

SCHOLARS' NOTES.

(From the International Lessons for 1878, by Edwin W. Rice, as issued by American Sunday-School Union.)

LESSON XIII.

MARCH 31.

[About 975-642 B. C.]

REVIEW.

DAILY READINGS.—M.—2 Chron. 12 : 1-12. T.—2 Chron. 20 : 14-25. W.—2 Chron. 26 : 9-23. Th.—Prov. 16 : 7-25. F.—2 Chron. 29 : 20-36. Sa.—Deut. 30. S.—Eph. 2 : 1-13.

GOLDEN TEXT.—When they in their trouble did turn unto the Lord God of Israel and sought him, he was found of them.—2 Chron. 15 : 4.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—The Lord punishes the perverse, but forgives the penitent.

TIME.—About 833 years (975 B. C. to 642 B.C.) From the division of the kingdom to the end of Manasseh's reign.

COUNTRY.—Judah. CAPITAL, Jerusalem.

RULERS.—Fourteen (13 kings, 1 queen) ; 7 did right and 7 did evil "in the sight of the Lord." Of the good kings, 6 reigned over 25 years; only one of the wicked kings had as long a reign, and 4 of their reigns reached a total of only 16 years, or an average of only 4 years each; 10 of these 14 rulers died a natural death, and 4 died in battle or by violence.

"ISRAEL" (as the northern kingdom was called after the division) had 19 kings during this period. Of these 19 rulers, at least 8 died violent deaths, and not one of the 19 appears to have walked "in the law of the Lord." In the reign of Hezekiah, king of Judah, "Israel" was attacked by Salmannasar, king of Assyria, and in the 5th year of Hezekiah's reign and the 9th of Hoshea, king of "Israel," Salmannasar, or Fargon, his successor, took Samaria (capital of "Israel"), after a three years' siege, and carried the nation into a captivity from which it never returned; hence they are sometimes spoken of as "the lost tribes." The colonists afterward peopling the territory of "Israel," or this northern kingdom, were called Samaritans, and of their character it is said "they feared Jehovah and served their own gods." 2 Kings 17 : 33-41. They tried to serve the true God and worship idols also. See also John 4 : 19-23.

PLANS FOR REVIEW.—Reviewing is not simply going over the lessons rather more hastily, but in the same manner as at first. The grain that has been well out and bound into sheaves does not need to be cut and bound again. But the sheaves may need to be gathered into shocks of 10, 20, or 50 sheaves, so that it can be quickly seen how much the field has produced, and that the grain may be protected in storms. So the review goes over the lessons to gather the knowledge already reaped, and bring it into bundles for better storing away in the mind's garden for future use. An orderly plan of review is, therefore, of importance.

One good plan for review of this history of Judah would be to divide it into periods by the religious revivals, as :—

- I. To the revival under Asa, Lessons I.-III.
II. To the repairing of temple by Joash, Lessons IV.-VII.
III. To the revival under Hezekiah, Lessons VIII.-X.
IV. To the repentance of Manasseh, Lessons XI.-XII.

Or another plan would be to group the lessons as to enforce the Central Truth of the Review.

GOD TEACHING JUDAH.

- (1) BY MERCIES, I.-VII.
(2) BY JUDGMENTS, VIII.-XII.

A chart of the lessons may be made on a large coarse sheet of wrapping-paper or on a largeslate. A scholar will find the work of writing out such an outline chart a great aid in fixing the facts clearly in mind. His chart, when completed, may present the following grouping of the lessons.

Table with columns: GOD TEACHING JUDAH, By Judgments, By Mercies, Topics, Titles, Golden Text, Central Truth.

Having his chart complete, and being able to give the Title, Golden Text, and Central Truth of each lesson

without hesitation as rapidly as he can speak, he may next take a review of the facts of this period by

I. INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS.

THE TIME covered by this history? The number of rulers of Judah during this period? How many kings? The name of the one queen? The great event with which this period begins? Cause of the division? THE COUNTRY ruled over by Judah—how large? Its capital? Its situation? The chief towns in Judah? "ISRAEL" had how many rulers during this period? How far did the territory of "Israel" extend? Why called "Israel"? What city was its capital? When destroyed? By whom? How was the land afterward re-peopled? 2 King 17.

OTHER NATIONS noticed in the lessons—name them. Which were the most powerful of these? Which the oldest?

II. LESSON QUESTIONS.

How did God teach Judah— (1.) BY MERCIES.—What king attacked Rehoboam? Why? What prophet gave Rehoboam the cause of the attack? Why did God spare Rehoboam? Asa's character? His efforts to remove idolatry? By whom was he attacked? How delivered? THE COVENANT, why renewed? At what place? By what offerings? To whom? What mercy was granted to Judah? JEHOSEPHAT'S PROSPERITY, why given? By whom? His efforts to remove idolatry? To spread a knowledge of God? JEHOSEPHAT REPROVED, for what? By whom? His efforts at reform? Who were appointed to aid in reforming the people? The instructions given them? JEHOSEPHAT HELPED, by whom? Against whom? When? The speech of Jehoshaphat to his army? Who went before the army? The manner and result of the battle? JOASH REPAIRING, whose house? How was the money to be raised therefor? The amount of money gathered? The feeling of the people in giving? (2.) BY JUDGMENTS.—UZZIAH'S PRIDE PUNISHED where? For what? How? By whom was he withstood? His temper under the reproof? How long a leper? AHAZ'S PERSISTENT WICKEDNESS, against whom? How punished? By what kings? How "ruined"? His greater sins? HEZEKIAH'S GOOD REIGN, by what judgments prompted? How does he describe those judgments? His orders to avert them? To restore true worship? HEZEKIAH AND THE ASSYRIANS, the cause of their strife? The aim of the Assyrians? How known to Hezekiah? The added threat? The character of the letters sent? To whom did he carry them all? The judgment on the Assyrians? MANASSEH BROUGHT TO REPENTANCE, by what judgments? The effect of the judgment on him? The answer of the Lord? The efforts Manasseh made to restore God's worship? How God teaches us by this history?

MERCIES AND JUDGMENTS. IMPROVED, ABUSED, BRING SALVATION, DESTRUCTION.

LESSON XIV.

APRIL 7.]

JO-SIAH'S EARLY PIETY. [About 639 B. C.]

READ 2 Chron. 34 : 1-8. RECITE vs. 2, 3.

DAILY READINGS.—M.—2 Chron. 34 : 1-8. T.—2 Kings 22 : 1-7. W.—1 Kings 13 : 1-10. Th.—1 Sam. 3. F.—Deut. 9 : 15-21. Sa.—Luke 2 : 40-52. S.—Ecol 12.

GOLDEN TEXT.—Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them.—Ecol. 12 : 1.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—Youth is the time to seek the Lord.

CONNECTED HISTORY.—After Manasseh's death, Amon, his son, succeeded him; reigned two years; was assassinated in his own house by conspirators. The people in turn slew the conspirators, and made Amon's son, Josiah-king; Psalm 77 and the prophecy of Habakkuk are referred to this period.

TO THE SCHOLAR.—Josiah is peculiarly the model for young men in training for high and responsible positions. He sought his father's God and walked in the right path. "He looked inward, looked forward, and looked upward."—Adam Clarke.

NOTE.—Jo-si'-ah (Jehovah heals), the sixteenth ruler of Judah; reigned 31 years (639-608 B. C.); destroyed idolatry; repaired the temple; caused the law to be read; celebrated a solemn passover; was slain in battle with the Egyptians at Megiddo, and buried with great lamentations. 2 Kings 22-23 : 2 Chron. 34-35. He was predicted by name 330 years before his birth, 1 Kings 13 : 2. Groves, the Asherim—i.e., pillars and trees consecrated to the Phœnician goddess Asherah, called also Ashtaroth and Astarte. Ma-nas'-seh, E'-phra'im, Sin'-e-on, Nap'h'-ta-li. As Simeon was the most southern and Naphtali the most northern tribe, while Ephraim and Manasseh lay between, all the land of Israel would seem to be included. The kingdom of Israel had been destroyed by the Assyrians (721 B. C.), but the idols remained, and there was a remnant of inhabitants 2 Chron. 34 : 9 to be brought back to the worship of the true God, Mattocks, mats or swords;

the more probable rendering for the Hebrew translated "with their mattocks" is "in their ruins." Sha'-phan, the scribe—i.e., royal secretary, or "secretary of state." The office was important, and involved very confidential relations with the king. Scribes, as a regular class, came in about this time. 2 Chron. 34 : 13. Three of Shaphan's sons, Elash, Gemariah, and Ahikam, and one of his grandsons, Mithaiah, are mentioned in the book of Jeremiah.

EXPLANATIONS AND QUESTIONS.

LESSON TOPICS.—(I.) JOSIAH SEEKS AFTER GOD. (II.) DESTROYS IDOL-GODS. (III.) REPAIRS GOD'S HOUSE.

I. JOSIAH SEEKS AFTER GOD. (1.) JOSIAH, see Notes. (2.) DECLINED... TO THE RIGHT HAND NOR TO THE LEFT, kept in God's "strait" path; only used of this one king; claimed by Job, Job 23 : 11, and the Psalmist, Ps. 44 : 18, compare Deut. 5 : 32; 17 : 11-20; 28 : 14. (3.) IN THE EIGHTH YEAR, when he was sixteen years old.

I. QUESTIONS.—How many kings had reigned in Judah before Josiah? Age when he began to reign? Length of his reign? Between what dates? (See Notes.) His capital? His character? Walk? Conduct? Force of the commendation in the last clause of v. 2. How was this enjoined in Deuteronomy? By whom practised? At what age did he begin to seek after God?

II. DESTROYS IDOL-GODS. (3.) IN THE TWELFTH YEAR, when he was twenty years old, and perhaps "came of age." The prophet Jeremiah began his work about this time, Jer. 1 : 2; GROVES, Asherim, pillars and trees of the goddess Asherah or Astarte; CARVED IMAGES, of wood; MOLTEN IMAGES, cast, of metal. (4.) IN HIS PRESENCE, under his oversight; IMAGES, sun-images—i.e., pillars or statues erected near or upon the altars, and consecrated to the sun-god Baal. These idols had been reared by Manasseh, destroyed and restored by Amon, Josiah's father, 2 Chron. 33 : 3, 15, 22. (5.) BONES OF THE PRIESTS, either the bodies were taken up from the graves, or the priests were then seized, put to death, and their bones so treated. (6.) MANASSEH... NAPHTALI, put for the whole land of Israel. The kingdom of Israel had been destroyed 721 B. C., but the Assyrian power was now weakened, and the remaining inhabitants might acknowledge the authority of Josiah; MATTOCKS, see Notes.

II. QUESTIONS.—Age of Josiah when he began to destroy idols? What places were first purged? Of what? Meaning of "groves"? What altars were broken? What done with the sun-images? With the dust of the idols? By whom had those idols been established? Special reason for burning the bones of the priests? Into what parts of Israel did he carry his work? Condition of Israel at that time? Destroyed how long before? Now under what government?

III. REPAIR GOD'S HOUSE. (8.) SHAPHAN, see Notes; THE HOUSE OF THE LORD, the temple built by Solomon. No record is made of any repairs since the time of Joash or Jehoahaz (2 Kings 12 : 4), some 230 years before. The three men mentioned were a sort of "building commission."

III. QUESTIONS.—Age of Josiah when he set about the repair of the temple? Names of the three commissioners? The office of each? By whom had the temple been repaired before? Give an account of that repairing. Of the present one.

What facts in this lesson teach us—

- (1.) That children should begin to serve God while young?
(2.) That the truly pious will desire the repair of the house of the Lord, both materially and spiritually?
(3.) That every one is to do his part of the work just where God puts him?

THE SPRING AND SUMMER CAMPAIGN.

We hope to have a very great increase in the circulation of our papers this spring and summer. The indications now are the most favorable; those, who through bad roads or hard times did not renew their subscriptions in December and January are doing it now. The times throughout the country are improving, and, further, every day's returns show marked increase over those of last year. To take the tide at its flood and give a new impetus to the work, we will accept half yearly new subscriptions to the WEEKLY WITNESS till further notice for fifty cents each. This we could not possibly do in the winter months, as ten the stress on the clerks is too great to permit them to attend to the great number of short-date subscriptions which might be expected. We will also continue our prize list as heretofore, in the hope that every new subscriber who takes the paper for six months will renew at the end of that time, and thus we shall not be losers by the offer of extra inducements. In this connection we might refer to the matter of mailing the money. Fifty cents is a very awkward sum to send in a letter; but our friends can obviate the difficulty by always sending in two, four, six, eight, ten, or some higher even number of subscriptions, so that the amount may be sent in bank notes; or better still, remit by post-office order, when there will be no dan

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THE CAMPAIGN MAP.

A copy of the map of Canada showing the counties where the liquor traffic is prohibited by law, accompanies every number of this issue of the MESSENGER. The prohibiting counties are shown by being tinted pink. Will our readers paste up this map in some place where it may be seen, and also enlist themselves in the temperance cause, if they have not already done so, so that soon every county may become prohibitory ones.

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