

The Home Study Quarterly

FOR SENIOR SCHOLARS AND THE HOME DEPARTMENT.

Vol. I.

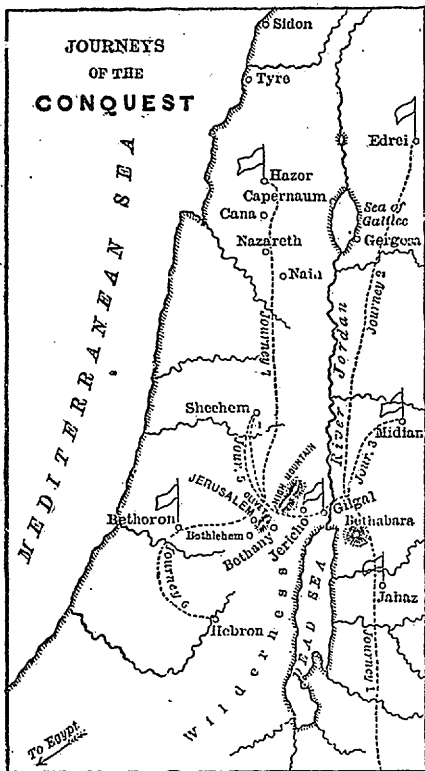
July, August and September, 1895.

No. 3.

THE CONQUEST OF CANAAN.

(From Peloubet's Notes, 1895.)

Before we enter upon the conquest of Canaan, which followed upon the fall of Jericho, it is well to place our scholars right upon the moral questions which necessarily arise. What right had the Israelites to drive out the Canaanites, to destroy them, and to take possession of their lands and homes?



FIRST. THE CANAANITES HAD FORFEITED THEIR RIGHTS. (1) Their destruction is always presented in Scripture as a judgment of God sent on them because of their wickedness. They had not only fallen into total apostasy from God, but into forms of idolatry of the most degrading kind. Their false religion cannot be regarded as a mere error of judgment; cruelty the most atrocious and unnatural crimes the most defiling were part and parcel of its observances (compare Lev. 18:21, 25 sqq.; Deut. 12: 30sqq.).—Cook. The heathenism of Palestine and Syria was so foul and degrading that there is no State, even at this time, which would not put it down, if necessary, by the severest penalties. Its spread to Rome was bewailed 1500 years later by the satirists of the day, as a calamity marking the utter decay of the times (Juvenal, *Satires*, III., 62).—Geikie. Nor did they sin thus through ignorance. They were not a savage race, but among the more cultivated ones of the time. They had commerce, coined money, iron chariots, probably books. (2) The Canaanites had received repeated warnings and instructions. Abraham and the patriarchs had lived among them. They knew something of God's dealings in behalf of his people. To them, as to all, shone the primitive revelation, and the voices of God in their consciences and in nature. God bore with them with infinite patience. (3) If God had not destroyed them they would have destroyed themselves by their own

corruption, but not till they had injured many others by their example and influence. This very destruction was more merciful than would have been the sufferings which would naturally flow from their character and conduct. (4) It can make no difference to those who are thus destroyed whether the agent of their destruction be a natural catastrophe, like an earthquake, the flood, the overthrow of Sodom, the destruction of the Egyptians in the Red Sea; or by an army divinely commissioned for the purpose; except that their gradual destruction by the servants of God, through marvellous miracles, was a continual invitation to them to repent, as well as a warning to the world against their sins.

SECOND. IT WAS WISE TO USE THE ISRAELITES AS THE DIVINE INSTRUMENTS.

(1) This land was the best place in which to train up a peculiar and separate people in the true religion. It was isolated. It was small, yet it was centrally situated for the spread of truth over the world. It had every variety of climate and of soil. It required labor to cultivate it, but bore fruit generously in response to toil. All these things, afforded special advantages for accomplishing the divine purpose as to this people. (2) The inhabitant, must be