

LESSON I.—July 3rd, 1898.

THE KINGDOM DIVIDED. 1 Kings 12: 16-25.

I. GOLDEN TEXT: "A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger." Prov. 15: 1.

II. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR THE QUARTER: God's good gifts.

III. PREVIEW THOUGHT FOR TO-DAY'S LESSON: A happy home.

IV. SYNOPSIS. We begin a half year's studies in the Old Testament at the death of Solomon, and the division of the kingdom upon the accession of Jeroboam, and Rehoboam. We must keep in mind that for the preceding 120 years the kingdom had been growing strong and united, under the successive reigns of Saul, David and Solomon. There was thorough military organization. Peace on all sides. Riches in abundance, gold as plentiful as stones. But for Solomon's sins this might have continued. Rehoboam was Solomon's son and would naturally be his heir. He was a true son of a wicked father and an equally ungodly mother. There was no peace within the kingdom, however. The people demanded reform, and sent to Egypt for Jeroboam, who had been banished thither by Solomon. The people demanded relief from Rehoboam, but his answer was haughty and thoughtless and under the leadership of Jeroboam the Ten Tribes revolted, and the kingdom was divided.

V. SUGGESTIVE STEPS.

1. Once upon a time there was a happy home. The children lived very happily there, until one day a quarrel came. There was one thoughtless and selfish boy. He wanted his own way, he only thought about himself. What endless trouble it made. One took his part, and the others took the other side, and there was a division. No more nice games that afternoon. No more bright smiles, etc., etc. Why? Selfishness had come in. Thoughtlessness led to angry words. Then quick answers, and the damage was done.

This story can be made more effective by being made more concrete, if, as it is told, some pieces of paper are used to represent the children, showing how, as they quarrelled, they divided. Emphasize that one thoughtless word led to all.

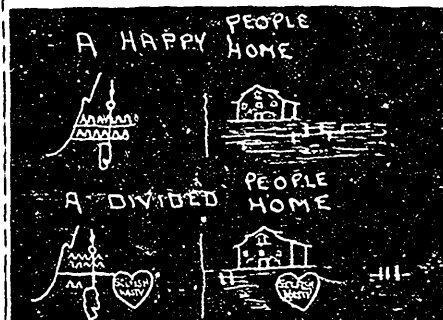
2. Teach the Golden Text.

3. Ask questions about the Kings, Saul,

David, and Solomon, and tell of the happy home the children of Israel had until after Solomon died. As you speak of the people recall the twelve tribes. Hold in the hand a piece of black paper on which are pasted twelve white pieces of paper, each the shape of a tent, and each time the people are spoken of throughout the Quarter, point to the paper to represent them.

4. Now tell that trouble had come into that once happy home, and one boy had the power to put an end to it, if he had only been thoughtful and unselfish, but he was not. Now tell the story of Rehoboam and Jeroboam, and when this is finished again refer to the Golden Text.

5. Now make the personal application showing how we often can be peacemakers. Ask



the children, for instance, where they have known a soft answer to have turned away wrath. Show the danger of the hasty word and of the angry word, and again drill on the Golden Text.

6. God gave the children of Israel a happy home, but sin made it unhappy. Sin divided it. Here tear the two tents from the ten, and place them on their respective places on the map.

7. God gives us a happy home and we must be careful not to allow sin to enter in and divide it. Our home is God's good gift. Let us prize it as a precious thing he has given us, and let us each do his share to keep it happy.

NOTE.—Sometime each Sunday in the Quarter, either during the opening exercises of the lesson or the closing exercises, have the children repeat the Golden Text for the Quarter.