

Our Story.

TWO WAYS TO BE HONEST.

(Concluded)

Squire Barlow came in the next day. His farm bordered on Mrs. Morris's pasture...

"I expect 'tis, squire," said Mrs. Morris, with a smile as pleasant as if the aggressive cows had belonged to her instead of her neighbour.

Now Squire Barlow was well under John Peters' thumb, having kept him in his service for fifteen years, and resented any outside comments on the man...

Gradually Jane Green was discovering that it was not necessary to lie or deceive to be agreeable. Gradually her faith in the necessity and use of absolute honesty was returning to her.

"Annt Rachel!" she said, panting and out of breath with her haste. "I want to talk to you. Oh, dear! Oh, I've got into the awfulest scrape!"

"Set down; set right down here on the step, Lucy, till you get your breath."

"So the two sat down together, Lucy on the lower step. Jane Green heard nothing of what went on till she came to the front window to tie back the curtains, she could not get out of the room without passing them, and, to tell the truth, she was so interested in the first words she did hear, and so anxious to know what Aunt Rachel would say, that she stood still and listened.

like him any more, all would have been right. "But, aunty, they'd have been so mad!"

"Well, that only lasts a little while, gettin' mad. 'Twould have been all over long ago, and nobody to blame. Dear little Lucy, you hear to a old woman. Go and tell father. He'll straighten it all out. Now, will you? Own up that you've been foolish and deceitful, and you want him to help you. Won't you, dear?"

"I'll try," said Lucy, humbly; and with a very warm kiss on Aunt Rachel's withered cheek, she stole away, down-cast but resolute. Jane listened in wonder. Here Aunt Rachel had told a headstrong girl to her face that she was foolish and deceitful, and had done wrong, and Lucy had not resented it, but had been grateful. What would she herself have done if Mary Ann or Ephraim had said as much to her? Why, she would have been furious!

"I guess not, Jane." "Well, I don't see into't. I used to get so vexed with Ephraim and Mary Ann; they were always sayin' horrid things, and then they'd say, 'I'm blunt, but I'm honest.' And oh, how I used to wish they'd tell some pleasant lies!"

"There's too much natu' gets into't them times." Jane sat silent. Here, then, was the solution of her doubt. Truth was lovely and divine after all. It was using it as a weapon of anger, ill humour or conceit, that tarnished its lustre and hid its beauty.

Sabbath School Work.

LESSON HELPS.

LESSON VII, November 17, 1889. DAVID'S LAST WORDS. 2 Sam. xxiii. 1-7. COMMIT VERSES 3, 4. GOLDEN TEXT.—He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure.—2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

CENTRAL TRUTH.—The blessed influence of the reign of Christ. DAILY READINGS. M. 2 Sam. xxii. 1-51. W. 2 Sam. xxiii. 1-7. Th. 1 Kings i. 1-53. F. 1 Kings ii. 1-12. Sa. 1 Chron. xxviii. 1-21. Sv. 1 Chron. xxix. 1-30.

TIME.—B. C. 1015. At the close of David's reign; eight years after the last lesson. PLACE.—Jerusalem. DAVID.—Seventy years old, having reigned forty years.

CLOSING YEARS.—Generally peaceful, spent in perfecting his kingdom, and preparation for the temple. There was a famine (2 Sam. xxi), a census or enrolment, either for taxation or military service, followed by a pestilence (2 Sam. xxiv; 1 Chron. xxi), the attempt of Adonijah upon the throne, and the appointment of Solomon as David's successor.

LAST WORDS.—(1) To the princes, in preparation for the temple (1 Chron. xxviii, xxix.); (2) to Solomon (1 Kings ii. 1-7); (3) to the world, our lesson for to-day.

ing forth fruits and flowers. 5. Although my house: although David was conscious of imperfections, yet God had made a promise, and all these blessings were to come forth from his house...

SUBJECTS FOR FURTHER STUDY AND SPECIAL REPORTS.—The incidents of David's closing years.—His last words to the princes; to Solomon.—His death and burial.—General view of his life and character, as a statesman, a general, a religious reformer, a hymn-writer.—His vision of the future.—Christ like the sun.—Christ's influence like the spring time.—The wicked like thorns.

QUESTIONS. REVIEW.—What dreadful experience did David pass through in our last two lessons? What became of Absalom? What were David's feelings toward him?

I. THE CLOSING YEARS OF DAVID'S LIFE.—How many years did David live after the rebellion of Absalom? How many years of famine? (2 Sam. xxi. 1.) What error did David commit? (2 Sam. xxiv.) How was it punished? What do you learn as to the population of his kingdom from this census? What was David doing most of these years? (1 Chron. xxii, xxviii, xxix.) Give a brief account of these preparations for the temple. What were David's last words to Solomon? (1 Kings ii. 1-7.) Where was David buried? (1 Kings ii. 10.) How old was he? (How long had he reigned?) What would you say of his character? Was his life a success? The source of it. Describe him as a statesman; as a general; as a poet.

II. A VISION OF THE TRUE KING.—(vs. 1-3).—How is David described in these verses? Who inspired him to speak the words of this lesson? Why is God called a Rock? How is the true King described? Was this a picture of himself, or of his ideal? (v. 5.) In which of his descendants was it fulfilled? (Matt. ii. 2, Luke i. 32, 33, Phil. ii. 9, 11; John xviii. 36, 37.) Over whom is Jesus King? What do you find in him that makes him the perfect ideal King?

III. THE BLESSED INFLUENCE OF HIS KINGDOM (vs. 4, 5).—To what is the influence of Jesus compared? Why is it said to be without clouds? In what respects are the sinful heart and the world without Christ like the earth in the night time? What does the sun do for the earth? What things like unto these does Jesus do for us? In what respects are the sinful heart and the world without Christ like the earth in winter time? What do the sun and rain do for the earth in the spring? What does Jesus do for us like unto these things? Did David feel worthy of such blessings? (v. 5.) How did he know God would do them? (v. 5. See also 2 Sam. vii. 12-16.) Are these promises being fulfilled?

IV. THOSE WHO REMAIN OUTSIDE THE KINGDOM (vs. 6, 7).—By what name are wicked people called? To what are they compared? What must be done with thorns and weeds? Why? How is their injury to others described? Need any persons remain wicked? If they refuse to repent and change, what must become of them? (Rev. xxi. 27.) Is there any way of escape except by turning from their evil ways? (Ez. k. xviii. 30-32; Matt. v. 20, vii. 18, 19)

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS. I. Even old age can be made useful in preparing materials for the rising generation to use. II. God gives us joyful and comfort inspiring visions of the future. III. It is blessed to have ever before us the highest ideals.

IV. Jesus Christ is the true King—righteous, wise, powerful, seeking the good of His people, triumphing over all enemies. V. The heart and the world, without Christ, are in the night of ignorance, of trouble, of sin, with only dim stars of guidance and hope. VI. Jesus Christ is like the rising sun, bringing light, warmth, cheer, life, and beauty. VII. The heart and the world, without Christ, are like the earth in winter. VIII. Jesus Christ is like the sun and rain of spring, bringing life and beauty, fruits, flowers, singing birds, every good.

IX. Those who remain wicked are like thorns, useless and injurious, and they must be cast out of God's paradise.—Peloubet.

EXTRAORDINARY afflictions are not always the punishment of extraordinary sins, but sometimes trials of extraordinary graces.—Matthew Adams.

ADORNING THE DOCTRINE.

I RECENTLY read in a paper a little story like this: A mother once said to her little girl, "Katy, why don't you go more with Lucy Wheeler? She's such a good little girl! I should like to have you play with her." "Yes, mamma, said Katy, with something of a sigh, "she is a good little girl, but, do you know, mamma, sometimes I almost hate her. She's so awfully good!"

I smiled at the story, and then fell to thinking over it. I remembered that I had known, among children of larger growth, people of unquestionable goodness, whose self-denial and self-control and unflinching adherence to right principles were worthy of my sincere admiration,—yes, and received it,—but who were still most unattractive to me, and whose society, I confess, I incline to avoid rather than seek.

In the wonderful old Church of St. Mark's, at Venice, is placed an alabaster pillar, said to have been saved from the ruins of Solomon's temple, and now used as part of the support of the high altar. It is cut in a beautiful spiral shaft of graceful proportions, and blossoms out at the top into an exquisitely carved capital. It stands bravely in its place, and bears its share of the weight. But your first thought is, "How beautiful!" Does not Jesus mean that we shall be beautiful as well as strong in his service? And do we take enough pains to make goodness attractive, and so adorn His doctrine "in all things"? Christ says: "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." Ought not we Christians to have more of this drawing power, not that we may draw others to ourselves personally, but through us to Him whose image we daily pray to bear?—S. S. Times.

PRAYER.

ANYWHERE, everywhere, any time and all times, we may commune with God. It is easy when the object of prayer is understood. We are to focus thought, not so much on our distributive wants, as on the grander reaches of contemplation indicated in the requests, "Hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." We are to cultivate a spirit of devotion and then we can realize the idea of the apostle's command, "Pray without ceasing." Our closet, then, is everywhere. Steps up to the throne we can find by the roadside or in the place of trade, as well as at home. We shall never feel lonely and desolate, for through the open windows of the soul will shine in a transfiguring light from heaven, in which we will gladly walk till we are received within the gates and behold the open vision of God.—S. E. Herrick, D. D.

INTO THE WILDERNESS.

THERE are some spirits which must go through a discipline analogous to that sustained by Elijah. The storm-struggle must precede the still, small voice. There are minds which must be convulsed with doubt before they can repose in faith. There are hearts which must be broken with disappointment before they can rise into hope. Blessed is the man who, when the tempest has spent its fury, recognises his Father's voice in its undertone, and bares his head and bows his knee, as Elijah did. To such spirits it seems as if God had said, "In the still sunshine and ordinary ways of life you cannot meet me, but like Job, in the desolation of the tempest you shall see My Form, and hear My Voice, and know that your Redeemer liveth."—F. W. Robertson.

A PREMIUM ON MARRIAGE.

THAT was a sound principle which a minister applied in the case of an inebriate who complained that he never could pass a saloon when alone. "Then take your baby with you," said the clergyman. The poor man's face brightened at the suggestion, and he was frequently seen afterwards trundling his little son in his perambulator, safely past the most alluring drinking den.

Family ties, when pure and strong, are great safeguards. This truth was recognised not long ago by a shrewd manufacturer at the West, who increased the wages of his married employes. He contended that a workman who has a home and wife and children to labour for is more competent and trustworthy than one who knocks about in boarding houses, and has no one to care whether he does well or ill. The man with a family dependent upon him, as a rule, is also more hopeful and ambitious, because he has a stronger incentive to do his best. Not that all bachelors are worthless, nor all beneficiaries paragons of excellence, but the old maxim still holds true, "It is not good that the man should be alone." The "higher criticism" may pick flaws in Genesis, but will scarcely class this statement among the "mistakes of Moses."—Congregationalist.

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