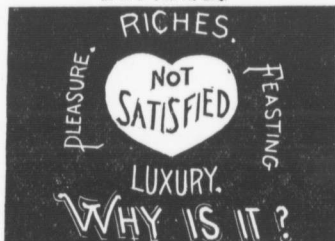


the king as a palace-builder. What magnificent structures he rears, as if wielding a magician's wand! He rims them with gardens that rustle with trees and are jewelled with flashing ponds. Long trains of servants glide through his palaces, and rare stock crowd his barns. Drought, though, may dry up his ponds and wither his trees. His servants may become traitors, pestilence may rob him of his cattle, and fire may crumble to ashes his palaces. I see the king as a money-getter. How he gloats over the gold that burns upon his table, the rare stones and bright silver that shine there. Canker, though, spots his gold, his silver is tarnished, and thieves invade his hoard of jewels. I see him as the patron of music and the arts. The voices of sweet singers, the notes of skilled players, entrance his soul. In all the kingdom of art, he stands as the sovereign, and calls about him its treasures. What song, though, can soften his heart-ache in sorrow? In sickness, what art-treasures can heal his wounds? I see him once more, and among the manuscripts of the wise. Far into the night, he turns over the parchment of poet and sage. He watches the stars. He records the trees from Lebanon's cedar to "the hyssop that springeth out of the wall." He is skilled to speak of "beasts and of fowl and of creeping things and of fishes." By the thousand, he composes songs and devises proverbs. And yet he knows that no wisdom can keep back the cold shadow of death steadily advancing

toward him. "How dieth the wise man?" he cries. "As the fool."

Blackboard.

BY J. B. PHIPPS, B.A.



With a piece of white chalk draw a heart. Write in it NOT SATISFIED. At the bottom of the board write WHY IS IT? Let us try and satisfy it. Surround it with riches. Does perfect happiness rest with a man simply because he has money? No. Add luxury, pleasure in worldly amusements, and feasting, and yet the words in the heart remain unchanged. Why is it? Because God has so made man that nothing will fill the heart with complete peace and joy except the love of Christ. You may erase each one of the words that surround the heart, and substitute Christ, and then the heart will be satisfied. (Erase the word "not.") The loss of any of the others will not change the love of Christ.

B.C. 980.]

LESSON XII.—THE CREATOR REMEMBERED.

Ecclesiastes 12. 1-14.

[December 31.



1 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;

2 While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:

3 In the day when the keepers of the *a* house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and *a* the grinders cease, because they are few, and *b* those that look out of the windows be darkened,

a 2 Cor. 5. 1.—*a* Or, the grinders fail, because they grind little.—*b* Gen. 27. 1.

4 And the *c* doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all *d* the daughters of music shall be brought low;

c Micah. 7. 1.—*d* 2 Sam. 19. 35.

5 Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the *e* almond tree shall flourish, and the grass hopper shall be a burden, and desire shall

fail; because man goeth to his long home; and the mourners go about the streets:

e Lev. 19. 32.

6 Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern:

7 Then *f* shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return unto God *h* who gave it.

f Gen. 3. 19.—*g* Chap. 3. 21.—*h* Num. 27. 16; Zech. 12. 1.

8 Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher; all is vanity.

9 And *b* moreover, because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs.

b Or, the more wise the preacher was, etc.

10 The Preacher sought to find out *c* acceptable words; and that which was written was upright, even words of truth.

c Words of delight.

11 The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd.

12 And further, by these, my son, be admon-