly? What did Jeremiah teach the people by this?

Was it right for Jeremiah to offer them wine? Had they much more reason for obeying God than the Rechabites had for obeying Jonadab? What reasons can you give why the people were under obligation to obey God? Had God done all that was possible to make them good? (Isa. 5:4.) Has he done all he can to make us good?

III. REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS (vs. 16-19).—How were the Israelites punished for their disobedience? What reward did God promise the Rechabites for their obedience? Has it been fulfilled?

IV. APPLICATION TO OBEDIENCE.—(1) How does this apply to our obedience to God? What reasons can you give why we should obey God perfectly? (2) Apply it to obedience to our parents? (3) To obedience to the laws of our country. In what ways are we tempted to disobey? What is the punishment of disobedience to God? (Matt. 25:46; Ezek. 18:20.) To parents? (Prov. 30:17.) To country? What is the reward of obedience to God? (Prov. 3:4-11; 1 Tim. 4:8.) To parents? (Ex. 20:12; Prov. 1:8, 9; 6:20-22.) To country?

V. APPLICATION TO TEMPERANCE.—Why did the Rechabites drink no wine or strong drink? What temptations have we to use strong drink? What reason for total abstinence do you find in the Bible?

What reasons for total abstinence do you find in science? In reason? In experience and observation of its effects? In the crime strong drink produces? The miseries? The expense? The injury to others and the danger to ourselves?

LESSONS FROM THE RECHABITES.

I. Obedience: (1) The duty of obedience; (2) the tests of obedience in daily life; (3) the reasons for obedience to God's command; what God has done for us, his messengers, his providence, the rewards of obedience and the punishment of disobedience.

Obedience: (1) To God. (2) to parents; (3) to laws of our country; (4) of country to laws of God.

II. Temperance: (1) An example of temperance; (2) resisting temptations; (3) the reasons for temperance; (4) the rewards of temperance.

Reasons for temperance: Required by obedience (1) to God's word; (2) to the law of love; (3) to science; (4) to reason; (5) to experience.