

THE BOOK OF BOOKS.

There is one book which the study of all other literature will only render more precious, while at the same time it is so surpassing and universal in its range, that all other literature serves but its foil or its illustration. "There is more wisdom in this book than in all the other books of the world put together."

Said the great German theologian Ewald to Dean Stanley, as he stooped to pick up a copy of the New Testament which had accidentally fallen from his table, "All other literature will seem greatest to us as it most tends to brighten the perfect lessons which can be learnt from this book alone."

"It lives in the ear," said Faber, "like a music that can never be forgotten. Its felicities often seem to be almost things rather than mere words. The memory of the dead passes into it. The potent traditions of childhood are stereotyped in its verses. The power of all the grief and trials of a war are hidden in its words."

"The sun," says Theodore Parker, "never sets upon its gleaming page. It goes equally to the cottage of the plain man and the palace of the king. It is woven into the literature of the scholar, and colours the talk of the street." "By the study of what other book," asks Prof. Huxley, "could children be so much made to feel that each figure in that vast historical procession fills, like themselves, but a momentary space in the interval between two eternities, and earns the blessings or the curses of all time, according to its efforts to do good and hate evil, even as they also are earning their payment for their work?"

All literature is in a true sense a Bible of the earth, and it is slowly written in

"Texts of despair or hope or joy or moan;" but its best interpretation and its only substitute is in the sacred literature of the chosen people to which in a special and distinctive sense we give, as we give to no other, the title of the Holy Book, the Word of God.

Fear Not.

Fret not, faint not, fear not!
What though sorely tried,
Do thou always make God thy stay:
In His presence hide.

Fret not, ill devices
Cannot always stand;
Believe, dear soul, in God's control
All in His hand.

Faint not, God is greater
Far from all thy foes;
On Him depend, all strength to lend
Till life's journey close.

Fear not, there can nothing
Come unknown above;
For good or ill shall work God's will,
And God's will is love.

Fret not, faint not, fear not!
Still in peace abide;
God will direct, and He protect;
In His love confide.

A STORY is told of a shrewd Scotch-woman who tried to wean her husband from the dram-shop by employing her brother to act the part of a ghost, and frighten John on his way home. "Who are you?" said the guidman, as the apparition rose before him from behind a bush. "I am Auld Nick," was the reply. "Come awa', man," said John, nothing daunted. "Gie's a shake o' your hand. I am married to a sister o' yours."

Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep.

GOLDEN head so lowly bending;
Little feet so white and bare,
Dewy eyes, half shut, half opened—
Lipsing out her evening prayer.

Well she knows when she is saying,
"Now I lay me down to sleep,"
'Tis to God that she is praying,
Praying Him her soul to keep.

Half asleep, and murmuring faintly,
"If I should die before I wake"—
Tiny fingers clasped so saintly—
"I pray Thee, Lord, my soul to take."

Oh, the rapture, sweet, unbroken,
Of the soul who wrote that prayer!
Children's myriad voices floating
Up to heaven, record it there.

Rev. D. V. Lucas on the Liquor Traffic.

Rev. D. V. Lucas, Secretary of the Dominion Alliance, gave an able lecture in the Elm Street Methodist Church on the Scott Act controversy now agitating the country. He opposed the stern logic of facts to air-spun theories, giving chapter and verse from official statistics, and quoting largely from the utterances of judges, grand juries, statesmen, and such clergymen as Canon Farrar and others of similar standing. As an old resident of the County of Halton, familiar with its record both before and since the passage of the Scott Act, he was enabled authoritatively to disprove the alleged failure of the Act in that county, and to show by a comparison of its criminal returns with those of the adjoining counties that the Act has been successful to a very remarkable degree in preventing drunkenness and crime. His concluding words were: "We dare not stand still and let this terrible traffic go on. God has laid the burden on us. Our opponents only make our work the harder, but they do not discourage us into inactivity and indifference, and they cannot defeat us, for we know that they are fighting against God. For there never was upon this earth any other thing which offered so many insults to God and His Son, or put so many hindrances in the way of His cause. There never was any other thing which has injured humanity more, or done more to disgrace civilization. Ask us to license it! We dare no more to consent to license it than we dare to license Pandora to open her box; than we dare to license men to turn loose in our streets the

WILD BEASTS OF THE JUNGLES.

To license it means to consent to let it live, to promise it protection, to authorize it to continue its work of slaughter and ruin. Five hundred years of licensing it in England; two hundred years of licensing it in the United States; one hundred years of license in Canada, and, in round numbers, four hundred and fifty separate and distinct Acts of Parliament to regulate it, and yet in these three Christian countries you kill not less than 150,000 persons annually, besides bringing into tens of thousands of homes misery and wretchedness which cannot be calculated or described. Now, sir, if it is still licensed for a little longer, it is against the consent of many thousands of good Christian people, who love this land quite as much as you do, and its people and its God a good deal more."

A Young Men's Christian Association has been formed in Jaffna College, Ceylon, and is asking for a place in the International Association.

How Prohibition was Won in Atlanta, Ga.

ATLANTA has never known such excitement before, except when Sherman burnt the city. Men of all classes are almost wild on this question. Go over the city and everything is forgotten in this. Lawyers, merchants, mechanics, preachers, real estate dealers, and of all lines of work have closed up, and are doing all they can to save the boys and the drunkards. The people know that they have a Lucifer as their arch enemy, and they are working with all the zeal of their souls, leaving nothing undone. They appreciate that flesh cannot whip the Prince of Darkness. Every man, woman and child is trying to pray for the help of the mighty God. We want the prayers of every Christian. If we win, it will be God's victory. One thing cheers us, the liquor men are even defying God, and saying that God does not answer prayer, and now we feel that God will protect His cause. The women, for three weeks, have been holding daily prayer-meetings in various parts of the city.

The vote was largely in favour of prohibition, though the liquor trade spent large sums to defeat the act.

Terrible Experience.

Mr. A. J. Talbott, who died at South Bend, Ind., from the effects of a relapse into intemperance, was formerly a minister, and once a member of Congress from Kentucky. He operated for the temperance order, but evidently was not supported by religion. In a temperance meeting at South Bend he gave the following as his experience: "But now that the struggle is over, I can survey the field and measure the losses. I had a position high and holy. This demon tore from around me the robes of my sacred office, and sent me forth churchless and godless, a very hissing and by-word among men. Afterward I had business large and lucrative, and my voice in all large courts was heard pleading for justice, mercy, and right. Anon the dust gathered on my unopened books, and no footfall crossed the threshold of the drunkard's office. I had moneys ample for all necessities; but they took wings and went to feed the coffers of the devils which possessed me. I had a home adorned with all that wealth and most exquisite taste could suggest. This devil crossed the threshold and the lights faded from the chambers; the fire went out on the holiest of altars, and leading me through its portals, despair walked forth with her, and sorrow and anguish lingered within. I had children, beautiful, to me at least, as a dream of the morning, and they had so entwined themselves around their father's heart that, no matter where it might wander, ever it came back to them on the bright wings of a father's undying love. This destroyer took their hands in his and led them away. I had a wife whose charms of mind and person were such that to see her was to remember, and to know her was to love. For thirteen years we walked the rugged path of life together, rejoicing in its sunshine, sorrowing in its shade. The infernal monster could not spare me even this. I had a mother who for long, long years had not left her chair, a victim of suffering and disease; and her choicest delight was in the reflection that the lessons she taught had taken root in the heart

of her youngest born, and that he was useful to his fellows and an honour to her that bore him. But the thunder-bolt reached even there, and there it did its most cruel work. Ah, me! never a word of reproach from her lips—only a tender care; only a shadow of great and unspoken grief gathered over her dear old face; only a trembling hand laid more lovingly on my head; only a closer clinging to the cross; only a more piteous appeal to heaven if her cup were not full. And while her boy raved in his wild delirium two thousand miles away, the pitying angels pushed the golden gates ajar, and the mother of the drunkard entered into rest.

"And thus I stand: A clergyman without a cure; a barrister without a brief or business; a father without a child; a husband without a wife; a son without a parent; a man with scarcely a friend; a soul without a hope—all swallowed up in the maelstrom of drink."

LESSON NOTES.

FIRST QUARTER.

STUDIES IN JEWISH HISTORY, B.C. 586.] LESSON IV. (Jan. 24.

CAPTIVITY OF JUDAH.

2 Kings 25. 1-18. Commit to mem. v. 11, 18. GOLDEN TEXT.

By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.—Ps. 137. 1.

CENTRAL TRUTH.

The way of transgressors is hard.

DAILY READINGS.

M. 2 Kings 24. 1-20. Tu. 2 Kings 25. 1-30. W. Jer. 52. 1-34. Th. Jer. 39. 1-18. F. 2 Chron. 36. 1-26. Sa. Ps. 74. 1-22. Su. Lam. 1. 1-22.

TIME.—Jerusalem destroyed in the summer of B.C. 586. 18 years after the last lesson.

PLACE.—Jerusalem; Riblah, 75 miles north of Damascus; Babylon.

CIRCUMSTANCES.—We turn now to the history in the Book of Kings. It is 18 years since the last lesson's story, but we must give a brief glance at the intervening history.

HELPS OVER HARD PLACES.—1. *Ninth year of his—Zedekiah's reign. Tenth month—Thebet, which includes from middle of December to middle of January. Built forts—High wooden towers from which to sling darts, firebrands, or thrust battering-rams.* 2, 3. *Eleventh year, fourth month—July, B.C., 586. A year and a half after the siege began. During this time the 3023 captives of Jer. 25. 25 (where "7th" should be "17th").* 4. *By way of the gate—at the south of the city. The besiegers entered on the north. Toward the plain—Of Jericho.* 6. *Riblah—75 miles north of Damascus. Here Nebuchadnezzar was overseeing two sieges, one at Jerusalem, and one at Tyre.* 11. *Remnant of the multitudes—Those outside of the city.*

SUBJECTS FOR SPECIAL REPORTS.—The first captivity.—The second captivity.—The third captivity.—God's justice in the punishment of the Jews.—His mercy.—How the way of transgressors is hard.—The benefits that came from the captivity.

QUESTIONS.

INTRODUCTORY.—How many years intervene between this lesson and the last? Who was king at the time of this captivity? Give the date. What prophets lived at this time, and where? Have you read over the history of this time as given in Jeremiah and Chronicles?

SUBJECT: THE WAY OF TRANSGRESSORS IS HARD.

I. THE BEGINNING OF SORROWS.—What great trouble had Jeremiah foretold on account of the sins of the Jews? (Jer. 27. 22.) When did this captivity begin? (2 Kings 24. 1; Dan. 1. 1.) What prophet was among the captives? (Dan. 1. 1, 6.) When was the next capture of Jerusalem? (2 Kings 24. 8-10.) Describe it. (2 Kings