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The Teachers Monthly

Rev. E. Douglas Fraser, D.D., Editor
Rev. J. M. Duncan, B.D., Associate Editor

Vol. XIV.

November, 1908

No. 11

ORDER EARLY, if you wish to be sure of your Sabbath School supplies for the New Year promptly. Our invariable rule is to fill orders on the day of their arrival; but towards the end of the year the amount of matter passing through the mails is so large, that there is likelihood of delay in transmission. Therefore, *order early*.

THE KING'S OWN, our illustrated paper for the Boys and Girls, is to be enlarged, beginning with 1909. It will contain one third more reading matter, without any increase in the subscription price. The issue for Jan. 2, 1909 has been printed in advance, and copies of it will be sent on application.

The TEACHERS MONTHLY for November and December will be sent free to any who may request it, and in any quantities that may be desired. This is in order that those who are not now using the TEACHERS MONTHLY may have an opportunity of thoroughly testing its quality.

Fixity and Fate

Fixity is as real a fact in human life as change. There is much, both in our constitution and surroundings, that we cannot alter, try as we will. Our natural abilities and aptitudes come to us through the working of laws in the making of which we have had no part and which no effort of ours can reverse. To one, for example, is given the poet's power of originating ideas and expressing them in rhythmical forms; while another is born with a capacity for the management of practical affairs. Our position in life, too, is quite as much made for

us as made by us. Our family connections, the place in which we live, often our work, are determined for us instead of being the results of our choice.

The realm in which each man can move has its strict and unchangeable limits; but within these limits he is sovereign. His kingdom may be small, but it is *his*. He may so rule in it, that it shall be filled with truth and justice and good-will and cheerful industry, and all other things that go to make life beautiful and happy.

We are not to argue from fixity to fate. The God who made the stars and holds each in its course, is the loving Father of us all, and our endowments are His gift, our place of His choosing. It may be that He has entrusted to us but one talent, while our neighbor has two or five. But no one save himself can prevent the one-talent man from being faithful, and to the faithful the reward is sure.

Faith and its Challenge

By Rev. J. D. Cunningham, M.A.

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews begins with a definition of faith. It is the evidence of things not seen. But the writer does not linger in the sphere of abstract definition. He prefers to pass swiftly into the sphere of history and make faith luminous through deeds rather than words. What faith *is*, may best be shown by what it *does*. With a few graphic touches, therefore, he reviews the past history of Israel. He creates a great picture gallery, in which are arranged the heroes of God in past ages, and here we see that every royal and masterful moment in the lives of these men was due to faith.

Does a soul go out not knowing whither it goeth, knowing only that God knows? It is through faith he does it. Does a soul stand steadfast against the lure of power and place unwedded to responsibility, the lure of silken, palaced ease that makes life to be "feeding among the roses and lying among the lilies"? It is through faith he does it.

Faith, therefore, is not remote, academic, mystical. It does things. It does hard things. It does impossible things. It is a thing all thews and sinews, that can and does overthrow the world. It is a thing all-persistent and all-enduring, that knows no rest until it "lays the spectres of the mind and beats out the music of life".

Wherein lies the secret of this aggressive, history-making, omnipotent power of faith? It lies in the fact that faith's other name is God! When we say "through faith", we say "through God". The achievements of faith are all achievements of God. Faith is simply an attitude of the soul, an open-dooredness of the soul which makes neighbors of God and life. Faith makes possible the presence of victory in life because it makes actual the presence of God in the soul.

It becomes clear, therefore, that, as we cannot understand faith through definition, neither can we receive faith in that way. God's divine intrusion into life is not through mental, but through moral avenues. We may have faith before we can define it. We may conquer by it, before we understand it. The willingness to receive God, the willingness to follow God,—these are the gates through which the king enters.

Having established that faith is not passive but potent, the writer of the Hebrews goes on in the next chapter to shew that faith must be contagious. In the twelfth chapter, the "picture gallery" of which we have spoken, becomes all at once an "arena". We have been looking at the heroes of God, now, like a great crowd of witnesses; *they* are looking at *us*. We have seen their achievements, now they are viewing ours. We must leave the picture gallery and enter the arena, saying, "Therefore let us also".

It is not enough to admire greatness, we must imitate it. After we have seen the heavenly vision, we must gird ourselves

to "run the straight race". Thereby is the divine succession maintained, and goodness becomes a gleam of hope in the present, as well as a golden dream of the past.

Welland, Ont.

"Thou Which Teachest"

By Esther Miller

The teacher of class No. 15 was in trouble. It started with the Noisy Boy. Hitherto his chief fault had been his noisiness; but he suddenly developed a new capacity for mischief by quarreling violently with the Slow Boy. It proved a very serious quarrel, indeed, displaying itself for two Sabbath afternoons in thunderous mutterings and lightning-like glances from angry eyes. The lesson for both days was spoiled, and the teacher saw that she must restore peace before anything effective could be done. She kept the Noisy Boy to help her put away her books after Sunday School, and found out all about it. The Slow Boy had certainly acted very meanly, but there were faults on both sides. The teacher talked the matter over gently and fairly, and at last succeeded in getting a promise of forgiveness. For the Noisy Boy had a big, generous heart, even though it was a fiery one.

But the next Sunday, when the teacher appeared, full of joyful anticipation of the reconciliation, she found to her dismay that matters were even worse than before. The Slow Boy was sullen, the Noisy Boy actively quarrelsome, and once more the lesson was a failure.

When the class was dismissed, the perplexed and discouraged teacher laid her hand for an instant on the Noisy Boy's arm. "I thought you promised me last week that you would be friends with Fred to-day", she said, with gentle reproach. The Noisy Boy flopped back noisily into his seat and hung his head in sullen silence.

"Did he offend you again?" "No."
 "Didn't he act as if he wanted to make up?"
 "I dunno, I guess so, I don't care anyhow."
 "Why, Frank! You didn't speak like that last Sunday. What has happened?"

Still sullen silence. "Hasn't something happened since then to make you change

your mind?" The Noisy Boy nodded reluctantly. "I was afraid so. Won't you tell me what it was?"

He glanced up at her half-defiantly, half-shyly. "I don't like to. It might make you mad", he said, with boyish candor. "Me? Why, Frank! Why should I be angry? Come, tell me, please, like a man."

"Well you—it's all ro' 'bout forgivin' folks anyhow", he burst out. "'Cause you said so yourself!"

"I said so!" cried his amazed teacher.

He nodded defiantly. "Yes, I heard you tellin' Mrs. Hume that you'd never forgive Miss Harkness, an' I bet she never acted so mean as Fred Bowes did!"

The teacher's dismayed mind flew back to the evening before. She and her friend had been chatting in the corner of a down-town

shop, when her enemy had passed. "Don't you speak to Amy Harkness?" her friend had asked, and she—she, the Sunday School teacher who had so earnestly preached forgiveness to her class—had answered incisively, "I certainly do not. I can never forgive her for the way she treated me last summer."

So, that was the reason of the Noisy Boy's stubbornness,—the poor Noisy Boy who had no one but his teacher to show him what forgiveness meant—and how she had failed! She sat in her place with scarlet cheeks and bent head long after he had left her, and the words that kept repeating themselves over and over to her were—"Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?"

Orillia, Ont.

What the Sabbath School May Learn from the Public School

The Three B's

By Joseph Whyte Rogers, Esq., M.A.

Principal, Dewson Street School, Toronto

As in a well governed home, there must be agreement between the parents as to what shall constitute the training of the child, so there must be unity of purpose among the officers and teachers as to what shall be the order and discipline of the Sabbath School. Differences of opinion should be discussed in private council and an understanding arrived at, that unity of purpose may be maintained. This agreement is the most essential feature of discipline.

Amongst the characteristics of a well governed School, three stand out prominently, namely, regularity of attendance, punctuality and good conduct. The three B's,—Be there; Be in time; Behave—are essential to the School's well-being.

1. Attendance. In size, classes should rarely exceed seven children. The teacher should know each child in the class, his parents, his home surroundings, his attractions and his ambitions. When he is absent, immediate communication should be had

with his parents, who should be made fully acquainted with the circumstances. If they are right-thinking people, a quiet influence will be found working in sympathy with the teacher and the School. If they are not, then the teacher has missionary work to do in the home, as well as in the School. In any case, the ideals of the teacher and superintendent should be judiciously kept before the minds of the parents, as well as of the children.

2. Punctuality. Children are keen imitators of those whom they admire, and especially if the admired ones are set as instructors of the young. It is, therefore, a necessity for teachers to be, themselves, early in their places, say fifteen minutes before work begins, so that the children may find a welcome when they arrive at class, and have no opportunity of entering into combinations, which the late teacher has no means of discovering and very little influence to correct. The teacher who is interested in his class, and is in time, has opportunities to get knowledge of his pupils, their aims and purposes, which few others can obtain.

3. Good conduct. The teacher should understand and live out the ideal relation

which he and his class bear to the whole School. In a word, "Co-operate". Respond at once to the call to order. Substitute as far as possible activities of a useful kind for those which merely produce amusement for the child and destroy the purpose of the teacher. Expect obedience. Be surprised if you do not get it.

The School Spirit

By R. A. Little, Esq., B.A.

Principal, Collegiate Institute, London, Ont.

The School spirit implies the spirit of unity in the School. This unity is the very basis, the *siné qua non*, of any spirit that can be found running through the School. It implies also unity in all that pertains to the best interests of the School in general and of the individual members. In order that this unity may prevail among the scholars of the School, it must begin with the officers and teachers. From the superintendent down to the teacher of the youngest class in the Primary Department, there must be unity of effort, in all the work and undertakings of the School.

Another primal basis of the School spirit is, that the work of the School in all departments should be as efficient as possible, so that the scholars may have a laudable pride in belonging to a well organized, go-ahead, live institution, and may be able, in mentioning their connection with their School, to do so with confidence and respect.

Now the School spirit or *esprit de corps* will be encouraged, whenever the whole School,—officers, teachers, and scholars,—can be brought to act together in any laudable purpose or undertaking. No opportunity of appealing to the noble spirit of the scholars in any cause worthy of their support should be allowed to pass; and, also, whenever the whole School can be brought to act as a unit in the ordinary work of the Sunday School, it should be brought to do so.

In the work immediately belonging to the School, this unity of action should be brought out:—(a) to a certain extent, in the recitation, when the scholars in general should be encouraged to speak out and answer questions from the platform, even though

their answers may be imperfect or perhaps incorrect; (b) in the contributions, in which all should be urged to take part, however small that part may be and to whatever object the funds may be devoted, but particularly to the cause of missions; (c) in getting in as few members those who do not belong to any Sunday School, which is a very essential part of the work of any School; (d) in the work of aiding in any way whatsoever those who are in need, or who have met with any misfortune. No opportunity of enlisting the united sympathy of the School in any outstanding case of need should be overlooked.

Apart from the work specially belonging to the School, there are many outside agencies whereby the spirit of the School may be nourished and elevated. The following may be mentioned: (1) The annual entertainment, which should, as far as possible, be given by the scholars themselves. No performance of any outside talent so enlists the enthusiasm and enlarges the sympathies of the School, as the effort in recitation, song, dialogue, etc., however weak that effort may be, of the members of the School itself. (2) The annual picnic and the games pertaining thereto, in which the joy and pleasure of each should be sought by all. (3) A Young People's Society, or something of that sort, to get the older scholars better acquainted with each other, and through which they may be held together, for their own mutual benefit and amusement, and not be led away to seek pleasure and amusement in places and society of less high standing. (4) Social gatherings of any sort, so long as they are conducted in a becoming and proper way, are of great value in creating a spirit of unity and good-feeling among the members of the School.

It should be remembered that, in all this work and these functions, the sympathetic interest and co-operation of the parents is essential, in order that the spirit of the School may be built up in an abiding and permanent way.

Working for a Result

By John B. Calkin, Esq., M.A.

"The man who aims at nothing, generally hits it." Occasionally, however, the result,

though of little real value may be interesting, as,—

"I shot an arrow into the air ;
It fell to earth, I knew not where ;

Long, long afterward, in an oak
I found the arrow, still unbroke."

But the outcome may be more serious,—
"I have shot mine arrow over the house
And hurt my brother."

Random shots, then, at best uncertain, may be dangerous, and it is unwise to take chances. The teacher, whether in the week-day school or in the Sunday School, should work with definite aim, and for the best result.

What, then, is the result to work for in the Sunday School? Knowledge of Bible truth, certainly; or, in the words of the Shorter Catechism,—“What man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man.” Right belief concerning God and knowledge of duty are important steps on the way, but they do not include the whole course. Leading the scholars to accept of that salvation through Christ, which the Bible offers, is a still higher achievement than mere knowledge, yet even this fails to round off the complete work.

Our scholars are to be brought to Christ, that they may become like Him,—like Him, not in character alone, but in behavior, in doing as well as being. To rest satisfied with one's own salvation is selfishness,—is not like Christ, who, that He might save others, would not save Himself.

Too often teachers greatly err by forcing upon their scholars knowledge for which they are unprepared and cannot understand, while they fail to train them in the doing of the simplest things of the Christian life. Every lesson may be shown to have a bearing on work to be done. Practical features should be made prominent, and subsequently exemplified by the scholars in actual doing. The interest and sympathies of the scholars should be so awakened that they will seek opportunities of helping others.

In order to develop an *esprit de corps*, the scholars may be encouraged to give their class a distinguishing name, as—The Workers, The Willing Helpers, or some such name,

indicating the active side of the Christian life. The work must be carefully adapted to the age and capabilities of the scholars, that it may not be too difficult for the younger ones or too simple for those of greater maturity.

What shall the scholars do, it may be asked? At first, the work may be restricted to acts of helpfulness to the members of their own class. If one is absent, delegates are sent to look after him; if one is ill, attention is shown, indicating interest. Where practicable, effort is used to remove obstacles that keep scholars from School. Interest is gradually widened to include the whole School, the neighborhood, the world. Aid is given to the needy, comfort to those in trouble, and the gospel is sent to the heathen. Urge children to do something each day that will help some one else, and to refrain from saying or doing what would hurt another. New fields will develop as the work goes on.

The teacher must not suppose, when he has set clearly before his scholars what they ought to do and has impressed them with a deep sense of their obligations, that the doing will take care of itself. There is no truer pedagogic maxim than, “Every impression must have its corresponding expression”, and the expression correlative to knowledge of duty, is doing.

Truro, N. S.

Adapting the Teaching

By Rev. Frank Baird, M.A.

In so far as the Sabbath School aims at the impartation of knowledge and the formation of character, it and the Public School stand on common ground. Up to the point where it may be said the two classes of schools part company, the methods found successful in the one may properly be carried over into the other. With respect to the grading of both lessons and scholars, and in regard to the adaptation of the teaching to the age and ability of the pupils, the day school is unquestionably far in advance.

This becomes apparent, when one glances at particulars. Note such things as:—

First—Age of Admission. This, in many Public Schools, is definitely fixed. The thing of importance, in this connection, is not

that the age of admission is five, or seven, but that there is an age fixed. It implies, at the very outset, that there is a system, and thus respect for the institution is created. With our Cradle Roll facilities, and with all our opportunities for linking the home to the School, and the School to the church, we could, doubtless, with great profit, take over from the day school the practice of admitting all our pupils at a fixed age.

Second—A Graded Course. Assuming the presence of scholars of a uniform age, those who have charge of secular education, wisely and logically present graded children with a graded course at the very outset. The whole path from ignorance to knowledge, from darkness to light, is marked off in sections; the part of it to be traveled the first, the fourth, or the tenth year, is clearly and rigidly defined. The time allowed for traversing the path is not laggard's time, nor yet swift runner's time; it is average time. It is all magnificent. It is the core of successful education. Followed logically, it makes ignorance impossible. It is a system which both creates and demands respect. It produces results.

Some such system must be carried over into our Sunday Schools. Difficulties there are; they must simply be overcome. Our Sunday School scholars should enter our Sunday Schools at a fixed age; they should be met at the outset with the first part of a graded course, extending over at least twelve years; there should be examinations at the end of each year, and when the entire course has been covered, successful pupils should receive a diploma, corresponding to a college degree.

Third—What to Do. Our General Assembly's Sabbath School Committee should create an ideal, and give to it concreteness and reality in such matters as:

- (a) Plans and equipment for Sunday School buildings.
- (b) A course of instruction covering several years of Bible study.
- (c) Uniform competitive examination papers.
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This is not hopelessly beyond us. Our graded *QUARTERLIES* and *Illustrated Papers* are a step toward the goal. The Interna-

tional Lessons now include a *Beginners'*, a *Primary* and an *Advanced Course*. Our different *Catechisms* could be assigned to certain years or terms, both special and ordinary pass work could be provided, and all things could be done decently, rationally, logically and in order.

With the fine model and the excellent results of the Public School before us, we are inexcusable. There is really no reason why "the children of this world" should be wiser, with respect to their schools, than are "the children of light."

Sussex, N. B.

Preparation for Teaching

By President R. A. Falconer, LL.D.

Preparation is such a large term, that it is necessary to define our meaning. There is the general preparation which every thoroughly educated man and woman has received, bringing such qualities of mind and spirit, that with comparatively little attention to the lesson to be taught, the teacher can deal very effectively with the pupil. A trained mind can easily detect the main point, can clothe it in simple and intelligible language, and by intellectual and personal tactfulness can adapt it to the understanding of the class. In fact, it is a commonplace among teachers, that the elementary courses are best taught by those who have the ripest experience and the widest knowledge. The reason for this is obvious. A survey in which the important matters are to be clearly taught, requires a wide knowledge of a large field and the ability to choose what is important. Teachers too often run into not only needless but distorting details, so that the scholar is left in a state of bewilderment, and such knowledge as is received is almost valueless. The ability to select, and a sense of proportion, are qualifications that a few possess naturally, but which ordinarily come to the teacher by education and experience.

Unfortunately, both in the day school and in the Sunday School there are fewer of these experienced teachers than we should have. In some ways the Sunday School may have an advantage, especially in so far as it is able to secure as teachers those

who once taught in the day school, but have, since, if they are women, become mothers of children, with all that that means in the way of teaching, or, if they are men, have gone into other occupations than teaching, for their livelihood. With such a background of preparation, the teacher can be left to discover for himself or herself the way in which particular lessons are to be prepared.

But a large number of teachers are quite inexperienced. Their preparation for any definite lesson will depend, partly upon the lesson, and partly upon the pupil. However, one rule holds for all—Understand your class. This is primary and essential. It is a lesson for the teacher, in fact, it is one of the great lessons of life, to learn to put oneself in another's place: to try to think as others think, not in the sense of abandoning one's convictions, but in order to get an entrance into their mind. That this is by no means easy is proved by the failures, both in the School and in the pulpit. It may be said, in general, that the success of a teacher will depend upon such a measure of sympathy and imagination as enables him to realize how others think.

I assume that the lessons have been so chosen for the teacher, that simpler historical or biographical passages have been assigned to the younger children, and didactic or poetical portions of the Bible to those who are maturer. Here, also, a general principle holds—the teacher must be familiar with the context in which the selection of scripture is found. If the incident be from the life of some Bible character, it should be studied as a part of his life as a whole,—for we are individuals, and these characters were individuals of a distinct type. The teacher should try to show the scholar how real those people were, how modern their lives were, how similar their temptations and experiences were to ours, and how they got strength from the same divine sources as lie ready for us to draw from. Their faith, their hope, rest where ours do. Their sins and their moral successes are warnings and encouragements for us.

In teaching the more difficult passages of the Old and New Testaments to older children, as for example from the Epistles, the

teacher has a hard task, for their language and thought are very foreign to ours. It is necessary for him to penetrate below the language to the kernel of moral or spiritual truth, and to translate that thought into present day language. Unfortunately, many words pass current in our schools and churches as though they were understood, whereas often they are not. Such words as "justify", "consecrate", "salvation", require definition, accurate, simple and unconventional, from the teacher. Another capital element for success with this grade of scholar, is to remember that one great spiritual truth is sufficient for one lesson. A second may drive the first out, a third may work confusion.

Teaching is an art that must be cultivated, for though some, like great artists, are so by nature, most attain their art only by arduous and incessant endeavor. But it is an art worth mastering, for there are no purer delights than those that come from leading others into the kingdom of truth.

University of Toronto

Music in the Sabbath School

By Rev. P. M. MacDonald, M.A.

III. THE SCHOLAR AND THE MUSIC

In the School singing, there is at work the dual process of pleasing the scholar, and of substituting a purpose for a pleasure.

1. *Music delights the scholar, because it relates him to his environment.* Heaven and the unseen world are more real to us in childhood, partly because the interests and duties of later life are unknown. The vital ardor of early life must find expression in the games and plays so much loved; and the emotions and affections in like manner seek for outlet and at the gate of music they find it. Macaulay prophesied that the day would come when poetry would be abandoned, because poetry belongs to the childhood of the world. So long as there are normal children, however, that prophecy will be unfulfilled, because poetry and music are the best means of expressing unutterable thoughts and feelings. Music is a means of getting near to God, and the children instinctively know this.

2. *Music satisfies the scholar, when it is*

bright and full toned. Take any group of scholars, and ask what kind of singing they like, and they will tell you, "Any kind but the sad and slow". Psychologically, they are strangers to the pathetic and dreary. Their sprightly youth finds satisfaction in the joyous, the glad, the cheerful, for, as Euripides says, "Youth holds no society with grief". The music that enlists the scholars' approval and assistance is that which tells of victory, of hope, of good to be. The marching tunes, especially, and the hymns that have a rolling chorus, find ready praise with them. For this reason the children of our Presbyterian Church are lovers of the Psalms, when these are sung as they should be. It is worthy of notice, that a School will join with their whole energy in singing, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow".

3. *Music profits the scholar, when it is understood to be a thanksgiving service.* "Praise is only praise, when well addressed", says the poet. Merely to join in the singing of a hymn accomplishes very little. It is when the heart and the understanding are active and attentive to the meaning of the exercise, that the profit comes to the singer. Because of this, children should be asked to sing the hymns they understand, and these should be mainly "hymns of love and praise". Children love God's good gifts, and are willing to say so. If they can be brought to see that singing is a means of expressing their thanks to Him, the singing will be brighter and the after life better.

Toronto

The Essentials of Good Teaching

By Professor O. J. Stevenson, D.Paed.

IX. FIXING THE LESSON

It is frequently a matter of surprise on Review Day, to find how much of the work of previous lessons has been quite forgotten by the class. Such a discovery on the part of the teacher should lead him to enquire, not how it is possible that his class should be so forgetful, but, rather, how it is that his teaching has been so ineffective that they are able to forget.

When a lesson is forgotten by the class, it means one of several things: (a) That it

has not been based on the pupil's experience and has not appealed to his interests. A lesson that interests the teacher, with his wider training and more mature experience, may awaken no response in the mind of the pupil. Not only must the lesson be carefully selected, but the teacher must treat of that phase of the lesson which suits the pupils' needs.

(b) That it has not been properly presented by the teacher. In our study of the Lesson Plan, we have emphasized the importance of the connection with previous experience, the statement of aim, the vivid presentation of the lesson story and the summary or review. But even if the lesson be carefully planned, there are other reasons why it may fail to be effective. Sometimes the teacher attempts to cover too much ground. It is much better to select one point and teach that point well, than to waste time and energy over a multitude of details. Sometimes too much time is spent on preliminaries, and before the lesson itself is fairly begun, the hour is up. Sometimes, too, the lesson lacks proportion, and so much time is taken up with illustration and digression that the important point in the story is lost.

(c) That the pupil has not appreciated the main truth in the lesson, and in some form given it direct expression. In the Sunday School much more than in the day school, there is danger that the pupil may be merely a passive listener. But the passive listener makes no real progress. Only the truths that we *express* can be permanently retained. The pupil may express himself in various ways,—in oral answer, in written exercise, in blackboard drawing, in a change in his own conduct; but only in so far as conscious expression takes place, may we expect that the results of the lesson will permanently remain.

In general, then, how much of this or that particular lesson the pupil may remember, depends upon the intensity of the interest that is aroused, the clearness with which the lesson is understood, and the opportunity given the pupil for self-expression. Whatever else the teacher may be able to accomplish, he should aim to teach at least one thing clearly and effectively,—to impress it as strongly as possible by pictures, by

stories, by simple quotation or reference, and above all by his own energy and earnestness, and, finally, to provide some opportunity for the pupil to appropriate the main truth of the lesson story through his own activities.

Queen's University, Kingston

In the Primary Class

A SERIES OF TWELVE ARTICLES

By Marion Wathen

XI. THE TEMPERANCE LESSON IN THE PRIMARY CLASS

Suppose you either begin or close your temperance lesson in some such way as this : Draw on the blackboard the picture of what is supposed to be a magnificent house,—do not forget the window curtains, for, strange to say, no matter how crude your drawing, the curtains seem to stand to the little child as a sign of magnificence. Tell the story of a child who lived there, with all his beautiful things, kind papa, mama, etc. Then rub out the picture, and in its place draw an old, tumble-down house, with no curtains, etc. Ask, "Who do you suppose lives in this house?" Explain that it is the same little child who had lived in the beautiful house and had such good times ; but he is not happy now, because he has had to leave his lovely home, with all his nice things, and is often cold and hungry,—and all because his father had learned to drink wine and strong drink. As it is always well to have children's stories end happily, perhaps it would be best to have this one end with an account of the

father's reformation.

Many teachers complain that they cannot make their temperance lessons a success, because there must necessarily be so much similarity in them. But, if one notices the passages selected by the International Lesson Committee, it will be seen that there is little danger of sameness, if the regular lesson text is made the basis of the teaching ; and a proper explanation given to it, in story form if possible.

Take, for example, the Lesson for November 29, Isa. 28 : 1-13. You can easily interest your class in this, at the outset, by asking them if they were ever in an orchard or fruit-tree garden. Then, suppose you talk to them about the beautiful vineyards to be found in many parts of our own country, their vines loaded with great bunches of grapes, purple and black and green (one of these may be drawn on the blackboard). Go on to say that our lesson is about a country where grapes of the very finest sort grew. Tell them what the people did with their grapes and of how happy the people were who lived in this beautiful valley, until they began to drink wine and get drunk, and of the terrible things that happened to them then. Tell, too, of how sorry God was about it, and of how He sent prophet after prophet to warn them.

Other temperance lessons, as they come, may be made as interesting as this, and, if so, there is no need for either the child or the teacher to feel, as is so often said, that it is "the same old thing".

Harcourt, N.B.

Lesson Calendar: Fourth Quarter

1. October 4.....David Brings the Ark to Jerusalem. 2 Samuel 6 : 1-12.
2. October 11.....God's Promise to David. 1 Chronicles 17 : 1-14.
3. October 18.....David's Kindness to Jonathan's Son. 2 Samuel, ch. 9.
4. October 25.....The Joy of Forgiveness. Psalm 32.
5. November 1.....Absalom Rebels Against David. 2 Samuel 15 : 1-12.
6. November 8.....David Grieves for Absalom. 2 Samuel 18 : 24-33.
7. November 15.....The Lord Our Shepherd. Psalm 23.
8. November 22.....Solomon Anointed King. 1 Kings 1 : 32-40 ; 50, 53.
9. November 29.....World's Temperance Sunday. Isaiah 28 : 1-13.
10. December 6.....Solomon Chooses Wisdom. 1 Kings 3 : 4-15.
11. December 13.....Solomon Dedicates the Temple. 1 Kings 8 : 1-11.
12. December 20.....Solomon's Downfall. 1 Kings 11 : 4-13.
13. December 27.....REVIEW.

AN ORDER OF SERVICE : Fourth Quarter.*Opening Exercises****I. SILENCE.**

II. SINGING. Hymn 320, Book of Praise. (It is expected that this beautiful hymn from the Supplemental Lessons will be memorized during the Quarter.)

III. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. Matthew 7 : 13, 14, 21.

Superintendent. Enter ye in at the strait gate : for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in therat :

School. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

Superintendent. Not every one that saith unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven ; but he that doeth the will of My Father which is in heaven.

IV. SINGING.

O Saviour, precious Saviour,
Whom yet unseen we love,
O name of might and favor,
All other names above !

*We worship Thee, we bless Thee,
To Thee alone we sing ;
We praise Thee and confess Thee
Our holy Lord and King.
—Hymn 100, Book of Praise.*

V. PRAYER. Closing with the Lord's Prayer in concert.

VI. READ IN CONCERT. See SPECIAL SCRIPTURE READING in THE TEACHERS MONTHLY, in connection with each Lesson.

VII. SINGING. Psalm or Hymn selected.

VIII. BIBLE WORK. From the Supplemental Lessons.

IX. READING OF LESSON PASSAGE.

X. SINGING. Psalm or Hymn selected. (This selection may usually be that marked, "From the PRIMARY QUARTERLY".)

Class Work

[Let this be entirely undisturbed by Secretary's or Librarian's distribution, or otherwise.]

I. ROLL CALL, by teacher.

II. OFFERING ; which may be taken in a class envelope, or class and report envelope.

III. RECITATION. 1. Scripture Memory Passages from the Supplemental Lessons, or Memory Verses in Lesson Helps. 2. Catechism. 3. The Question on Missions from the Supplemental Lessons.

IV. LESSON STUDY.

Closing Exercises

I. ANNOUNCEMENTS.

II. SINGING. Hymn selected.

III. REVIEW FROM SUPERINTENDENT'S DESK ; which, along with the Blackboard Review, may include one or more of the following items : Recitation in concert of Verses Memorized, Catechism, Questions on Missions, Lesson Title, Golden Text, and Heads of Lesson Plan. (Do not overload the Review : it should be pointed, brief and bright.)

IV. SINGING.

Hail to the Lord's Anointed,
Great David's greater Son !
Hail, in the time appointed,
His reign on earth begun !
He comes to break oppression,
To set the captive free,
To take away transgression,
And rule in equity.

—Hymn 444, Book of Praise.

V. RESPONSIVE SENTENCES. Proverbs 4 : 23, 26, 27.

Superintendent. Keep thy heart with all diligence ;

School. For out of it are the issues of life.

Superintendent. Ponder the path of thy feet.

School. And let all thy ways be established.

Superintendent and School. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left : remove thy foot from evil.

VI. BENEDICTION OR CLOSING PRAYER.

*Copies of the above ORDER OF SERVICE on separate sheet may be had at 50c. a hundred.

Lesson V. **ABSALOM REBELS AGAINST DAVID** November 1, 1908

2 Samuel 15 : 1-12. *Commit to memory vs. 5, 6. Study 2 Samuel, ch. 15. Read 2 Samuel, chs. 13 to 16.

GOLDEN TEXT—Honour thy father and thy mother : that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.—Exodus 20 : 12.

1 And it came to pass after this, that Ab'salom prepared him ¹ chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him.

2 And Ab'salom rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate : and it was so, that when any man ² that had a controversy came to the king for judgment, then Ab'salom called unto him, and said, Of what city art thou ? And he said, Thy servant is of one of the tribes of Is'rael.

3 And Ab'salom said unto him, See, thy matters are good and right ; but there is no man deputed of the king to hear thee.

4 Ab'salom said moreover, Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me, and I would do him justice !

5 And it was so, that when any man came nigh ³ to him to do him obeisance, he put forth his hand, and ⁴ took him, and kissed him.

6 And on this manner did Ab'salom to all Is'rael that came to the king for judgment : so Ab'salom stole the hearts of the men of Is'rael.

Revised Version—¹a chariot ; ²had a suit which should come ; ³Omit to him ; ⁴took hold of ; ⁵at the end of ; ⁶indeed bring me again ; ⁷is king in ; ⁸invited ; ⁹Omit they ; ¹⁰the.

LESSON PLAN

I. Absalom's Plot, 1-6.

II. Absalom's Rebellion, 7-12.

DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association)

M.—Absalom rebels against David, 2 Sam. 15 : 1-12. T.—Absalom rebels against David, 2 Sam. 15 : 13-29. W.—Absalom rebels against David, 2 Sam. 15 : 30-37. Th.—Causing shame, Prov. 19 : 20-26. F.—David's prayer, Ps. 3. S.—Honor to parents, Mark 7 : 5-13. S.—Duty of children, Eph. 6 : 1-8.

Shorter Catechism—*Ques.* 104. *What do we pray for in the fourth petition ?* A. In the fourth petition (which is, *Give us this day our daily bread*) we pray, That of God's free gift we may receive a competent

7 And it came to pass ⁵ after forty years, that Ab'salom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the LORD, in He'bron.

8 For thy servant vowed a vow while I abode at Ge'shur in Syr'ia, saying, If the LORD shall ⁶ bring me again indeed to Jeru'salem, then I will serve the LORD.

9 And the king said unto him, Go in peace. So he arose, and went to He'bron.

10 But Ab'salom sent spies throughout all the tribes of Is'rael, saying, As soon as ye hear the sound of the trumpet, then ye shall say, Ab'salom ⁷ reigneth in He'bron.

11 And with Ab'salom went two hundred men out of Jeru'salem, *that were* ⁸ called ; and ⁹ they went in their simplicity, and they knew not any thing.

12 And Ab'salom sent for Ahith'ophel the Gi'tonite, Da'vid's counsellor, from his city, *even from Gi'loh*, while he offered ¹⁰ sacrifices. And the conspiracy was strong ; for the people increased continually with Ab'salom.

portion of the good things of this life, and enjoy his blessing with them.

The Question on Missions—5. What special training do these workers receive ? Usually they spend some time on the mission station, and receive instruction from the missionary as he has opportunity. On some islands special classes are held for them. Others attend the Training Institute at Tangoa for four years.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, 320 (Supplemental Lesson) ; 22 ; 255 ; 32 (Ps. Sel.) ; 516 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY) ; 245.

Special Scripture Reading—Prov. 1 : 7-19. (To be read responsively or in concert by the whole School.) It is expected that each scholar will have his or her Bible, and so be prepared to take part in this reading, which may form part of the opening exercises of the School.

EXPOSITION

By Professor R. Davidson, Ph.D., University College, Toronto

Time and Place—About B.C. 970 (according to Ussher's chronology given in the Margin of the English Bible, B.C. 1027) ; Jerusalem and Hebron.

Connecting Links—2 Sam. ch. 10 narrates the war with the Ammonites and the Syrians or Arameans. It was in this war that Uriah, the husband of Bathsheba, was slain. (See chs. 11, 12.) Chs. 13 and 14 tell of the flight of Absalom, David's third son (ch. 3 : 3), from the king's anger, to Geshur, whence, three years later, he was brought back to Jerusalem through the influence of Joab, David's nephew and general, and was reconciled to the king after two years' further waiting.

I. Absalom's Plot, 1-6.

V. 1. *After this* ; after his reconciliation

with his father (see Connecting Links). *Absalom prepared him*. Restored to the king's favor, he assumes the dignity and splendor of prince and heir-apparent. He had the advantage of age among the princes. Amnon was dead, Chileab had disappeared, and Absalom was next (see ch. 3 : 2, 3). He was moreover of a goodly person (ch. 14 : 25, 26) and affable (v. 5), of kingly parentage on both sides (see Light from the East), and he naturally thought his claim to the throne was good. *A chariot* (Rev. Ver.) *and horses, and fifty men to run before*. Chariot and horses and outrunners,—there you have royalty on parade, whether king or would-be king (compare 1 Sam. 8 : 11 ; 1 Kgs. 1 : 5), prepared to impress the people as something kingly and magnificent. The

*The Scripture Memory Passages of the Supplemental Leaflets are recommended as a substitute for those here given Sabbath by Sabbath. Their recitation leads to the obtaining of a beautiful Certificate or Diploma.

fifty warriors would be a bodyguard for the prince.

Vs. 2-6. *Absalom rose up early.* Business, in the East, is transacted during the early morning hours, to escape the heat of the sun later on in the day. *Beside the way of the gate;* the road leading to the gate of the palace grounds. According to Eastern custom, this was a place of common resort, a meeting place for king and people. The Turks still call their government the "Sultan's Gate", and we call it by the name of the principal gate of the palace at Constantinople, the Sublime Porte (High Gate). The gateway of a city was also a place for transacting business, ch. 19:8; Ruth 4:1, etc. *Any man had a suit . . . to the king for judgement* (Rev. Ver.); a dispute to bring before the king for settlement. *Absalom called.* As each man came, the gallant young prince waylaid him. *Of what city art thou?* He showed an interest in each man by asking about his home. *One of the tribes.* The suitor in his answer would give the name of his own particular tribe. *Thy matters are good and right . . . no man . . . to hear thee.* Absalom suggests that the king was careless. *Oh that I were made judge.* The crafty schemer flattered each man that his case was good, and lamented that it was not likely to get a fair hearing, hinting that things would be very different if he himself were in power. He would be the champion of justice, he had the public good at heart. Without supposing that David was remiss in his duty, we can easily believe there were real grievances. The old king's tasks had grown too heavy for him; but Absalom's baseness is none the less. *Any man came . . . to do him obeisance;* to offer him the respectful salutation due to him as the king's son. *Put forth his hand . . . kissed him.* Did he not love the people? He would have no obeisance from the suitors; he saluted them as friends. No wonder that he got the start of both king and people. *Stole the hearts.* The expression means that Absalom duped or befooled the people.

II. Absalom's Rebellion, 7-12.

Vs. 7-9. *At the end of forty years* (Rev. Ver.). According to Josephus and some of the old versions of the Bible, we should

probably read "four" instead of "forty". (See also Rev. Ver. Margin.) This period was spent by Absalom in preparing for rebellion by winning the people away from their loyalty to David. *Absalom said unto the king;* who, apparently, did not yet suspect any disloyalty on the part of his son. *Pay my vow . . . unto the Lord.* He asked leave of absence from the court that he might offer the sacrifices to the Lord, promised, as he declared, during his exile in Geshur (see Connecting Links and Geography Lesson). *The Lord . . . bring me . . . to Jerusalem . . . serve the Lord.* The vow, like Jacob's (Gen. 28:20-22), called for a personal appearance before God with the sacrifice. *So he . . . went to Hebron.* Hebron was the old capital, and perhaps its people felt aggrieved when Jerusalem usurped its place. This would make them the more likely to fall in with Absalom's plans. *Go in peace.* David did not find it strange that Absalom should want to worship at Hebron instead of Jerusalem. Hebron was an ancient sanctuary, and besides, it was Absalom's birthplace.

V. 10. *Sent spies throughout . . . Israel;* to find out secretly their feelings towards him. Elaborate preparations had been made, and it was arranged that, at the given signal, proclamation should be made all over the country, *Absalom is king in Hebron* (Rev. Ver.). This public announcement declaring that the revolt had been successful would help to make it so.

V. 11. *Two hundred men out of Jerusalem.* They were no doubt members of the leading families, and, if they did not turn to his side, could be held as hostages. *Invited* (Rev. Ver.); to the feast that would follow the sacrifice. *Knew not anything,* They were entirely ignorant of the conspiracy.

V. 12. *Ahithophel the Gilonite;* a native of Giloh, a village a few miles south or southwest of Hebron. *David's counsellor;* noted for his wisdom, ch. 16:23. *Conspiracy was strong.* The revolt seemed on the high road to success.

In the remaining portion of the chapter (vs. 13-23), we have a vivid picture of David's flight from Jerusalem. We see the king, climbing the steep ascent of the Mount of Olives, his head covered and his feet bare,

in token of his grief, and weeping bitterly at the heartless ingratitude of his rebellious son. The people that followed shared his sorrow. Two incidents noted in the flight, are the king's sending back the ark to Jerusalem, lest harm should come to it, and Hushai's return to the city to keep watch, in the interests of David, on Absalom's movements.

Light from the East

ABSALOM—Was David's third son, and his mother was Maacah, the daughter of the king of Geshur, a small tribe on the east of the Sea of Galilee. Perhaps it was from his mother that he inherited the treacherous spirit of intrigue by which the courts of the East were and are still characterized. No one, not even the members of the ruler's own family, can be trusted absolutely. Hence despots often surrounded themselves

with foreign troops, and raised brilliant slaves to the highest positions, in order to secure fidelity. This system of intrigue also led to a network of spies and informers, like private detectives, who dogged every official's footsteps and pried into his home life. It was the knowledge that no near heir to the throne could be safely left alive, that led to wholesale massacres of uncles, brothers, cousins, old and young, to make certain that no plots should rise around any of them.

"LET ME GO"—When any official in the Turkish courts fears himself suspected of a plot, he often escapes by asking the Sultan for permission to make a pilgrimage to Mecca—a permission which according to Mohammedan law cannot be refused, as the obligation of the pilgrimage takes precedence of all other duties.

APPLICATION

By Rev. Clarence Mackinnon, B.D., Winnipeg

Absalom prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him, v. 1. This ambitious young prince riding in his splendid chariot, with his company of outrunners, reminds us of Joseph, the young prime minister of Egypt, to whom the king assigned his second chariot. But what a contrast between the two! Joseph rode in the king's chariot, as the reward of faithful devotion to duty. Absalom assumed the appearance of royalty, with the treacherous purpose of turning it into reality, and that at the expense of his own father's downfall. Their methods and their motives made all the difference between these two young men. We show ourselves worthy of honor or of shame by the way in which we seek gain and advancement. Whatever goal we seek, let us be sure we reach it by a clean road.

See, thy matters are good and right, v. 3. No tropical plants excel in splendor the lianas of the South American forests. Woody, climbing and twining, they wrap themselves around the trunks of tall trees and swing from branch to branch in luxuriant festoons. But for all their rich beauty, they are very treacherous to the trees which they adorn;

for by and by they encircle the tree to the very top; then their own stems begin to thicken until they constrict and kill the tree which they have beautified. Flattery is as treacherous as the liana. "A man that flattereth his neighbor spreadeth a net for his feet", Prov. 29 : 5. Many a one has been beguiled to his ruin by the glittering promises held out to him if he would only enter on some evil course. The flatterer, for his own purposes, lures his companions on in a path that can lead only to disaster, and at the end leaves them to bear by themselves the shame and loss he has brought upon them.

Absalom stole the hearts of the men of Israel, v. 6. The world has had many traitors. Balaam had the vision of a prophet, but the soul of a miser; and the money bags eventually won. Alcibiades loved Socrates, who was the wisest of the Greeks; but he loved his pleasures more, and betrayed the cause of his country, and sometimes he even wished his old teacher were dead, that there would be no one left to shame him. The greatest of all traitors is Judas who betrayed our Lord for less than twenty dollars. There is a picture at Brussels, of the false disciple as he comes by chance upon the workmen who

What is a
Traitor?

have been making the cross on which Christ is to be crucified. They are sleeping peacefully by the fire. Judas' face has an expression of awful remorse and agony as he sees the cross and tools. But he clutches his money bag still, and hurries on into the night. One who loves himself more than any man, however good, or any cause, however holy, is a traitor at heart.

Let me go and pay my vow, v. 7. Absalom told a lie. He really meant to raise a rebellion against the good king, his father.

It was easy to tell the lie. But **After the Money Was Spent** it was not so easy to wipe it out; for a falsehood is ineffaceable. A boy was asked if he would tell a lie for a dollar. He said, "No." "For a thousand dollars?" "No." "Why?" "Because after the thousand dollars were spent, the lie would still remain." It is the most foolish of all bargains, surely, for the sake of a brief hour's advantage, to bring upon ourselves the shame and remorse that never fail to result from untruth and dishonesty.

If the Lord shall bring me again. . . I will serve the Lord, v. 8. In the gardens and parks in the south of England, the box tree is a familiar

sight. Sometimes it grows to the height of twelve or fourteen feet. The **Leaves, But No Flowers** most obvious and remarkable feature of this ornamental tree is the thickness of its growth, its multitude of crowded branches and leaves. So dense indeed does it become, that it can be clipped and pruned into the most fantastic figures. Yet, for all this luxuriance of leaf, the casual eye would not detect upon it a single flower. Flowers are there, but very small ones, on greenish tiny spikes in the axils of the leaves. How like the box tree is the hy-poerite: all show and neither flower nor fruit.

Lesson Points

By Rev. J. M. Duncan, B.D.

Ambition, like a spirited steed, requires the rein of principle to keep it in the right track. v. 1.

Popularity, at the expense of sincerity, is a bad bargain. v. 2.

It is far easier to criticize the work of others than to do the work ourselves. v. 3.

Every seeming success gained by deceit is a step towards certain failure. v. 6.

Treachery is blackest in the one who is most completely trusted. v. 9.

TEACHING HINTS

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the School.

For Teachers of the Older Scholars and Bible Classes

By Rev. John H. MacVicar, B.A.

Absalom had, in cold blood, given orders for the murder of his brother whilst his guest, ch. 13 : 28. The further story of the handsome sneak (ch. 14 : 25) falls into two sections :—

1. *Absalom stealing the hearts of the people*, vs. 1-6. He had been in an enforced exile (ch. 13 : 38), was partially re-instated (ch. 14 : 24), and eventually fully restored to the king's favor, ch. 14 : 33. Possibly, in the final reconciliation his income had been enlarged, and he began to "put on style" (v. 1), aping forbidden Egyptian ways, Deut. 17 : 16. His spectacular mode of living contrasted with the quiet habits of his father, and impressed the gaping crowd, susceptible

to the glitter of vulgar display.

So far, so good. But the shrewd young prince craved closer touch with the people; so, frequenting the seat of justice at the "gate", he ingratiated himself with those who came with law-suits, v. 2. Affecting personal interest in them, one by one, he pronounced favorable judgments on the merits of their cases (v. 3); lamented the incompetence of the existing administration of justice; and unctuously sighed for power in his own hands to right things, v. 4. Some, he won by assumed familiar courtesies, v. 5. Save for the hidden motive of the sneak, all this would have been charming (see Rom. 12 : 9). Absalom strove not to "win" hearts, which is praiseworthy (Job 29 : 11-13), but to "steal" hearts (v. 6), which is reprehensible, Job 27 : 7, 8.

2. *Absalom stealing away from the king*, vs. 7-12. The "heart-stealing" went on for three or four years (v. 7, Rev. Ver., Mar-

gin). Sincere people might take a lesson from the persistency of the insincere (see Micah 7: 3). Why not persist in good? Gal. 6: 9. Absalom, throwing dust in the eyes of his pious father, at last steals away with a master stroke of hypocrisy, vs. 7, 8. This pretended reverence makes us think of the Judas kiss (Matt. 26: 49), and Charles II.'s act in signing the Scottish Covenant, to secure his crown.

Absalom's unsuspecting father allows him to steal away, v. 9. Hebron was far enough off to enable the sneak to bring his schemes to an issue, v. 10. He accordingly made three important moves: (1) By means of spies, secretly despatched, he arranged a trumpet signal for a sudden, simultaneous proclamation of his ascension to the throne, v. 10. (2) He gathered at Hebron a band of 200 unsuspecting men from Jerusalem, whom he expected with little difficulty to persuade to transfer their allegiance, v. 11. (3) He weakened David, and strengthened himself, by summoning to his side Ahithophel, the king's counselor, v. 12. All which moves gave great momentum to the conspiracy. Discuss, in conclusion, reasons why David had been losing the hold of his people and so made rebellion easy. Indicate in contrast the hopelessness of rebellion against Christ, Acts 9: 5.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

By Rev. R. Douglas Fraser, D.D.

"A Handsome Fool", would be a good title for this Lesson. It may not be well to announce it. But keep it in mind as the key to the teaching.

Begin by drawing the class into a conversation about Absalom—*who he was*: of kingly lineage on both father's and mother's side (see Exposition, v. 1); *what he was like*: ch. 14: 25 gives the description, and the verse following puts on a finishing touch,—a splendid-looking young man, after the manner of his time; *what he owed to his father*: the respect and honor due by all sons to all fathers,—this, of course, but much more, for he was forgiven by his father of an awful crime and restored to favor and his princely place (chs. 13, 14); *what his prospects in life*: almost certain to be king, when his father

should die (see Exposition, v. 1). Before closing the conversation, be sure that Absalom is a vivid figure to the scholars—*young, splendid, with high prospects, and with very special reason to honor and love his father.* So much for what the handsome Absalom was and might have been, ought to have been.

The Lesson, as a sample of what Absalom really was. Take time to go sufficiently into the details to make the story in its three parts, very real. First (vs. 1-6), the vain and plausible young prince, with his glitter and show, and his "palavering", stealing the hearts of the men of Israel from their rightful king, his father,—this continuing for four years (see Exposition). Second (vs. 7-9), the shameless pretext for the journey to Hebron. It is a melancholy business, but may be useful, to have the class tell how many of the Commandments this precious hypocrite here broke. Third (vs. 10-12), the preparations, in detail, for the outbreak: these evince ability which, applied to a better cause, would have ensured Absalom's advance. The greater the pity, that that ability was so basely used.

The Lesson will naturally end by the emphasizing of its two main practical points:—

(1) *A fool's treatment of his father.* The wise son honors his father—because his own heart tells him he ought so to do, and because God so commands (have the scholars repeat the Fifth Commandment). But the fool laughs at his own truer self and at God. The wise way may be illustrated by Matt. 15: 4; 19: 19; Eph. 6: 1-3; Lev. 19: 32; Prov. 1: 8, 9; 4: 1, 20-22; 6: 20, 21; 10: 1; 13: 1; 15: 20; Col. 3: 20; Heb. 12: 9, and such examples as Joseph, Samuel, Timothy, Jesus; and the foolish way by Deut. 27: 16; Job 19: 18; Prov. 8: 36; 10: 1; 13: 1; 15: 5, 20; 20: 20; 30: 11; Jer. 32: 30, and such examples as Samuel's sons, Adonijah (1 Kgs. ch. 1), children of Bethel, 2 Kgs. 2: 23, 24.

(2) *A fool's way with himself.* This young man was made a fool of by his ambition and his vanity: he wanted to be king because of the power of it and the display. Two very touchy steeds, ambition and vanity; they need careful handling. Absalom's folly was that he let these run away with him. He was in the line to become king; but he

must become king at once. It was a fearful "gamble", his whole fortune staked on a single throw. Show the scholars that it

is thus our follies blind us and "rush" us. It is a mark of a fool that he sees neither far nor straight.

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

By Rev. J. M. Duncan, B.D.



To the east of the Sea of Galilee is the hilly and once well wooded, but now treeless, district known as the Jaulan. Its name in New Testament times was Gaulanitis, a portion of the dominions which fell to Philip, the son of Herod the Great, on the death of his father. It was this Philip who enlarged and beautified the town of Caesarea Philippi near which Peter uttered his memorable confession of Jesus as the Christ (see Mark 8 : 27-30). The province of Gaulanitis had some parts rocky and others exceedingly fertile. It is part of the great east Jordan plateau, rising some 2,000 feet above sea level. Judging from existing ruins, it was once densely populated.

It is in this region that we are to find the ancient Geshur. Joshua 13 : 13 tells us that, when the half tribe of Manasseh settled on the east side of the Jordan, the Geshurites were permitted to remain in the land. In the time of David they were ruled by an independent king, Talmai. David married his daughter, and she became the mother of Absalom (2 Sam. 3 : 3). After the murder of Amnon, Absalom took refuge with his

grandfather, Talmai, the king of Geshur, 2 Sam. 13 : 37 ; 15 : 8.

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

In this section will be found further assistance under various headings.

Some Test Questions

[NOTE : These Questions are not intended for use in the class, but as samples of questions by which the teacher may test the thoroughness of his own preparation of the Lesson. He will also find it of great advantage to be familiar with the Questions set for the scholars in the HOME STUDY, INTERMEDIATE, and PRIMARY, QUARTERLIES and LEAFLETS.]

1. With what nations was Israel at war? Whose death was brought about by David? Whom did he afterwards marry?

2. With whom did Absalom quarrel? In what did the quarrel end? Whither did Absalom flee?

3. Through whose influence was he brought back to Jerusalem? What was Joab's position? How long afterwards was it before

he was fully reconciled to his father?

4. Why was Absalom likely to be heir to the throne? What marks of royalty did he assume?

5. Where was the king accustomed to meet with suitors? How did Absalom greet those who came?

6. What did he insinuate as to the king? What did he hint as to himself? Explain "stole the hearts", v. 6.

7. How long was Absalom preparing for revolt? What permission did he ask of the king? Why did he select Hebron as his headquarters?

8. Whom did he invite to go with him? Which of David's counselors joined him?

9. What arrangements were made to an-

nounce the revolt to the people ?

10. Describe David's flight from Jerusalem.

Something to Look Up

[FROM THE INTERMEDIATE QUARTERLY AND LEAFLET]

1. What is the promise made concerning a child trained up in the way he should go ?

2. In the same book we are told that the father of a wise child shall have joy in him. Find the passage.

ANSWERS (Lesson IV.)—(1) Ps. 51 : 10.
(2) 1 John 1 : 9.

For Discussion

[FROM THE HOME STUDY QUARTERLY AND LEAFLET]

1. Absalom's ingratitude.

2. A straight path, the shortest cut.

Prove from Scripture

That sin is rebellion against a Father.

The Catechism

By Rev. J. M. Duncan, B.D.

Ques. 104. *The Lord's Prayer—its fourth petition.* In teaching this Question, note the following points : 1. We depend entirely upon God. Every blessing we have is His free gift (see such passages as Ps. 104 : 27, 28; Acts 17 : 25). 2. We have the right to ask for a sufficient supply for our actual needs. "Bread" in this petition includes all temporal blessings, for which we may ask in submission to God's will, and also all spiritual blessings, which we may seek without re-

serve. 3. We should cherish a spirit of trust in God. It is only our *daily* bread for which we are taught to ask. This means that we should leave the future and all its wants with child-like confidence in the hands of a loving Father (see Matt. 6 : 25-34). 4. Better than all temporal gifts is the blessing of God.

The Question on Missions

By Rev. Joseph Annand, D.D., Tangoa, Santo, New Hebrides

Ques. 5. The earlier workers in this field were trained somewhat after the manner of the apostles. Usually in breaking with heathenism, a man is constrained to leave his old associates, and live at, or near to, the mission station. There he learns from personal daily contact with the missionary much that he could never acquire from books. As soon as any number can be induced to receive the new teaching, classes are organized. With the hope of securing a better qualified class of workers, the New Hebrides Synod organized an Institute at Tangoa, Santo, thirteen years ago, in which young men and their wives were to receive four years continuous instruction. A missionary with a lay assistant, and their wives, were to devote their whole time to this work. The average attendance has been about forty men and fifteen women. This Institute has become a valuable part of the mission.

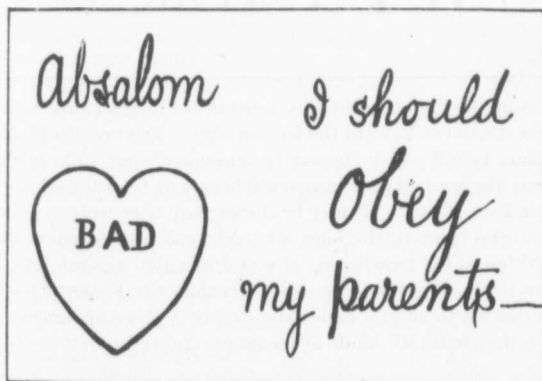
FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

By Mrs. Jessie Munro Johnston, North Bay, Ont.

Lesson Subject—The king's rebellious son.

Introduction—How many of you know what we call the son of a king ? Yes, "a

prince". What do we call the daughters ? "Princesses." "Are kings' children always good, mother ? Do they play like other children ? Do they never do anything naughty ?" asked a little girl. "Sad to say, kings' children sometimes are very naughty and cause no end of trouble. Our Lesson story to-day is about a prince who was very bad, and caused his father the king a great deal of sorrow. Who can print the name of the king of Israel about whom we have been talking in our Lesson



stories? Some one print D-A-V-I-D. This was Israel's shepherd king.

A Prince Causing Grief to His Father—King David had a number of sons. The one we are to hear about to-day is A-B-S-A-L-O-M (Print). He had quarreled with his brother Amnon and had caused his servants to kill him. When King David heard of this, he was very sorrowful. Absalom was afraid, and ran away to his grandfather, the king of Geshur, who lived away beyond the Jordan river (map). Poor King David! One son dead, and another running away from home because his anger had led him to commit a great crime!

Absalom Forgiven—After a while Joab, the leader of the king's army, coaxed David to send and bring Absalom home again, and Joab was sent to bring him back. Tell of his return to Jerusalem (ch. 14 : 23), and of his pardon by the king, two years later, ch. 14 : 28-33.

A Proud, Selfish Prince—Was Absalom a good prince and a loving son now? Let us look at him. He is a fine-looking prince (ch. 14 : 25, 26), and he is taking upon himself all the honors that belong to one who is to be king. Describe Absalom driving through the streets of Jerusalem with his

chariots and horses, and men to run before him. The king looked on, pleased with his son's beauty. Ah, if he could have seen Absalom's heart! That was not so beautiful. It was filled with mean, selfish thoughts and plans; do you know he made up his mind that he would take away the crown from his father David and be king himself? So he used to go and wait at the gates of the king's palace and meet the people coming in, and try to turn them against the king and make them think that he would be a better king than David (see Exposition). And at last he got a great many followers, and one day a message came to David, that the people were wanting to make Absalom king. So the poor old king fled for fear of his son Absalom. Picture the old king climbing the Mount of Olives, weeping, head covered and feet bare, vs. 23-30. What a sad picture! All this sorrow was caused by Absalom's disobeying one of God's commandments.

• *Golden Text*—Repeat the Fifth Commandment, and explain. Tell a simple story of a boy or girl who honored his father or mother, as this Commandment requires us to do.

Something to Think About—I should obey my parents.

FROM THE PLATFORM

By Rev. J. M. Duncan, B.D.

ABSALOM THE FAIR FRIENDLY FALSE

Begin the conversation by referring to the title borne by some of our British sovereigns, as William Rufus (the Red), Victoria the Good, Edward the Peacemaker. Print on the blackboard, ABSALOM, and get the scholars to tell you in answer to questions, what titles might be given to him. A little talk about his personal appearance will bring out from the scholars that he might be called Absalom THE FAIR (Print). It may be shown that, if we were to judge him by his treatment of the suitors who came to the king, we might call him Absalom the FRIENDLY (Print). But when we think of his treacherous plot and rebellion against David, his father and king, we see that he richly deserves to be called Absalom the FALSE (Print). Impress the lesson that, of far greater worth than a handsome face or a pleasant, agreeable manner, is a true and honest heart that hates all kinds of meanness and dishonesty with a perfect hatred.

Lesson VI.

DAVID GRIEVES FOR ABSALOM

November 8, 1908

2 Samuel 18 : 24-33. Commit to memory v. 33. Study 2 Samuel, ch. 1.

GOLDEN TEXT—A foolish son is a grief to his father.—Proverbs 17 : 25.

24¹ And Da'vid sat between the two gates : and the watchman went up to the roof² over the gate unto the wall, and lifted up his eyes, and looked, and beheld a man running alone.

25 And the watchman cried, and told the king. And the king said, If he be alone, *there is tidings* in his mouth. And he came apace, and drew near.

26 And the watchman saw another man running ; and the watchman called unto the porter, and said, Behold *another* man running alone. And the king said, He also bringeth tidings.

27 And the watchman said, Me thinketh the running of the foremost is like the running of Ahi'maaz the son of Za'dok. And the king said, He is a good man, and cometh with good tidings.

28 And Ahi'maaz called, and said unto the king, All is well. And he³ fell down to the earth upon his face before the king, and said, Blessed be the Lord thy God, which hath delivered up the men that lifted up their hand against my lord the king.

Revised Version—Now David ; ² of ; ³ bowed himself before the king with his face to the earth ; ⁴ Is it well with the young man Absalom ; ⁵ even me ;

LESSON PLAN

- I. Eager Watchers, 24-27.
- II. Evil Tidings, 28-32.
- III. A Bitter Cry, 33.

DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association)

M.—David grieves for Absalom, 2 Sam. 18 : 1-13.

T.—David grieves for Absalom, 2 Sam. 18 : 14-23.

W.—David grieves for Absalom, 2 Sam. 18 : 24-33.

Th.—A sorrowful victory, 2 Sam. 19 : 1-8. F.—A rebellious people, Isa. 1 : 1-9. S.—Fruit of disobedience, Ps. 81 : 8-16. S.—Christ weeps for Jerusalem, Luke 19 : 37-44.

Shorter Catechism—*Ques.* 105. *What do we pray for in the fifth petition ?* A. In the fifth petition

EXPOSITION

Time and Place—About B.C. 970 (Ussher, B.C. 1023); Mahanaim.

Connecting Links—David fled from Jerusalem towards the Jordan, but Absalom, listening to Hushai (see ch. 15 : 31-37, last Lesson) rather than Ahithophel, delayed pursuit. Ahithophel in chagrin took his own life : he saw the inevitable failure of Absalom's cause. Tidings of Absalom's plan were sent to David, and he had time to cross the river and establish himself among friends at Mahanaim, chs. 16, 17.

Absalom followed later, and the two armies met in "the wood of Ephraim" not far from Mahanaim. David awaited in the city the news of the conflict. He had strictly charged his generals Joab, Abishai and Ittai (v. 5) to deal gently with his son, but Joab slew him in cold blood, and the battle was over. Joab sent a negro slave to tell David the issue, and after him, Zadok the priest's son, Ahi-maaz, set out for Mahanaim. (See vs. 1-23.)

I. Eager Watchers, 24-27.

V. 24. *David sat between the two gates ;*

29 And the king said, ⁴ Is the young man Ab'salom safe ? And Ahi'maaz answered, When Jo'ab sent the king's servant, ⁵ and *me* thy servant, I saw a great tumult, but I knew not what it was.

30 And the king said ⁶ unto him, Turn aside, and stand here. And he turned aside, and stood still.

31 And, behold, ⁷ Cu'shi came ; and ⁷ Cu'shi said, ⁸ Tidings, my lord the king : for the Lord hath avenged thee this day of all them that rose up against thee.

32 And the king said unto ⁷ Cu'shi, ⁴ Is the young man Ab'salom safe ? And ⁷ Cu'shi answered, The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do thee hurt, be as that young man is.

33 And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept : and as he went, thus he said, O my son Ab'salom, my son, my son Ab'salom ! would God I had died for thee, O Ab'salom, my son, my son !

himself before the king with his face to the earth ; ⁶ *Omit* unto him ; ⁷ the Cushite ; ⁸ Tidings for ; ⁹ up.

(which is, *And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*) we pray. That God, for Christ's sake, would freely pardon all our sins ; which we are the rather encouraged to ask, because by his grace we are enabled from the heart to forgive others.

The Question on Missions—6. Who may attend the Training Institute ? Any young man between sixteen and thirty years of age, who is a church member, and wishes to be a teacher. He must also be able to read a little in English, as all instruction is given in that language.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, 320 (Supplemental Lesson); 262 ; 247 ; 17 (Ps. Sel.); 587 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY); 260.

Special Scripture Reading—Prov. 10 : 1-8. (To be read responsively or in concert by the whole School.)

that is, in the building which was both gateway and tower. There was an inner gate and an outer one, with a gate-house between having rooms above (see v. 33), and probably at either side. In the gate-house, Eli awaited the news, on the disastrous day of Aphek, 1 Sam. 4 : 18. *The watchman . . . roof over the gate.* The roof was flat, and apparently on a level with the top of the city wall. *Behold a man running.* See Light from the East.

Vs. 25-27. *Told the king ;* who was anxiously awaiting news in the gate-house below. *If . . . alone there is tidings.* If David's army had been routed, there would be many fugitives scattered over the plain. *Came apace . . . drew near.* But swiftly as he ran, his feet seemed leaden to the king in his agony of anxious suspense. *Another man running.* See on vs. 1-23. *Watchman called unto the porter.* Probably we should read here, "The watchman on the gate cried". *He also bringeth tidings ;* perhaps news additional to that borne by the first runner. *Foremost . . . like . . . Ahimaaz the son of Zadok.* Zadok was

the priest who had left Jerusalem with David, but whom the king had sent back to the city with the ark (see ch. 15 : 24-29). His son Ahimaaz was one of the two messengers who had carried Hushai's warning to David (read carefully chs. 15 : 32-37 and 17 : 15-22). Every runner has his own gait, and the keen-eyed watchman could distinguish that of Ahimaaz even at a distance. *A good man. . . good tidings.* The king was glad. Had not Ahimaaz lately brought him the welcome news of the success of Hushai's plan? Surely he would have a message of good cheer now, as before.

II. Evil Tidings, 28-32.

V. 28. *Ahimaaz called. . . unto the king; as soon as he was within hearing distance, and without waiting to take breath after his long run. All is well; literally, "Peace", the customary Eastern salutation. Bowed himself (Rev. Ver.); kneeling down and bending forward until the forehead actually touched the ground,—to this day the practice amongst Orientals in approaching a king. Blessed, etc. The victory is recognized as God's gift, and a proof that David's trust in Him had not been vain.*

V. 29. *Is the young man Absalom safe?* The form of the question in Hebrew is a sign of the tenderness of David's affection. *A great tumult. . . but I knew not.* Ahimaaz was as anxious to conceal the bad news, as he was to tell the good.

Vs. 30-32. *Turn aside.* Unless he could tell about Absalom, the king had no interest in his message. *The Cushite came (Rev. Ver.).* The Cushites included all the natives of Africa beyond Egypt,—Ethiopians, as we should call them. *The Lord hath avenged thee, etc.* Joab had sent a blunt messenger with the evil message. Ahimaaz had outrun the Cushite, because he had taken the smoother, though longer route along the valley of the Jordan (v. 23), while the slave had taken the more difficult road over the hills. *Is the young man Absalom safe?* The Cushite answers this question, in language that but thinly veils the awful facts of the case, and thus fills up the cup of the king's sorrow.

III. A Bitter Cry, 33.

V. 33. *The king was much moved.* His grief broke forth like an uncontrollable torrent. He

forgot that the dead young man was a conspirator against him, and remembered only that he was his son. *Went up to the chamber; above the gate, to be alone in his sorrow. Wept.* So Jesus wept over rebellious Jerusalem, Luke 19 : 41, 42. *O my son Absalom.* Except some of the words of Jesus, there is no passage in the Bible, or indeed in all literature, so deeply pathetic. In every word there is the sob of a broken heart. *Would God I had died for thee.* So Moses (Ex. 32 : 32) and Paul (Rom. 9 : 3) would have sacrificed themselves, had it been possible, to save others.

Light from the East

RUNNERS—Eastern kings had a body of professional runners around them, partly as attendants, partly to carry orders and to bring back news. These men were trained from their boyhood to swiftness and power of endurance, and the speed they could keep up for a whole day was remarkable. I have seen two official runners with their wands of office preceding the carriage of the present Pasha of Egypt when it was being driven quite swiftly. I have seen an Arab over seventy, keep up a steady trot all day in front of a horse, and seem quite fresh at night. Down to the eighteenth century, runners went before every nobleman's coach in England, and they were often needed to keep it from being overturned, so rough were the roads. The Persian kings organized a regular system of mounted couriers, who traversed the whole kingdom with the royal mandates and general intelligence, and their swiftness became proverbial.

"THE ENEMIES. . . BE"—An Oriental will not give a direct reply, if he knows that it means evil tidings. He will give it some turn to modify its effect. The news of his son's death is conveyed to David in the form of a loyal wish for the destruction of all his enemies.

Many a time, when cantering through these lovely glades, (of Gilead), as my steed dashed under the low-sweeping boughs, how easy have I felt it would have been to have incurred the fate of Absalom had my hair been as long as his.—Tristram.

APPLICATION

David sat between the two gates, v. 24. When Cicero and Quintus were both proscribed by the second triumvirate at Rome, Quintus hid himself so successfully that the soldiers were not able to find him. Enraged at their disappointment, they took his son and put him to torture; but never a word would the faithful lad utter. Nothing more than an involuntary sigh and an occasional groan escaped his lips. The father was near enough to hear. He was so affected at the thought of the son dying to save his own life, that he could endure it no longer. He presented himself to the murderers and asked that he might take his son's place. No such sacrifice on behalf of father or mother may be required of us. But there are opportunities without number of making our parents' hearts glad by words and deeds of loving unselfishness. And these we owe to them for their unstinting goodness to us. Let not the pagan son of Quintus be more dutiful than the children of Christian parents.

Good tidings, v. 27. Some poor children of a city were taken for a few days' outing into the country. Several of them were put up at a farm house, and a rare "Milk's Blue" treat it was for those street Arabs to breathe the fresh air and enjoy the delights of field and forest. The mother of the home, however, noticed that one little fellow did not drink his milk, and she asked him why. "I ain't got no milk", was his unexpected reply. "There it is", she said, "right by your plate." "That ain't milk", protested the little fellow, "milk's blue." Poor little chap, he had never known any other than the miserable watered stuff given to him in the slum; and it was one of the trials of his life when he had to leave the fresh creamy drink of the farm and go back to the thin doctored milk of his city home. The food of the soul is the tidings that it hears. How much of the stuff that it feeds upon in the cheap literature of the age, is thin and blue! There is no sustenance in it, nothing to give the soul a further vision and a wider hope. The gospel is the only really good tidings, and when once the soul has drunk of these "wells of

salvation", it has no inclination to go back to the rubbish that contents the world.

Is the young man Absalom safe? v. 32. A sad incident happened at the burning of a newspaper building some years ago. The

Associated Press room was in the upper story. All the operators but one left their posts in time to escape. Notwithstanding the warning that had been given, this man remained too long at the wire, ticking off the latest news of the fire. He found his exit blocked. The interest of his work had so engrossed him, that he neglected the opportunity of escape, and unhappily perished in the flames. A young man may not become the victim of any of the more glaring vices of his associates. He may be clean and respectable and bear a good name among his friends; but he may be so engrossed in his business or pleasure as to neglect altogether the warning and the offer of salvation in the gospel. The young man Absalom is not safe, unless he has a firm hold of the only Saviour Jesus Christ.

O my son Absalom, v. 33. Chevalier Johnstone tells an affecting story that occurred in Scotland during Prince Charlie's rebellion.

A young man was an officer in one of the English regiments. His father, on the contrary, was a warm Jacobite, and joined the standard of Prince Charlie. Imagine the father's horror at receiving an order to attack next day the very regiment in which his son was an officer. "Perhaps", he said, "I may be so unfortunate as to kill my son with my own hand." Nothing would console the afflicted parent. The battle took place. The following evening, however, nothing could exceed the father's joy as he returned from the fight with one prisoner, alive and well, and that his son. For the time being, he cared not how many others he captured. It is a sad circumstance when the home is divided, when the son is found fighting against the father in the ranks of the enemy; but He who gave up His own Son to die for sinners, knows what are the sorrows of a father, and knows also the deep and abiding joy in the heart of a father when the prodigal is

A Debt We
All Owe

Stayed
Too Long

The Father's
Joy

brought home. For this purpose it was that He gave up His Son.

Lesson Points

No earthly father ever longed so eagerly for his son's welfare as God longs for the salvation of His wandering children. v. 1.

We can best commend the gospel to others by showing its power in our own lives v. 27.

The young man is never safe until he gives himself into the keeping of the Saviour. v. 32.

By the sacrifice of the cross alone can we measure the cost of our pardon. v. 33.

TEACHING HINTS

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the School.

For Teachers of the Older Scholars and Bible Classes

1. Describe the *tragic collapse of Absalom's rebellion*:—David's tactics (v. 2); his special instructions concerning Absalom (v. 5); the battle in the wood (vs. 6-8); the entanglement in the oak (v. 9); Joab's deed of violence, v. 14. Then proceed to discuss:

2. *David's suspense*, vs. 24-30. Mahanaim had been a scene of suspense long before, Gen. 32 : 11, 12. Then the conflict was between two brothers (Gen. 32 : 6-8); now between father and son. Whichever way the battle goes, David has ground for anxiety. If Absalom wins, David's throne falls. If defeated, there may be a fallen son to mourn over. Picture the anxious king, restlessly fidgeting in his seat at the gate, and sending a watchman above to discover the least sign of an approaching messenger, v. 24. On learning that a runner is in sight, David passes through the suspense of uncertain conjecture. News of some kind is afoot, v. 25. That becomes more obvious when a second runner appears, v. 26. But what kind of news? Good or bad? The suspense turns on that. The identification of one runner relieves the tension somewhat, v. 27. But his actual arrival with partial news (v. 28), creates fresh suspense. What about Absalom? Is he safe? The evasion of the messenger (v. 29) heightens suspense, and he is turned aside to await the second runner's report. Nervous collapse easily follows prolonged suspense. Hence,

3. *David's sorrow*, vs. 31-33. The arrival of the Cushite confirms the fact that the rebellion is over (v. 31), and divulges the further dreaded fact that Absalom has perished, v. 32. The politic reminder that only an

"enemy" has perished is ignored; for blood is thicker than water. There is a burst of parental grief, v. 33. Such sorrow is not unnatural, John 11 : 35. David was a faulty man (2 Sam. 12 : 9), and some of his troubles had been of his own making; but "a tear shows that the door of the heart is still open", and we look straight into David's heart when we see his sorrow. Point out: (1) The passion of it. Scarcely any cry could be more intense, unless Jeremiah's lament, Jer. 9 : 1. (2) The self-absorption of it. Suffering as a father, he forgets everything, and every one, else, Lam. 1 : 12. (3) The injustice of it, Rom. 14 : 7. There were others to think of, ch. 19 : 5-7. (4) The ultimate good of it, Heb. 12 : 11. "Submissive tears wash the heart clean; rebellious ones blister it." Was David's grief in any sense a fore-feeling towards Christ's representation of the Father-heart of God? Luke 15 : 11-32.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

Absalom in the oak; David at the gate; God in His heaven,—these are headings for the Lesson. The teacher may announce them as starting points for question and conversation, and the application of truth.

ABSALOM IN THE OAK. Call back the scholars to the previous Lesson. Absalom's rebellion,—his ambition and vanity and meanness. The intermediate steps will be readily given—David's flight from Jerusalem (from the end of last Lesson); Absalom's plans (ch. 17); David's counter-plan (ch. 18 : 1-4); his command concerning Absalom (v. 5); the battle (vs. 6-8); and then the tragedy of the oak (vs. 9-17): every scholar will be eager to tell this. A millionaire who had made his money by putting success before honesty, said in bitterness of soul, "I know what I have done wasn't manly. I would give all I possess if I could say, 'I have given every one a square deal. I have done no man

wrong'". Was some such bitter remorse Absalom's as he hung in the oak, and death drew suddenly near? Did it come to him like the baleful lightning flash, that the way of transgressors is hard, that a foolish son is a grief to his father, that they that sow the wind shall reap the whirlwind? Alas, poor Absalom!

DAVID AT THE GATE. Three scholars might impersonate the watchman, the first messenger, the second messenger, and so render the tragic scene of the bringing of the tidings; and the teacher might read the king and father's lament, v. 33. Little explanation is needed, and less comment. The scene is too vividly painted to require anything but recital. But the father's love and the father's grief may be dwelt upon a little further—love for his son even though that son was

seeking to rob him of his throne and possibly of his life; grief for his errors and for his untimely death. Two things should be impressed upon the scholars: (1) What a child means to a father—a father's love; (2) How a child can break a father's heart—a father's grief.

GOD IN HIS HEAVEN. God, the unseen Spectator of the tragedy of that sad day. He is just. Absalom reaped as he had sown (Gal. 6: 7). That is God's unchangeable law, which our reason and conscience say is right. That is the first lesson. God is pitiful. On an occasion far less sad Jesus wept (John 11: 35). Be sure that God did not forget David in his overwhelming grief. And, then, is not David's grief an image of the yearning of the heavenly Father over us, His erring and rebellious children? See John 3: 16.

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

[SEE SKETCH MAP, LESSON V.]

Gilead was the district east of the Jordan, extending from a little below the southern end of the Sea of Galilee, about half way down to the Dead Sea. "The portion of the Jordan Valley belonging to Gilead", says Dr. Merrill in Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible, "was of such fertility that it might easily be made one of the gardens of the world. Streams descended from the hills; there were numerous fountains of sweet, cool water, and copious sulphur springs existed in the valley at several different points." For the most part, Gilead is a fertile and beautiful country. It was famous for its great valleys. Among these was that of the Jabbok, cele-

brated in connection with the history of Jacob (see Gen. 32: 22).

Mahanaim was one of the cities of Gilead. Its site is not certainly known, but Dr. Merrill identifies it with some ruins on an eminence commanding an extensive view down the Valley of the Jabbok almost as far as the Jordan. This agrees with the story of 2 Sam., ch. 18, which tells that the watchman could see Ahimaaz and the Cushite from a considerable distance. The name Mahanaim means "two camps" or "two hosts", and was given to the place by Jacob because there the angels of God met him, apparently in two detachments, Gen. 32: 2.

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

In this section will be found further assistance under various headings.

Some Test Questions

1. What two advisers did Absalom consult? Whose advice did he follow? What did this cause Ahithophel to do?

2. What was the counsel of Hushai? What did this give David time to do? Where did he establish himself?

3. Where was the battle fought between David's and Absalom's armies? What charge had David given concerning Absalom?

4. By whom was Absalom slain? Whom did Joab send to David with news of the battle? What other messenger also set out?

5. Where was David awaiting news of the battle? Who saw the messengers coming?

6. Which messenger did the watchman see first? How did the watchman recognize him? What did the king say about him?

7. How did Ahimaaz announce the victory to the king? What did David ask? Give the reply of Ahimaaz.

8. Who was the second messenger? How had he been outrun by Ahimaaz?

9. What did the king ask of the Cushite? Tell the answer of the messenger.

10. How did David show his grief for Absalom? What would he have done for him?

Something to Look Up

1. Who was the first son who brought grief to his parents by his wrong-doing? Find the verse that tells what he did.

2. Find the passage that tells how the best Boy that ever lived acted towards His parents.

ANSWERS (Lesson V.)—(1) Prov. 22: 6. (2) Prov. 23: 24.

For Discussion

1. Disobedience to parents.
2. Our heavenly Father's love.

Prove from Scripture

That the result of sin is death.

The Catechism

Ques. 105. *The Lord's Prayer—its fifth petition.* There are two points in the Question: (1) God's forgiveness of us; (2) Our forgiveness of others. We all need God's forgiveness, for we have all sinned, Ps. 14: 3; Isa. 53: 6; Rom. 3: 23. It is "for Christ's sake" we are forgiven. He has endured the penalty due by us, and thus set us free, 1 Pet. 2: 24. We can do nothing to merit forgive-

ness, but must receive it as a free gift, Rom. 3: 24. God's forgiveness is complete. It covers "all our sins", Isa. 1: 18. There is constant occasion for our forgiving one another, because we are constantly giving and receiving offence. And we are bound to forgive others their smaller offences against us, because God has forgiven our greater offence against Him, Matt. 18: 27-35.

The Question on Missions

Ques. 6. Married young men are preferred as students. Their wives are trained at the same time in separate classes by the ladies. On finishing their course of studies, they are ready to begin teaching at once; whereas the single man must hunt up a wife before he can be sent out, which is not always an easy matter for him. To make the way easy for students to come to the Institute, their passage by steamer is paid. Their clothing, school materials and food are given them free, save that they must cultivate their own vegetable food. For this work four afternoons a week are allowed them. Although many of the students come very poorly prepared for entering, yet upon the whole results are encouraging. The English language, for many good reasons, was chosen as the medium of instruction. This is the first institution of its kind, known to us, using English exclusively.

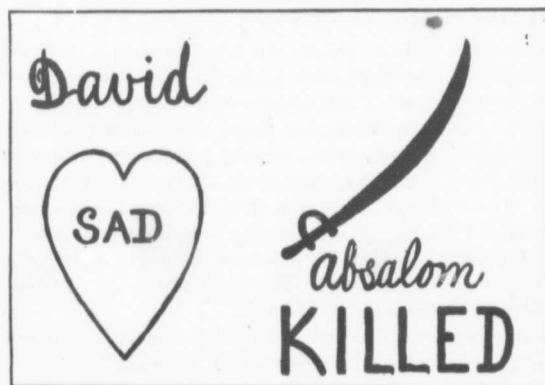
FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

Lesson Subject—The king mourning for his son.

Introduction—"It hurts mother more than it hurts my boy", said a fond mother, as

she turned away from the little lad, after punishing him for meddling with some forbidden articles; and that is just the way poor old King David felt when his son Absalom was punished for his badness to his father. His fatherly heart could not bear to have Absalom suffer.

A Battle Between Father and Son—Here are two armies meeting in battle (use sand tray or blackboard), and the saddest part of it is, that one army belongs to King David, and the other to his son Absalom. They



have met in the wood of Ephraim near Mahanaim (map)—a son fighting against his father! Can any of you tell why they are fighting? If we place this crown (made of pasteboard, or outline on board) before you, you will remember that Absalom wants to get the crown of the king upon his own head (recall last Lesson).

We last saw King David climbing the Mount of Olives, weeping, etc.—fleeing from his wicked son, and when he had climbed the hill, there came to him a man with asses bearing food for the king and his followers. If we speak of crutches, you will remember the lame man Mephibosheth, son of Jonathan. He is now sending these things by Ziba his servant, to refresh and help David and his men on their journey (you see kindness begets kindness); but the unkind son Absalom is at the same time planning to take David's life, ch. 17. David's friend Hushai warns the king of the plot, ch. 17: 15-22. David arrives at Mahanaim (ch. 17: 27-29), and he there gets his army ready to fight Absalom, ch. 18: 1-14. Ah, listen! David is speaking to the captains of his army. "Deal gently with my son", etc., v. 5. His love for his son is still strong, even though the son has proved so unworthy.

Absalom's Punishment—Did God let Absalom carry out his bad plans? No. God caused him to die in a very sad way, in punishment for his sin, vs. 9-17.

Sorrowful News for the King—Where shall we find the old king now? He is not in the battle. Ah! there he is sitting in the watchtower (outline: see Exposition), looking, watching, straining his eyes, listening for news of the battle. How will it come to him—by telephone, telegram, or train? By none of these. There was only one way in those days—by a messenger, a swift runner. Describe the coming of the two messengers, and the news they bring. Picture the old father bowed down with sorrow as he cries out, "O my son Absalom!" etc. What love! What forgiveness! It makes us think of the love and forgiveness of our heavenly Father, and of Jesus, when He prayed for those who put Him upon the cross, and died for them.

Golden Text—Now print the Golden Text and have it repeated, and give a simple illustration of the way in which a foolish and ungrateful boy caused grief to his dear father and mother.

Something to Think About—I should never grieve my parents.

FROM THE PLATFORM

IS THE YOUNG MAN SAFE?

Print on the blackboard, IS THE YOUNG MAN SAFE? Who, in the Lesson, asked this question? Of whom was it asked? And about whom? The answers to these questions will come readily from the scholars. They may be followed by a few questions bringing out the fate of the misguided Absalom. Then recall the base conduct of the young prince which led to his ruin and death. Emphasize his ambition, disloyalty, deceit, hypocrisy. From this young man of the old time, turn to the young men of to-day. Are they safe? Get the scholars to talk about some of the dangers lying about young men of our own times, for example, the temptation to make money by dishonest means, the temptation from drink, the temptation to gamble, etc. How can they be safe? Put in the very forefront the need of their trusting themselves to the guidance and keeping of Jesus. Then urge the importance of being on the watch against the very first approach of evil.

Lesson VII.

THE LORD OUR SHEPHERD

November 15, 1908

Psalm 23. Commit to memory the entire Psalm. Read John 10 : 1-18.

GOLDEN TEXT—The Lord is my shepherd ; I shall not want.—Psalm 23 : 1.

1 The Lord is my shepherd ; I shall not want.
 2 He maketh me to lie down in green pastures ;
 he leadeth me beside the still waters
 3 He restoreth my soul ; he ¹leadeth me in the
 paths of righteousness for his name's sake.
 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the
 shadow of death, I will fear no evil : for thou art

Revised Version—¹guideth ; ²hast anointed.

LESSON PLAN

I. God as Shepherd, 1-4.

II. God as Host, 5, 6.

DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association)

M.—The Lord our Shepherd, Ps. 23. T.—A tender Shepherd, Isa. 40 : 1-11. W.—A protecting Shepherd, Jer. 31 : 10-14. Th.—A feeding Shepherd, Ezek. 34 : 11-16. F.—The good Shepherd, John 10 : 7-16. S.—A strong Shepherd, John 10 : 22-30. S.—No separation, Rom. 8 : 31-39.

Shorter Catechism—*Ques.* 106. *What do we pray for in the sixth petition ?* A. In the sixth petition

with me ; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

5 Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies : thou ²anointest my head with oil ; my cup runneth over.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life : and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

(which is, *And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil*), we pray, That God would either keep us from being tempted to sin, or support and deliver us when we are tempted.

The Question on Missions—7. What subjects are taught in the Institute ? The Bible and applied Christianity in relation to teacher and pupil ; the branches of a common school education ; also prompt obedience, cleanliness and care of the body, tidiness, diligence, courtesy and love for others.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, 320 (Supplemental Lesson) ; 19 ; 134 ; 56 (Ps. Sel.) ; 16 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY) ; 14 (Ps. Sel.).

Special Scripture Reading—John 10 : 1-16 (To be read responsively or in concert by the whole School.)

EXPOSITION

Lesson Setting—The Twenty-third Psalm is a song of grateful praise to Jehovah, first as the Good Shepherd who tends and guides, and second, as the bountiful Host, who entertains His guest with unstinted liberality.

I. God as Shepherd, 1-4.

V. 1. *The Lord is my shepherd* ; a most natural figure in a shepherd country. The first Hebrews we know were shepherds. As shepherds the patriarchs went down to Egypt (Gen. 47 : 3), and they left it with much cattle, Ex. 12 : 32. As shepherds the Israelites entered Canaan, and most of them never gave up their flocks. The eastern plateaus and the hills of the west country have been sheep walks from that day to this. What a shepherd is to his sheep, that Jehovah is to His people. Again and again He is referred to as a Shepherd, Gen. 49 : 24 ; Ps. 74 : 1 ; 78 : 52 ; 79 : 13 ; 80 : 1 ; 95 : 7 ; 100 : 3 ; Isa. 40 : 11 ; 63 : 11 (compare Luke 15 : 3-7 ; John 10 : 1-16). *I shall not want* ; literally, "I have no want" : not future but present, pointing to daily experience. (Compare John 10 : 9.)

V. 2. *Maketh me to lie down* ; as the footsore, panting sheep rest beside some running brook when the sun's heat is fierce at noon-tide. *In green pastures*. The shepherd can lead his sheep to the tender grass only in the spring. At that season there is no scarcity of good grass, but later, when the dry season

sets in, they have nothing but withered herbage and stubble. But Jehovah leads His sheep always in the midst of plenty. *Still waters*. There is little running water in Palestine. For the daily watering, the sheep are taken to a well and the shepherd draws for them (see Gen. 29 : 1-3 ; Ex. 2 : 16-21). By "still waters" are meant "waters of rest". Jehovah's wells yield choice water that refreshes the soul (compare Song of Sol. 1 : 7). *He leadeth me*. In the East the shepherd does not drive his flock ; he goes before, and they follow him.

V. 3. *Restoreth my soul* ; or my life. By providing spiritual refreshment, Jehovah strengthens and invigorates the psalmist to full activity and enjoyment. *Leadeth me in the paths of righteousness* ; in right tracks, paths that lead to the destination, not those which lose themselves in the desert. *For his name's sake*. Jehovah is sure to guide him aright ; His word is pledged ; His "name", His honor is at stake.

V. 4. *Valley of the shadow of death* ; Rev. Ver. Margin, "valley of deep darkness". The good Guide leads the psalmist. Every shepherd knows how a guide is needed in the dark, precipitous wadis of Judah, full of caves haunted by wild beasts and robbers (see Light from the East). *I will fear no evil. . . thou art with me. . . thy rod. . . thy staff. . . comfort me*. The presence of Jehovah, as of a brave

shepherd, with the great oak club ("rod"), stout enough to brain a wild beast, and the long crook ("staff"), to pull the sheep out of danger, strengthens the psalmist's heart to face any peril.

II. God as Host, 5, 6.

V. 5. *Preparest a table before me.* Jehovah is now a Host, and the psalmist His guest. Hospitality in the sparsely settled East is a sacred duty. It is the "golden piety of the wilderness". Traveler and fugitive from justice alike are welcomed, given food and shelter and kept inviolate for a time, the host assuming responsibility for the guest's safety. What a picture of God's love! *In the presence of mine enemies.* The psalmist is as one who has fled from his enemies to take refuge with God. His enemies come up in pursuit, but they dare not cross the charmed threshold. *Anointest my head with oil;* a mark of honor to a guest in the East. Its omission was regarded as a slight, Luke 7:46. *Cup runneth over;* filled to the brim with God's blessings and mercies.

V. 6. *Goodness and mercy shall follow;* "shall pursue me", hunt me down, with the persistence of an enemy, but with the kindness of a friend. So eager, does the psalmist feel, is God to bless him. *All the days of my life.* A desert-dweller's guest could count on protection and entertainment for two days, but the psalmist as Jehovah's guest will abide with Him forever. *Dwell in the house of the Lord;* be where God is. *For ever.* To the Christian this means that he will be with God after death, as well as in this life. Death is simply passing from one storey to another in the heavenly Father's

house of many mansions.

The intensely personal quality of the psalm is not to be overlooked: every line has the personal pronoun. My Shepherd, my Guide, my Host,—every Jewish and every Christian heart has lingered on the words.

Light from the East

SHEPHERD—The green pastures are looked up by the shepherd's wisdom, the still waters are the wells and cisterns which, in many places, are the only water. The life of a sheep wandering into a garden is forfeited to the owner of the garden, but the shepherd may restore it to the flock. He goes before the sheep, choosing the right path, which, amid many precipices and impassable rocks, is often difficult, and though he may lead them through the Valley of Robbers, or the Ravine of the Eagle, they are safe. He has his long staff, with which he guides and sometimes stops them, and the short club with the heavy head, driven full of nails, which, wielded by a long, sinewy arm, will speedily stun the most formidable beast. The enemies of the flock are the poisonous plants, which must be discovered and removed, the adders, whose holes must be treated with burnt hog's fat, and the jackals, wolves, and hyenas, against which he watches night and day. At night, when the sheep are entering the fold, he stops the way with his staff, and examines each one, bathing the fly-bitten head with olive oil, or rubbing the torn side or the bruised knee with cedar tar, and if one seems specially exhausted, he lifts the two-handed cup full of water, from a vessel in reserve, and thus refreshes it.

APPLICATION

The Lord is my shepherd, v. 1. A shepherd was found on the downs of West England, with a troubled look on his face. "Why, sir", he said, "I could do well enough, were it not for that black ewe that you see yonder among the flock. She is the plague of my life. No sooner do I sit down to look at my book, or take up my wallet to get my dinner, but away she sets off over the down, and the rest follow her, and I have many a weary step to get them again. There! you see,

she's off, and they are off after her." The shepherd has his cares and worries. There are black sheep that are his constant annoyance. Are there ever any black sheep in the Lord's flock? Do we sometimes cause Him needless anxiety by our wilful conduct? Do we ever tempt others away from the safe pastures and force Him to travel many a weary mile to win us back again?

I shall not want, v. 1. Garibaldi, the famous Italian patriot, in his early days was a shepherd. On one occasion a lamb strayed

from his flock and was lost on the wild slopes of a mountain. The faithful shepherd started out at once to find where it was. He came home at supper time unsuccessful. Nothing daunted, he lit his lantern and took up the search in the darkness. After a while his companions became tired and discouraged, and they returned home; but Garibaldi would not give up. Long after midnight the sleeping friends were awakened by a footstep in the yard. It was the untiring shepherd returning with the poor little bleating lamb in his arms. Jesus is a "good Shepherd" like that (John 10: 11). He will never desert His wayward sheep nor His tender lambs, until He has brought them back to the safe fold and the pleasant pastures. If we belong to His flock, we need have no fear. He will not suffer us to want or to be lost.

He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness, v. 3. Sometimes the shepherd has to try many devices to bring his sheep where he wants them. On one occasion, **Led by a Lamb** when the herbage was cropped close and it was necessary to climb higher to get good grazing ground, a shepherd was baffled, because the approach was steep, and the poor things were not willing to make the attempt. He hit upon a happy expedient. He seized a lamb, carried it up the steep place and threw it on to the table land. It stood at the edge and bleated for the old sheep, and it was not many minutes until the mother was up beside the lamb. God often uses the children to lead the older people. Sometimes a man will resist the most powerful appeal that can be made to him by his minister or his friends; but the sight of his little child a follower of Jesus will melt his heart and make him a Christian too. This is one of the Good Shepherd's happy devices.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow, v. 4. Hume, the great Scotch skeptic, and Robertson, the great Christian historian, passed an evening in earnest friendly discussion, **In the Dark Passage Way** Hume contending that the light of nature was all that man would need, and Robertson that he needed also the light of the Bible. When Hume rose to depart, his

friend hastened to bring a lamp; but the skeptic smilingly remarked, "Pray, do not trouble. I find the light of nature always sufficient." He had not, however, advanced many steps along the dark passage way, when he tripped over something and fell. His friend ran to his assistance with the lamp, and as he did so, whispered softly, "You had better have a light from above". When men come to tread the dark passage way that leads out of this world, they would most surely stumble and fall, if they had no one to illumine the darkness for them. But Jesus has given His followers the promise that He will go with them, and He is the Light of the world. There is no gloom so thick that His presence will not dispel.

A table . . . in the presence of mine enemies, v. 5. Our enemies, how many they be, and how relentlessly they pursue us! They are not the difficulties, the struggles, the disappointments. These **God and Our Enemies** have proved themselves, again and again, to be our best friends. In contending with them, we have been led into a stranger and nobler manhood. Our enemies are our sins, our evil deeds, our pride, our selfishness, our malice, our passions, which have brought upon us the lashings of conscience, or worse, have enslaved us in the bondage of debased habits,—these are our enemies. But the message of the whole Bible is, that God has made abundant provision for us as sinners. He showers his benefits upon us, day by day, with a loving and lavish hand, so that, by His goodness He may lead us to the repentance, which always leads to pardon. But, better than this, He has sent His own Son into the world to be our Saviour from sin. His perfect life, His atoning death stand between us and the worst we have been and done, to shelter us from its pursuing wrath, and to keep us in peace that nothing can disturb.

I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever. v. 6. The conviction of immortality, which faith in God gives, has made **Why They Did Not Fear** soft the pillow of the dying, During an outbreak of smallpox at a mission institution, a heathen woman

was engaged to help in nursing. She was greatly impressed by the fact that the Christian girls did not fear death as the others did; and, despite the horrors of the plague, all the Christians wore a cheerful aspect. She returned to her village, but the im-

pression never forsook her, and at length led her back to learn more of that Saviour who could rob death of its sting. To-day she is telling her own people how "perfect love casteth out fear" (1 John 4 : 18 ; Hymn 181, Book of Praise).

TEACHING HINTS

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the School.

For Teachers of the Older Scholars and Bible Classes

The old way of interpreting the Psalm was to see the shepherd at the beginning, and lose him at the end. The new interpretation sees him all through, first in the fields, then in his tent.

1. *The shepherd looking after his sheep*, vs. 1-4. At once call attention to Christ's adoption of the imagery (John 10 : 14), and keep Him in view throughout as the "Good" Shepherd, who proves His goodness by dying (John 10 : 11 ; Rom. 5 : 8, 9); the "Great" Shepherd, who proves His greatness by rising again (Heb. 13 : 20 ; Acts 2 : 24); the "Chief" Shepherd, who will prove His supremacy by coming again, 1 Pet. 5 : 4 ; Matt. 26 : 64. They who are shepherded by Christ "shall not want", since He looks so well after them, Phil. 4 : 19. Every need of His flock is supplied, because : (1) He provides, v. 2. Like an Oriental shepherd, in an unfenced country, He finds out the grassy spots and refreshing streams, John 6 : 35. Through His care, the sheep revive, v. 3, first clause ; John 10 : 10. (2) He leads, v. 3. Sheep are prone to wander, Isa. 53 : 6. The shepherd's crook draws them back into "straight" paths—"paths of righteousness", John 10 : 4. (3) He protects, v. 4. In the Orient, the shepherd's "rod" or club, which wards off the attacks of wild beasts, is as important as his "staff" or crook, John 10 : 12 ; 2 Thess. 3 : 3. Christ acts as the "Good", "Great", "Chief" Shepherd "for His name's sake", v. 3. If He did not do all a shepherd should, He would not deserve the "name", Ezek. 34 : 8.

2. *The shepherd looking after his guest*, vs. 5, 6. Picture the black, squat shepherd's tent, with a haggard, panting fugitive at its

opening and the scowling "avenger of blood" hot-foot behind, Josh. 20 : 3. Explain the law of desert hospitality, which made a guest's life sacred and imposed on the host an inviolable obligation to protect him. Dwell on this fugitive's security, v. 5. The shepherd, having now a charge more valuable than sheep (Matt. 12 : 12, first half), cares for him more thoroughly than for his flock. From "the fugitive sense of sin", we find refuge with the Good Shepherd who died for us, 1 Cor. 15 : 3 ; Rom. 8 : 34. Besides protection, He affords rare hospitality, Matt. 26 : 26-29. With redeeming love, our cup "runneth over". Goodness and mercy "follow" "pursue", or "hunt" us, and in their eager solicitude for our well-being, will not let us escape, Rom. 8 : 38, 39. We may have every assurance of unending enjoyment of the "Good", "Great", "Chief" Shepherd's hospitality, John 10 : 27, 28.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

The story or the song that lives, comes from the writer's heart, is part of his own experience.

No one but one who was, or had been, a shepherd, could have written this Psalm. And no one could have written it, who had not had God near him in darkness as well as in the light.

David was a shepherd!

David had his dark, dark days, as well as his days of gladness. Recall the Lesson of last Sabbath as one of David's dark days. Was it after this experience that he wrote the Psalm? At any rate, it was after deep experience of God's comfort and aid.

Probably most of the scholars can recite this Psalm in its prose version, and all of them in verse. What better can the teacher do, at the beginning of the Lesson period, than to "hear" the scholars say the Psalm? And what better can the School do than sing

it with one heart and one voice, at the close of the hour?

And what more can the teacher hope to accomplish in the Lesson, than to get the Psalm just a little deeper than before, into the children's hearts? Some sidelights may help.

The Lord. Jehovah, the Saviour and Guide and Helper of His people Israel (illustrate this from their history). Jehovah-Jesus, our Saviour and Helper and Guide.

My Shepherd. As every dew-drop may take the whole great round sun into its bosom, so each least one of us may say of the great Jehovah-Jesus, "My Shepherd".

Shall not want. Not want what? Anything, anything in this life, anything in the life beyond.

Green pastures. . . still waters. A sweet pic-

ture of the restfulness into which the blessed Saviour leads His followers.

Restoreth my soul. Makes it a joy to live, so strong do we become, when His Spirit dwells within us.

Paths of righteousness. Right tracks. "There are many paths, but only one best one. In that way God leads us."

For His name's sake. His honor is pledged to our right guidance.

The valley of the shadow. The worst peril or sorrow that can come.

Thy rod. For my defence.

Thy staff. For my support and guidance.

Preparest a table. Makes one of His own family, and therefore safe from every foe. And at that table, the anointing oil of His favor, the overflowing cup of His grace.

All the days. Both now, and forevermore.

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

[SEE SKETCH MAP, LESSON V.]

Read carefully the accounts of Palestine as a shepherd country, in the *QUARTERLIES*. These refer particularly to the hill country of Judah, and may be supplemented by the following description of sheep-tending in the far north, taken from Dr. Thomson's, *The Land and the Book*:

"In ordinary circumstances the shepherd does not *feed* his flock, except by leading and guiding them where they may gather for themselves; but there are times when it is otherwise. Late in autumn, when the pastures are dried up, and in winter, in places covered with snow, he must furnish them food, or they die. In the vast oak woods

along the eastern sides of Lebanon, between Baalbek and the cedars, there are then gathered innumerable flocks, and the shepherds are all day long in the bushy trees, cutting down the branches, upon whose green leaves and tender twigs the sheep and goats are entirely supported. The same is true in all mountain districts, and large forests are preserved on purpose. Life in these remote and wild woods is then most singular and romantic. The ring of the axe, the crash of falling trees, the shout of the shepherds, the tinkling of bells and barking of dogs, wake a thousand echoes along the deep wadis of Lebanon."

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

In this section will be found further assistance under various headings.

Some Test Questions

1. Under what two figures does the Lesson Psalm speak of God?
2. Why was it natural for a Hebrew to think of God as a Shepherd? Mention some Old Testament passages in which He is thus referred to.
3. How does the psalmist describe the sufficiency of God's provision for him?
4. What is meant by "still waters"?

How does an Eastern shepherd guide his sheep?

5. Explain "paths of righteousness". Why is the psalmist sure that Jehovah will guide him aright?

6. What is the "rod"? What the "staff"? Why is the psalmist fearless?

7. What responsibility does an Eastern host assume for his guest?

8. How is the abundance of the provision of the divine Host pictured?

9. To what are the "goodness and mercy" of God likened?

10. How long, according to Eastern custom, could a guest claim protection and entertainment from his host? How long will God provide for His people?

Something to Look Up

1. Isaiah has told us that we are all like sheep and have gone astray, but that our sins were laid upon Jesus. Find this verse.

2. In what verse of John's Gospel does Jesus tell us that He is the Good Shepherd?

ANSWERS (Lesson VI.)—(1) Cain; Gen. 4: 8. (2) Luke 2: 51.

For Discussion

1. Shepherd life in the East.
2. Make up a list of God's "mercies", by each scholar naming one.

Prove from Scripture

That Jesus frees us from fear of death.

The Catechism

Ques. 106. *The Lord's Prayer—its sixth petition.* The Question has to do with temptation. Temptation in scripture has two meanings. It signifies, first, a test. In this sense, God tempts us, as He tempted Abraham (Gen. 22: 1), to reveal our character and make us stronger to resist. If we are to overcome, we must have strength higher than our own. This we may receive

in answer to prayer (see 2 Cor. 12: 9). Again, temptation is used in the sense of enticement to sin. In this sense God tempts no man. The three sources of temptation are the world (Eph. 2: 2), the flesh (James 1: 14), and the devil, 1 Pet. 5: 8. Against those we cannot stand by ourselves. What we need and should pray for, is either to be kept from being tempted, or strengthened to resist successfully when we are tempted.

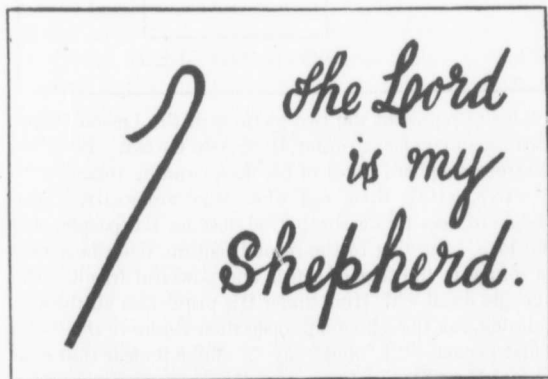
The Question on Missions

Ques. 7. The teaching in the Institute is largely Biblical. The position that the native teacher holds, demands of him a fair knowledge of God's Word. He is a man of one Book; and it is of the utmost importance that he understand it, especially that he himself be guided by its principles, and walk humbly with its Author. To fit him for life's duties he must learn arithmetic, be able to write fairly well, and know something of the world beyond his own island home. Coming as he does from the forest, and the wild ways of the heathen, he requires training in obedience to authority; also to be clean and take some care of the body. Diligence is not innate to human nature; neither is love for others, nor kindly treatment of them, particularly of the weaker ones, indigenous; hence the need for instructing the future leaders in these duties.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

Lesson Subject—The king telling of God's care.

Introduction—There are so many ways in which this Lesson may be introduced. Any



little talk about sheep and shepherds will lead up to it. Some of the very little ones will be able to repeat one of the pretty nursery rhymes about sheep. Have you all seen sheep, real live ones? "Yes." Will some one tell me how they look? Did you notice their quiet, gentle eyes? Are they cross animals? We'll put a picture of some sheep (or outline) on the board, or use toy sheep, if a sand table is used. Can you tell me what the sheep eat for their breakfast, and

dinner, and supper every day?

What do we call the man who leads the sheep from the stable or sheepfold, out to the pasture, and takes care of them all the time? Print, SHEPHERD. In many places there are great dangers to the sheep—wild animals may kill them, or thieves may try to steal them away. But see here, the shepherd won't let them! He carries a rod or club with which he will hit the wild animals or thieves and drive them away, and here is a picture of a staff (or crook) which a real shepherd carries (outline). Explain its use in drawing aside branches, etc., to allow the sheep to pass, so that their woolly coats will not be caught. Then, too, it is used to help to get the sheep out of any dangerous place into which it may have fallen,—and let me whisper you something else the kind shepherd does with his staff: he often pulls down the nice, tender branches and leaves for the wee lambs to get a nibble too. So Jesus, the Good Shepherd, always takes special care of the little ones in His flock.

Golden Text—Print and repeat, THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD; I SHALL NOT WANT. Do you know it was King David who wrote these words? He had been a shepherd, and knew just how kind and gentle a good shepherd must be. He played on his harp

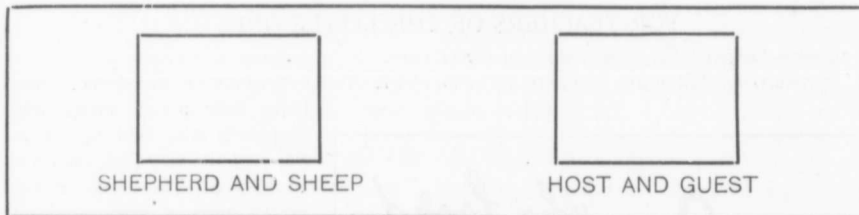
and sang this beautiful Shepherd Psalm. Some of you know it all (repeat in concert). Do you remember the sad time King David was having when we last heard of him? (Recall last Lesson.) But when he wrote this Psalm, it was all joy and brightness with him.

A Set of Pictures—Let us look at all the beautiful pictures David gives us, to make us think of God's love and care for us. Describe these in a simple, practical way, explaining the analogy: (1) A shepherd. (2) Beside still waters. (3) Paths of righteousness. (4) Valley of sorrow, or gloom or death. (5) Rod and staff. (6) A table spread with good things. (7) Tokens of a feast. Blessings poured upon the head, an overflowing cup of blessings. (8) Goodness and mercy following in the pathway of the friend of God. (9) The house of the Lord, an everlasting home.

Our Shepherd—Jesus wants us to think of Him as a kind Shepherd leading and caring for His sheep. He says, "I am the good Shepherd". Surely we need not be afraid of anything, when we know that Jesus the Lord is our Shepherd. He will not permit anything to harm us when we trust in Him.

Something to Think About—The Lord is my Shepherd.

FROM THE PLATFORM



Draw on the blackboard two squares to represent the two pictures of the Lesson Psalm. Under the one print, SHEPHERD AND SHEEP, and under the other, HOST AND GUEST. Bring out by questioning, the care which an Eastern shepherd takes of his flock, leading them out to pasture, looking out for fresh, cool water, letting them rest when they are weary. Then emphasize the truth that what the shepherd does for his sheep, God does for His people, only with far more wisdom and power and love. Turning to the second picture, describe a man fleeing from his enemies, and finding refuge in the tent of a true and powerful friend. The lesson to impress here is that God's people dwell with Him, under His protection all through this life, and in the life to come. In closing, ask the scholars to open their Bibles to the Psalm and pick out all the pronouns in the first person,—“I” and “my”. Make it clear that each of us may have God as his Shepherd and Host by simply trusting Him.

Lesson VIII.

SOLOMON ANOINTED KING

November 22, 1908

1 Kings 1 : 32-40, 50-53.

Commit to memory vs. 39, 40.

Study 1 Kings 1 : 1 to 2 : 12.

GOLDEN TEXT—Know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind.—1 Chronicles 28 : 9.

32 And king Da'vid said, Call me Za'dok the priest, and Na'than the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoi'ada. And they came before the king.

33 The king also said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord, and cause Sol'omon my son to ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to Gi'hon :

34 And let Za'dok the priest and Na'than the prophet anoint him there king over Is'rael : and blow ye with the trumpet, and say, God save king Sol'omon.

35 Then ye shall come up after him, that he may come and sit upon my throne ; for he shall be king in my stead : and I have appointed him to be ruler over Is'rael and over Ju'dah.

36 And Benaiah the son of Jehoi'ada answered the king, and said, Amen : the Lord God of my lord the king say so too.

37 As the Lord hath been with my lord the king, even so be he with Sol'omon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord king Da'vid.

38 So Za'dok the priest, and Na'than the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoi'ada, and the Cher'e-thites, and the Pel'e-thites, went down, and caused Sol'omon to ride upon king Da'vid's mule, and

Revised Version—¹ And the king said ; ² and he shall ; ³ shall ; ⁴ Omit shall ; ⁵ did obeisance.

LESSON PLAN

- I. Solomon Appointed King, 32-37.
- II. Solomon Proclaimed King, 38-40.
- III. Solomon Ruling as King, 50-53.

DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association)

M.—Solomon anointed king, 1 Kgs. 1 : 32-40.
T.—Solomon anointed king, 1 Kgs. 1 : 41-53. W.—Solomon anointed king, 1 Kgs. 2 : 1-12. Th.—David's charge, 1 Chron. 22 : 5-13. F.—David's prayer, 1 Chron. 29 : 10-19. S.—The second anointing, 1 Chron. 29 : 20-30. S.—Prayer for Solomon, Ps. 72.

Shorter Catechism—*Que.* 107. *What doth the conclusion of the Lord's prayer teach us ?* A. The conclusion of the Lord's prayer (which is, *For thine is*

brought him to Gi'hon.

39 And Za'dok the priest took an horn of oil out of the tabernacle, and anointed Sol'omon. And they blew the trumpet ; and all the people said, God save king Sol'omon.

40 And all the people came up after him, and the people piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them.

50 And Adonijah feared because of Sol'omon, and arose, and went, and caught hold on the horns of the altar.

51 And it was told Sol'omon, saying, Behold, Adonijah feareth king Sol'omon : for, lo, he hath caught hold on the horns of the altar, saying, Let king Sol'omon swear unto me to day that he will not slay his servant with the sword.

52 And Sol'omon said, If he will shew himself a worthy man, there shall not an hair of him fall to the earth : but if wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die.

53 So king Sol'omon sent, and they brought him down from the altar. And he came and bowed himself to king Sol'omon : and Sol'omon said unto him, Go to thine house.

Revised Version—¹ And the king said ; ² and he shall ; ³ prince ; ⁴ the ; ⁵ Tent ; ⁶ he ; ⁷ laid hold ;

the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen) teacheth us to take our encouragement in prayer from God only, and in our prayers to praise him, ascribing kingdom, power, and glory to him. And, in testimony of our desire, and assurance to be heard, we say, *Amen*.

The Question on Missions—8. Do teachers trained in the Institute excel others not so trained ? Those receiving first or second class certificates usually become effective teachers ; and, besides the ordinary work, take charge of the children's schools ; or they are placed at the more important out-stations.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, 320 (Supplemental Lesson) ; 90 ; 67 ; 83 (Ps. Sel.) ; 301 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY) ; 434.

Special Scripture Reading—Psalm 45. (To be read responsively or in concert by the whole School.)

EXPOSITION

Time and Place—About B.C. 965 (Ussher, B.C. 1015); Jerusalem.

Connecting Links—David remained absorbed in grief for Absalom (Lesson VII., 2 Sam. 18 : 24-33), until Joab roused him to lead his army back to Jerusalem and resume his throne, ch. 19. Soon afterwards a fresh rebellion broke out under Sheba, a Benjamite, which was quelled by Joab, ch. 20. A famine of three years' duration followed, having been sent of God as a punishment for Saul's massacre of the Gibeonites, ch. 21. Ch. 24 tells how David, in a spirit of vain-glory, made a census of his people. For this the land was afflicted with a pestilence, which was stayed by the king's offering a sacrifice on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. In ch. 22 we have David's song of praise to God for his victories, re-

peated in Ps. 18, and in ch. 23 there is a list of his mighty men.

Adonijah was the eldest living son of the king, and naturally looked for the kingdom. He was supported by Joab, David's general, and Abiathar, the high priest. Vs. 9, 10 tell of a great feast made by Adonijah for his followers. His rival was Solomon, who was a number of years younger, but the son of David's favorite wife Bathsheba. Solomon's supporters were Nathan the prophet, Zadok, Abiathar's colleague and rival in the priesthood, and Benaiah, captain of the royal bodyguard. Nathan interpreted Adonijah's feast as a conspiracy. He sent Bathsheba at once to the king, to inquire how it was that he had made Adonijah king when, by the word of the Lord, he had promised the throne to her son, 1 Chron. 22 : 9. Nathan

went himself after Bathsheba, asking the king the same question. The plan succeeded; David was indignant. He swore that Solomon should be king, and prepared to put his words at once into execution.

I. Solomon Appointed King, 32-37.

Vs. 32-34. *King David said.* The words of Bathsheba (vs. 15-21) and of Nathan (vs. 22-27) had roused in the old warrior king something of his earlier vigor and promptness of action. *Call me Zadok . . . Nathan . . . Benaiah.* The combination of the high priest, the court prophet, and the captain of the royal bodyguard would be a guarantee that the proceedings had the king's sanction. *Take . . . the servants of your lord* (David himself); the king's bodyguard (see on v. 38), a considerable company of well armed men. Since Joab was on the other side (v. 7), there was likely to be fighting. *Cause Solomon . . . ride upon mine own mule.* The mule is first mentioned as the riding animal of the royal family in David's time, 2 Sam. 13 : 29 ; 18 : 9. Asses were still used by the common people, while the war horse was not introduced until Solomon's time. It was death, according to the Rabbis, for any one to ride the king's mule without his consent. Solomon's appearing on it would be an additional proof of David's sanction of his coronation. *To Gihon*; a place in the Kedron Valley east of Jerusalem, where there was a fountain. *Anoint him there.* Anointing was the method of inauguration into each of the offices typical of the Messiah ("Anointed One"), that of prophet and priest and king. *Blow ye with trumpet.* Compare the proclamation of Absalom (2 Sam. 15 : 10), Jehu (2 Kgs. 9 : 13), and Joash, 2 Kgs. 11 : 14. *God save king Solomon*; literally, "Let the king Solomon live".

Vs. 35-37. *Benaiah . . . answered.* It is not without significance that it was Benaiah who made answer. He was captain of the bodyguard, and in those days the prince or general who had the army behind him had a great advantage over all rivals. To a great extent, the issue lay in Benaiah's hands, and he answered the monarch. *Amen*; a prayer meaning, "so let it be", implying a determination to carry out the

king's orders. *The Lord . . . say so too.* The Greek version of the Bible has here, "May Jehovah confirm the words of my lord the king". Without his approval and help, the plans of the king and his counselors would come to naught. *His throne greater, etc.*; words to flatter a father's fond hopes for his son.

II. Solomon Proclaimed King, 38-40.

Vs. 38-40. *Zadok . . . Nathan . . . Benaiah*; a formidable trio; well might Adonijah and his fellow revelers dread their powers. *Cherethites. Pelethites*; the troops under Benaiah, the "mighty men" of vs. 8 and 10. The Cherethites may have been originally a clan of Philistines (1 Sam. 30 : 14 ; Ezek. 25 : 16 ; Zeph. 2 : 5), as perhaps the Pelethites were also. David's standing army was probably recruited to a large extent from Philistine sources. They were born soldiers, and had no battles of their own to fight. *Went down . . . to Gihon.* As the king had commanded (v. 33), so it was done. *Zadok took the horn of oil* (Rev. Ver.); doubtless the sacred oil kept for such occasions as this and for the anointing of priests (see Ex. 30 : 23-25). *Out of the tabernacle*; likely the tent on Mount Moriah, in which the ark was placed, 2 Sam. 6 : 17. *Anointed Solomon*; the symbol of his divine appointment and qualification. *Blew the trumpet*; the public proclamation. *God save king Solomon*; the people's joyful ratification of heaven's choice. *Piped with him pipes*; played on flutes. *Rejoiced . . . earth rent*; an Oriental way of describing how great was the jubilation.

The shouting and trumpeting interrupted Adonijah's banquet. It was soon known that Solomon had anticipated him, and was already sitting on David's throne. The Oriental stands in awe of the accomplished fact. Adonijah's faction dwindled away, till he was left with scarce a supporter but Joab and Abiathar (vs. 41-49).

III. Solomon Ruling as King, 50-53.

Vs. 50-53. *Adonijah feared*; and with reason, since it was the custom of the times for a new king to slay all rivals to the throne. *Horns of the altar*; perhaps the one set up by David when he brought the ark to Jerusalem (see 2 Sam. 6 : 17 ; 1 Kgs. 3 : 15). The horns were wooden projections at the four corners,

covered with brass, Ex. 27 : 2. There, as a ward of Jehovah, Adonijah was inviolable. *Let king Solomon swear.* He would not leave the sanctuary till Solomon granted him his life. He made his obeisance to Solomon and received the command, *Go to thine house.*

Ch. 2 : 1-9 contains David's parting counsels to Solomon. Vs. 10, 11 tell of his death, and v. 12 describes Solomon's kingdom as firmly established, all obstacles having been removed.

Light from the East

PRIEST AND KING—Were very closely associated ; the king derived his power from God through the priests. Each Sumerian king, who ruled over the ancient Babylonian plain, called himself a "prince-priest". He was the sovereign of a temple and the chief servant of the god worshiped there, and from this deity he obtained his authority. In Egypt the king was a priest, and subject to

priestly control. The heir was educated among the priests, and if an election was necessary, either a priest or a soldier was chosen, and only these two classes could vote. The vote of every priest in the first rank counted a hundred, and in the inferior ranks twenty, while the vote of a soldier counted only one. If a soldier was chosen, he was at once initiated a priest. All the king's duties were prescribed in the priestly code, and after the daily sacrifice the high priest recited his virtues and pronounced an imprecation on all who charged the king with doing wrong, and fixed the guilt and penalty on the counselors who had wrongfully advised him. This desire to attach the sanction of heaven to the assumption of kingly power appears in many modern customs. Napoleon Bonaparte brought the Pope from Rome to crown him Emperor in Paris, and the king of Great Britain is still crowned by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

APPLICATION

Call me Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, v. 32. He had just been paying a visit at his aunt's house when it came on to rain. On going out he observed an umbrella all rolled up and snugly placed in a corner. He took it and proceeded to open it up, when his aunt sprang toward him and said, "No, no, you can't have that. I've had that umbrella twenty-three years, and it has never been wet yet ; and I am not going to permit it to get wet now". Some folks' religion is of the same quality. It stands in the corner, a respectable article to be admired, but it must not be dampened in the showers of actual life. How different was David's attitude to religion ! When the crisis came in the affairs of government, the first men he sent for were the priest and the prophet. The best religion is the religion that is most used.

Amen : the Lord God of my lord the king say so too, v. 36. "Well, my boy, do you ever find it hard work to be good ?" asked a gentleman of a newsboy.

A Sky Telegram "Yes, sir." "Well, so do I. But I have found out how to get help." "How, sir ?" "I just send a

telegram." The boy was surprised. Then the gentleman touched him on the forehead and said, "What do you do there ?" "Think." "Can God see what you think ?" "Yes." "Well", continued the gentleman, "when you want help to sell your papers, or be a good boy, just send a sky telegram, 'Jesus help me', and God will get it." It was such a sky telegram that Benaiah sent, when he said "Amen" to the king's request and invoked the divine sanction ; for without God's amen, our amen avails nothing.

The horns of the altar, v. 50. Protection is one of the great needs of life. The bud would have become a leaf, but the plant changed its soft green cells into God's Wings a hard casing and sharpened its stem into a thorn, because it needed thorns to protect it, as well as leaves to feed it. Human life needs protection also. Adonijah fled to the horns of the altar. In the Middle Ages every church was a sanctuary, where the culprit could escape from the violence of the pursuer. But the only true protection for the soul from the sorrows and wrongs of this world, is under the shadow of God's wings where it finds shelter through faith.

If he will shew himself a worthy man, v. 52. Can anything be more delicately beautiful than a spray of maiden-hair fern? What a

God's Test of Fitness perfect mosaic its tiny leaflets make! But, with the fern, this wonderful display of foliage

is not a question of beauty, but of necessity. If it does not arrange its leaves so as to secure sufficient sunlight in the shady crevice where it grows, it must die. Men too are not exempt from the same stern requirements. Only it is not a display of wealth or fame or worldly honors that enables them to survive, but of moral worth. "If he shew himself a worthy man, there shall not a hair of him fall to the ground: but if wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die." This is God's test of human fitness to live forever.

Go to thine house, v. 53. A plot was formed against the life of Archbishop Cranmer. Two of the accomplices were among his intimate friends whom he had

Cranmer and the Conspirators benefited. He called them aside and informed them of the plot. They expressed their abhorrence. He produced the letters that involved their guilt. They fell down at his feet and craved for pardon. They seemed little to deserve it;

but after he had pointed out the grave nature of their crime, he forgave them, and never again alluded to their treachery; and it became a byword, "Do Lord Cranmer an ill turn, and you make him your friend forever." If we learn, like Solomon or Cranmer, to forgive the trespasses of our fellow men, God will also forgive us our trespasses. (Matt. 6: 14, 15.)

Lesson Points

True subjects of God will be loyal subjects to their king. v. 32.

As soon as we see our duty, we should make haste to do it. v. 33.

God never calls us to any task without also giving us fitness for it. v. 34.

The most successful workman is the one who renders himself unnecessary. v. 35.

"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." v. 36.

It is the mark of a noble soul to feel, not jealousy, but joy, at the greater prosperity of others. v. 37.

That throne is secure which rests on God's appointment and the people's will, v. 39.

A wise man will see the end of a thing before he commits himself to it. v. 50.

TEACHING HINTS

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the School.

For Teachers of the Older Scholars and Bible Classes

Start with Adonijah's not unnatural ambition, as David's eldest living son, to reach the throne, (v. 5 first half). Like Absalom, spoiled by parental indulgence (v. 6), he seeks, in anticipation of his father's end (v. 1), to bring himself into conspicuous notice (v. 5, last half), and enlists the support of Joab, the commander of the forces, and Abiathar, the chief priest, v. 7. He gives a feast, from which his only known rival, Solomon, is excluded, v. 10. Open rebellion is declared, v. 25. Nathan and Bathsheba become active in Solomon's interests (vs. 15-31), and David recalls a special word about Solomon, 1 Chron. 22: 6-9.

1. *A sudden stroke of policy*, vs. 32-40. Show how many things were in favor of

Adonijah's move: such as his own prominence and Solomon's obscurity; his own strength, through the enlistment of ecclesiastical and military power, and David's weakness through old age. Important factors, however, were being left out of account: notably the prestige of a still reigning sovereign and the influence of his decision regarding a successor. Something like his former energy animates the old king, who resolves on a sudden stroke of policy. Zadok, the second priest; Nathan, the prophet; and Benaiah, the captain of the body-guard, are summoned (v. 32), and given their orders (vs. 33-35), which evoke expressions of implicit obedience and loyalty, vs. 36, 37. On the king's special riding animal, escorted by the king's body-guard (v. 38; 2 Sam. 20: 6, 7), or palace regiment, young Solomon is presented to the people and anointed as David's nomination for a successor (v. 39, first half), and with enthusiastic cheers

(v. 40), the people accept him as their coming monarch, v. 39, last half. By this sudden stroke, Solomon the Peaceable (compare ch. 4 : 24) is enthroned. Will it be a strained transition to the enthronement of the Prince of Peace (Eph. 2 : 14-17) above all rivals? Luke 19 : 14 ; John 18 : 40. The heavenly King's choice of a Ruler for His subjects is very deliberately declared, 1 John 3 : 23 ; Luke 2 : 10, 11.

2. *A deliberate act of clemency*, vs. 50-53. Picture the progress of Adonijah's turbulent banquet ; Joab's startled surprise at the trumpet-blare and uproarious shouts (v. 41) ; the arrival of the special messenger (v. 42), with news of the *coup d'état* (vs. 43-48) ; and ensuing panic, v. 49. Explain the abject terror of Adonijah (v. 50), and describe the practice of seeking sanctuary in the Greek temples, old English churches, and especially in Holyrood, Edinburgh, where Scottish law still recognizes the right of asylum. This clinging to the horns of the altar was a dramatic appeal for mercy. The wretched outwitted prince would not leave asylum without a promise of amnesty, v. 51. This is granted on condition of good behavior, vs. 52, 53. By way of application, magnify the clemency shown in Christ, Luke 23 : 34 ; Rom. 5 : 6-11.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

The scholars, if old enough, will recall the ceremonies and rejoicings at the coronation of King Edward six years ago. Talk about the doings of that wonderful day : a new king had come to the throne. It was a great event.

There is an even greater charm in the accession of King Solomon. King Edward was a man of sixty-seven, when he came to the throne. He might do great things (as a matter of fact, he has done great things, especially for the promotion of peace and good-will amongst the nations) ; but by reason of his mature age, his reign must necessarily be brief. Solomon is a mere youth. All life is before him.

The Lesson is **A KING'S CALL** : how Solomon became king.

Possibly some of the scholars may take interest in the plans and plots of Adonijah

and his friends, and the counter plans of Solomon and his friends, related in the earlier part of the Lesson chapter.

These lead up to David's summons (v. 32) of priest, prophet, and general—leaders of the three leading classes.

Then follow the steps to be taken to make Solomon king—placing him upon the king's mule (see Exposition) ; anointing him with the sacred oil (see Exposition) ; blowing the trumpet ; and crying, "God save King Solomon". Vs. 38-40 give the details as actually worked out.

Adonijah's dismay (vs. 41-49) ; his flight for refuge to the altar (v. 50) ; Solomon's wise act of pardon (vs. 51-53) ; follow in their order. Solomon acted with fairness and wisdom.

A KING'S CALL : how Solomon became king. Carry the class back to this topic, and bring out by question and conversation the four elements in the situation :—

(1) *His inheritance as the son of David*. He was his father's son ; therefore he became king. Show how much a young man owes to those who have gone before him, to the home, and his breeding. Encourage independence, self-help, by all means ; but lead the scholars to see how deeply in debt they are to parents and teachers and their whole environment.

(2) *His choice by God*. Have the class turn to 1 Chron. 22 : 8, 9. No one comes by chance into a great place. Have the scholars give scripture instances of God's call, such as Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, Samuel, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Nehemiah, Daniel, the twelve disciples, Paul. "To what has God called me?" a young person asks. How does the answer come? Sometimes by the inward voice in the soul. Sometimes in the two ways just to be described.

(3) *His fitness for the place*. This will come out more fully in the Lesson of a fortnight hence. Solomon had kingly qualities, prized wisdom above all else. He was fit to be king, and therefore the kingship came to him. A regal lesson, this, for all young people : be fit for your task, and the task will come ; be fit for the responsibility and the honor, and these will not pass you by.

(4) *His choice by the people*. See vs. 39,

40. He was a favorite, because he deserved to be. And the people's favor was a chief asset in his promotion. It is right to wish for and seek for the favor of our fellowmen.

We have the example of Jesus for this, Luke 2 : 52. Every friend one makes, by right and generous conduct, is a step not only to greater happiness, but to larger success in life.

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON

[SEE SKETCH MAP, LESSON V.]

A recent traveler in Palestine writes : "Through a forest of cacti ten and fifteen feet high we rode south to Shunem, another little miserable mud and dung village, noisome, degraded, where the people, breathing the disease-laden air, live like animals in holes. Yet it is the place where Elisha raised the Shunammite woman's son (see 2 Kgs., ch. 4), centuries before Christ raised the boy of the widow of Nain a few miles to the north." This wretched hamlet, now called Sûlem or Sôlem, lies on the slopes of Jebel Dahi, or Little Hermon, looking across

the valley from the north to Gilboa. It was from Shunem that Abishag was brought to wait on King David. The traveler already quoted tells us, that on his way from Shunem he "passed a deep cut out of which native women were carrying basketfuls of earth and stones, as a part of the operation of building a railroad in the Plain of Esdraelon". Sûlem or Sôlem is 5 miles north of the western end of Mount Gilboa, and 10 or 12 miles from Carmel, whither the Shunammite woman went to find Elisha when her son had died, 2 Kgs. 4 : 25.

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

In this section will be found further assistance under various headings.

From the Library

Life is too short, and the work to be done too pressing and great, to allow of dawdling. "I made haste, and delayed not, but made haste to keep Thy commandments." Let us learn from Adonijah's fiasco, to see the end of a thing before we commit ourselves to it, and to have the work done first before we think of the feast.—Dr. Alexander MacLaren.

Solomon inherited from his mother and the counselor Ahithophel (2 Sam. 11 : 3 ; 23 : 34 ; 16 : 23) sagacity, quickness of judgment, judicial insight, and perhaps some measure of sensual weakness ; from his father, thoughtfulness, literary tastes, the skill of ruling, and an interest in religion. His bodily form must have borne the graceful characteristics of all David's children.—Tuck.

The main difficulty with which besiegers of Jerusalem have had to contend—and it has sometimes proved insuperable—is the waterlessness of the city's surroundings. Gihon, if not the only fountain of the neighborhood, was the principal one, and sprang just beneath the city walls. By covering

the aperture of the cave in which it issued, and by leading the water to a reservoir in the mouth of the central valley, Hezekiah (2 Chron. 32 : 30) deprived the invader of its use and secured this for himself.—Dr. George Adam Smith.

Some Test Questions

1. By whom was David roused from his grief at Absalom's death ? To what city did he return ?
2. What fresh rebellion broke out ? For what reason was a famine sent upon the land ?
3. How did David show a boastful spirit ? In what way was he punished ? How was the pestilence stayed ?
4. Where do we find David's song of praise for his victories ? In which Psalm is this repeated ?
5. Who was David's eldest living son ? Who supported his claims to the throne ?
6. By whom was David roused to secure the throne for Solomon ?
7. What three leaders did he summon ? What did he bid them do ? Describe the coronation of Solomon.
8. Where did Adonijah take refuge ? What command did Solomon give to him ?
9. How was Adonijah afterwards treated ? How Abiathar ? How Joab ?

10. Where are David's parting words to Solomon? What is said of Solomon's kingdom?

Something to Look Up

1. A joyous procession once followed Jesus through Jerusalem, shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David". Find the verse.

2. Blessings come to the just, Solomon has told us, but violence to the wicked. Find this saying.

ANSWERS (Lesson VII).—(1) Isa. 53 : 6.
(2) John 10 : 11.

For Discussion

1. God's will and human effort.
2. The power of kindness.

Prove from Scripture

That God requires sincerity.

The Catechism

Ques. 107. *The Lord's Prayer—its conclusion.* In the conclusion of the Lord's prayer there is : 1. A ground of encouragement in prayer. It points us to One who is able to fulfil all our petitions. He is the Ruler of all things, 1 Chron. 29 : 11. All the power in the universe belongs to Him, Matt. 28 : 18. 2. The duty of giving praise a place in our prayers. Bible prayers are full of praise. See, for example, the Psalms,

especially such as the One Hundred and Third; the recorded prayers of Jesus (Matt. 11 : 25; John, ch. 17); and the prayers of Paul (see Eph. 3 : 20, 21). 3. The confidence that prayer will be heard. The confidence finds expression in the word "Amen", which means, "So be it". In using it we call upon God solemnly and with assurance, to grant the requests presented.

The Question on Missions

Ques. 8. On finishing the course of four years' training, every student receives a certificate indicating his fitness for teacher. Three grades are given, first, second, and third. The first two carry with them a higher salary than men not trained in the Institute get. Some of those who took first class have excelled as workers. Four or five from Rev. Dr. J. W. McKenzie's field are doing remarkably well, some on their own island, and others abroad. Kalorib and Kaloris are doing excellent work on Malekula as pioneers. Some of Mr. Milne's young men also are doing nobly. Langrei on Emae has fitted several for entering the Institute. Others also are doing superior work for the Master. Besides, there are some very fine men who have been trained specially by their own missionaries, and who are an honor and a blessing to the islands. May the Lord of the harvest increase their number greatly!

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

Lesson Subject—The king appointing his son to rule in his place.

Introduction—Did you ever see a little boy trying to do "just what father does"?



Jack was this kind of boy. One day, we saw him very busy with hammer and nails and an old box. "I'se fixin' a box for my mudder", he said, with an air of great importance. "My fadder says soon I'll be a big man, and perhaps I'll build houses like he does. He says I'll have to take his place some time, when he gets old and cannot work."

Review—We heard about one of David's sons who was a very bad prince (recall Absalom). Now, we are going to hear about

one of them who was a very good prince.

Lesson—King David got old, very old and weak and tired, and being king was very wearying to him. He knew he was soon going to die, so he said, "I must put the crown upon the head of one of my sons, and make him king in my place. He will be young and strong and fit to be a king." So, a short time before God called David to heaven, he chose one of his sons to be king.

A New King—Let us again draw (or show) our crown, while we talk about King David taking off his crown and putting it on the head of his son S-O-L-O-M-O-N. Picture the going of young Prince Solomon to Gihon, riding upon the mule which King David was accustomed to ride. Perhaps none of you have seen a mule. It is something like a horse. Mules are not much used in our country, but in the land of Israel they were used by royal people, and it was a great honor to ride upon the king's own mule.

God Save the King—Picture vs. 39, 40. We can all join heartily in this song, "God save the king", for we so often hear it in connection with our own beloved king (sing one verse). But another of David's sons, Adonijah, quite expected to be king, and was very angry when Solomon was made

king, and he had to beg Solomon to spare his life.

A Father's Good Advice—Listen to some of David's good-by words to Solomon. David was very weak and near to death. He tells Solomon this, and tells him, "Be thou strong. . . and show thyself a man".

Golden Text—David also tells Solomon these words (repeat Golden Text).

The Boys Make the Men—"Mother, was my fadder once a wee boy just like me?" asked a little laddie. Yes, boys and girls, your fathers and mothers were once boys and girls, and some day you boys and girls will be men and women. You must learn all the good you can, and ask Jesus to help you all to become good men and women. Obey your father and mother, and be thankful that God has given you a good home and good parents.

Sing (Hymn 24, Book of Praise, v. 4)—

For the joy of human love,

Brother, sister, parent, child,

Friends on earth, and friends above,

For all gentle thoughts and mild,

Father, unto Thee we raise

This our sacrifice of praise.

Something to Think About—I should be thankful for a good home.

FROM THE PLATFORM

THE GOD OF THY FATHER

Let the conversation centre about the Golden Text. Print, THE GOD OF THY FATHER. Get the scholars to tell of the great things which God had done for David. Then ask for the two commands given in the Golden Text to Solomon. First, he was to *know* God. Talk about ways in which he could learn of God,—from His Word, and from His dealings with David his father. Secondly, he was to *serve* God. Have the reasons pointed out why he should do this, such as God's goodness to David and to himself, etc. Discuss "with a perfect (that is, a "sincere") heart", and "a willing mind". Now apply the text. We, too, should know God and serve Him. Refer to all that He has done for our fathers. Show how much more we may know of Him than did Solomon, and how much greater reason we have to serve Him than had Solomon, since He has given us His own Son. Urge every scholar to make the text a life motto.

Isaiah 28 : 1-13. Commit to memory v. 11.

GOLDEN TEXT—I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection.—1 Corinthians 9 : 27.

1 Woe to the crown of pride, ¹ to the drunkards of Ephraim, ² whose glorious beauty is a fading flower, which ³ are on the head of the fat ⁴ valleys of them that are overcome with wine!

2 Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one ⁵ which as a tempest of hail ⁶ and a destroying storm, as a ⁷ flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall ⁸ cast down to the earth with the hand.

3 The crown of pride, ¹ the drunkards of Ephraim, shall be trodden under ² feet:

4 And the ¹⁰ glorious beauty, which is on the head of the fat valley, shall be a ¹¹ fading flower, and as the hasty fruit before the summer; which when he that looketh upon it seeth, while it is yet in his hand he eateth it up.

5 In that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory, and for a diadem of beauty, unto the residue of his people.

6 And for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn ¹² the battle ¹³ to the gate.

7 But ¹⁴ they also have erred through wine, and through strong drink are ¹⁵ out of the way; the priest

Revised Version—1 of; ² and to the fading flower of his glorious beauty; ³ is; ⁴ valley; ⁵ Omit and; ⁶ Omit and; ⁷ tempest; ⁸ he; ⁹ foot; ¹⁰ fading flower of his; ¹¹ shall be as the first ripe fig; ¹² back; ¹³ at; ¹⁴ these; ¹⁵ gone astray; ¹⁶ will; ¹⁷ the message; ¹⁸ it is precept upon; ¹⁹ Nay, but by men of strange lips; ²⁰ with; ²¹ rest, give ye rest to him that is weary; ²² Therefore shall the word; ²³ be; ²⁴ may.

LESSON PLAN

- I. Israel's Doom, 1-6.
II. Judah's Danger, 7-13.

DAILY READINGS

(By courtesy of I. B. R. Association)

M.—World's Temperance Sunday, Isa. 28 : 1-13.
T.—Drink and defeat, 1 Kgs. 20 : 13-21. W.—Belshazzar's feast, Dan. 5 : 1-9. Th.—Sudden destruction, Nah. 1 : 1-10. F.—Shut out, Gal. 5 : 16-26. S.—Watch and be sober! 1 Thess. 5 : 4-11. S.—Temperate in all things, 1 Cor. 9 : 19-27.

and the prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are ¹⁶ out of the way through strong drink; they err in vision, they stumble in judgment.

8 For all tables are full of vomit and filthiness, so that there is no place clean.

9 Whom ¹⁶ shall he teach knowledge? and whom ¹⁶ shall he make to understand ¹⁷ doctrine? them that are weaned from the milk, and drawn from the breasts.

10 For ¹⁸ precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, ⁸ and there a little:

11 ¹⁹ For with stammering lips and ²⁰ another tongue will he speak to this people.

12 To whom he said, This is the ²¹ rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear:

13 ²² But the word of the Lord ²³ was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, ⁸ and there a little; that they ²⁴ might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken.

Shorter Catechism—Review Questions 101-107.

The Question on Missions—9. Are there teachers enough now to occupy the whole group of islands? No, the demand is always greater than the supply; many more are required. There are hundreds of small villages which have no teachers; some of them the missionary has never visited.

Lesson Hymns—Book of Praise, 320 (Supplemental Lesson); 275; 219; 17 (Ps. Sel.); 251 (from PRIMARY QUARTERLY); 530.

Special Scripture Reading—1 Cor. 9 : 24-27. (To be read responsively or in concert by the whole School.)

EXPOSITION

Time and Place—About B.C. 725 and B.C. 704; Jerusalem.

The Lesson Setting—The great prophets of the eighth century B.C. (Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah) lived in a degenerate age. A period of great prosperity was passing, and the sins of prosperity and civilization were ravaging the life of Samaria and Jerusalem; luxury and extravagance, drunkenness and greed, were undermining the foundations of morality and religion. With sin came God; He came to punish: that was Isaiah's word of warning. Could the people not hear the tramp of Assyrian horsemen? The Assyrians were the scourge in Jehovah's hand. City after city of Syria fell before their terrible onset. At length they encamped within sight of Samaria, the capital of the Northern kingdom of Israel: in these circumstances Isaiah delivered the oracle in vs. 1-4.

Samaria fell in B.C. 722, and Judah, for

the time, made her peace with the invader, at a great price. But Isaiah, the great prophet of Judah, warns his own people that a like doom to that of Samaria will come upon them also, unless they forsake their sins.

I. Israel's Doom, 1-6.

Vs. 1, 2. *Woe to the crown of pride*; not a wish, but a warning. The prophet has no pleasure in foretelling the doom of the sinful people, but, speaking for God, he must point out the certain end of their course. "Samaria, with its ramparts and white terraced streets crowning the summit of a low hill, which rises in the middle of a fertile valley, is compared to a chaplet of flowers that wreathes the flushed temples of a reveler." (Skinner.) *Drunkards of Ephraim*; that is, Israel, here named from its chief tribe. Amos had indicted the people of Samaria thirty years before for luxury and debauchery, Amos 4 : 1; 6 : 1, 6. Isaiah saw their vices ripe for judgment, the people as good as ruined.

Glorious beauty; the magnificence and luxury of Samaria. *A jading flower*. The wreath is already withered. *The head of the fat valley* (Rev. Ver.); the beautiful and fertile valley over which Samaria looked. *Overcome with wine*; literally, "wine-stunned". *A mighty and strong one*; that is, Assyria, Jehovah's instrument, as in ch. 10:5, for the punishment of sinful Israel. The carousal is lost in the storm, and the foreign foe sweeps on like a *tempest of hail and a destroying storm*, like a *flood of mighty waters overflowing*, which dashes its spray down its torrent-bed with violence. After "overflowing", read "which casts down to the earth with violence". (Compare ch. 5:26-29.)

Vs. 3, 4. *Trodden under foot* (Rev. Ver.); crushed by the remorseless invader. *Hasty fruit*; Rev. Ver. "firstripe fig", which might appear in June, while the proper fig season was not till August. These early figs were counted a great delicacy. *Seeth in his hand. eateth it up*. So swiftly and greedily will Assyria devour Samaria.

Vs. 5, 6. *In that day*. This points to the coming Messianic age. *Lord. crown of glory. diadem of beauty*. Jehovah will replace the false glory of splendor and luxury with the true glory of righteousness and purity. *The residue*; not merely the remnant left after the Assyrian conquest, but a remnant turned to Jehovah. *Spirit of judgment*.

Jehovah, the true Glory of His people, will guide His people's judges. *For strength*. He will also give valor to His warriors. *Turn back the battle* (Rev. Ver.); repel invaders.

II. Judah's Danger, 7-13.

Vs. 7, 8. *They also*; the people of Judah as well as Israel. Nearly twenty years had passed since the fall of Samaria in B.C. 722. "There", said Isaiah to the people of Judah, "is a mirror for you to read your own character and destiny." Judean nobles, priests and prophets, too, were drunkards (see ch. 5:11-17, 22, 23). But in their self-confidence they laughed at Isaiah's warnings.

Vs. 9-13. *Whom shall he teach knowledge?* Did he take them for children, the drunkards asked, excitedly, when he surprised them at a carousal, that he should repeat over and over his little preachments, v. 10. Isaiah turned on them with a terrible threat: "Jehovah is at hand. You stammer now with your wine-thick lips, Jehovah will answer in a stammering tongue (the barbarian accent of Assyria). And when He speaks to you in a stammering tongue, you will remember His plain words of promise and cheer, v. 12. You ridicule the A.B.C. of Jehovah's words: wait for the A.B.C. of His deeds—judgment upon judgment, decay and ruin, slow, relentless, sure." Judah was taken captive in B.C. 587.

APPLICATION

Whose glorious beauty is a jading flower, v. 1. Few sights are more beautiful than the bright scarlet tints of the autumn foliage; but there is a true touch of pathos in their probable explanation. The red tints are not, like the yellow, merely the bleached particles from which the green coloring matter has died out: the red is a new stain that has been freshly developed and flushes the little cells that compose the leaf. Chemical experiments have proved that it helps to conserve the heat, and so to prolong for a few days the lingering life of the leaf. If this be so, the glorious beauty of the autumn is but the pathetic struggle of the doomed foliage to hold out a little longer against the increasing cold. The "glorious beauty"

of the midnight reveler, his songs, his jests, his deeper draughts, what else are they but a desperate effort to keep up the spirits against the cold despair, that, like a blighting frost, is nipping all the bright flowers of the human heart? It is but a false and fleeting glory, a faint flicker before the fire dies out and the ashes are left cold and desolate.

A tempest of hail, v. 2. Yonder lies the prairie, a golden sea of ripening grain. A few days, and it will be gathered into sheaves, filling the farmer's heart with "Hailed Out" delight, when lo! a black cloud darkens the west. Moving in swift silence, it comes on with irresistible stride. The dumb beast takes warning, and seeks a hasty place of refuge. Man drops his tools, and hastens indoors. A blinding

The Frost and
the Leaves

flash of lightning, a crashing peal of thunder, a furious blast of wind, the rattle of heavy hailstones like the discharge of a terrific fusillade, and it is all over in a few minutes. The clouds are gone, the sun shines forth in the glory of a peaceful and transparent sky; but the farmer beholds with dismay his waving harvest leveled to the ground and all the toil and expectation of a summer season gone for naught. He has been "hailed out". No more vivid metaphor can represent the fierce judgment of God on sin or its dire consequences. It blasts the fruit of a whole life. It leaves the home desolate and utterly ruins the happiness of the heart. Man is powerless to withstand it. The only way to avoid it is to take warning and find refuge in Jesus Christ. From the tempest of divine wrath against sin, He will safely hide us. Let the storm rage ever so wildly round about us, He will keep us in safety and peace.

Through strong drink are out of the way, v. 7. A Christian missionary had the painful duty of visiting a soldier in India, who was condemned to death for having shot a black man, when in a fit of intoxication. Several prisoners gathered around, and to the request for a Bible answered that they had none. The murderer, however, replied that he once had possessed one and had brought it with him from his native land, but, in a moment of great recklessness, had been tempted to part with it for more liquor. "Oh", he added,

"if I had listened to my Bible, I should not have been here." More than that poor soldier have exchanged their Bibles for strong drink, though they would have been shocked at the thought of doing it so glaringly. They have preferred the wine cup to the word of God: and their choice has brought ruin to their lives.

Snares, v. 13. The southern pitcher plant has a leaf like a conical urn with a hood over the mouth. This hood is full of translucent spots, like little windows. A Treacherous Plant On the outside of the mouth are sweet nectar glands, and the delicious nectar drops form a trail from them down the outside of the leaf. Just inside the mouth, however, there is a glazed zone so exceedingly slippery, that even the delicate foot of a fly cannot hold on to it, but must slide down its sides. Just below this glazed zone is another zone of stiff hairs all pointing downwards. In the bottom of the pitcher stands a quantity of water containing a juice that kills and digests flies. This pitcher plant is said to be a great fly catcher, and no one will doubt it; but it is not more treacherous to foolish insects, than is the gilded saloon to the unwary youth who is so ignorant as to enter it. Tempted by its delusive pleasures, he crosses the fatal threshold; he falls; he tries to recover himself; but money and reputation are both gone. Too often he gives up hope, and becomes another victim of drink.

Sold His Bible
For Drink

TEACHING HINTS

This section embraces teaching material for the various grades in the School.

For Teachers of the Older Scholars and Bible Classes

For the sake both of cumulative interest and progress of thought, I would not hesitate to teach the second part of this Lesson first.

1. *The errors of intemperance*, vs. 7, 8. How many have "erred" or gone astray, through "strong drink", even among well intentioned people, like "priests" and "prophets". No one, whatever his station, who fools with drink, can be sure that, before he is through with it, drink will not make a fool of him. The errors of intemperance

are due to defective "vision", and defective "judgment", v. 7 (last clause). Those who habitually fall into shameless debauchery, are quite unable to "see" any harm in excessive resort to stimulants, or to "judge" correctly its baneful, debilitating, ruining influence, v. 8.

2. *The lessons of sobriety*, vs. 9-13. Modern expositors take verses 9 and 10 to represent the mimicking mockery in which men over their cups indulge when sobriety is urged upon them. To-day it would run, "Balderdash! We are not Primary School babes, that you should come to us with your puerile precepts." They pooh-pooh the thought that there is in sobriety and self-

control "rest" from the woes incidental to intemperance and its impaired vitality, v. 12. They sneer at the teacher of sobriety as a "stammerer" (v. 11), and, heedless of the warnings of experience, go on to their doom, v. 13 (last clause). View the beginning of the passage now, in the light of all this.

3. *The degradation of the jading flower*, vs. 1-4. Describe the beauty of Samaria, so suggestive of a "sparkling coronet or flowery wreath". The charm of this beauty-spot is marred by the revelings of intemperance, v. 1. Will the beauty last? A storm of Assyrian invasion is near, v. 2. Will men incapacitated by drunkenness be able to resist it? Bigot's debaucheries in Quebec hastened the fall of French Canada. The wreaths that pressed on the flushed brows of the drunkards of Ephraim were made of fading flowers, vs. 3, 4. Samaria, with all its beauty, was ripening fast for its fate, like "hasty fruit" (v. 4), ready to satisfy the invading Assyrian's hunger.

4. *The glory of the unfading crown*, vs. 5, 6. The hour of crisis—"that day"—shows a remnant who have not lost their self-control and who find in God their "crown" and "glory" (1 Pet. 5 : 4), their "diadem of beauty", Isa. 62 : 3. In the long run sobriety is not without its reward. Sober soldiers, like "Havelock's saints", ready for sudden calls when other regiments are too tipsy for action, have strength to turn the battle to the gate. Sobriety is a Christian duty, Eph. 5 : 18.

For Teachers of the Boys and Girls

The title, "World's Temperance Sunday", gives evidence of how widespread are the evils of strong drink,—well-nigh world-wide, indeed; and that Christian men feel that no power is able to overthrow that terrible demon, save the power of the Christian life—Christ, the Omnipotent, dwelling in the heart, ruling in the community.

The Lesson passage is an old-time study of how drink damns, how God punishes, and of the way of escape. The story is an old one and of far away lands; but human nature does not change. It is now what it was in Isaiah's time twenty-five hundred years ago.

The lesson of the story belongs to our own land and to this very day.

1. *How drink damns*. Have the scholars, from the Lesson passage, draw up an indictment against strong drink. It will be found to contain only two counts: but they are terrible ones: (1) Drink makes men fools. The picture, as painted in v. 7, should be examined point by point: it is vivid and lurid. Alas! what every child has seen with his own eyes testifies as to its truth; for has not every community its sots (the word is from the French, literally foöls)? Draw attention to the fact that priest and prophet, the wise, strong men, the leaders, are as much made fools-of by drink, when they use it, as are ordinary people. Indeed, more so; for drink, like death, "loves a shining mark". Vs. 9, 10 give further evidence of the folly of the drunkard: he mocks instruction, will take no advice. The last stage of folly is to think that it has nothing to learn. (2) Drink defiles. V. 8 is sufficient on this point.

2. *How God punishes*. Show this from the prophet's message, first, to Samaria, whose fall is just at hand (vs. 1-4, 11); then, to Jerusalem, whose punishment will surely come (vs. 14, 15). National destruction following upon national degeneration through drink. This the teacher will work out in detail with the scholars from the verses,—beautiful Samaria to be swept as by a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as by a flood of mighty waters, its glory trodden in the dust, passing away like quickly eaten fruit; and this punishment by a foreign army, the Assyrians, Judah to share a like fate, if she continue in like ways, vs. 14-19. The drunkard, and a debauched people, have no power of resistance. They fall victims to every foe. A short essay to show this in the case of the individual, and another, in the case of a nation, will be of interest and value.

3. *The way of escape*. This, again, can be gathered from the Lesson passage: (1) Don't mock God (see vs. 14, 22). See also Gal. 6 : 7. When the Almighty threatens, it is that men may listen and learn. (2) Be taught by what has happened to others. Samaria is rushing to destruction; Jerusalem should take warning. If drink has destroyed

others, it will, in like manner, destroy us. four words of Isa. 1 : 16 are a sovereign remedy. (3) Quit. There is no other way. The last remedy.

THE GEOGRAPHY LESSON



The city of Samaria was situated on the summit of a conical hill with steep sides, in the midst of a very fertile region. The hills around it are terraced to the top and sown with grain, or planted with olives or figs, and the valleys which open between them are very rich. It would be difficult to find in all Palestine a situation of equal strength, beauty, and fertility combined. But in the prophet's eye it was like the chapel of flowers with which the revelers of the time crowned themselves; its glory would speedily wither. Here and there around the brow of the hill, the remains of a row of columns are still standing to suggest to the traveler how much like a crown the towers, fortifications, and colonnades of the city in its glory must have been. The wretched and fanatical Moslem village of Sebestieh is now on one end of the hill and the ruins of a church, built by the Crusaders on an older foundation to John the Baptist. The traditional tomb of the Baptist is in the crypt underneath this church. A group of pillars on the summit of the hill marks the site of a temple of great size and magnificence,

built by Herod the Great in honor of Augustus. Below the village there are two beautiful springs, but on the hill itself there is no trace of water. This was remedied by extensive cisterns which enabled the city to sustain a siege of three years against Sargon, the king of Assyria, 2 Kgs. 17 : 5, 6.

ADDED HINTS AND HELPS

In this section will be found further assistance under various headings.

Some Test Questions

1. Who were the great Hebrew prophets of the eighth century B.C.? What were the prevailing sins of the time?

2. What was the capital of Israel, the Northern kingdom? When did this city fall before the Assyrians? What warning did Isaiah draw from this event for the people of Judah?

3. Why is Samaria called the "crown of pride"? What prophet, before Isaiah's time, had spoken against the vices of its inhabitants?

4. Explain the "head of the fat valley". To what does Isaiah compare the invasion of the Assyrians?

5. How does he illustrate the "devouring" of Samaria by the foreign foe?

6. To what time does "that day" refer? What promise does the Lord make concerning it?

7. Why did Isaiah say that the people of Judah were in danger of a doom like that of Samaria?

8. How were the prophet's warnings received?

9. How did he say that Jehovah would speak to the mockers?

10. When was Judah taken captive?

Something to Look Up

1. The great prophet Elijah was once mocked by children and a terrible punishment came upon them. Find the two verses that tell of this.

2. We are told in Proverbs that if a man is often reprov'd and still disobeys God, he will suddenly be cut off. Read the words.

ANSWERS (Lesson VIII.)—(1) Matt. 21 : 9. (2) Prov. 10 : 6.

For Discussion

1. Warnings from history against strong drink.

2. How drink unfits for work.

Prove from Scripture

That our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.

The Catechism

Ques. 101-107. (Review)—The Questions for review cover the six petitions and the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer. The first three petitions, as we have seen, fix our attention upon God. They teach us to give His honor and the doing of His will the highest place in our thoughts and desires. The last three petitions have to do with ourselves. In the fourth it is recognized that we are needy creatures, dependent upon God's bounty for every blessing. The fifth

regards all mankind as sinners requiring forgiveness from one another, and, most of all, forgiveness from God. The sixth is also a petition for sinners, pointing out the way in which we may be set free, and kept free, from the power of sin. The conclusion of the Prayer makes us glad with the assurance that the God of all power will hear and answer our prayers.

The Question on Missions

Ques. 9. The natives of the New Hebrides group live in small villages or encampments all through the islands. These villages have from twenty to a hundred people, there are very few with more. It is almost impossible to get any two of them to unite for a school ; so the missionary endeavors to supply all the larger places with teachers. On Malekula and Santo the greater part of the inland people are yet without teachers, because none can be obtained. Some of these places are not willing to accept the gospel, and will not receive the messenger. But were men available, many more could be placed out with advantage to the cause. There are villages both on Malekula and Santo where no white man has ever been. Often the butsh villages are hostile to those among whom the missionary labors ; in that case he may fail to find guides to show him the way.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

Lesson Subject—The evils of strong drink.

Golden Text—Our Golden Text tells us about a good kind of fight. Let us all repeat the Golden Text (clench hands). Each of us should be a fighter in this good fight—I and my body. The body sometimes wants to do some things that we know in our heart we should not do.

Fighters—A little boy said, "Mother told me not to chew gum, and I thought I could not keep from it, my teeth just seemed to want to chew ; but I did not want to disobey mother, so I just clenched my hands and said, 'I won't do it'." That was one blow that the

Strong Drink
is a
THIEF!

lad gave his body. A little girl ate too many chocolates, she "just loved them", she said; but the doctor told her mother it was going to make her a very sick child, if she did not stop. So the next time chocolates were given to her, she gave them to her mother to do with them as she thought best, but she "would not taste one". So her body got a good sharp blow. A man was very fond of drinking whisky; but he saw all the sin and misery caused by strong drink, and he said, "No! I'll never taste the stuff again", and he did not. That boy and girl and man each fought the good kind of fight, and kept the body under and brought it into subjection.

Lesson.—Our Lesson is about some of the men of Israel who did not fight this good fight, did not try to keep their body under control; and their bodies got the best of it and ruled the men, in place of the men ruling their own bodies. The body—the lips, throat, stomach, wanted wine, wine, wine, till the men were knocked down, and wine had the mastery over them. Their body was master, and what did wine do to these men then? Just what it does to any one who lets it get control of him now. Wine is a thief. It took away their money. It took away their brains. It took away their happiness. It took away their goodness. It took away

health and strength and good looks. It knocked them down, and took away everything they had; and so it does now. The teacher may print, one under another, the letters of the alphabet, and let the children repeat the lines, four or more at a time.

The Liquor A, B, C.

A—is the Alcohol—deathlike its grip;
 B—is the Boy who just takes a sip;
 C—the Companion who urges him on;
 D—is for all the bad Deeds that are done;
 E—is the Effort to get away;
 F—for the Friends who lead him astray;
 G—for the Guilt which he afterwards feels;
 H—for the Heart-break which never heals;
 I—his Intention to drink not at all;
 J—for the Jeering that caused him to fall;
 K—is his Knowledge that he is a slave;
 L—for the Liquor which all drunkards crave;
 M—for the Mother now aged and grey;
 N—for the "No" which he tries hard to say;
 O—for the Others whom he leads astray;
 P—for the Pride he has cast away;
 Q—for the Quarrels that daily abound;
 R—for the Ruin that hovers around;
 S—for the Sickness that surely will come;
 T—for the Tumult that crazes his brain;
 U—for the Usefulness killed in the slums;
 V—is the Vagrant he swiftly becomes.

Something to Think About—Strong drink causes sorrow.

FROM THE PLATFORM

I keep under my body

Tell this true story. One of our ministers, when a boy, lived in the country and belonged to a baseball nine. One day a match game was being played between his club and a club from a neighboring town. The lads from the town thought it was necessary to drink a good deal of whisky to keep up their strength, and the players belonging to the country did the same, except the boy who afterwards became a minister. Next day there was a barn raising to which the country players were invited. But the only one who was fit for the heavy work of lifting the sills and bents and rafters into place, was the one who had not tasted whisky the day before. Write on the blackboard, *I keep under my body*, and impress the truth that if we wish to have strong bodies and thus be really fit to excel in play or work, we must "cut out" strong drink.

BIBLE DICTIONARY FOR FOURTH
QUARTER, 1908

[For additional information in regard to certain of the places, see Geography Lessons.]

A-bin'-a-dab. A man of Kirjath-jearim, in whose house the ark found accommodation for twenty years after it was sent back by the Philistines, 1 Sam. 7 : 1, 2 ; 2 Sam. 6 : 3 ; 1 Chron. 13 : 7.

Ab'-sa-lom. A son of David. His mother was Maacah, daughter of Talmi, king of Geshur. After his defeat in the rebellion against David, he was killed by Joab while entangled by his long hair among the spreading branches of an oak, under which he had been riding, his mule having run away.

Ad-o-ni'-jah. A son of David, born at Hebron, (2 Sam. 3 : 2, 4). When his father was stricken in years, he attempted to seize the throne, and, was first pardoned by Solomon (1 Kgs. 1 : 50-53); but, on further offence, was slain, 1 Kgs. 2 : 17-25.

A-hi'-ma-az. The son of Zadok. He was the first to bring David tidings of the victory over Absalom.

A-hi'-o, Uz'-zah. The two sons of Abinadab who drove the cart on which David was taking the ark to Jerusalem, 2 Sam. 6 : 3, 4.

A-hith'-o-phel. One of David's counselors, a man of great sagacity, but morally untrustworthy. He joined in the rebellion of Absalom, and hanged himself when Hushai's counsel was preferred to his own.

Am'-mon. The younger son of Lot, and ancestor of the Ammonites, who dwelt east of the Jordan, on the borders of the Arabian Desert. Their chief god was Milcom or Molech, whose worship was adopted by Solomon (see 1 Kgs. 11 : 5).

Ash'-to-reth. A goddess worshiped by the Zidonians (see 1 Kgs. 11 : 5).

Ba'-a-le. The same as Kirjath-jearim, a town of Judah, eleven miles west of Jerusalem.

Be-nai'-ah. The successor of Joab as commander-in-chief of David's army (see 1 Kgs. 2 : 35).

Che'-mosh. A god of the Moabites worshiped by Solomon, 1 Kgs. 11 : 7.

Cher'-e-thites and Pel'-e-thites. Members of two tribes from the Philistine country who belonged to David's bodyguard.

Cu'-shi. In 2 Sam. ch. 18, the Rev. Ver. substitutes for this name, "the Cushite", a native of Cush or Ethiopia, the country lying in Eastern Africa, south of Egypt.

Da'-vid. Son of Jesse and second king of Israel.

E'-phra-im. The tribe descended from Ephraim, the younger son of Joseph. The name was commonly used by the prophets for the ten tribes forming the Northern kingdom, of which Ephraim was the chief tribe.

Eth'-a-nim. The seventh month of the

Jewish year, also called Tisri. It corresponded to parts of September and October.

Ge'-shur. A portion of Syria on the east of the Jordan adjoining the north border of the Israelitish territory. David married a daughter of Talmi, a ruler of this territory.

Gib'-e-ah. See 2 Sam. 6 : 4, where this word occurs : the Rev. Ver. gives instead "the hill".

Gib'-e-on. A city of Benjamin in which the tabernacle was erected for a time in the reign of David and Solomon. Its modern name is el-Jib, about six miles northwest of Jerusalem.

Gi'-hon. A spring probably in the Kedron Valley just outside of Jerusalem from which the city obtained part of its water supply.

Gi'-loh. A village in the hill country of Judah.

Git'-tite. A native or inhabitant of Gath.

He'-bron. A town in the hill country of Judah, about twenty miles southwest of Jerusalem. It was David's capital during the seven and a half years of his reign over Judah. Here Absalom raised the standard of rebellion.

Je-hoi'-a-da. A priest, the father of Benaiah.

Jo'-ab. A nephew of David, and the commander-in-chief in his army.

Le'-vites. The men of the tribe of Levi, charged with the duty of helping the priests, by taking care of the tabernacle and making preparation for its services.

Lo'-de-bar. A place in Gilead, where Mephibosheth dwelt.

Me-phib'-o-sheth. The son of Jonathan. He was lame in both his feet (2 Sam. 4 : 4). David restored to him the property of Saul, his grandfather, and gave him a place at the royal table. (See 2 Sam., ch. 9.)

Mo'-ab. The district east of the Dead Sea inhabited by the Moabites, who were descended from Lot.

Mil'-com, or Mol'-ech. See under Ammon.

Na'-than. A well known prophet in the reigns of David and Solomon.

O'-bed-e'-dom. A man living at Gath-rimmon, in whose house the ark was left for three months by David.

Sol'-o-mon. The son of David and third king of Israel. He reigned forty years. He was famed for his wisdom and the splendor of his court.

Syr'-i-a. Properly Aram, a country occupying a plain to the northeast of Palestine.

Za'-dok. Early in David's reign joint high priest with Abiathar, and later, sole high priest.

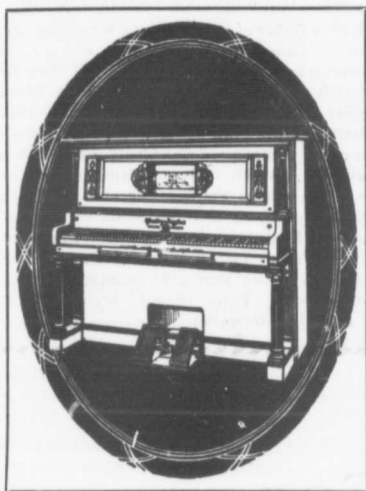
Zi'-ba. A servant of King Saul's (see 2 Sam. 9 : 9).

Zi-do'-ni-ans. Or Sidonians, inhabitants of Sidon, an ancient Canaanitish city on the sea coast.

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