



LESSON XIII.—SEPTEMBER 25.

Review.

Golden Text.

The Lord is merciful and gracious. Psalm ciii., 8.

Home Readings.

- Monday, Sept. 19.—I. Kings xii., 12-20.
 Tuesday, Sept. 20.—I. Kings xii., 25-33.
 Wednesday, Sept. 21.—II. Chron. xix., 1-11.
 Thursday, Sept. 22.—I. Kings xvii., 1-16.
 Friday, Sept. 23.—I. Kings xviii., 30-46.
 Saturday, Sept. 24.—I. Kings xix., 1-18.
 Sunday, Sept. 25.—Amos v., 4-15.

WHAT IS A REVIEW?

When a certain thing has to be done at stated intervals it is very apt to become a monotonous performance, carried out solely because it is on the programme. The reviews of the Sunday-school lessons come every three months, and, in order to have everything on its appointed date, are carried out, whether they are dull or interesting, dreaded by the teacher or looked forward to in anticipation of a profitable hour.

Several objects in a review suggest themselves after a moment's thought. Let us set down a few: you may think of others. The purpose of a review is:

To fix the lessons of the quarter more firmly in mind.

To teach the lessons of the whole quarter as one, so that their connection may be very clearly shown.

To bring out the leading facts.

To correct errors and point out new truths.

To discover what the scholars have gained from the quarter's work.

A review, then, is a final lesson on the subjects that have been considered. It is also a means of discovering what the scholars are getting out of their Sunday-school work.

The review is not to be prepared for in the usual time we give each week to the lesson. It represents the work of three months. One student of Sunday-school work, M. C. Hazard, says, 'A review is like an apple—it takes three months to ripen.'

WAYS OF CONDUCTING A REVIEW.

With primary classes means adapted to the minds of children will suggest themselves, but we are here dealing with the review as conducted for older scholars.

Without doubt the very best sort of review is the written.

1. One of the best ways to fix what we know about a subject is to write it in our own words.

2. A written statement tends to encourage systematic arrangement of one's ideas on a subject.

3. The written review recalls the written examination of the public schools, and so adds to the importance of the work, as the scholar looks at it.

4. The scholar discovers the weak points of his preparation during the quarter when he endeavors to 'set down in black and white' what he has learned.

A blackboard review serves to make the main points of the three months' work vivid. When the matter put on the board is the result of questions asked the school, as it should be, it becomes a sort of written review for the whole school as a body, but cannot take the place of the individual written review.

Then there is the review by questions and answers. But asking questions is an art. It is one thing to ask a hit-or-miss lot of ques-

tions, half of which perhaps suggest their answers, and it is quite another thing to ask questions according to some systematic plan in the reviewer's mind, a plan that has been carefully wrought out beforehand. Skilful questioning is one of the most effective means of teaching, but is not an ability acquired in a moment. Of what good are such questions as these in provoking thought and study? 'Was Elijah a good man?' 'Was Ahab a bad man?' 'What did Jezebel want to do to Elijah?' 'Did Elijah ever go to Mt. Sinai?'

It requires nothing but the most superficial knowledge to answer any of the above. Shrewd guess work would serve the scholar's purpose in the case of half the questions of this kind.

But suppose a school is asked some such questions as this: 'What important national event was the result of a young man's listening to foolish counsel?' Such a question cannot be answered by guess. The scholar must have some knowledge of the lesson of July 3, wherein is the account of Rehoboam following the advice of his young men, and thereby so offending the people that the nation was divided. The scholar must do some thinking in answering a question put in this way. He cannot merely take a chance between 'Yes,' and 'No,' nor does the question suggest the proper answer.

Again, 'How was the religion of the ten tribes affected by the division of the kingdom?' Here a knowledge of Jeroboam's attempt to prevent his subjects from uniting in worship with Judah must be in the scholar's possession before any intelligent answer is possible.

SUBJECTS FOR REVIEW.

You have noticed that, as a rule, each separate lesson hinges on some leading fact in the career of the children of Israel. While not rigidly confined to these, the review should so deal with the subject matter of the quarter as to bring out prominently these important points. While occasionally some detail may be added or dwelt upon to advantage, the leading points, the mountain peaks, the main channels, the chief highways, of the quarter's lessons are the essential things.

The lessons may and should be considered with different purposes in view, and the reviewer must keep these in mind.

1. The historical study of the lessons deals with chief events in order, the dates on which they occurred, their causes and effects, etc.

2. The topical study would take up various general subjects illustrated in the lessons. For instance, 'The Nature of Idolatry,' 'Godliness and Material Prosperity,' 'God's Care of his Servants.'

3. The biographical study would take up the great characters and follow out their careers. Elijah, Ahab, Jezebel, Obadiah, Elisha, Asa, etc., furnish examples from the past quarter.

Applications of a spiritual and moral character should not be mere formal remarks at the end of the lesson or review, but such teaching should rather be skilfully interwoven with the other points covered.

For preparing your review questions, if you are a teacher, and for studying the quarter's lessons, if a scholar, we would make these suggestions:

From the historical view-point, keep in mind the character of the people and the times you study, noting the chief events, and their dates, and the influences that most deeply affected men.

The biographical study should fix in mind the names, characters, and important deeds of the men who stand out prominently in sacred history.

The topical study perhaps comes nearest to our own individual lives, as it takes up the tendencies of human nature, our relation to God, his dealings with men of all kinds. Hence the opportunity to enforce truth is favored by topical study and questions derived from it.

We do not, of course, mean that the lesson is to be gone over three or more times with these various ideas in view, one at a time. The thought is to keep these various purposes in mind, and to carry out all of them, as the character of the class or the needs of the individuals suggest.

Next week we begin a new quarter, the lesson for October 2 being, 'Elisha Succeeds Elijah.' II. Kings ii., 12-22.

C. E. Topic.

Sunday, Sept. 25.—Topic—Cheering facts about missions in Japan and Corea. Zech. xiv., 3-9, 20.

Junior C. E. Topic.

JOSEPH AND HIS FATHER.

Monday, Sept. 19.—A message to his father. Gen. xlv., 1-13.

Tuesday, Sept. 20.—Sending for his father. Gen. xlv., 14-22.

Wednesday, Sept. 21.—A present for his father. Gen. xlv., 23.

Thursday, Sept. 22.—The brothers' return. Gen. xlv., 24-28.

Friday, Sept. 23.—The father's journey. Gen. xlv., 1-7.

Saturday, Sept. 24.—Meeting his father. Gen. xlv., 26-34.

Sunday, Sept. 25.—Topic—How Joseph honored his father. Gen. xlvii., 7-12.

That Class of Girls.

(Marion Thorne, in the 'Sunday-school Times'.)

Those careless, indifferent, giggling girls from fourteen to sixteen years old, over there in the corner class in the mission school—how are you going to teach them?

Don't always teach them in just the same way. Change and variety are needed in the Sunday-school just as much as anywhere else. If you invariably begin your teaching in one way, those girls will know just what to expect, and even if at first they like your method, they will weary of it by and by.

Don't let the bright girl answer all of the questions. If she will insist upon talking, surprise her some day by making her ask questions instead of answering them. And don't let the dull girl always sit silent. However dull she may be, there must be some subject that she knows something about. Find out what that subject is, if it takes you six months to do it, for when you do discover it you can get her to talking, and when she finds herself able to speak well on one subject, she will be encouraged to venture a remark on some other.

Don't always go round the class in regular order with your questions. Skip about. Ask the same question of several scholars, and compare the answers.

Pick out the practical lesson to be taught and tell them how somebody that you know, or know of, tried to apply that special bit of truth in his daily life, and failed or succeeded as the case may be. Better yet, if you can tell them how you yourself have tried.

Visit them often, so that you may know all about their home life and home influences. Find out who is dearest to their young hearts. If it is mother or father, wee baby sister, or dear feeble grandma, 'make a note of it,' and don't fail to inquire for that one of the household, if you forget all the others.

Heart-Keeping.

'Keep your heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life,' Prov. iv., 23.

Keep the heart by pre-occupying it with holy thoughts, heavenly thoughts. Let the imagination find food in the infinitely precious verities of the truth of God, let its pictures be images of all that is lovely and of good report. Think of God, his omniscience, his eternity, his holiness; think of Christ, his purity and his friendship; think of the struggles, of the triumphs, of all the faithful people of God; think of the spotlessness of heaven and the white robes of the redeemed; think of the worth of an undefiled soul.

Oh, keep the heart by vigilance. Fortify it every approach. Set faithful servants at every entrance. Keep it by prayer—on your knees wrestling for victory. Keep it by communings with God. Keep it by holy meditations, by the sympathy with all the good, living or dead. Keep it, above all, by committing it to the keeping of God—let the Holy Ghost abide within. Consecrate it to God; he only can keep it, make it a holy temple, fit for his indwelling.—Bishop Geo. D. Cummins, D.D.