

amongst these huge, weird, uncanny-looking birds. Almost at all seasons, too, the common gull makes the air sadly melodious with his call, or odd, short, little, sharp pipe; and with his bright wings carries off gently into the sky and sea-tones the sometimes over-dazzling brilliancy of the white chalk cliffs. Puffins, kitty wakes, and the rest likewise abound, offering no mean addition by contrast to the general feeling of solitude which the region engenders; for though, in one sense, the absence of fishing-boats and their kindred incidents is a drawback to Lulworth from the artist's point of view, it is, in a measure, compensated for by the undisturbed tranquillity to be found on every height, and in every bay and inlet. Beyond a solitary boatman occasionally to be observed hauling up or lowering his lobster-pots in some deep rocky creek, or the shepherd and his dog tending the flock that has wandered hurl upon the verge of the tall cliffs, and now and then the coastguard on the look-out, or passing between the



THE SPRING.

white-washed barracks, which, on this as along all our shores, peep up at intervals, there is no life going on. The "fisherman's boy," or the "sailor lad," is a rarity in this sequestered district, and, except in an odd instance or two, there is no sea-faring population to give it much attraction in the eyes of a figure-painter. Nevertheless it may be added that Mr. Millais spent several weeks here painting his notable picture of "The Romans leaving Britain"; but he, to be sure, did not select that black-eyed, dark-haired beauty, or the stalwart Roman warrior, her lover, from the natives.

Doubtless it was again the fine outlook upon the irregular coast and open sea, the background to his incident, that drew our eminent painter to the spot, and so finally we come back to the fact that it is to cliffs and sea and rocky, wild, bold shore that the artist, who would make Lulworth his headquarters, must look for his subjects.

For the Sabbath School.

International S. S. Lesson.

LESSON II.—APRIL 8.—GEN. XXXVII., 1-11.

Discord in Jacob's Family.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"See that you fall not out by the way."

A GLANCE AT THE INTERVENING HISTORY.—Eleven years had passed since the return of Jacob from Padan-Aram, and his deliverance from Esau. He first dwelt near Shechem, and here showed his enterprise by digging a famous well in the valley between Mts. Ebal and Gerizim, that is still known by his name, after thirty-six centuries. Driven from this place by a fierce collision of his sons with the Shechemites, Jacob went to Bethel, where his first great distress had been relieved by a divine vision, marking an era in his life. He refreshed his soul with the memory, and set up a pillar for a memorial. Proceeding southward he had gone only as far as Bethlehem when a great sorrow fell upon him. His beloved Rachel died in giving birth to a son whom she named Benoni, "The son of my sorrow," but his father named him Benjamin, "the son of the right hand," his comfort and support. Jacob still continued his southward journey, and came to Hebron where his father Isaac was still living old and feeble. His death is recorded in this connection because it was the natural completion of the story in chapter xxxv. But he lived several years after the events recorded in to-day's lesson.

THE FAMILY OF JACOB. THE OLDER SONS.—V. 1. And Jacob dwelt in the land. At Hebron (37: 14). The ten older sons of Jacob were separate in many ways from the two younger ones, who were the comfort and joy of Jacob's old age. They differed greatly in age, and still more in character, and were often the cause of trouble and sorrow. "The readers of Gen., chap. 34, 35, 37, and 38, will see that they were 'hard boys.' Especially do the worst elements of depraved character appear in their treatment of their younger brother Joseph."

The circumstances which tended to produce this character. (1) They were brought up during the active worldly career of Jacob, when he was carrying out his shrewd plans for worldly wealth. So that the home training and influences were not the most favorable to piety and morals. (2) Their relatives in Haran were none too pious. They came in contact with an immoral heathen community. This contamination is shown incidentally by the command of Jacob when he was going from Shechem to Bethel, that his household should "put away the strange gods that are among you," (32: 2). (3) "Their shepherd life took them into distant parts of the country, and seems practically to

have removed them much of the time from home and its domestic influences." Bickering, quarrels, selfishness bad temper, bad conduct are almost certain to ensue.

Mark the unconscious influence or atmosphere of the family, which in the worldly position of its history affected the older children. Every family has this unconscious influence, this moral atmosphere, and it is the most powerful influence in training the young. It is either a moral malaria preparing for every outbreak of vice, or is like the mountain breezes, or the sea air invigorating the soul.

JOSEPH THE BOY. GERMS OF CHARACTER.—V. 2. The generations of Jacob. This is plainly the beginning of a new document or story, put in its place after the story of "The Generations of Esau" in chapter 36. (1) Joseph was born in Padan-Aram, B. C. 1735. He was Jacob's youngest son, except Benjamin, who was but a little child at this time. (2) *His training.* Joseph could not have been more than six or seven years old when the family removed to Canaan, so that he had been brought up under better influences than his brethren; the atmosphere of the family in Joseph's childhood was far better than when the elder children were young. Then probably Jacob gave more time to the training of his younger son, and kept him more under his own influence; and Joseph inherited better tendencies from his mother. (3) *His character.* Joseph seems to have been a truly pious young man, bright and cheerful, active and trustworthy, earnest to do good and make others good, full of wise common sense, and of great business capacity. "He had Abraham's dignity and capacity, Isaac's purity and self-devotion, Jacob's cleverness and tenacity." He seems to have been handsome, strong, vigorous and attractive, a gentle, noble boy. The fact that his mother was dead, and his brothers were unfavorable, would throw him upon his own resources and develop his character early. No wonder that his father loved and trusted him, and put him forward. These characteristics were, of course, but partly developed in him, but the elements of his future career were there.

JOSEPH AT WORK.—And was feeding the flock. He was a shepherd like his brothers who were dispersed in detachments over the large extent of country occupied by Jacob's cattle, sometimes as far as Shechem, fifty miles; and Dothan seventy miles from their Hebron home. The lad was with the sons of Bilhah, and . . . Zilpah. These secondary wives of Jacob being the servants of Leah and Rachel, were probably Syrians. Their sons, therefore were of a wilder race than their brothers. As to Joseph's connection with them (1) They were shut out from rivalry with him as heir to the birth-right, and headship of the clan, for this would naturally fall to Reuben the eldest son of Leah or to Joseph the eldest son of Rachel.