

when he and two of his sons were treacherously murdered at the castle of his son-in-law, before Christ 135. His death was followed by another Syrian invasion, the effect of which, though serious, did not prove lasting. Hircanus, his son, cast off the yoke of foreign power, and so successful were his measures that Judea never after acknowledged subjection to Syria. He died after having exercised royal authority for 29 years, leaving the Jewish nation in a state of great prosperity. His eldest son, Aristobulus, assumed the diadem and title of king, which none had enjoyed since the captivity. His successors were Alexandria, and Hircanus II.

Roman Rule.

In the year 65, before Christ, Aristobulus implored the protection of Rome against his brother Hircanus II, which issued in the establishment of the Roman power in Judea. Pompey, who was chosen arbiter, took Jerusalem itself, and B. C. 63, according to Josephus and Tacitus, the Jews again lost their liberty. At this date the administration of Judea was marked by "teachery, cruelty and blood." Foreign invasion attended by massacre and pillage wasted her resources—domestic calamity filled up the cup of her sufferings. Herod the Great "a stranger and Idumean," supported by the powerful patronage of Mark Antony, at length obtained the regal power,—subject, however, to Rome—and transmitted it to his descendants. His reign was at first characterized by oppressive exactions, and by indiscriminate cruelty. Friends and foes were alike obnoxious to his un governable fury. Mariamne, his accomplished queen, a descendant of the Asmonean family, fell a victim to his rage and jealousy. In the course of his reign three of his sons were also condemned to death.

Having exasperated the Jews by his tyrannical bearing, Herod endeavoured to regain their favour by rebuilding their temple. The undertaking was commenced before Christ 17, and employed *eighteen thousand men* for eight or nine years. But although the temple proper was fit for divine service in that time, a great number of men were employed on the outbuildings during the whole life of our Saviour on earth. This magnificent structure is said to have exceeded in some respects, even the first temple which was built by Solomon. "Its appearance," says Josephus, "exhibited everything that could strike the mind and astonish the sight. It was on every side covered with plates of gold, and when the sun rose upon it, reflected such a dazzling effulgence, that the eye was unable to sustain its brightness. Immense riches were profusely expended upon it, and every

ornament bestowed which art and genius could devise."

The whole history of the Jews from the return of the captivity to the coming of Christ is comprised in four periods:—

1. They were under the Persian monarchs 206 years.
2. The period during which they were subject to Alexander the Great and his successors, the Kings of Egypt and Syria, may be stated at 163 years.
3. The Asmonean family reigned over Judea more than 100 years from the time of Judas Maccabeus.
4. From the year 65 B. C. the power of Rome prevailed. The history of this period is familiar to most of our readers.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

THE BENEFICENCE SCHEME is working admirably wherever it has been introduced. About 63 churches have already adopted it.

COMMENDATORY.—FROM NEW BRUNSWICK.—The *Christian Visitor* of St. John, N. B., in its issue of January 1st, has the following kind editorial note referring to ourselves:—

"An experienced teacher in one of our best Sunday schools, in ordering the *CHRISTIAN HELPER* for 1879, says: 'I have never seen anything that suits me better in connection with the International Lessons.' This commendation is creditable to the man and the paper."

We may say that the *Visitor* shows its appreciation of our Lessons by printing them regularly in its columns, duly credited, after asking our permission to do so.

SKILFUL AND RELIABLE WORKMANSHIP.—Many of the churches within the bounds of the Western Convention are now pretty familiar with the very neat little collectors' and superintendents' books in connection with our new scheme of Systematic Beneficence. These books were gotten up very expeditiously and marvelously cheap by the new Baptist firm of Davis & Henderson, whose advertisement will be found on the 2nd page of the cover of this paper. Both our young friends are active members of Jarvis Street Church and enthusiastic teachers in the Sunday school.

INCREASE OF CIRCULATION.—The readers of the *HELPER* will be glad to learn

that since the beginning of the present year we have received very nearly 300 new subscribers, and more are promised. We are very much encouraged in our efforts to provide a Baptist Sunday school paper for Canadian teachers. Our friends who act as agents would confer a great favour if they would send in their orders before the 15th of the month, so as to have new subscribers supplied with the regular mailing list. Old subscribers who have not remitted for Vol. II. are gently reminded that what they have to send us will be acceptable.

THE RECENT SABBATH SCHOOL INSTITUTE held in this city was not as great a success as some of its predecessors. We fear the Sunday school teachers of Toronto have become somewhat surfeited with meetings of this character; as they manifested very little interest in the bill of fare provided. It is impossible to present, year after year, a programme entirely fresh and new to an audience proverbially well up on matters of Sunday school interest.—There were some excellent things said, however, and some valuable papers read;—and we commend among these latter the paper by Bro. Morse which appears in another column.

OUR PRIMARY LESSON HELPS.—We have recently received quite a number of very kind complimentary and unsolicited letters on the enterprise, improvement, and the tone of the *Helper*, which we duly appreciate. Among them the following from one of the foremost primary teachers of the denomination in Canada we give in full:—

DEAR BROTHER,—I cannot refrain from congratulating you upon your success in obtaining the services of Mrs. J. C. Yule as the writer of your Junior Lessons for the *CHRISTIAN HELPER*. I have read them carefully and pronounce them among the best I have seen. You have now supplied a want which I felt was much needed to make the *CHRISTIAN HELPER* specially a Sabbath school paper for teachers.

Yours, &c.,
W. WESBROOM.

Toronto, 23rd Dec., 1878.

BRITISH COLUMBIA BAPTISTS.—A year ago we gave a brief account of the progress of Baptist principles in this far off province of our Dominion, and the success of the little church in the city of Victoria, under the ministry of the Rev.